

Good news, bad news for WUSD

Joanne Moore
Reporter
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It was a typical agenda for the December 12 Willits Unified School District's Board of Trustees meeting: organizing a newly constituted board, school information, and budget approval.

Before any of that, however, parent Deanna Arms pleaded with the board not to let go football coach Chris Bickford, offering supportive letters from "20 parents and players" who agreed with her.

Arms is the "parent of a varsity player," she said, and Bickford is the "best coach he's ever had. He's a huge asset, dedicated to rebuilding the program."

Nothing could be done about the move, however, because Bickford is not covered by the contract between the Willits Teachers Association and the district.

However, Arms' plea did not fall on deaf ears; board President Alex Bowlds told Arms he was "not unsympathetic." Rather, it hit the brick wall of state law and the district's contract with its teachers.

"It's a contractual issue. It

Read the rest of **WUSD**
Over on page 15

Laytonville fire claims one life

A house fire claimed the life of a Laytonville resident last Saturday evening, December 15.

Personnel from the Laytonville Volunteer Fire Department and CalFire were notified of a structure fire in the 48000 block of North Highway 101 shortly before 8 pm. When they arrived at the address, they discovered "a fully involved residential structure fire," according to sheriff's Lt. Shannon Barney.

Firefighters contained and cooled down the blaze, Barney said, but it was 11:37 pm before firefighters could enter the home to assess damage to the structure. "They found the remains of one decedent," he added.

Fire authorities contacted the sheriff's office to initiate a coroner's investigation into the death. Sheriff's detectives also investigated the incident, while a CalFire investigator was at the scene to help determine the cause and origin of the fire.

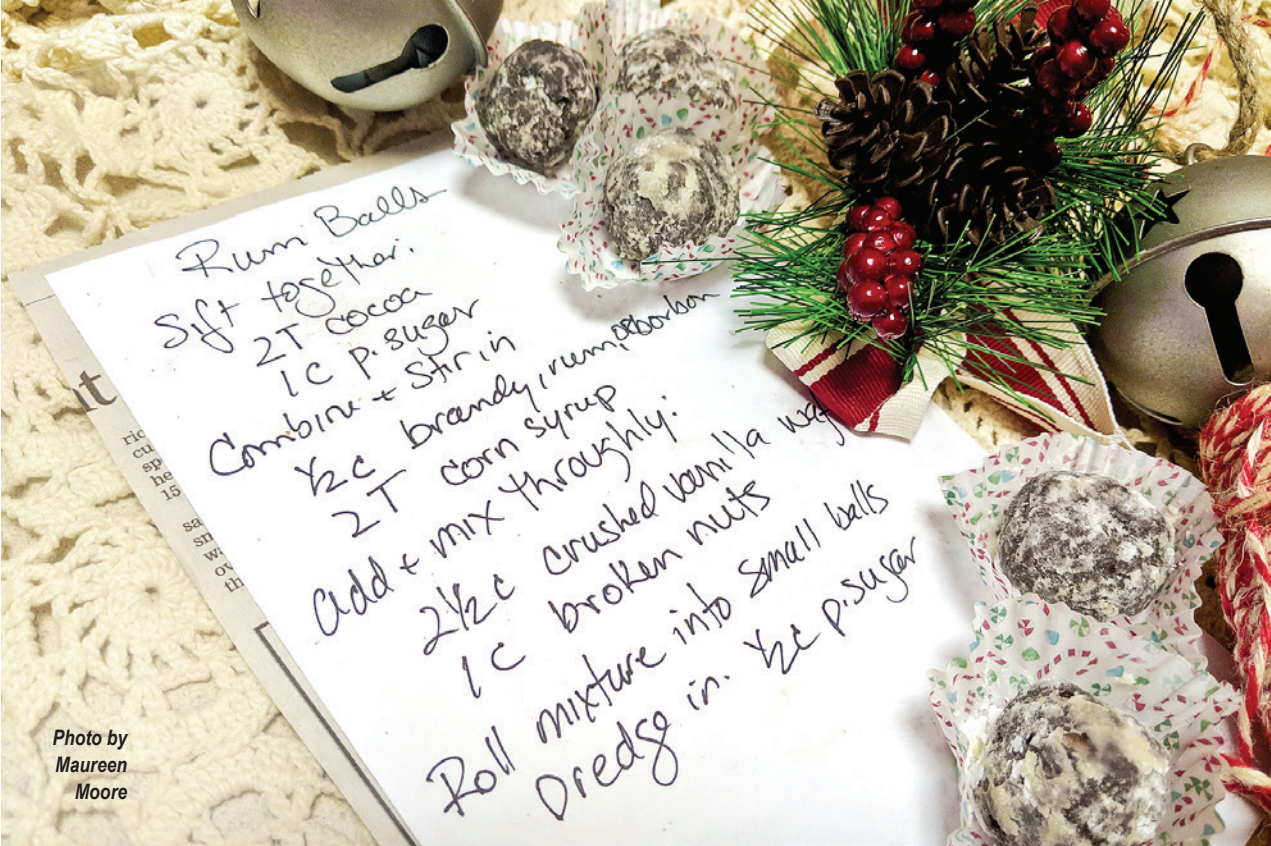
Cause of the fire remains under investigation. The owner/current occupant of the home is known, Barney noted, and the sheriff's office is in contact with family members.

DNA samples have been

Read the rest of **Fire**
Over on page 13



Above: Gracie Jennison won an ice cream gift certificate to Scoops Frozen Yogurt and Deli, the venue where the 2018 Willits Weekly Cookie Party was held. Jackie and her husband, Kale, hold their boys Henry and Marshal after cookie tasting. Chris Lamprich also won a Scoops gift certificate. Below: Rum Balls, one of the most anticipated cookies of the season for Willits Weekly's Maureen Moore.



Cookies, Cookies, Cookies

Willits Weekly Cookie Party names winners of 2018 'sweet tooth' trophies

December is the time for cookies, and for the sixth year, Willits Weekly celebrated in holiday theme with the annual Cookie Party held at Scoops Frozen Yogurt and Deli on Friday, December 14. Scoops generously hosted the party last year, too.

Each entry was sampled by event attendees to decide the "People's Choice" winner, which ended up going to Elizabeth Hart for her Italian Rainbow Cookies – "Biscotto Arcobaleno." Three official judges also sampled the selection, and Little Lake Fire Chief Chris Wilkes, Matthew Jennison and John Kvasnicka decided that, for the second year in a row, the Judge's Choice winner went to Alicia Logan and her "Ooey Goey Rocky Road Cookies." The third award went to Shawna Perry Handschug for her "Reindeer Game Tokens," which won the "Best Decorated" award. Winners received bragging rights and their names inscribed onto the contest's perpetual trophies.

Thank you to all who came and baked, voted and tasted! See the winning recipes on page 6 of today's edition, and have a happy holiday!

– Maureen Moore



Photos by Matthew Caine



At top: Official cookie party judges, from left: Little Lake Fire Chief Chris Wilkes, Matthew Jennison and John Kvasnicka. Above: The "Best Decorated" entry made by Shawna Perry. At left: 2018 winners include, from left: Tinley and Alicia Logan, the two-time Judge's Choice winners for their "Ooey Goey Rocky Road Cookies" entry; Shawna Perry Handschug, and River in front, with their award for their Best Decorated "Reindeer Game Tokens"; and Elizabeth Hart and her award for People's Choice for her Italian Rainbow Cookies – "Biscotto Arcobaleno."

City council swears in new members, picks new mayor

Forrest Glyer
Reporter
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A farewell reception was given for outgoing Councilmen Ron Orenstein during a busy Willits City Council meeting last week, and two new councilmembers – Greta Kanne and Larry Stranske – were sworn in.

A new mayor and vice mayor for Willits also were chosen at the meeting, and the council heard updates on both the city's Main Street Corridor Enhancement Plan and the Paint the Town project being organized by Willits Economic Localization.



Gerry Gonzalez will be the new mayor of Willits for the next year, and Larry Stranske will be vice mayor. The two positions are voted on every year around this time and typically rotate to different council members.

Read the rest of **Council**
Over on Page 15

New Willits City Council member Greta Kanne and returning member Larry Stranske are sworn in by Willits City Manager Stephanie Garrabrant-Sierra at last week's city council meeting.

Photo by Forrest Glyer

Supervisors bid adieu to Croskey, Hamburg, Ranochak

Mike A'Dair
Reporter
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Supervisors presented proclamations to outgoing board members Dan Hamburg and Georgeanne Croskey on Tuesday. They also said goodbye to Assessor-Clerk-Recorder Susan Ranochak and awarded longevity pins to 19 county employees who have worked between 15 and 30 years for the county.

Croskey's proclamation was somewhat brief, since she was Third District supervisor for only 18 months, appointed to the office by Gov. Edmund G. Brown, Jr. in May 2017. The proclamation praised Croskey for her "passion and concern for the safety and welfare of Third District residents [which] has positively affected the local region through sponsorship of items on board agendas, as well as her involvement in the community.

"The citizens of Mendocino County deeply appreciate Georgeanne's leadership, dedication to public service, and her passion for advocacy for sound public policy representing Mendocino

Read the rest of **Adieu**
Over on page 15

Supes prioritize repairs on three county roofs

Mike A'Dair
Reporter
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Supervisors on Tuesday unanimously approved prioritizing repairs on three of the county's most leaky and important roofs. The priorities include the main jail building, the Emergency Operations Center and Jail Programs building (both housed in a single structure), and phase two of roof repairs on the administration center.

In the 2018-2019 budget, the board had already allocated \$1.7 million for roof repairs on the administration center. However, on November 20, county Auditor Lloyd Weer told the board he had determined there would be a \$4.4 million carry-forward after the close of fiscal year 2017-18. Because supervisors had already budgeted a \$450,000 carry-forward, they found they had an extra \$3.9 million to spend.

Upon the recommendation of CEO Carmel Angelo, the board quickly disposed of \$2.9 million of the windfall.

Read more of **Roofs**
Over on page 13

What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from our readers

Thank you

To the Editor:

On the evening of November 20, 2018, my next door neighbor's house caught fire. Thankfully, she was rescued by my other neighbor, Sheldon Lund. Mary Fisher and her dog Buster made it out safely with his help.

I want to thank Lance Armstrong who alerted me to the fire so I could call 9-1-1, and for his assistance with Mary.

I was so relieved to see Fire Chief Chris Wilkes pull up in his truck with the Little Lake and Brooktrails firefighters shortly behind him. Many of these firefighters were on their way home from the Camp fire in Paradise.

I want to thank our firefighters for their swift arrival and for their courage and sensitivity with Mary's belongings.

Another big thanks to Joseph Dell'Ara, Austin Barhite, and Sheldon Lund for keeping my house from igniting.

I am fortunate to live in a neighborhood of wonderful people who were there to offer their help and support. Thank you again.

Kathy Lawrence, Willits

Three little words

To the Editor:

I'd like to personally thank members of our community, city staff and the Willits City Council for their kind tribute to Ron Orenstein during the city council meeting on December 12.

Over 20 years ago, Ron mentioned to Gordon Logan, our city manager, that he wanted to serve his community and begin by building a skateboard park. Gordy

smiled and said three little words to him. Thus began Ron's research, development and work with many city projects and non-profit organizations, both on and off of city council.

Last night, now that he decided to pass the baton to another willing to serve this community, I can finally repeat those three little words to Ron: "You're mine now."

Brenda Orenstein, Willits

The Wolverine Law

To the Editor:

In 2008 France passed a law requiring all motorists to have high-visibility vests in their vehicles as a safety measure should the driver need to exit a vehicle on a roadside. Therefore, everybody with a vehicle in France has a yellow vest.

Whether from smoke in the air from the fires, low visibility due to the low-lying fog, or driving blizzards or downpours – when we pull over for any untimely emergency we want to be seen. For these reasons and others we should emulate this French law here.

Let's start in Willits. We in Mendocino County have already set precedent for being the first to pass important, forward-looking laws. Think of Measures H and S or PUMI.

And, as the Boy Scouts of America* and the French have shown us, it's good to be prepared. Why shouldn't we have at the ready a means of voicing and redressing our grievances? Should it be an emergency, which the French obviously believe, those who choose can quickly and easily don our *gilets jaunes* and collectively communicate the issue and the urgency. Is this not at the very heart of a democracy?

(*The author is proud and grateful to have been an Eagle Scout. The vest he wore to carry his merit badges was yellow.)

This could be a city or township ordinance at first: required but not enforced. Look, just as a specific native tribe can be inferred from the fledges (feathers) and markings on their arrows, so too can a community be known by its ordinances. We could call it the Wolverine Law of Willits.

Just to know that that vest is there in your vehicle would be a comfort. Making eye contact and winking your nose once would tell any Willitsian that your yellow vest is ready and willing to gather together should the moment arise. One wink back, confirms the trust.

Chances are it would be contagious, with one city or community after another declaring their democracy this way.

Would our city council consider it? Of course they would. They're known for having considered every damn thing under the sun. But can we get it on the consent calendar? – ah, that is another question.

Would someone good at it please create a Facebook page for this? Maybe call it the "WolverineLaw." But if you want more universality, then simply call it the "YellowVestLaw."

Lanny Cotler, Willits

LocalLights:OpenMic++

To the Editor:

LocalLights, the successful local music concert series at the Willits Community Theatre in 2014, will be continuing in 2019 (starting on January 13) in a slightly different format. First of all, it will take

place at the Willits Center for the Arts as a WCA-sponsored event, which means it will also serve as a fundraiser for WCA. It will be held in the Great Room (upstairs) at WCA, which is an acoustically wonderful environment for stage performances of this nature. Secondly, it will be a monthly event on every second Sunday of the month starting at 5 pm. Thirdly, there will be a large open mic component to the event in addition to the featured group of the month.

And all of this will be made possible to you for a suggested donation of \$5! Proceeds will be split between the featured musician(s) and WCA. So come out and enjoy performances by your favorite local musicians in addition to hearing friends, neighbors and other community members (maybe even yourself) strut their stuff at the open mic. And support WCA and local musicians in the process.

We will be offering a music-oriented, distraction-free environment for an enhanced acoustic experience. And we have a great sound system to fill it out with. There will be some time before the featured group to start off the event with open mic sets, which will continue again after the featured performance. Open mic slots will be scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. If you (or your group) would like to be featured, please contact us at 459-7054 or LocalLights@theSighting.com.

Please come out and support your local artists of all types with LocalLights:OpenMic++ at WCA. Look for detailed announcements starting in January.

David Partch and Kyle Madrigal, co-hosts, Willits

Willits Weekly Holiday Break

Willits Weekly is taking our annual holiday break after this December 20 edition. We'll skip publication on December 27 and January 3, and we'll be back in the new year with a January 10, 2019 edition.



Above, from left: Melissa Bouley, head gardener at Commonwealth Garden, pauses to pose under the arch as she runs for more hot water during the evening. She also helped decorate for the event and said, "Every year we try to make it better, and we've really done it this year!" Sparetime Supply's six-wheeled truck is the perfect size for Bailey, standing, and Caiden to pretend to drive it away. The \$5 entry fee for adults is collected by new Willits Chamber of Commerce Coordinator Lila Van Meter, left, and Holly Madrigal. This year the proceeds will go to the Caring Kitchen Project. At left: The high school sent over their peace sign – "Everybody can see it and that's the message," Ananda Johnson said. Below: Rylan looks up at his parents through the bicycle-rim enclosure with wonder. At bottom, left: From left: Three friends, Jair, Jaime and Jayden, pose for the camera on the Mendocino County Museum's reindeer-pulled sleigh. At bottom, right: River fondly pets the glittered unicorn sculpture by Glitter My World.

Photos by Ree Slocum

Holiday Lights

Rain and wind didn't stop hundreds of people from visiting the dazzling light display at Commonwealth Garden

Last weekend the Commonwealth Garden's orchard, across the street from Adventist Health Howard Memorial, was lit up with a dazzling light show and display of lighted sculptures. It was the third annual event sponsored by the Frank R. Howard Foundation.

Willits Weekly attended the festivities Saturday night as strong winds and intermittent mist met families when they walked through the brightly lit arch entryway leading to tantalizing light displays. Some children tugged at their parents, barely stopping for a photo with mom and dad in their excitement. Yet every child and parent stopped when Santa appeared to talk with children and pose for photos.

The light show is a combined community effort started from an idea Holly Madrigal and Ananda Johnson had when they, separately, visited the Mendocino Botanical Gardens' Festival of Lights on the coast. "Let's do it here," Madrigal mentioned to Johnson and added: "The Commonwealth Garden is stunning and a beautiful place. It could work perfectly for a light show!" Johnson immediately agreed. They had a meeting with the Howard Foundation, and the idea sprang to fruition in December 2016.

What started with a few sculptures and decorations has grown yearly, with new ones added from Willits community businesses and volunteers. "We needed a few more generators this year because there were more sculptures. About 16 now," Johnson said. "J.D. Redhouse loaned two [generators], Ed Mitchell loaned one, the hospital loaned their big one, and Dave Madrigal found another one." J.D. Redhouse also donated bales of straw to surround the generators and deaden the noise.

Adventist Health's Cici Winiger and Holly Sears decorated the large arch entry with small and multicolored LED lights. Directly after the colorfully lit arch, a table was set up for information and collecting a \$5 fee for adults (kids were free). This year the fee will be donated to the Caring Kitchen Project. Then more light-magic unfolded on the dark hillside along a path leading to the hilltop gazebo.

Glitter My World's unicorn mesmerized kids with its size and brightly glittered body. GMW also loaned their gorgeous, large iguana and stunning dragon sculptures. To add to the awesomeness of the glittered sculptures, the glitter used is nontoxic and biodegradable.

There were the very popular interactive sculptures: kids crawled into the bicycle-rim igloo loaned by the Willits Area Bicyclists; Sparetime set up their child-sized six-wheeled truck for kids to sit in; the Little Lake Fire Department sent their antique fire engine for kids to climb around; Imagination Station's airplane-shaped teeter-totter became a glowing play zone; and the sleigh and wooden reindeer were from the Mendocino County Museum and made great photo opportunities.

Other colorful additions included the peace sign from the high school, Mariposa Market's butterfly, and Willits Furniture's tall, rearing horse. There were also a variety of shining things scattered among the



Glitter My World's fierce dragon was one of the colorfully lit sculptures.

Read the rest of Lights Over on Page 13

Willits Children's Christmas Program just about wrapped up

Willits Children's Christmas Program coordinator Laura Sleeper says all the shopping for local kids in need of holiday cheer is complete, and she expects the wrapping to be finished before this newspaper hits the streets. Congratulations to all who helped with the Christmas Program this year!

Sleeper is calling families as their bags are complete, so they can come pick up presents at Santa's HQ at the old Howard Hospital Monday through Friday, 4 to 7 pm.

"We're encouraging people to come pick up their bags," Sleeper said. "With everything firefighters have done for the community, this year especially with all the fires, we'd like to get our firefighters home for the holidays. If a family in the program doesn't have a car, we have volunteers happy to bring them their bags." Call 354-1991 for more information.

– Jennifer Poole

The Rules: LETTERS

Letters & Commentaries: Email letters to willitsweekly@gmail.com. Letters focusing on Willits and Third District issues, activities, events and people have priority. Willits Weekly prints letters from residents of Willits and the Third District only. To encourage a variety of voices, Willits Weekly limits letter publication from any one writer to once every four weeks.

Typed letters can be sent to Willits Weekly, P.O. Box 1698, Willits, CA 95490, but email is preferred. Letters and commentaries must be submitted with a name, address and phone number, although only the author's name and city of residence will be published. No letters from an anonymous source will be published, although a request to withhold the writer's name will be considered.



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Rain Totals in Willits

Precipitation in the Willits area as of December 19
(Note: Willits Weekly's "rain year" started September 29, with the first local rains.)

National Weather Service, Willits Howard Ranger Station as of 12/19/2018 at 1 pm	11.96"
Mendocino College North County Center as of 12/19/2018 at 1 pm	11.53"
Willits sewer plant as of 12/19/2018 at 9:30 a.m.	12.89"
High Horse Willits as of 12/19/2018 at 1 pm	13.78"
Highway 20, Willits as of 12/19/2018 at 1 pm	13.52"
Lucky Monkey's Ranch, 2 miles west of Willits as of 12/18/2018 at 11 pm	10.07"

surface, it's sometimes associated with the polar vortex. This is not confined to just the United States. Portions of Europe and Asia also experience cold surges connected to the polar vortex. Check the forecast for your area on the National Weather Service's site www.weather.gov.

On the local weather front, the NWS is forecasting new winter rains beginning Thursday, December 20 with a shot of rain and gusty southerly winds.

Forecasters, however, say there is still some model disagreement on the exact timing, but it appears rain will begin along the North Coast by early Thursday afternoon. Rain amounts "look to be tempered a bit by the progressive nature of the system," with amounts higher to the north and lower to the south over Mendocino County. Most areas will see between 0.5 and

1 inch of precipitation, the NWS says. The storm will depart to the east Thursday night, followed by a period of quieter weather Friday into Saturday, bringing colder overnight lows.

The next storm system will arrive over the area Sunday or Monday, forecasters say. That system has the potential to bring much colder air to the region, resulting in increased potential for thunderstorms and small hail, and much lower snow levels than so far this winter.

The NWS forecast for Christmas Day as we go to press Wednesday evening is: "A chance of rain. Partly sunny, with a high near 54."

– Dan McKee

Willits Weekly welcomes reports of rain and other weather information at willitsweekly@gmail.com.

Online & Print

Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

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Happy Holidays

FROM THE NOYO THEATRE

AQUAMAN

(PG)13 2 hrs 23 mins

SHOWTIMES FOR 12/21 THRU 1/3/19:
2:00, 5:15 & 8:30pm

(NO 2:00 show on Xmas 12/25)

Movie Times for 12/21 thru 1/3

SPIDER-MAN: INTO THE SPIDER-VERSE

(PG) 1 hr 57 mins

SHOWTIMES FOR 12/21 THRU 1/3/19:
2:45, 5:30 & 8:15pm

(NO 2:45 show on Xmas 12/25)

Tightwad Tuesday film for Christmas Day, 12/25 is in RED - All tickets: \$5

MARY POPPINS RETURNS

(PG) 2 hrs 10 mins

SHOWTIMES FOR 12/21 THRU 1/3/19:
1:45, 4:45 & 7:45pm

(NO 1:45 show on Xmas 12/25)

Willits Weekly's
Puzzle Page

Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword

		8			4		9
2	1				6		7
		3				2	
				9			4
6			4	1			
	5					3	1
		2			7		8
							4
9			3				6

Level: Intermediate



HOW TO
SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

NEW YEAR WORD SEARCH

E	F	G	L	X	G	S	R	E	N	C	S	E	I	T	A	P	N
C	N	D	W	O	O	Y	A	O	J	F	A	N	M	A	L	L	O
N	T	A	K	S	D	I	C	T	I	N	A	T	E	L	F	O	D
T	E	Y	D	G	T	L	A	C	U	R	N	G	A	P	M	A	H
M	S	L	E	I	B	U	C	R	A	O	L	H	B	E	S	T	C
O	R	I	V	F	D	I	K	E	A	N	R	T	E	A	I	P	U
A	K	E	V	R	F	D	I	K	E	A	N	R	T	E	A	I	P
R	D	R	E	S	A	J	S	B	T	A	F	R	C	A	D	W	X
Y	T	B	Y	C	N	V	O	C	L	I	J	R	S	A	H	E	R
T	T	H	R	P	N	J	L	F	A	T	O	C	R	Y	O	B	E
A	P	O	W	J	U	X	U	T	O	T	D	J	N	C	A	B	I
I	C	A	H	S	A	D	T	O	E	S	S	R	S	I	E	M	Y
V	I	W	O	M	L	O	I	W	S	V	O	P	H	A	M	Y	H
I	J	I	G	M	V	S	O	U	T	W	J	G	N	I	G	N	I
V	A	C	A	T	I	O	N	Y	D	N	H	B	W	P	T	A	X
H	Y	A	R	S	I	R	E	V	I	N	A	D	E	C	E	M	B

ADVANCEMENT	CONFETTI	FAMILY	PARTIES
ANNIVERSARY	CONTEMPORARY	FISCAL	PHYSICAL
ANNUAL	COUNTDOWN	FRIENDS	PREMIER
BALLOONS	CROWD	HOLIDAY	RESOLUTION
BIRTHDAY	CURRENT	JANUARY	REVELRY
CALENDAR	DATE	KISS	SINGING
CELEBRATION	DECEMBER	LATEST	TAXES
CHAMPAGNE	DECORATIONS	NEW	VACATION
CHEERS			YEAR

		1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9
	10	11					12				13
	14						15				16
18							19			20	21
22				23			24			25	
26				27			28			29	30
		31	32				33			34	
35	36						37				
38					39		40				
41				42	43		44			45	46
48			49		50		51				52
53				54			55				56
57				58			59			60	61
	63	64					65				
		66					67				

CLUES ACROSS

- Pairs
- Try to gain favor
- Bloodsucking African fly
- Preserve a dead body
- Philly delicacy
- Early multimedia
- Agency
- Teenagers' test
- Net
- Computer memory
- Drove fast
- Expression of annoyance
- Google certification
- A way to caress
- Charles S. Dutton sitcom
- OJ's judge
- Pack up
- Croc hunter
- Extract
- Leg parts
- Herbal tea
- Humans have 10
- Autonomic nervous system
- Swiss river
- Paddle

CLUES DOWN

- Speedy ballplayer Gordon
- Utah athlete
- Former CIA
- Teeter totter
- Sporting dog
- Woman (French)
- Greek sophist
- Gathered leaves
- Milliliter
- African nation
- In a brazen way
- Aquatic mammal

- Pouch
- Denies
- Germany
- Brightness
- Cooll
- Department of Defense
- Indian city
- 'Our Betters' director
- Ice cream brand
- Midway between north and northeast
- Postage are one type
- Balearic island
- Body part
- Scotland's longest river
- Where rafters go
- Type of Kia
- Where monks live
- UK TV station
- A way to raise an objection
- Sunscreen rating
- Unfriendly
- Catch
- Panthers' QB
- Self
- Type of sister
- Alright

WILLITS POLICE DEPARTMENT
POLICE LOG

December 10 to December 16

By Danya Davis, Willits Weekly

The officers of the Willits Police Department handled 188 incidents in this seven-day reporting period.

Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

December 10

8:28 am: Officers initiated a burglary investigation in the 300 block of South Main Street.
11:00 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1700 block of South Main Street.
2:22 pm: Officers responded to a report of a suspicious person in the 100 block of East Commercial Street.
3:20 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity near the intersection of Margie Drive and Bonnie Lane.

3:22 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 200 block of North Main Street.
7:41 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 800 block of South Main Street.

8:10 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 800 block of South Main Street.
9:14 pm: Officers initiated a vehicle theft investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

9:02 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 700 block of South Main Street.

9:10 pm: HOLMES, Daniel Ray Sr. (46) of Ukiah was contacted in the 100 block of Marcela Drive following a disturbance. He was arrested pursuant to 415 (2) PC (Disturbing the Peace) and on misdemeanor charges of failure to appear.

9:37 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 200 block of South Main Street.

3:14 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 700 block of South Main Street.

6:11 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of East San Francisco Avenue and issued a warning.
8:07 pm: Officers initiated a fraud investigation in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

December 11

9:07 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1100 block of Poplar Avenue.

9:37 am: Officers responded to a report of a suspicious vehicle near the intersection of Baechtel Road and South Main Street.

9:54 am: Officers initiated a fraud

investigation in the 100 block of Alder Court.

1:20 pm: Officers responded to a report of an assault in the 100 block of East Commercial Street.

9:25 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

December 13

1:24 pm: Officers initiated a fraud investigation in the 100 block of East Commercial Street.

5:34 pm: Officers initiated a missing person investigation in the 100 block of Holly Street.

9:02 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 700 block of South Main Street.

9:10 pm: HOLMES, Daniel Ray Sr. (46) of Ukiah was contacted in the 100 block of Marcela Drive following a disturbance. He was arrested pursuant to 415 (2) PC (Disturbing the Peace) and on misdemeanor charges of failure to appear.

December 14

10:59 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

3:40 pm: Officers responded to a report of harassment in the 200 block of South Lenore Avenue.

5:37 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 100 block of East Commercial Street.

6:04 pm: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 100 block of Alder Court.

December 15

10:13 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1100 block of Locust Street.

12:43 pm: Officers responded to a report of an assault in the 100 block of East Commercial Street.

6:20 pm: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 100 block of North Street.

11:09 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance near the intersection of School Street and Wood Street.

Read the rest of WPD Over on page 13

LITTLE LAKE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

FIRE CALLS

December 11 to December 16

by LLFD Training Chief Eric Alvarez

12-11-18 (Highway 101, mile marker 41)

Vehicle fire: Little Lake Fire responded to a reported vehicle fire. Upon arrival it appeared to be a small fire in the engine compartment. LLFD units at scene extinguished the fire, while other fire personnel controlled traffic. 9 firefighters responded for service.

12-11-18 (Highway 20, mile marker 23)

Vehicle accident: Little Lake Fire responded to a reported traffic accident, but was canceled by fire units at scene. 8 firefighters responded for service.

12-12-18 (Main Street)

Fire: Little Lake Fire responded to a reported structure fire. Upon arrival the wooden window frame was viewed to be on fire in the lower corner. The fire was extinguished, and fire personnel checked for fire extension. No extension was found. 11 firefighters responded for service.

12-13-18 (Oak Street)

Medical call: Little Lake Fire responded to a reported CPR in progress. Upon arrival it was determined to be a patient having seizures. The medical unit at scene packaged and loaded patient for transport. 2 firefighters responded for service.

12-14-18 (Sherwood Road)

Medical call: Little Lake Fire responded to a lift assist. Fire assisted the patient back into bed. 5 firefighters responded for service.

12-14-18 (Highway 101, mile marker 40)

Traffic accident: Little Lake Fire responded to a reported vehicle into the k-rail. Upon arrival, LLFD checked the vehicle for fluid leakage as well as provided traffic control. 8 firefighters responded for service.

12-14-18 (on-ramp to Highway 101 south)

Vehicle accident: Little Lake Fire responded to a reported vehicle rollover. Upon arrival the subject self-extricated and was cleared by medical staff at scene. 8 firefighters responded for service.

12-15-18 (Poplar Avenue)

Assist: Little Lake Fire assisted the medic unit with entry to the residence. 6 firefighters responded for service.

12-16-18 (Highway 101, mile marker 42)

Vehicle accident: Little Lake Fire responded to a reported two-vehicle traffic accident. Three occupants were transported to Howard Memorial Hospital via ambulance. Fire provided traffic control. 7 firefighters responded for service.



From far left: Bobbie Nunez sold candy Christmas trains she'd made herself. Amber and Catrenica offered a wide variety of PartyLite Christmas candles. Kim DuFour, left, with her crochet hook and young helper Kimi DeFour Sanchez. This table featured succulent gardens and quartz crystals.

Photos by Jennifer Poole



Native Crafts

First annual Sherwood Valley Christmas fair hosted vendors offering traditional and modern wares

Native American jewelry, medicine pouches, beaded baby moccasins, homemade jam and salsa, wreaths and ornaments; blankets; crocheted items, "Native" T-shirts, succulent gardens, handmade soaps, and candles were among the goods on display at the first annual Sherwood Valley Christmas Crafts Fair.

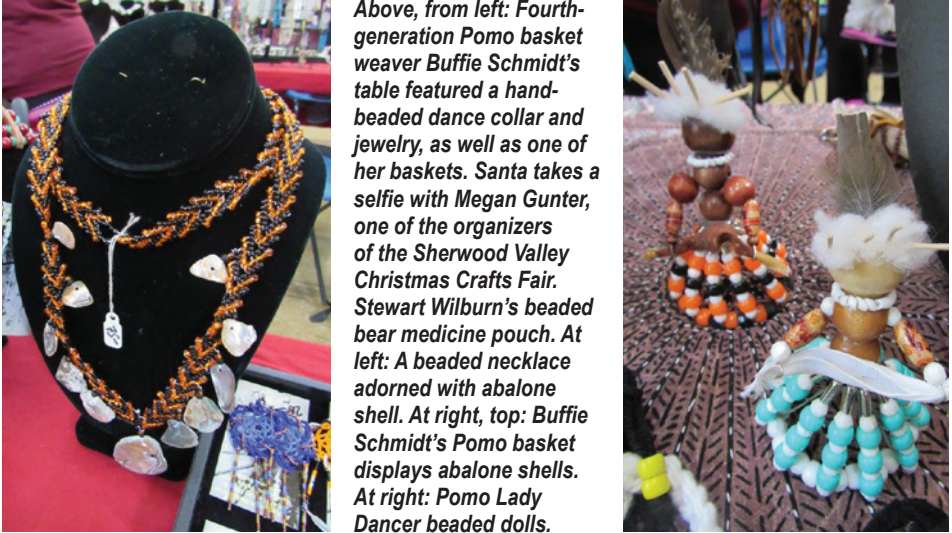
The fair at the Willits Community Center on December 1 featured more than 20 vendors. Santa Claus set up at the corner of Commercial and Main streets to wave passersby down to the fair.

"The elders wanted to do it," explained Megan Gunter of the Sherwood Valley Food Program, who helped organize the show. Michael Knight, chair of the Sherwood Valley Tribe of Pomo Indians, gave Gunter full credit for the successful event: "She made the first efforts, and is responsible for putting this on."

Gunter says she's definitely inspired to put another Christmas crafts fair next year, and to plan additional health educational events for 2019, too.

One very affordable and cute little gift was a Christmas train crafted out of wrapped candy by one of the younger vendors, Bobbie Nunez. Amber and Catrenica featured a wide variety of PartyLite Candles, in Christmas themes.
More of an heirloom gift were the beaded baby moccasins made by Wailaki/Tolowa/Pomo/Wintu bead artist Stuart Wilburn from Willits. In pairs of white and tan, the soft deerskin booties are a special gift for any young parents and their child – or to keep in a glass box on the shelf.

Read the rest of Sherwood Over on Page 13



WISHING YOU
a Healthy
HOLIDAY SEASON

AND A
Happy New Year.

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From the Sparetime family
to yours

Merry Christmas!

We will close at
**6pm Dec. 22nd and
reopen at 8am Jan. 2nd**

Have a fun & safe holiday!

SPARETIME
—GARDEN CENTER—

208 E. San Francisco Ave. Willits, CA. 95490 (707)459-6791

Reindeer Games Tokens

INGREDIENTS

About 40 REESE'S Peanut Butter Cups Miniatures or 12 (0.75 oz. each) REESE'S Peanut Butter Cups, quartered

1/2 cup butter or margarine (1 stick), softened

1/2 cup granulated sugar

1/2 cup light brown sugar packed

1/2 cup REESE'S Creamy Peanut Butter

1 egg

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour

3/4 teaspoon baking soda

1/2 teaspoon salt

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oven to 375°F. Remove wrappers from candies. Line small muffin cups (1-3/4 inches in diameter) with paper bake cups.
2. Beat butter, brown sugar, granulated sugar, peanut butter, egg and vanilla until light and fluffy in large bowl. Stir together flour, baking soda and salt; add to butter mixture, beating until well blended. Shape dough into 1-inch balls; place one in each prepared muffin cup. Do not flatten.
3. Bake 10 to 12 minutes until puffed and lightly browned; remove from oven. Immediately press peanut butter cup or piece onto each cookie. Cool completely in muffin pan. About 3-1/2 dozen cookies.

Decorate mini M&Ms and sprinkles on top

Willits Weekly Cookie Party Winning Recipes 2018

"Reindeer Games Tokens" entered by Shawna Perry Handschug won "Best Decorated"

"Rainbow Cookies" entered by Elizabeth Hart won "People's Choice"

"Ooey Gooley Rocky Road Cookies" entered by Alicia Logan won "Judge's Choice"

Thank you to all who baked, tasted and voted! Happy Holidays!

Rainbow Cookies

Recipe courtesy of Sophie Brickman, San Francisco Chronicle

Makes about 35 bar cookies, or a 9-by 6 1/2-inch layer cake

For cookies, follow the recipe as is. For a cake, assemble it up to the point where you're about to frost it, cut it in half, put one half on top of the other, then frost.

- 12 ounces (3 sticks) butter, room temperature, cut into pieces
- 1 cup sugar
- 5 large eggs, separated
- 10 ounces almond paste, roughly chopped
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- Red, green and yellow food coloring
- 12 ounces semisweet chocolate
- 1/2 cup heavy cream, for cake version only
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup seedless raspberry jam
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup apricot preserves

Instructions: Preheat the oven to 350°. Butter and lightly flour three 9-by 13-inch baking pans (disposable is fine). Line each with parchment or wax paper, then butter and flour the base again.

In the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream the butter, sugar, egg yolks and almond paste until fluffy, about 5 minutes, stopping occasionally to scrape down the sides of the bowl. Make sure everything is incorporated, and there are no chunks of almond paste. (Or, whisk together the mixture by hand or an egg beater.)

In another bowl, combine the flour, salt and baking powder. With the mixer running on low speed, add the flour mixture to the bowl in batches, scraping

Ooey Gooley Rocky Road Cookies

Flourless chocolate cookies are chewy and delicious, and studded with all the components of Rocky Road: toasted almonds, marshmallows, and chocolate chips!

Prep Time 10 minutes

Cook Time 12 minutes

Total Time 22 minutes

Servings 24


Calories 161kcal

Ingredients

- 3 cups powdered sugar
- 2/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 3 extra large egg whites
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- 2 cups semisweet chocolate chips
- 2.5 oz sliced almonds toasted
- 1 cup mini marshmallows

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F, and line two sheet pans with parchment paper.
2. In a large bowl, sift together the powdered sugar and cocoa powder. Whisk in the salt. Add the egg whites and vanilla and whisk until combined. Stir in the chocolate chips and almonds.
3. Use a [disher](#) to portion out small mounds on to the parchment paper, then top each cookie with 4-5 marshmallows. Pop into the freezer for 5 minutes to chill slightly (this prevents them from spreading too much in the oven).
4. Bake for 12-13 minutes until the marshmallows are golden brown. Let the cookies sit on the paper for a few minutes to set, before moving them to a wire rack to cool. Enjoy!!!



Above: People clap along to the Christmas melodies played by the jazz quartet led by Dorian May. Above, right: Dorian May provides the beats to this percussion-only version of "Little Drummer Boy," sung by Sharon Garner. At right, from left: Francis Vanek delivers soulful notes on his saxophone. Dorothea May concentrates as she plays the stand-up bass. Dorian May talks about jazz beats.

Christmas Jazz

Quartet led by Dorian May makes holiday tunes their own at St. Francis in the Redwoods concert

"We never know what's going to happen," Dorian May told the audience.

What happened was an almost-perfect blending of virtuosity, individual styles, and sweet notes. The enthusiastically appreciative audience who braved the elements to hear the concert at the Saint Francis of the Redwoods were rewarded with an evening of Christmas melodies and improvised jazz.

Normally billed as the Dorian May Trio, this amorphous congregation of an often-changing lineup of expert musicians was a quartet on this occasion. Dorian May arranged the music and played piano; his wife, Dorothea, accompanied on bass; Francis Vanek played sax; and Sharon Garner added the vocals.

"We all play jazz," continued May. "What happens is that we have a loose idea of what we're going to play, but it's never the same, and we interpret it differently each time. We use a chart to give us a loose structure that has a melody line and chords."

From that loose outline, they seemed to perform as one instrument with a fluidity of varying sounds. The theme of the evening was Christmas music, but that seemed


consequential only in the familiarity with the basic melodies. The holiday tunes were a taking off point from which the quartet could both play with the audience's expectations and at the same time, create new directions, diving in and out of that familiarity, touching it and soaring to immediate and improvised expression.

Bill Bruneau of Saint Francis of the Redwoods has had a dream of creating a venue for a once-a-month concert at the church, which has excellent acoustics and an amiable, light interior, adding an element of relaxed ambiance to the music. The December 16 event was the first of such concerts, to be followed in January by the duo of Greg Schindel, also known as the Train Singer, and Malakai Schindel, his multi-talented son.

If successful, there will be more musical events at this venue, the receipts of which benefit Willits Daily Bread, which feeds people healthy, tasty dinners Monday through Thursday at the old adjunct to the church, 66 East Commercial Street.

Willits Daily Bread, according to Sally Rohlicek, who spoke at the concert, has served 8,495 people in just the last year. Any money that is gathered by the concerts


Read the rest of [Jazz](#) Over on Page 13




At left: Dorothea May (bass), Dorian May (piano), Sharon Garner (vocals), and Francis Vanek (tenor sax) prepare to perform for the crowd gathered at Saint Francis in the Redwoods.

Below: Dorian May adds some percussion as Francis Vanek and Dorothea May play along.

Photos by Mathew Caine





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January 17 & 18, 2019

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Willits Weekly's CHRISTMAS CALENDAR

December 20

WEEKDAY HOLIDAY SALES - NOW THRU CHRISTMAS EVE
15% OFF TOYS & GIFTS AND 20% OFF CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR

30% OFF TOYS & PUZZLES




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December 21

WEEKDAY HOLIDAY SALES - NOW THRU CHRISTMAS EVE
15% OFF TOYS & GIFTS AND 20% OFF CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR

30% OFF TOWELS, BLANKETS & COOKWEAR




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December 22

WEEKDAY HOLIDAY SALES - NOW THRU CHRISTMAS EVE
15% OFF TOYS & GIFTS AND 20% OFF CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR

30% OFF CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR 25% OFF TOYS & GIFTS




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December 23

WEEKDAY HOLIDAY SALES - NOW THRU CHRISTMAS EVE
15% OFF TOYS & GIFTS AND 20% OFF CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR

30% OFF CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR 25% OFF TOYS & GIFTS




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December 24

WEEKDAY HOLIDAY SALES - NOW THRU CHRISTMAS EVE
15% OFF TOYS & GIFTS AND 20% OFF CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR

30% OFF CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR 25% OFF TOYS & GIFTS



J.D. REDHOUSE & COMPANY
A LOCALLY OWNED MERCANTILE
919 South Main Street Downtown Willits 707-459-1914

Willits Weekly

The locally owned newspaper!

REMINDER:

December 20, 2018
will be our last edition
of the year, and we will
resume printing on
January 10, 2019

Pg. 6 Phone: 707-459-2633, 707-972-7047 Email: willitsweekly@gmail.com Mail: P.O. Box 1698, Willits, CA 95490 Willits Weekly | December 20, 2018

Willits Weekly | December 20, 2018 Phone: 707-459-2633, 707-972-7047 Email: willitsweekly@gmail.com Mail: P.O. Box 1698, Willits, CA 95490 Pg. 7

Thursday, December 20

Twelve Days of Christmas Specials: Start looking for fun store deals daily leading up to Christmas. Participating stores: Willits Power, Moon Lady, Monkey Wrench, Buttercups, Off the Cuff, J.D. Redhouse, Re-Evolution, Cat's Meow, Mazahar, Tango, Mirror, Mirror, The Book Juggler, and more. Check out each store's Facebook and Instagram for details. "Support the businesses in your community by shopping locally this holiday season."

Willits Farmers Market: The market is now indoors at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street for the winter, Thursday, December 20, 3 to 5:30 pm. Winter veggies, local meats, sausage and eggs, local grains, and savory and sweet baked goods, including handcrafted bread. More: gift items, dog treats, jams and jellies and savory preserves, olive oil and balsamic vinegar, fair trade chocolates, Willits-roasted coffee, tea, fire cider, crafts, knitted goods and jewelry, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more. This Thursday expect Christmas jazz by Dorian May, wreaths made to order, holiday crafts and treats of all sorts. This is the last market of the year. The market will be closed for the holidays until Thursday, January 3.

Holiday Lights Bike Ride: "Willits, let's use the new bike lanes downtown! Light up your bikes and join us on a leisurely ride around downtown and check out holiday light displays. All ages encouraged, bring lights and helmets." Thursday, December 20, 6 pm. Meet at Willits City Park. Information: 467-3217. Facebook: WalkBikeMendocino.

A Gift of Vintage Stories: "A Gift of Vintage Stories" is "An Evening of Holiday Classic Tales," Thursday, December 20, 7 to 8 pm, at the Mendocino County Museum. Create a magical holiday memory with your loved ones. Gather friends, family, and neighbors to experience beloved holiday tales like "The Gift of the Magi" and "A Child's Christmas in Wales" read by performing artists Linda Pack and R. Bobby. Free to the public at the Mendocino County Museum, 400 East Commercial Street. "Tis the Season to gather together and listen to holiday stories!"

Thursday Twinkle Sip & Shop: Participating Main Street stores open until 8 pm every Thursday night during holiday season, with special deals and drinks. Look for lit-up Mason jars. Check downtown merchants' Facebook and Instagram pages for details.

Friday, December 21

Happy first day of winter!

Senior Holiday Center Bake Sale: homemade Christmas goodies at the Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road, Friday, December 21. 8 am until gone! While you're there, check out the Jim Beam bottle full of coins – guess the total amount of money and win \$400! Tickets are \$3 each or two for \$5. The bottle was generously donated by Meals on Wheels driver, Michael McEnnerney. Winner will be announced Friday, December 21. The money in the bottle over the \$400 will go to support the Senior Center. Info: 459-6826.

21st Annual Grade Two Holiday Performance: Brookside Elementary School, 1277 Blosser Lane. Friday, December 21, enter at 10 am, program begins at 10:15 am in the cafeteria.

Tubby Tunes Holiday Music Massacre radio show: The 30th Annual Tubby Tunes Holiday Music Massacre radio show by Long John will never be mistaken for a traditional Xmas music show ... no Bing Crosby, Perry Como, or Nat King Cole. New songs are added to the broadcast every year. Friday, December 21, 3 to 5 pm, Fat 99 KPHT-LP, 99.9 FM, Laytonville. Monday, December 24, 3 to 5 pm, KMUD-FM, www.KMUD.org, worldwide. (The KMUD broadcast can be heard for two weeks afterward by going to kmud.org and navigating to the "Archives" for December 24, 3 to 5

pm).

24th Annual Winter Solstice Spiral Dance: Friday, December 21, 7 pm. "Welcome the Sun's return with our traditional storytelling of a midwinter tale, candle lighting, and song, followed by the Spiral Dance. The spark of yule turns our hearts to gratitude in the cold & dark. Let us celebrate our interconnectedness and relationship to all Beings, the cycles and seasons." A benefit for the Grange. Doors open at 6:45 pm. Sliding scale donation \$5 to \$10, kids free. Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street.

New Year's Eve Dance Party
December 31

The One Tribe Collective is having "A New Year's Eve Dance Party" at the Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street on Monday, December 31. Local DJs and live music, laser and light show, food by Zocalo Collective, OneTribe Elixir Bar, prize drawings, local arts and craft vendors, live painting, bodywork, tarot readings, an electric and acoustical soundscape journey, late night sound healing, and more. Come dance in the New Year! All ages. Doors open at 7 pm, music at 8 pm. \$15 at the door, but no one is turned away. Any who wish to volunteer as trade for entry, please email onetribecollectivemendo@gmail.com.

Celebrate Winter Solstice 2018
Spiral Dance



our Mid-Winter tale: The Quiltmaker's Gift

Friday, December 21st
at the Little Lake Grange
291 School Street, Willits
7:00 pm

plus: drums, songs, poems, candles, Spiral Dance!
donation appreciated

What's Happening Around Town



Shanachie Pub: Joe Tucky & Friends, Friday, December 21, 9 pm. "Joe from Gypsy Thorns will play folk mixed with Southern blue rock and a good dash of Appalachian Soul." Shanachie Pub, 50B South Main Street.

Saturday, December 22

Holiday Shopping Bazaar: Leopold Collective, 109 North Main Street (across from Scoops), offers a chance to enjoy music, food and crafts and to do your holiday shopping. Saturday, December 22, 11 am to 6:30 pm. Delicious treats and refreshments by ToLove Cookery. Live DJ. Info and to reserve vending spaces: 240-477-0629.

WHS Travel Club Package Wrapping: The Willits High School Art and Travel Group will be wrapping presents to earn money for their upcoming trip to Italy and Greece, at Mazahar, 38 South Main Street. Saturday, December 22 and Sunday, December 23, 12 to 5 pm.

Shanachie Pub: Forrest & Friends: Forrest Glycer of Schindig and friends Malakai Schindel, Sarah Rose, Hope, Lhasa and Billie Kerr come together for a night of heartfelt original and familiar folk Americana songs. Saturday, December 22, 8 pm. Shanachie Pub, 50B South Main Street.

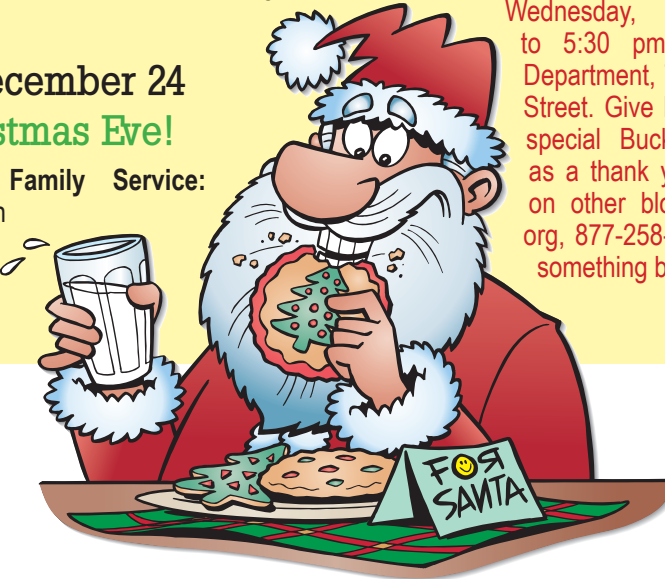


Sunday, December 23

WHS Travel Club Package Wrapping: at Mazahar, 38 South Main Street. See December 22 listing for details.

Monday, December 24
Merry Christmas Eve!

Christmas Eve Family Service: Saint Francis in the Redwoods Episcopal Church, at the



Senior Center Lunch

Week of December 24 through December 28

Monday: Chicken Enchiladas
Tuesday: Closed on Christmas Day
Wednesday: Teriyaki Chicken Sandwich Crispy with Pineapple
Thursday: Gyros (Lamb)
Friday: Birthday Turkey Dinner

New Year's Day Yoga Celebration 2019

January 1

Free classes all day. 45-minute "New Year's Day Resolution" yoga and movement classes, back to back. "Let's begin 2019 together with active and peaceful engagement of our bodies, our minds, and our community. Come celebrate Our Yoga Center's 7th year anniversary!"

Large Studio Schedule: 9 am Gentle Hatha Yoga - Emmy Good; 10 am Iyengar Yoga (Detox) - Jeff Brunner; 11 am Movement - Sandy Metzler; 12 am Kundalini - Melissa Casanova; 1 pm Family Yoga - Erin Dominy; 2 pm Warm Vinyasa Yoga - Erin Dominy; 3 pm Hot Vinyasa - Eryn Brunner; 4 pm Warm Vinyasa Yoga - Lauren Kitover, 5pm Restorative Yoga - Erin & Lauren. Small Studio Schedule: 11 am Chair Yoga - Jeff Brunner; 12 am Rope Yoga - Jeff Brunner. Our Yoga Center, 1726 South Main Street. Info: 707-841-6100, www.ouryogacenter.com

Shanachie Pub New Year's Eve Party
December 31

The return of Soulevity, five-piece reggae-rock-ska-punk-metal-hip hop band featuring former members of Tubestack Jones, Rhyme Related and others. Joining Soulevity is Some of the Truest, a local hip hop group that will make you dance while opening your mind with their lyrical flow. Also playing is special guest Blair Blaze, drummer and frontman, formerly of Tubestack Jones, Rhyme Related, Dumb Struck Genius, Outlaws of the Illwits and Funkacillin and now with House of Mary. Monday, December 31. Shanachie Pub, 50B South Main Street.

Thursday, December 27

"The Cannabis Hour": "Ending 2018 on a High Note?" Was the year 2018 a good one for Mendocino County cannabis cultivators? Will 2019 bring positive outcomes for cultivators, producers and the county's economy? Cannabis Hour host Jane Fletcher will announce is that in February 2019 she's turning the show over to permitted cultivator Jenn Procacci of Covelo. Cannabis activist Corinne Powell of Ukiah will join Jane and Jenn for the year-end review and 2019 forecast. Thursday, December 27, 11 am on KZYX Radio, 91.5-FM. Find the archived show at http://jukebox.kzyx.org/.



Tuesday, December 25
Merry Christmas!

Tightwad Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre: All 2D movies that are in their second week are \$5 on Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre for all ages, all showings. This week's Tightwad movie is: "Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse." 5:30 and 8:15 pm shows only on Christmas Day; no 2:45 pm show. For showtimes: www.noyotheatre.com. 57 East Commercial Street. 459-6696.

Wednesday, December 26, 1 to 5:30 pm, Little Lake Fire Department, 74 East Commercial Street. Give blood and receive a special Bucket Brigade T-Shirt as a thank you. For information on other blood drives: vitalant.org, 877-258-4825. "Be a part of something bigger than yourself."

Wednesday, December 26, 1 to 5:30 pm, Little Lake Fire Department, 74 East Commercial Street. Give blood and receive a special Bucket Brigade T-Shirt as a thank you. For information on other blood drives: vitalant.org, 877-258-4825. "Be a part of something bigger than yourself."

Blood Drive Challenge: The 13th Annual Bucket Brigade Blood Drive Challenge.

Wednesday, December 26, 1 to 5:30 pm, Little Lake Fire Department, 74 East Commercial Street. Give blood and receive a special Bucket Brigade T-Shirt as a thank you. For information on other blood drives: vitalant.org, 877-258-4825. "Be a part of something bigger than yourself."



Willits Artwalk Night
January 5

Four local galleries participate in an artwalk in the Commercial and Main Street area. Openings at the Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street (Loren Madsen and Linda MacDonald); Brickhouse Coffee, 3 South Main Street (Julie Bullock); Re-Evolution, 15 West Mendocino Avenue (Marta Alonzo); and Leopold Collective, 109 North Main Street (TBA). Take a walk, enjoy some excellent artworks, support the arts in Willits.



AT THE MOVIES



'Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse'

The Story: Animated Spider-Man adventure, including traditional Spider-type humor, plus major twists. Miles Morales, the non-Peter Parker Spider-Man, must contend with being bitten by a radioactive spider. And then: the monstrous muscled thug Kingpin cracks open the Multiverse. The walls between parallel dimensions are breaking! Brooklyn's falling apart! The Brooklyn Bridge is crystallizing! Whatta disaster! We're all doomed! But then: a number of alt-Spideys show up to save the day! (No, Dan, that's Mighty Mouse, you idiot!) They show up to help Miles Morales, and more importantly ... Save The World!

My Thoughts: This is a fine animated flick. It's witty. It's brilliantly drawn. The pace is quick, not crazy. The plot twists are (omigawd!) real twists. Also, a solid high five! and huzzah! for the voice actors who sound like they are reading out loud from a Marvel comic book ... which is how they should sound! And (my goodness!) I even agreed with Rotten Tomatoes who gives it 97 percent "Fresh"! So count my exclamation points! This flick is a keeper.

Parents: This movie is fine for kids, though probably too complex for your little ones. My guess is 8-year-olds and up. It has the positive character messages of courage, constancy, loyalty, being true to your word, and being a hero in your own life, with or without superpowers.

Willitsian Daniel Essman prefers his reality attenuated by the wisdom of the imagination.



Senior Center Holiday Raffle

Guess the amount of money in the Jim Beam Bottle and win \$400 to use on your holiday shopping. Tickets are \$3 each or 2 for \$5. Tickets available at the Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. The bottle was generously donated by Meals on Wheels driver, Michael McEnnerney. Winner will be announced Friday, December 21. The money in the bottle over the \$400 will go to support the Senior Center.



Speaker Series: 'Autism Basics'
January 8

Avenues to Wellness speaker series presents, "Autism Basics" by Michela Fignini Myers, M.Ed. Tuesday January 8, 5:30 to 7 pm, Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. Free, donations appreciated. An introduction to Autism Spectrum Disorder, covering the main characteristics of children and individuals with ASD, as well as resources for effective strategies.

Michela Fignini-Myers is a special education teacher who has been in the field since 1997. She is a board-certified behavioral analyst, M.Ed., in Special Education. Avenues to Wellness is a community-based wellness program of the Frank R. Howard Foundation. They offer a speaker series the first Tuesday of the month at the Willits Center for the Arts. Visit: avenueswellness.org for an online archive of past events. Info: 456-9676.

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"Believe": Alcohol Ink paintings by Julie Bullock
January 5

"Julie Bullock is an Alcohol Ink artist from Redding. She is bringing her unique glass art to Brickhouse Coffee. Each painting is a one of a kind, as she does not offer prints of any of her original paintings. She uses a unique technique where she lights the inks on fire on the glass as a base and then adds details. She is an intuitive artist, who never really knows what she is going to paint prior to painting. She will be in Willits for the opening reception, Saturday, January 5, 6 to 9 pm. More info: www.facebook.com/DbDesigns17, instagram.com/dbdesigns17.



Above: Soroptimists Loraine Patton, left, Barbara O'Rear and Susan Soss volunteered for the Salvation Army in front of the Willits Safeway on December 13. "We had a great time ringing the bells," said Soroptimist Vicki Ham, who took the picture.



Students at Gateway Gymnastics show off their gym T-shirts at the 20th anniversary celebration at the Rec Grove earlier this year.

Photo by Cathy Warren



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Photo by Vicki Ham

Ringing Bells

Get your free listing in the 2019 Soroptimist phone book – deadline December 31

The Willits Soroptimists remind Willits residents, businesses and community organizations that it's their "last chance" to submit or update their free phone listings for the 2019 edition of the annual Community Telephone Directory. There is no charge for the listings, and the phone book includes cell phone as well as landline listings.

Send name(s), phone number(s), and address if desired, to willitsphonebook@gmail.com before December 31. For information about advertising opportunities in the phone book, contact Loraine Patton at willitsphonebook@gmail.com.

Soroptimist International's mission is to improve the lives of women and girls, in local communities and throughout the world. Proceeds from the phone book are used to help support scholarships given to local women and girls every year by the Soroptimist International Willits chapter.

The Willits club meets on the second and third Tuesday of the month, at noon at Old Mission Pizza in the Evergreen Plaza.

Visit "Soroptimist International Willits" on Facebook; or contact the club at P.O. Box 311, Willits, CA 95490, or siwillits@soroptimist.net.

– Jennifer Poole

20 years at Gateway Gymnastics

Congratulations to Gateway Gymnastics, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. Owner and coach Catherine Warren started Gateway in 1998, and has taught close to 4,000 Willits kids about gymnastics, which "builds confidence, strength and flexibility," she says. "I'm teaching my students' kids these days. They like to look at their parents' photos on the wall."

Gateway Gymnastics is located at 275 Franklin Avenue, and will start a new session on January 8 which runs through May. Students may enroll anytime throughout the year, and drop-ins are OK when space is available. Coach Warren offers four levels of gymnastics: Parent/Tot (for 1- to 2-year-olds and parents); Tiny Tumblers (age 3 to 5); Beginning (5 years+) and Intermediate.

Call 459-3855 for more information.

James 'Jim' Marill

James Jay Marill was born October 27, 1951, in Los Angeles, to Arthur and Shirley Marill. As a child, Jim rode his bicycle all over town and sold newspapers on a downtown corner. He briefly attended CSU Northridge and UC Davis.

As he went looking for his life's calling, he found work doing stream restoration in Laytonville, working as a short order cook, taxi driver, and baker. A natural computer and tech whiz, he went to work developing the Video Department at the County Office of Education, making educational videos.

He and Linda Posner married in the early 1980s bringing their beloved daughter Pearl into the world. Being a dad was a calling he recognized as his biggest guide, challenge, and delight. They divorced, but he and Linda continued to work together as parents and in theatre productions over the years.

Realizing that he was more a people person than a techie, when Willits Community Services offered him the job of Executive Director Jim jumped in. At the helm for all together twenty-three years, he maintained wonderful and dedicated support staff, for whom he was fiercely protective, and community volunteers, to whom he was ever grateful. He was heartened by the ongoing support of his Board members. Loving the "schmooze-fests," as he called them, Jim created and nurtured connections with community members. He tirelessly served on the Mendocino County Clinic Board. This year, though very ill, he insisted on overseeing the annual WCS Thanksgiving dinner, which fed 515 people.

Ten years ago Jim made a spiritual journey that took him away from Willits. When he returned a few years later to Willits and to WCS, he reflected that it wasn't so much what he was doing professionally but how he was doing it. Meeting while he was holding a giant bag of carrots at Safeway, Melinda Clarke recognized a spiritual fellow traveler, and asked him out for a date. Jim and Melinda married in June 2015, and spent some beautiful years talking about everything, laughing, cooking, and watching the sky together, before his health challenges eventually swept him up into star land.

Jim loved music and singing, with Emandal Chorale for over twenty years, and as a student of Vox Mundi, a Brazilian approach to sacred voice. Jim loved playing board games with friends, and making others laugh. He was deeply touched by the enormous outpouring of love and support he received these past years. We will remember him as a vital, creative, loving, warm, kind man of strength and presence. We will miss him terribly. He leaves his beloved daughter Pearl, his loving wife, Melinda, sister Barb, brother Rick, his dear friend Linda, numerous nieces and nephews and their children, and inherited grandchildren.

A Memorial Service is planned for Saturday, January 12, from 1 to 4 pm, at the Little Lake Grange. Jim has belonged to us all, and all are welcome to join in his life's honoring. Donations in Jim's name can be made to Willits Community Services and Food Bank, 229 East San Francisco Avenue, Willits, CA 95490.

COLUMN | Health Matters

Knowing your limits with alcohol

By Mario Espindola, MD, Family Medicine

We live in a beautiful county where many people's livelihoods are tied to viticulture and the making of wine. We also entertain tourists from miles away who come to sample the wonderful wine of Mendocino County. In a community like ours where the economic base is so closely tied to an alcoholic beverage, it is extra important to know where the line is between healthy, social drinking and unhealthy drinking.

Wine and other alcoholic drinks are not inherently bad. In fact, some scientific studies show that in small doses, red wine may provide some health benefits; specifically, that antioxidants such as flavonoids or a substance called resveratrol may protect the lining of blood vessels in your heart.

Mayo Clinic says the resveratrol found in red wine might help prevent damage to blood vessels, reduce low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol – the "bad" cholesterol – and prevent blood clots, but notes that more research is needed.

For people who drink in moderation, the negative side effects of alcohol are usually minimal. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism defines low-risk drinking for women as no more than three drinks on any single day and no more than seven drinks per week. For men, it is defined as no more than four drinks on any single day and no more than 14 drinks per week. A standard drink can be a 12-ounce beer which is usually 5 percent alcohol, a 5-ounce glass of wine which is usually 12 percent alcohol, or a 1.5-ounce drink of distilled spirits which is usually about 40 percent alcohol.

When people drink more than NIAAA's low-risk limits, health problems arise. Even if you stay within the limits, you increase your carbohydrate and calorie intake every time you drink. You may also be increasing your blood pressure and your triglycerides (a type of fat). So if you struggle to maintain a healthy weight or are on blood pressure medication, reducing your alcohol intake is a good idea.

It is also important to remember that certain people should avoid alcohol completely, including the following:

- Those who plan to drive a vehicle or operate machinery,
- Those who take medications that interact with alcohol,
- Those who have a medical condition that alcohol can aggravate, or
- Those who are pregnant or trying to become pregnant.

Be aware that alcohol can be extra dangerous when mixed with other drugs, whether prescription or non-prescription. If you are taking opioid painkillers, drinking alcohol can lead to an accidental overdose or even death.

If children are present in the home, parents and other adults can inadvertently share attitudes and behaviors about alcohol that can be dangerous for young people. Adults should drink responsibly, especially in front of children, and parents should be explicit with their teens that drinking before the age of 21 is both illegal and unhealthy. This message is easier for teens to accept when parents do not abuse alcohol.

If you drink more than the low-risk limits for an extended period of time, you put yourself at risk for several serious health conditions, causing damage to your heart, stomach, liver and pancreas, and increasing your risk for several types of cancer.

Potential heart problems include cardiomyopathy, the weakening of your heart muscle; arrhythmias, an irregular heartbeat; and stroke and/or high blood pressure. Potential liver problems include steatosis (fatty liver disease), alcoholic hepatitis, fibrosis, and/or cirrhosis. High alcohol consumption can also lead to pancreatitis, which is very painful and can cause serious digestion problems.

If you need help reducing your alcohol intake, talk to your doctor or primary care provider. Many excellent treatments exist, including FDA-approved medications to help you stop drinking. Typically, we start with behavioral interventions. For those who need it, we have a wonderful community resource to help with detoxification – the Ukiah Recovery Center.

Wherever you are in this journey, we can help. All you have to do is take the first step – call your medical provider for an appointment today.

Dr. Mario Espindola is a primary care doctor at MCHC Health Centers, a local, non-profit, federally qualified health center offering medical, dental and behavioral health care to people in Lake and Mendocino counties. Their Willits location is Little Lake Health Center, 456-9600.



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OBITUARY |

Diane Hinchliffe

Diane Hinchliffe, nee Snyder, died peacefully at home in Willits on December 10 after living valiantly and defiantly while undergoing treatment for an aggressive cancer.

Diane was a Willits native, daughter and first-born child of Paul and Rose Snyder, and was delivered into this world by Dr. Raymond Babcock at Howard Hospital in 1958. Her early domains were pre-flood Weott where Paul was logging and the Octagon house on Sherwood Road. Early photos depicted her cherubic, doll-like visage and bashful smile.

Diane attended local schools and graduated from Willits High School in 1977. She then attended College of the Redwoods before moving to Sacramento for work while her high school sweetheart and husband to be, Jeff Hinchliffe, was attending college.

In 1985 she and Jeff moved back to Mendocino County where they began a family and she started a 30-year-plus career as medical records supervisor at Consolidated Tribal Health Project in Calpella.

Diane's work ethic and humor were revered at CTHP where her lightning-fast typing could be heard into her 12th hour of work. She fielded work-related calls until very recently; a typical conversation started with: "Hey Di, I know you are sick, but how do you...?"

Her home life revolved around her family, raising and educating her four children. Diane loved the water and summers were spent swimming in the Eel River or camping at Usal Beach. She enjoyed travelling, especially to sites of beauty or historical significance.

Diane was of Native American and Anglo heritage, and she embraced both cultures, although this was often in the guise of irreverent and honest humor.

Diane is survived by husband, Jeff; her children Otto, Eli, Maya and Isaac; brothers James, Stanley and Steven; her mother, Rose, and two grandchildren, Liam and Jed. She was predeceased by her father and hero, Paul Snyder, in 2010.

A private ceremony is planned. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to Consolidated Tribal Health Project in her name, c/o Executive Director Richard Matens, rmatens@cthp.org.

Arrangements under the care and direction of Anker-Lucier Mortuary.



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'Experience The Sound of Soul'

Tuesday, January 15, 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Willits Center for the Arts, 71 E. Commercial Street. Welcome to the worlds of HU (pronounced hue), an ancient, universal name for God. This sacred word can spiritually uplift people of any religion, culture, or walk of life. It is freely given – a gift beyond measure. Love is love. And you are that. HU is the Sound of Soul. Information? Call April, 972-2475 or visit: www.TheSoundofSoul.org

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SPIRITUAL PATHWAYS

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If you want to be included in this column please call:
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Above, from left: Ron O'Brien plays a guitar at his home in Willits. The Herz-O'Brien brothers, Loren, left and Eric, right, will join their father, Ron O'Brien, to perform at Brickhouse Coffee on Friday, December 28. Loren Herz-O'Brien entertained the Brickhouse audience at the 2017 concert with his flute and an original poem.

O'Brien and Sons

Willits musician Ron O'Brien is joined by his sons in an evening of cross-genre compositions and musical anecdotes

Ron O'Brien and sons, Loren and Eric Herz-O'Brien, will play together for the first time in public, in their concert at Brickhouse Coffee, 3 South Main Street, on Friday, December 28. It is a confluence of O'Briens from various corners of the country – Ron from Willits, Loren from Long Beach, and Eric from Burlington, Vermont.

The trio brings together five generations of classical training, mixed in with their love of

all forms of music, from Rachmaninoff to John Lennon. Ron was brought up in upstate New York and lived in many locations in the United States, but eventually settled in Willits with his family about 15 years ago.

In addition to his extensive background in music, Ron has a background in the electrical industry, which is what brought him to California.

He started out at Consolidated Electrical Distributors in Ukiah, but loved living in Willits and the commute was becoming a burden. So he transferred to Dean Fuller until being laid off in the recession. He now works for Summit Signal as his "day gig."

Ron considers himself to be an arranger primarily. "I play mostly my own solo arrangements of various kinds of music on the classical guitar," he said. "Though most of what I play is not guitar music. I make the songs my own. I don't consider myself to be the best guitar player. Loren's a better flute player than I am a guitar player."

Loren Herz-O'Brien is a flautist and a bass player, and is proficient in several other instruments and disciplines. "Loren's been playing flute since the sixth grade at Baechtel Grove," explains his mother, Jackie Herz. "The first day he picked it up, he immediately got a sound out of it."

Loren, like his brother, Eric, took a "gap year" after high school. His dad offered to pay for his college if he could go out on his own for a year, make a living, pay his own bills, and "learn how to balance a checkbook." After the gap year, he enrolled at the Bob Cole Conservatory of Music, a division of California State University, Long Beach.

"He's been in Long Beach for the last year and a half now," said Ron. "He's liking it better this year because he's getting more involved in composition. The earliest they will allow you to become a composition major is after a year and a half. The course work is a lot of formal stuff but he plays a myriad of different styles like we have in our shows."

"He's most interested in doing Broadway shows," Ron continued. "His mother was brought up on Broadway. When we lived near Binghamton, New York, his mother's family would take him to shows in New York City, which was only four hours away."

Ron, his pride showing, went on to tell about his other son, Eric, who will be joining him in concert for the first time. "My other son is Eric. He is 29. When he graduated Willits High he knew he wanted to write. At the end of his gap year he decided he wanted to focus on screenwriting."

"He applied to the seven best film schools in



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Roofs

However, one of the options presented to them on November 20 was to spend \$1 million on phase two of the roofing project for the administration center. County staff reminded the board the roof of the main jail building was critically in need of repair, as well.

Fourth District Supervisor Dan Gjerde suggested that staff return to the board with a report on which roof needed repairing or replacing the most.

On Tuesday Assistant Facilities Manager Doug Anderson told supervisors that at least another \$700,000 would be needed to bring phase two to completion. In addition, Anderson estimated putting another roof on the main jail building would cost \$865,000, and that a new roof on the Emergency Operations Center and Jail Programs building would cost \$360,000.

Anderson said each of the roofs were equally deteriorated and all were beyond patching or putting a low-cost second roof on. Anderson said all the roofs would have to be deconstructed and re-roofed from scratch.

Supervisors directed the county to consider the roof on the main jail building as its first priority. Second priority is the roof over the Emergency Operations Center. Third priority would be phase two of the administration center project, which includes the roof over the

Department of Environmental Health, Human Resources and the Department of Planning and Building Services.

Second District Supervisor John McCowen said each of the roofs were equally valuable and each needed to be repaired as soon as possible. While total cost for the three options comes to approximately \$1.9 million, and the county has only \$1 million to spend, McCowen favored dipping into the county's General Reserve Fund, which currently stands at \$11.7 million, to fund all three roofing projects.

McCowen's suggestion won the approval of the other three supervisors and that of CEO Angelo. Because removing \$1 million from the General Reserve Fund was not on the board's agenda, that item will need to come back to supervisors for final approval after the first of the year.

Angelo told supervisors she was concerned about the state of the roof over the Information Center, a room that serves as the hub of all the county's information systems. "If that room goes down, it will shut down the county," she said.

She recommended the facilities department reapportion the lines demarcating the three phases of the roofing project for the administration center, placing re-roofing the Information Center in phase two. Anderson said that could be done.

Supervisors unanimously approved moving forward to put out requests for proposals

to re-roof the main jail and the Emergency Operations Center. Staff will come back next year with a motion to remove \$1 million from the county's General Reserve Fund to be used to re-roof the part of the administration center building demarcated "phase two," which presumably will include the roof over the Information Center.

According to Anderson, phases two and three of the project are each slated to cost \$2.5 million.

Wilbanks contract approved

Retirement Association Administrator James Wilbanks was given a new contract on Tuesday, by a unanimous vote of the board of supervisors. The new contract dispenses with some of the sweeteners in the old proposed contract, including a \$500 per month housing allowance, four \$15,000 per year longevity bonuses (over what was essentially a three-year contract), and a 3 percent raise after one month – all part of the original contract proposal.

The new proposed contract proposes Wilbanks receive a base pay of \$161,700 a year, with a 3 percent raise after each year in the three-year contract. In addition, Wilbanks would receive three \$25,000 per year longevity bonuses.

McCowen balked at approving the new contract, saying he calculated the new contract offered Wilbanks more money than the previous one. Wilbanks denied

Read the rest of Roofs Over on page 15

Sweet Sugar Bear

Sugar Bear is a young adult mixed-breed dog who was surrendered rather abruptly, and he is now adjusting to his new reality. He is very sweet and loves attention of any kind – the more the better. We are still learning more about him, but there's a lot to like already, so stay tuned and we'll keep you informed!

The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County is located at 9700 Uva Drive, Redwood Valley. Open hours: 1 to 5 pm, Wednesday through Friday; and 11 am to 3 pm, Saturday and Sunday. Please give us a call at 707-485-0123 if you have questions. You can view our adoptable dogs and cats on Petfinder or through our website: mendohumanesociety.com.



volunteer or help take the dogs for a walk, please join HSMC on Sundays at 11 am for an orientation.

Smart Frankie

Frankie is a wonderful and loving dog. He is a 1-year-old mixed-breed neutered male who currently weighs 69 pounds. Frankie knows "Sit" and "Shake," and we're pretty sure he would excel in canine training classes, as he looks like he has German shepherd and border collie in his makeup – two very smart breeds. We loved his little socks, which he has on all four feet! Frankie was a little bit shy and was not a cuddler, but he sure loves to play fetch and catch with tennis balls!

The Ukiah Shelter is located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah. Adoption hours are Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10 am to 4:30 pm, and Wednesday from 10 am to 6:30 pm. To view photos and bios of some of the other wonderful adoptable animals here, please visit at: www.mendoanimalshelter.com. More info about adoptions: 707-467-6453.

Read the rest of O'Brien From Page 12

the country," shared Ron, "and was accepted to six of them. He went to UCLA and did very well. He worked part time at the college television station and did a number of internships. One of the internships was for Wolfgang Peterson, a well-known director who did 'Never Ending Story,' 'Das Boot' and others. Eric did well enough in his internship that they asked him to come back and gave him a lot more responsibilities.

"However, at the end of his four years," continued Ron, "he decided he wanted nothing more to do with Los Angeles. He always liked the East Coast. He settled in Burlington, Vermont and has been there ever since, for five or six years now. He works for a television studio.

"He was really into music in high school and considered going into it as a career," explained Ron. "He was very good on the bass. He started out playing upright string bass. My dad played upright bass and when he died, I inherited his instrument and Eric began to fool around on it when he was about 11.

"He switched back and forth between the bass and the trumpet," he continued, "into his high school years, and eventually the trumpet went away. While he was still in high school, he joined the Mendocino College Symphonic Band and then he joined the Ukiah Symphony. Then he got his first electric bass, and he likes both that and the stand up.

"At our shows you'll hear Rachmaninoff, Bach, Willie Nelson and the Beatles, a little bit of everything. My father was a formally trained upright bass player. My grandparents were both world-class formal musicians from the British Isles. Scottish and British. Strict European-conservatory types. My great-great-grandfather was an opera singer in the British Isles. I'm fourth-generation and my kids are fifth-generation musicians," Ron concluded.

To obtain tickets in advance to see these three talented musicians, stop by Mazahar, 38 South Main Street. General admission advance cover charge is \$13; \$10 for students and seniors. At the door: \$15 general; \$12 student / senior.

Doors open at 6 pm, music begins at 7 pm. Brickhouse will be serving finger foods, pastries, coffee, tea, and other beverages.

Fire

obtained from the family for comparison with the victim, Barney said, but added DNA testing can take months because laboratories have large caseloads to process."

An autopsy was scheduled December 18 to determine the cause of death.

This report was based on a press release from the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office.

Fire on 101

CalFire reports it received a barrage of 911 calls regarding a fire on the west side of Highway 101 between Reeves Canyon Road and Ridgewood Ranch around 10:30 pm on that same, rainy Saturday, December 15.

A CalFire spokesman told Willits Weekly the flames were from a legal controlled burn.

WPD

From Page 4

December 16

12:03 am: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 200 block of School Street.

10:13 am: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 1500 block of South Main Street.

10:18 am: Officers responded to a report of a suspicious vehicle in the 1200 block of South Main Street.

12:55 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 100 block of Creekside Court.

1:37 pm: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 1500 block of South Main Street.

3:25 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of Northbrook Way.

4:20 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 100 block of West Mendocino Avenue.

7:14 pm: Officers initiated a burglary investigation in the 200 block of School Street.

Sherwood

From Page 5

One table sold elegant, small succulent gardens – some of them in abalone shells with blue and green beach glass – as well as quartz crystals. Melissa Campbell offered certified ear piercing and beaded jewelry.

Buffie Schmidt, who came up from Sonoma County for the crafts fair – "I have a lot of family up here," she said – displayed beautiful jewelry and regalia at her table. Schmidt's table also displayed a hand-woven basket with abalone shells spilling out. Schmidt is a fourth-generation Pomo cradle basket weaver, taught by her mother, Christine Hamilton from Yokayo Rancheria. See some of her jewelry at the California Indian Museum and Cultural Center: https://cimcc.org/brand/buffie-schmidt/.

Santa Calderon and family minded her table laded with crocheted hats, beanies (some with holes for braids or locks), baby booties, blankets, scarfs, shawls with sleeves, and "stuffers" – "I do different animals on request." Calderon said about her stuffed animals. Calderon also makes doggie sweaters and sweaters for chickens. "Some little girl told her mom the chickens looked cold, so I made three chicken sweaters. The chickens love 'em," she said.

Kim DuFour also displayed beautiful crocheted items, including blankets in strong and "ombre" colors. This was her first time selling her crocheted work, although she's been crocheting for 15 years.

Raymond Moon of Commod Bod Clothing said he "did really well" at his table displaying "Native" T-shirts and hats, including the popular "3 feather" design. Commod Bod – "We ship from Willits!" – has been online for a year. Check out the entire line of clothing at https://commodbod.com/.

Lights

From Page 3

decorated fruit trees dotting the hillside, adding to the wonder.

When people reached the top of the hill, two warming fires greeted them with wood donated by Roy and Kathy Branscomb. Folks had cups of hot cider or hot chocolate cradled in their hands as they enjoyed the warmth and friendship of the evening. Making it cozier, were covered bales of hay (also donated by J.D. Redhouse) surrounding the fire pit for people to sit on. Mendocino Construction Services donated the fire circles.

The gazebo was alight with warmth where Johnson and Margie Handley served the hot drinks. On the decorated table were plates of scrumptious cookies made by the Adventist Health Nutritional Services, also known as Roots Restaurant.

Neighbor Brenda Orenstein commented: "Anyone coming by this past week [who] saw how energetic all of the volunteers were, putting up the sculptures and decorating, they'd be impressed. This is truly a beautiful thing for the town. If you miss it this year, make sure to come next year!"

The torrential rain and winds during the day Sunday made for poor attendance predictions for that evening. But, according to Madrigal: "It cleared with no rain Sunday night! It felt like a Christmas miracle. We ended up with about 200 people coming through this night, also. So that makes about 400 people who came [both nights]. The cast from the WCT play, 'The Best Christmas Pageant Ever,' showed up and sang carols, and someone figured out how to get the vintage fire engine's siren to work." She added, "The holiday spirit is really alive in Willits!"

The orchard was open to the public for a walking tour through the gaily-lit sculpture garden last Saturday and Sunday nights only. But funds have been procured to keep the festive lights on at night for passers-by to admire, making it a destination on a Christmas lights walking / biking or driving tour of Willits. The light sculptures will be up until the end of the year.



Varsity Wrestling | Owen Sabastian, 17, Junior

How Long Playing the Sport: Four years

Breakfast of Champions: Waffles

Love of the Sport: "It's an individual sport that also has teamwork involved."

Other Sports Played: None

Owen went undefeated representing the Wolverines in their fourth place finish at the Drew Esquival Duals in Healdsburg this Saturday.

– Submitted by
Head Wrestling Coach Brian Bowles

Varsity Wrestling | Cameron Hernandez, 17, Junior

How Long Playing the Sport: "This is my first year."

Breakfast of Champions: Eggs with cheese and toast
Love of the Sport: "I love how you get to connect with friends and meet more people."

Other Sports Played: None

Cameron wrestled back-to-back tournaments Friday and Saturday for the Wolverines. Without him stepping up and filling the varsity spot at 113 pounds, we may not have made it into the gold bracket as a team.

– Submitted by
Head Wrestling Coach Brian Bowles



Happy Birthday, Alaska!

They say "time flies by," but how could it be

That our sweet little Alaska is already *three*??!

The princess, the pirate, the big dinosaur,

This girl keeps our lives rich with genie folklore! We love her more with each passing day,

And today is the day we gather to say,

Happy Birthday, Alaska!!

– Love Mom, Dad, River and Cricket



Happy Birthday, Jodi!

Lordy lordy, look who is 40. We love you, Jodi!

– Love from all of us

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The rest of
Council
From Page 1

Kanne began her first term on the council by seconding the nominations for both Gonzalez and Stranske. Gonzalez was nominated by Stranske and won approval with a 4-1 vote. He'll be mayor for the second time in three years, having also taken the position in 2017.

Stranske was nominated by Gonzalez and was approved in a 3-2 vote.

Councilwoman Saprina Rodriguez voted against both nominations; former mayor Madge Strong voted "no" on Stranske's nomination.

Main Street plan update

City Planner Dusty Duley updated the council on the progress of the Main Street Corridor Enhancement Plan.

While the Caltrans downtown relinquishment construction is already basically finished, including new bike lanes that were recently painted, Duley said most of the improvements outlined in the city's own plan won't be implemented until 2020.

That's because the city needs to wait until Caltrans completes all its work in the relinquishment agreement, including the Sherwood Road intersection project, which isn't scheduled to be finished until next year. At that point Caltrans can officially hand over Main Street ownership back to the city.

"The timeline for construction is related to when the relinquishment of Main Street happens," said Duley. "Caltrans still needs to complete the Sherwood Road intersection project before relinquishment occurs. The relinquishment process itself can take a few months.

"The Sherwood project is currently estimated to be completed in the summer of 2019," he noted. "At that point they'd be eligible to ... fully relinquish Main Street from Highway 20 to the northern city limits to the city, and that would happen in fall or early winter of 2019. That would put our timeline for completing the improvements we've gone over in the spring of 2020. So there is a little bit of time that still needs to go by."

Duley added that the city was planning on moving more quickly to replace the wood chips Caltrans used to fill in planter strips they constructed with pavers – brick-like stones often used for exterior floors.

Duley said he'd been hearing a lot of complaints about the wood chips, including some aired during a recent Willits Revit-ED committee meeting.

"It was quite unanimous among those who attended the meeting that wood chips were not the final solution and something else should be put in there," he said. "It was noted [wood chips] could be a tripping hazard, they're not pretty, weeds grow up in them, they can be filled with water."

Duley said replacing the chips with pavers in the 3-foot-wide planter strips would cost around \$200,000, and staff had identified funds available in the Regional Surface Transportation Program administered by the Mendocino Council of Governments that could potentially be used. For other improvements, Duley said the city could utilize funds from its special half-cent sales tax, and staff has been pursuing grants to help as well.

As outlined in the Main Street plan, those improvements include the planting of numerous trees, installing decorative streetlights, and creating enhanced crosswalks for pedestrian safety featuring extended sidewalks, bulb-outs, and medians at intersections.

The plan also envisions implementing public art,

directional signage, street furnishings, and rain gardens for beautification.

Cannabis businesses

Duley also updated the council on cannabis businesses in town, noting staff would likely open a 30-day window for interested parties to apply for Willits dispensary permits in early January.

Under the city cannabis ordinance, there can be up to three dispensaries within city limits; if there are more applicants than that, a selection board will decide who gets the permits based on the quality and appropriateness of their business plans.

Staff had delayed opening the 30-day window in order to first clarify what standards would be used for judging business plans.

"So we've got draft applications put together," he said. "I sent that out to some of my peers. They brought back some good comments. The main consistent comment was that we should better define our ranking system and our scoring system."

"This week staff has been working on creating a scoring system and updating the application packet. We probably have another 20 or 30 hours of staff time to complete that."

Based on the interest he's seen in opening dispensaries, Duley said he's not sure there will be more than three eligible applicants.

"There's a list," he told councilmembers. "Honestly, a lot of them don't have a location picked out. I don't know how they're going to be eligible if they don't have a location picked out. Some of the other folks that are interested are folks that already have established other businesses and do have locations."

"I'm not confident we're going to have more than three, but we might have three. So it may be we don't even get into the ranking situation. But I'm glad we're thinking about that, because we need to make sure that process is fair and transparent."

Duley also replied to an inquiry from Strong about a conflict in the city's policy regarding cannabis distribution with recently updated state law.

There is a "conflict with our ordinance," he agreed. "What our ordinance says is that you can't deliver cannabis in the city limits unless you're one of our three licensed dispensaries. What the state has now in their new regulations is that anyone that has a license to deliver cannabis can deliver it to any jurisdiction whether they totally ban it, or they have any other restrictions that run afoul of that."

"This is something that the League of [California] Cities and other organizations that represent folks like us very well articulated to the state; unfortunately, we lost local control on that individual matter."

For all types of cannabis business, Duley said that after receiving 12 permit applications in the month of November, he estimates the city's program has now taken in over \$200,000 in application fees since the ordinance was implemented. "It's also resulted in quite a bit of new development and new construction," he added.

Only one odor complaint has been reported so far, he added, and that situation was resolved quickly.

"So far we've had good actors," Duley said. "That was my main concern when we got direction to run this program – that we were going to have a lot of code enforcement problems. And we still might, but so far, we've been really happy with the applicants that have chosen to come here and do business. We'll continue to hold them to a high standard, but so far so good."

The rest of
WUSD
From Page 1

has to do with the WTA and the district," said Bowlds. "We can't deal with it even if we wanted to."

He explained that, under the contract, a "teacher has the first right of refusal" when it came to filling a coaching position.

Arms questioned whether this is always the case, even if the teacher is not as qualified as someone else.

Bowlds responded that qualifications were not a deciding factor.

"The contract doesn't say [the teacher] has to be certified or qualified," he said.

Outgoing WTA president and supervisor-elect John Haschak added that he believed state law also required the same action.

"It's my understanding that it's in the education code," he said. "It's not just the Willits Unified School District and Willits Teachers Association."

"Nothing would surprise me in the education code," lamented Superintendent Mark Westerburg.

"It wouldn't surprise me either," said Bowlds, who thanked Arms for "stepping forward."

The board then moved on to its regular business: final goodbyes to departing board members, swearing in new trustees, choosing officers, choosing individual schools for each board member to represent, budget approval, presentation of a report listing "deferred maintenance projects" at district schools, and health insurance woes.

Outgoing Trustee Christopher Neary was not present, but Trustee Bob Colvig thanked him in absentia for his many years of service.

"We always appreciated his leadership," said Colvig. Departing member Cynthia Carni was present to say farewell and receive a plaque.

Carni, who has been on Othe board since 2008, said she always had "one reason and one reason only" for being on the board ... "to do the right thing for kids."

She was "always willing to come in," said Westerburg.

New trustees Jeanne King and Paula Nunez were sworn in together by board clerk Colvig, who was later unanimously re-elected as clerk.

President Bowlds, referred to by Westerburg as the board's "elder statesman," was also unanimously re-elected as president.

Each trustee also chose a district school to personally represent or focus on.

Westerburg suggested they consider "where you want to spend your time" in making their choices.

Nunez chose Blosser Lane Elementary School; King chose Brookside Elementary School; Colvig chose Baechtel Grove Middle School; Bowlds chose Willits High School; and Chavez chose Sherwood Elementary School and San Hedrin Alternative Vocational High School.

During the meeting, Westerburg also presented the board with a detailed "facility overview" – a 2015-2016 report of "deferred

maintenance projects" at district schools – with an estimated price tag of almost \$6 million.

"I want to keep having discussion," Westerburg said about the work that needs to be done. "It's not going away."

And he briefly brought up the "B word" again – "B" as in bond.

"One way or the other, public entities fix facilities," he said. "We have to give it our best."

Approval of the district's interim budget was also on the agenda.

With state funding down and enrollment (which affects funding) "down a little bit," budget projections included continued deficit spending.

State funding under California Gov. Jerry Brown has included "one-time yearly funds" that will not necessarily continue under the administration of incoming Gov. Gavin Newsom, explained district Director of Fiscal Services Nikki Agenbroad.

With a budget of just over \$20 million for 2018-2019, the projected deficit spending was low – just under \$13,000. For the next two years out, however, deficit spending is projected to be far higher – closer to \$700,000 each year.

Westerburg assured the board that, although projected, that amount of increased deficit spending would not occur.

"We know we are not going to have as big a deficit in the next two years," he said. "We'll do whatever we have to do not to have deficits [that] big."

A couple of the contributors to the district's somewhat dismal financial state of affairs were state-mandated expenditures and "incredible disproportionality" in state funding, he explained.

"We have 1,100 mandates we have to do," Westerburg noted.

"Efficiency at its best," President Bowlds shot back.

"Welcome to California," added Trustee Chavez.

Westerburg described cost-of-living increases that go equally to all districts regardless of need, as "grievous errors in the state funding mechanism."

There was some good financial news, however. The district has received approval for funding for two new busses.

"That's \$350,000 we don't have to take out of the general fund," said Westerburg.

In the end, he told the board "we're just about where we thought we'd be," and the budget was unanimously approved.

The meeting ended with some gloomy health insurance news – "everybody got hit with \$2,400 in insurance," said Westerburg. The "negotiations worksheet" Westerburg handed to board members said: "17/18 cost went from \$600 to \$2,400 in 18/19."

"It hit everybody," Westerburg said. "It's really hard on our CSEA folks." CSEA is the "California School Employee Association," which represents classified staff – school employees who don't need certification or licenses to be qualified for the job.

The rest of
Adieu
From Page 1

County," the proclamation stated.

Deputy Executive Officer Janelle Rau praised Croskey for "working tirelessly on several issues and for assisting us in becoming a more efficient organization."

Health and Human Services Agency Director Tammy Moss Chandler also thanked Croskey for her service, noting Covelo Fire Protection District Chief Doren Freeman had called Chandler, advising her that he intended to be at that morning's board meeting, but was unable to come. Chandler said Freeman had asked her to convey to Croskey the deep appreciation of Covelo Fire Protection District volunteers, as well as his own, for Croskey's assistance in obtaining for the district \$129,101 to purchase a basic life-support ambulance.

The funds also will be used to enhance the district's advanced life-support services. The item was approved that morning on the board's consent calendar.

The proclamation for Supervisor Hamburg – who was first elected in 1980 and then again in 2010 and in 2014 – praised him for acting "in the interests of all Mendocino County residents; including three terms as chairman of the board of supervisors."

Hamburg had served in the U.S. Congress from 1993 to 1995, and while in Washington had "authorized the Headwater Forest Act, a bill that passed the House overwhelmingly; worked for single-payer health care, cuts in military spending, equal rights for the gay-bisexual-lesbian and transgender community, rail transportation and salmon restoration."

The proclamation noted that "as an elected supervisor, Dan has served with distinction on many boards and committees, including the Behavioral Health Advisory Board, First Five Mendocino, the Local Agency Formation Commission and Sonoma Clean Power, to name a few."

As with Croskey's proclamation, the Hamburg proclamation included the sentence: "The citizens of Mendocino County deeply appreciate his leadership, dedication to public service and his passion for advocacy for sound public policy representing Mendocino County."

Hamburg was not present at the meeting. Instead, Chairwoman Croskey presented the proclamation to CEO Carmel Angelo, who said she had spoken with Hamburg's wife, who had relayed Hamburg's regret that he was unable to attend the meeting.

Angelo said Hamburg remains under a doctor's care but did not disclose the nature of his illness.

Susan Ranochak also received a letter of commendation upon her retirement from the Mendocino County Assessor/ Clerk-Recorder's Office. The proclamation noted Ranochak began working for the assessor's office in 1984 as a property appraiser, became assistant assessor in 2003, and was elected assessor/clerk-recorder in 2007, taking office in 2008.

"During Sue's extended career, vast improvements in technology and information management demanded many changes within the organization.... Under Sue's guidance, Mendocino County improved the ballot-counting process, including improvements associated with posting results on the Assessor/Clerk-Recorder website within moments.... Sue Ranochak has had a long and distinguished career and can take great pride in her service to the citizens of Mendocino County."

County thanks long-standing employees

Human Resources Director Heidi Dunham and various department heads presented pins to 19 county employees who have worked at least 15 years for the county.

Receiving 15-year pins were Patricia Cloman, Rachel Ebel-Elliott, Tammie McKee, Maria Hurtado, Jason Costa, Charles Chernow, Lois Pitman and Connie Duran.

Receiving 20-year pins were Karen Ungewitter, Neil "Kort" Pettersen, Dawn Tipton, Dustin Lorenzo, Julie Whipple, Gage Ferguson and Chris Gialdini.

Ana Madrigal-Duran, Elizabeth Valentine and Julie Forrester received 25-year pins, and HHSAA Administrative Secretary Cindy Roper was given a 30-year pin.

The rest of
Roofs
From Page 13

that was the case, as did county Treasurer Shari Schapmire, who worked on the retirement board subcommittee that crafted the new contract.

"We actually thought the new contract contained slightly less money than the previous proposed contract," Schapmire said.

Wilbanks told McCowen that while the original proposal for the new contract contained \$78,000 in bonuses, the second proposal contained only \$75,000 in bonuses.

When McCowen realized he was calculating the total value of the first proposal using \$157,000 as the first-year salary, while forgetting that under the proposal Wilbanks would be getting a 3 percent raise after one month, he backed down.

Fourth District Supervisor Dan Gjerde attempted to soften the blow. "The retirement board is very happy with Dr. Wilbank's performance and also, that of the additional staff of three," Gjerde said. "They are performing at a very high level and providing very good service to the people of Mendocino County."

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