

Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

Online & Print



It's Real Estate Section Thursday!

A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

Donations Accepted Edition No. 638

Thursday, May 14, 2026

MCSO recovers \$73,000 scammed from Brooktrails residents

By Sgt. J. Woida, for MCSO

Mendocino County Sheriff's Office deputies are investigating an organized fraud and financial abuse scam that initially resulted in the loss of approximately \$100,000 from elderly victims residing in the Brooktrails area of Willits, an 86-year-old man and a 73-year-old woman.

On May 8, 2026 at approximately 11:43 pm, Sheriff's Office deputies were dispatched to an address in the Brooktrails area regarding a reported fraud involving the transfer of approximately \$100,000 in cash and cash equivalents.

The victims reported they believed their electronic devices had been compromised and that they were being surveilled by unknown individuals.

Deputies later met with the victims at the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office Willits Substation, where they

Read the rest of **Scammed** Over on Page 4

CAL FIRE: Watch out for rattlesnakes

Posted by CAL FIRE MEU Here's a Rattlesnake Safety Communication from the CAL FIRE Mendocino Unit.

Issue: While rattlesnake bites are typically uncommon, California has recently experienced an increase in encounters and bites, including three fatal cases reported so far this year. Please exercise caution when in areas where rattlesnakes are prone.

Understanding Rattlesnakes: Rattlesnakes are venomous reptiles native to North and South America. They generally avoid human contact but can deliver dangerous bites when threatened. Rattlesnakes are most active in spring and fall during moderate temperatures and often inhabit rocky areas, dry canyons, high-elevation slopes, and trails where the ground retains heat.

Prevention and Awareness: Rattlesnake bites are preventable by remaining aware, utilizing protective clothing, and exercising caution while in their habitats.

Read the rest of **Snakes** Over on Page 9



Above, from left: Catmint starts were available, along with many other happy and healthy plants at Saturday's Grateful Gleaners' Annual Plant Sale. The Jennison family were thrilled to see the elusive "Indigo Rose" tomato start, available from the Commonwealth Garden-started tomato selection board - thank you Mellisa!! The check-out table consisted of a counting station, and a paying station to help move people through the line. Melon starts look robust in their little pots. Below: Healing Central Chiropractic's Izzy Perry and Shawna Perry Handschug came to the plant sale with a shopping list to help keep their purchases - hopefully - on track. Good luck! Ha!



Photos by Maureen Jennison

Gettin' Started

Grateful Gleaners plant sale raises over \$3,700 for non-profit during annual event last Saturday

Submitted by Karen Gridley, for the Grateful Gleaners

A profusion of plants greeted Willits gardeners as they entered the gated enclosure for the Gleaner Plant Sale on the Saturday before Mother's Day.

The diversity of plants ranged from the smallest basil start to a 12-foot European Horse Chestnut in a tub, and from an exotic South American survival plant to favorite vegetable and flower starts for the home gardener.

Clearly tomatoes were the No. 1 most-sought-after vegetable, but the all-volunteer Gleaners were prepared. A whole bank of tomatoes awaited shoppers. It could have been overwhelming, but all the tomatoes were labeled and organized by variety, with a Gleaner volunteer to help customers find what they were looking for.

All the starts were seeded by Gleaner volunteers, and all the perennial plants, whether flowers, fruits, trees, or vegetables, come from local gardens, both large and small. Consequently, there is

Read the rest of **Gleaners** Over on page 11

At right, above: Prana smiles with a happy cosmos which is destined to be planted in a Willits garden. Starbucks cups and toilet paper rolls were both turned into seed-starting vessels for starts at the sale. Below, from left: Veteran plant-man Richard Jeske brought a milk crate to carry his starts. Donna d'Terra and Anna Marietta ran the Herbs from Motherland stand at the front of the sale. Maggie was ogling this Calendula start at the Herbs from Motherland stand and was delighted when Marietta graciously gifted it to her. At bottom, left: Sale volunteers Nola Hontou-Marshall, Earline Dykes, and Beth Riedel, right, two of whom donned their new Grateful Gleaner visors. The field at the Tuttle Lane home was filled with tables, shoppers and starts.



Supervisors Forum in Laytonville draws a crowd

Reprinted courtesy of the Mendocino County Observer

By Ran Bush

Three of the four candidates for the District 3 Supervisor position participated in the Candidate Forum at Harwood Hall in Laytonville on April 29. Moderator Alison Pernel asked questions that forum attendees submitted at the meeting, and questions that were submitted via email by local residents before the meeting. About 35 people were in the room, and 11 people joined on a zoom link.

In spite of some audio problems with the PA system, Buffy Wright-Bourassa, Clay Romero, and Eric Hart each presented prepared opening remarks. Moderator Pernel then reminded the audience and the candidates to turn off their phones, and presented the questions that had been submitted on each topic.

There were several questions about each candidate's background,

Read the rest of **Laytonville** Over on Page 9

More from the 3rd District Supervisors Forum

Here is a transcript of another set of questions and answers from the candidates at the April 19, 2026 3rd District Supervisors Candidates Forum, with Buffy Wright Bourassa, Russell Green, Eric Hart, and Clay Romero. You can watch the forum on Willits Community Television's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/@WillitsCommunityTV

QUESTION: What is your favorite and/or most valuable natural environmental asset of Mendocino County, and how would you propose to protect it?

Buffy Wright Bourassa: I think it's important to state that I'm a Sherwood Valley Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians member. I grew up in Pinoleville, on the reservation in Ukiah, and the most important part of Mendocino County is all of it. My ancestors have been here since time immemorial. Honestly, if we could preserve this county in all of its beauty, that's what I stand for. How does that work with all of us here? My goal isn't to stop us from being productive members of our society, but how do we come together?

Read more of **Q&A** Over on Page 9

What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from our readers

Leadership and politics

To the Editor:
People ask me why I support Eric Hart for Third District Supervisor. The answer is simple: Leadership.

A leader must be able to identify needs, what's right and what's wrong, a change in procedure or finances, a problem that needs a fix.

We don't need an inexperienced supervisor or someone whose experience consists of "getting along and going along." Seat-warming is not a qualification.

Government is no different from running a business or even surviving as a citizen; change is the only unavoidable constant. Times change, and needs change. The politician who cannot see those changes and propose solutions will not get my vote.

The only candidate who has a successful history of working with local non-profits, starting new programs, and improving existing ones, is Eric Hart. His previous experience with AT&T and others was a great training ground for the logical analysis of Mendocino County finances and operational glitches that is so desperately needed today. The time Hart has spent on the Arts Council, Rotary Club, and Fire Safe Councils demonstrate that his interest in improving our community is no passing thing. He is already doing it.

I'm voting for Eric Hart right away, and I hope you do too.

Hal Wagenet,
Third District Supervisor, 2003-2006

Reelect Pekin for judge

To the Editor:
I strongly endorse the reelection of Patrick Pekin as Judge of the Superior Court. Why substitute a man of questionable temperament for a seasoned judge who has demonstrated his ability to ensure fairness and justice for all? This judicial position requires maturity, broad legal knowledge, empathy, and sound judgment. Judge Pekin has these qualities. He enjoys broad support from the bench and bar, and from the community at large.

Simply putting on a black robe and taking the bench does not make a good judge. As one who served on the bench for 14 years, I can attest to the huge investment of time, effort, continuing education, and practical experience needed to do the job effectively. Patrick Pekin has made this investment. He is worthy of your vote on June 2.

James F. King, Willits

Volunteer Meals on Wheels driver

To the Editor:
The Willits Senior Center urgently needs a volunteer Meals on Wheels driver from 10:30 am to 2 pm on

Thursdays. We provide the Meals on Wheels truck – you simply provide your time, compassion, and heart one day a week.

For many of our homebound seniors, this may be the only human connection they have all day.

Just a few hours of your time one day a week can help fight hunger, isolation, and loneliness in our community.

Please consider becoming the reason someone feels remembered this Thursday.

A free lunch is included

Joliana is our meals on wheels coordinator, she can be reached at 707-459-6826, extension 6.

Richard Baker, director,
Willits Senior Center

Free Community Breakfast

To the Editor:
The Willits United Methodist Church and the Willits Shelter Action Group will be hosting a free community breakfast at the Methodist Church on Friday, May 22. There will be a wide selection of breakfast goodies, juices, coffee and rolls.

All are welcome, and donations are always appreciated. The breakfast starts at 8:30 am and will run until 10:30 am. The Methodist Church is located at 286 School Street, just across the street from the Little Lake Grange.

Mike A'Dair, president,
Willits Shelter Action Group

Willits motel shelter program

To the Editor:
The Willits motel shelter program has done an outstanding job of temporarily housing those who don't have homes, giving brief stays 1 to 2 nights to local unhoused people. May is the month where we usually stop offering rooms; however, there are several homeless folks who have been discharged from the hospital and also families with children but no homes. Your donation will help us to keep those folks in rooms for a little longer while the weather eases into summer.

The Willits Shelter Action Group is hard at work creating a real shelter that will house people who need homes. This long-term goal is now within reach. It will be an incredible addition to the Willits community.

Meanwhile, we continue to see unhoused folks, some of whom are medically fragile and need shelter now. Your generous donations will make all the difference.

Please send a check to WSAG Willits Shelter Action Group indicating motel program, PO Box 71, Willits CA 95490.

Thank you very much!

Ruthanne Volz, Motel Shelter Program

Shamrock Ranch prescribed burn

Submitted by CAL FIRE MEU

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Mendocino Unit will be conducting a vegetation management prescribed burn on the Shamrock Ranch.

This prescribed burn will treat approximately 300-acres of grass and understory vegetation within oak woodlands and mixed conifer habitats, creating a mosaic of variously burned vegetation and islands of unburned habitat.

The Shamrock Ranch is in the northern portion of Mendocino County, east of Highway 101, and southeast of the town of Laytonville.

Burning was set to begin on Tuesday, May 11, 2026 and continue intermittently as favorable weather conditions present themselves, but end no later than Monday, June 1, 2026. Burning will start at approximately 8 am and conclude at approximately 3 pm daily.

This project burn will be conducted under strictly controlled weather and fuel conditions. Smoke and aircraft may be visible in the area.

This project adds to significant work underway throughout the state and brings California one step closer towards meeting state fuels reduction goals directed by the California Fire Plan and the California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan. To track the progress being made, both in your community and throughout California, visit the CAL FIRE fuels reduction dashboard at www.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/natural-resource-management/fuels-reduction.

CAL FIRE announces \$70 million for community wildfire resilience grants

Submitted by CAL FIRE Sacramento

May 7 – As California recognizes Wildfire Preparedness Week and as announced by California Governor Gavin Newsom May 7, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection is advancing the state's ongoing Wildfire and Forest Resilience efforts by announcing the availability of up to \$70 million in funding for community-focused Wildfire Prevention and Resilience projects.

These grants support locally led efforts that reduce wildfire risk, strengthen preparedness, and help protect lives, property, and critical infrastructure.

Grant applications are now open. Completed applications must be submitted by 3 pm on July 8, 2026.

CAL FIRE's Wildfire Prevention Grants Program provides financial support for projects that reduce the potential for destructive wildfire in and around communities. Eligible activities include hazardous fuels reduction, wildfire prevention planning, and wildfire prevention education aimed at increasing readiness and reducing wildfire ignition potential. Projects that also deliver carbon reduction benefits will receive additional consideration.

"These grants empower communities to reduce hazardous fuels, strengthen evacuation readiness, and protect the places Californians live, work, and recreate," said Frank Bigelow, deputy director of Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation. "By investing in locally driven prevention projects, we are reducing risks today while building long-term resilience for future generations."

Last year, CAL FIRE's 2025–26 Wildfire Prevention Grant awards funded high-impact resilience projects across California. In Siskiyou County, the Eastside Yreka Community Protection Project is reducing hazardous fuels across 410 acres near homes, evacuation routes, and critical infrastructure. In Alameda County, the Anthony Chabot Forest Fuels Enhancement Project is treating 556 acres near nearly 22,000 homes in a high-risk wildland-urban interface area. In San Bernardino County, roadside fuel reduction work across 282 acres is improving evacuation routes to help protect more than 37,000 structures.

These examples of effectiveness demonstrate how thoughtful planning and preventative work funded through CAL FIRE grants directly reduces wildfire risk, improves firefighter safety, and safeguards communities.

Read the rest of **Wildfire** | *Over on page 9*

Little Lake Valley rainfall totals (inches)

location	Mon May 04	Tue May 05	Wed May 06	Thur May 07	Fri May 08	Sat May 09	Sun May 10	weekly total	rainfall since 01Oct25
Northbrook Way	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.04	54.36
Brooktrails Dr @ Sherwood Rd	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	55.44
Valley Rd	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	39.08
Canyon Rd	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06	43.28
Pine Mountain	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	49.24
South Main @ East Oak	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.04	53.64
average	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.04	49.17

data compiled from weatherunderground (<https://www.wunderground.com>)

Willits Rain Box

A little splash of a shower moved through on Monday, May 4, bringing the only measurable May rainfall to the Little Lake Valley. Rainfall accumulation averaged just 0.04". Accumulations were somewhat greater just to our south, with parts of Redwood Valley tallying 0.10". As expected, April ended with a rainfall total of 5.66".

The May month-to-date figures brought the total accumulation since the rain year began on October 1, 2025 to 49.17". Although some portions of Mendocino County could see showers mid-week, none are predicted for the Willits area.

– Tim Hanna, Willits Rain Box

Correction

The endorsements for school board candidates reported in Willits Weekly's May 7 story, "Celebrating Endorsements: Willits Teachers Association supports Nicole Karkar, Paula Nunez, Mason Rescina for school board," are for the November 3, 2026 election.

The Rules: LETTERS

Letters & Commentaries: Email letters to willitsweekly@gmail.com. Willits Weekly prints letters and commentaries about Willits and Third District issues, activities, events, and people. We print letters to the editor 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.

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. Deadline is end of day Monday for each Thursday edition. No letters from an anonymous source will be published, although a request to withhold the writer's name will be considered.

Willits Weekly

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Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

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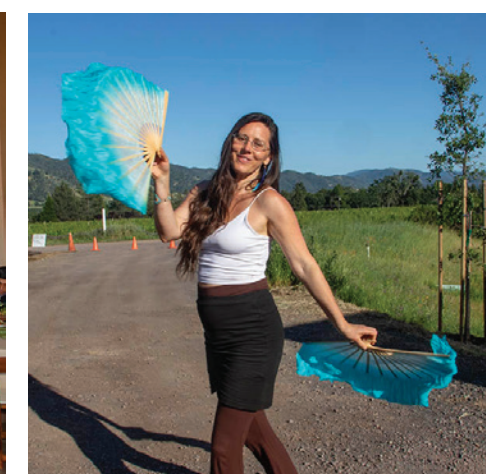
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Waldorf Spring Soiree

Annual fundraiser is a pleasant evening of entertainment and tasty food

The Waldorf School of Mendocino County definitely knows how to throw a party. Their annual Spring Soiree was an al fresco event this year, for the first time, at the newly rebuilt Frey Wine Tasting facility, complete with a sumptuous plentiful taco bar from El Chicano, and a rocking soul and funk band from the coast, Mama Grows Funk, who got the partygoers out of their seats, dancing into the night. Many alumni and parents of students were in attendance, including some who nimbly hula-hooped to the music.

The silent auction was filled with a lot of disparate and worthy items, some created by the classes at the TK-through-sixth-grade school. There were such valuable prizes as a mosaic from the fifth and sixth-grade classes, depicting Hannibal crossing the alps, a hand-woven basket, a Sue Ellen Parkinson painting, motocross racing helmets, firewood, gift cards for many things, including acupuncture and yoga, and many more fun things.

As always, the raffle is one of their biggest fundraisers for the year. Several prizes were written on paper bags and the players, after purchasing the tickets, could place tickets into the bags corresponding to the prizes they wanted. The tickets were drawn later in the evening. There was a special raffle for a handcrafted quilt by Linda Jacobs.

The school is founded on several key principals and methods for educating the whole child. "The basic philosophy is that it's developmentally based education," explained Maya Stuart, administrator at the Waldorf School of Mendocino County. "The idea is that children have the ability to grow into different capacities in different times in their human development."

"In the beginning, in the early years, they're really learning how to work and play socially together and figure out who they are as people, individuals from their parents and the teachers and learning the skills to be good human beings socially," said Stuart. "During that time we do a lot of cooking and baking and chopping and doing productive activities, but in a very structured, informed environment."

"They are actually beginning to build some foundational academic skills like



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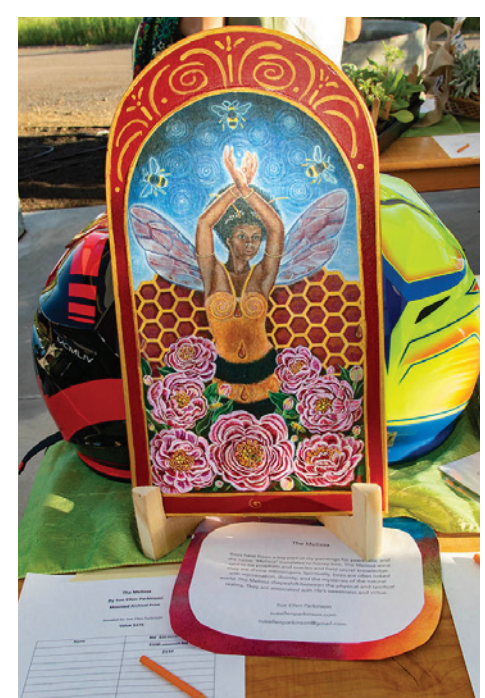
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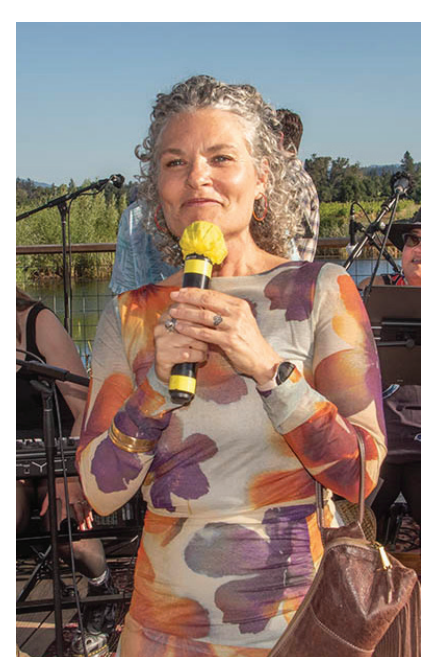
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Above, from left: Waldorf graduate Pearl Marill and her mother, Linda Posner, have fun at the soiree. The food from El Chicano is laid out in the Frey Vineyards spacious tasting room. Sienna Rena enjoys dancing to the driving rhythms of Mama Grows Funk. At left: This mosaic, crafted by the fifth and sixth-grade classes, depicts Hannibal crossing the Alps. Below, left: There are many eclectic offerings in the silent auction, including this painting by Sue Ellen Parkinson. Below, right: Karrin Palmer is a parent of students and an emotional-support provider.



At far left: The Waldorf School of Mendocino County Administrator Maya Stuart welcomes the crowd. At left: Katrina Frey is one of the founders of the winery, along with her husband and brother-in-law. Photos by Mathew Caine

Your health, your month.

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From mental well-being to physical exams, May is the time to prioritize you.

May is Women's Health Month! Between family, work, and community, it's easy to put your own health on the back burner. MCHC is here to help you hit the reset button with local, compassionate care tailored to you.

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Willits Weekly's Puzzle Page

Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword



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

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!

Level: Advanced

FLOWER FRIENDS WORD SEARCH

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

- ANTENNAE
- APIARY
- BEEBLE
- BLOSSOM
- BUMBLEBEE
- BUTTERFLY
- CHRYSLIS
- COLONY
- DRONE
- ECOSYSTEM
- FLIGHT
- FORAGING
- HABITAT
- HOVERFLY
- HUMMINGBIRD
- LARVA
- MANDIBLES
- MIGRATORY
- NECTAR
- OVARY
- PETAL
- POLLEN
- PROBOSCIS
- STAMEN

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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53						54				55	56	
57										58		
59						60				61		

CLUES ACROSS

1. Notable casino destination
6. Current units
10. Roman military unit
14. American lizard
15. Fates
17. The Yankees have lots of these
19. Unhappy
20. Mimic
21. Remove from the record
22. Where cargo ships dock (abbr.)
23. A way to fight
24. Turfs
26. Contract
29. Country along the Arabian peninsula
31. Tree species
32. Pituitary gland secretion (abbr.)
34. Perfect
35. *Partner to groans
37. Jewish calendar month
38. Where wrestlers work
39. Egotistical
40. Potted plants
41. Containers
43. Large, flightless birds
45. Part of a book

CLUES DOWN

1. Animal jaws
2. Small water buffalo
3. An appliance has one
5. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
6. Tree species
7. No more than what is specified
8. Tire measurement
9. Towers
10. Forward
11. Jacob ____, American journalist
12. Vale
13. Former CIA
16. Middle Eastern nation
18. Exhausts

WILLITS POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICE LOG

April 27 to May 4
 By Danya Davis, Willits Weekly

The officers of the Willits Police Department reported 83 incidents in this 7-day period.

Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

April 27

10:15 am: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 400 block of East Commercial Street.

4:58 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 1500 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

7:49 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 1500 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

April 28

8:13 am: BOGOSIAN, Paul Henry (52) of Redway was contacted in the 300 block of East Commercial Street. He was arrested on felony charges of arson of a structure or forest land, arson during a state of emergency, and resisting an officer, and on misdemeanor charges of placing a pollutant near water and violation of probation.

1:12 pm: Officers initiated a vehicle theft investigation in the 200 block of North Lenore Avenue.

4:22 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 900 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

7:04 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 1500 block of South Main Street.

April 29

3:42 pm: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of East Commercial Street and North Humboldt Street and issued a citation.

9:30 pm: BUZZARD, Lukus Bradley (27) of Willits was contacted in the 1700 block of South Main Street. He was arrested on misdemeanor charges of driving under the influence of drugs, possession of a controlled substance, and possession of drug paraphernalia.

April 30

12:02 am: Officers conducted a stop in the 1300 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

12:17 am: Officers conducted a stop in the 1500 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

10:08 am: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity near the intersection of Walnut Street and South Main Street.

May 1

10:32 am: Officers initiated a fraud investigation in the 43000 block of Mather Lane.

The rest of **Scammed** From page 1

provided detailed documentation related to the fraud scheme.

During the investigation, MCSO deputies learned the victims had been targeted by suspects impersonating employees of Microsoft, the Federal Trade Commission, and Chase Bank officials. The scam reportedly began after one victim received a computer notification directing them to contact Microsoft technical support regarding alleged security issues on their laptop computer.

The suspects convinced the victims to provide remote access to their computer and falsely claimed the device contained viruses, illegal material, and evidence of criminal activity. The victims were informed they were involved in a federal investigation and were threatened with arrest if they failed to cooperate.

Over the course of several days, the victims were coerced into withdrawing and transferring large sums of money under the belief they were assisting federal authorities with an ongoing investigation. MCSO deputies learned approximately \$23,000 in cash was packaged and handed to an unknown male "runner" who met the victims in the Brooktrails area.

Deputies also learned the victims were instructed to obtain and mail a cashier's

11:03 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

2:35 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 300 block of South Main Street.

2:44 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 1100 block of Magnolia Avenue.

5:21 pm: LOPES SR., Anthony Frank (55) of Willits was contacted in the 100 block of Bush Street. He was arrested on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (alcohol) and violation of probation.

10:02 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 100 block of Pine Street.

May 2

9:18 am: Officers initiated a vehicle theft investigation in the 1400 block of Willow Lane.

5:35 pm: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of Haehl Creek Drive and East Hill Road and issued a citation.

8:13 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 200 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

8:43 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 600 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

11:20 pm: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of McKinley Street and West Valley Street and issued a citation.

May 3

10:45 am: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 300 block of Laurel Street.

1:42 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 1400 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

4:28 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 300 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

4:37 pm: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of Alder Lane and Elm Lane and issued a warning.

7:06 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 1400 block of Baechtel Road.

8:33 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 100 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

8:41 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 1100 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

May 4

1:06 am: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 300 block of South Main Street.

check for approximately \$73,000 to an address in Brooklyn, New York.

Through coordinated efforts with local businesses and financial institutions, MCSO deputies were able to recover the cashier's check and facilitate the return of the funds to the victims' bank account before the money was lost.

Crimes committed include: 532(a) PC - Fraud; 368(d)(1) PC - Theft against an elder or dependent adult; 12022.6 PC - Theft over \$50,000; and 12022.65 PC - Acting in concert with two or more persons in the commission of a felony.

The investigation remains ongoing, and anyone with information related to this incident is requested to contact the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office at 707-463-4086 (option 1). Information can also be provided anonymously by calling the non-emergency tip-line at 707-234-2100.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office reminds the public that government agencies and financial institutions will never demand secrecy, request large cash withdrawals, or direct citizens to transfer funds as part of a criminal investigation. Residents are encouraged to verify suspicious communications independently and immediately contact law enforcement and their financial institutions if possibly being targeted by a scam.



Ken Burton speaks with a prospective customer about his beautiful woodwork.

Photos by Mathew Caine

Gifts for Mom

Little Lake Grange hosts Mother's Day Craft Fair as fundraiser for new roof

Old roofs leak. This is very true about the Little Lake Grange. When it pours, buckets need to be placed in strategic locations to avoid getting water on the floor and creating an even bigger problem. In order to rectify this situation, the grange is attempting to raise money, and has been for quite a while, for a new metal roof that will outlast most of the members and the building itself. One of the methods the grange has been utilizing to fundraise is a series of craft fairs like the one they produced last Saturday, May 9. Fifteen vendors offered their artistic wares at prices that would make them attractive to people needing last-minute gifts for Mother's Day.

"We have great hopes for the roof," said Annie Waters, who, along with Tiffany Chandler, created the craft fair. "We've been collecting money for the roof. In fact, this fair is probably putting about \$350 into the roof fund. We think it's going to be about \$500,000 for the roof. We made a mistake years ago and put in a regular roof. Now, we're going to put in a metal roof. It's going to last the lifetime of this building, and all of our descendants won't have to keep putting roofs on the building. We always have to have a barrel over in that corner when it rains," Waters said while pointing toward the stage. "We've been saving money for the roof for years."

The vendors afforded an opportunity to have interesting conversations, to learn what they created and how they did so. Ken

Burton, when he's not clowning or blowing up balloon animals, creates some very fine wooden objects. "These bottle stoppers work for a number of things," explained Burton, referring to an assortment of sleek stoppers. "They can be used for wine, so I put them in the wineries. They can also be used for hard alcohol and olive oil. They're all made in Louisiana where I took my grinding school. I was a machinist for a while. I learned how to grind. I have a lathe and I'm about to buy another one. I just got asked to teach, so I'll end up teaching one of these days."

Carol Jean Freeman, of CJ Designs, makes cups and apparel. "I also take custom orders and make tote bags, shirts, hoodies. The designs come in UVDTs [ultraviolet direct-to-film]. I learned about it all on TikTok. They come in a pre-drilled double-walled acrylic cup," said Freeman.

Brandy Maxwell, of Brandy's Creative Corner, can be seen at many of the local craft fairs. She creates a variety of beaded objects, including "necklaces, earrings, pens, pencils, styluses, bottle openers, breakaway lanyards. All kinds of fun stuff for Mother's Day," explained Maxwell.

Patricia Campbell places whimsical designs and sayings on bags and other objects, such as: "It turns out this IS my circus and these ARE my monkeys." "I told my daughter to watch her attitude. She told me that for complaints about my

Read the rest of **Gifts** Over on page 11



Gigi Pohlsen shows her decorative worm couples for plants or the garden, at left, and ceramic gnomes and flower candle holders, above.

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Above, left: Vicky and Theresa make these colorful organic flowers out of pine cones.



Above, right: Brandy Maxwell, of Brandy's Creative Corner, makes and sells beaded items, necklaces, earrings, pens, etc. At left: Annie Waters talks with Kelly Viss of Barefoot Forest Homestead. At left, below: Carol Jean Freeman of CJ Designs creates colorful designs on drink containers.



Below, left: People arrive at a steady pace to peruse the crafts at the Mother's Day Craft Fair. Below, right: The crew of Mom Delia's Mexican Street Food makes huaraches, a large tortilla filled or topped with many varieties.



At bottom, left: Maria Reyes has too many beaded items to show inside the grange hall. At bottom, right: Richard "RJ" Jergenson and Annie Waters are a major part of the Little Lake Grange.



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Eric Hart will bring practical operations experience to county government, modernize broken and outdated systems and process, and build a service-first culture that helps residents, businesses, and communities move forward.

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Titles and affiliations of each individual are provided for identification purposes only. Paid for by Eric Hart for Supervisor 2026. FPCC# 1487857

SPIRITUAL PATHWAYS

Agape Bible Church
290 S. Lenore Ave.
Willits, CA 95490
Where love is first and the Bible is central.
Sunday Services:
10:00 a.m. - Worship
Adult Sunday School 8:30 a.m.
Info? 707-459-1905
www.agapebiblechurch.com

Amazing Grace Assembly of God Church
803 Coast Street
Willits, CA 95490
Worship Service - 5:00 p.m.
Pastor Kris Strickland
EVERYBODY IS WELCOME

Church of Christ
"What must we do to be saved?"
Acts 2:37
1095 S. Main St., Willits
(next to Super 8)
(707) 459-5023
Sunday Bible Study-10:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship-11:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening Service-6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study-7:00 p.m.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
265 Margie Drive
Willits, CA 95490
ALL ARE WELCOME
Sacrament Meeting
Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Eckankar: The Path of Spiritual Freedom
• A University for Soul
• Spiritual Living Courses
• Spiritual Discussions
• ECK Light & Sound Services
More information?
Call 530-224-8703
www.eckankar.org

Grace Community Church
Celebrating Life In Christ
25 Hazel Street, Willits
Worship Service
10 a.m.
For appointments call:
(707) 459-3106

St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church
61 W. San Francisco Ave.
Willits, CA 95490
Father Aaron Bandanadan
Mass times:
Wednesday-Friday 9:00 a.m.
Saturday-5:30 p.m.
Sunday-9:00 a.m. - English
10:30 a.m. - Spanish
Confessions on Saturday
4:45 - 5:15 p.m.
Or by appointment at
707-459-2252

https://stanthonywillits.org/
saintanthonywillits@gmail.com
We welcome All Walks of Faith

St. Francis Episcopal Church
1 North Main Street, Willits
707-272-0177
Sunday Service - 10 a.m.
In-person and on Zoom
Call for information.
ALL ARE WELCOME
The Rev. Betsy Bruneau

St. John Lutheran Church
Sunday Service
10:00 a.m.
(707) 459-2988
24 Mill Creek Drive
Facebook.com/stjohnwillits
ALL ARE WELCOME

Willits Seventh-Day Adventist Church
707-459-5714
Friendly, open worship
Saturdays
Bible Study - 9:30 a.m.
Worship Service - 10:45 a.m.
Zoom Transmission Available.
Wednesday
Prayer Meeting - 7:00 p.m.
399 W. Mendocino Ave.
All are welcome!

Willits United Methodist Church
Labyrinth and Peace Garden
A place to find comfort
where all are welcome
Pastor Jaime Rogers-Fairchild
Sunday Worship at 10:30 am
286 School St. (at Pine)
707-459-2855
wumc@outlook.com
www.willitsumc.org
Facebook: facebook/willitsumc

If you want to be included in this column please call:
April Tweddell
(707) 972-2475
april@willitsweekly.com



Thursday, May 14

Willits Farmers Market: Join your neighbors at Summer Market outdoors at City Park on Commercial Street, Thursday, May 14, from 3 to 5:30 pm, for the freshest produce available, local meat, farm fresh eggs, hot and cold food from local businesses, along with crafts, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more. The market honors EBT and WIC cards and matches benefits to double your dollars.

Book Club at the Library: Come be a part of a welcoming community centered around the love of reading every 2nd Thursday of the month at 3:30 pm, Thursday, May 14 this month, at the Willits Branch Library, 390 East Commercial Street. This club welcomes readers 18 and over to discuss notable books. Titles will be chosen during the meetings.

Friday, May 15

Vendor Market at Adri's Saloon: Shop small, with local vendors, good vibes and community. Friday, May 15, from 3 to 6 pm. Adri's Saloon, 1615 A South Main Street.

'Road Trip' exhibit at Museum: "Road Trip: Discover Mendocino County by way of the Famous Redwood Highway" explores the intriguing history behind the campaign to lure visitors from around the world to the rugged beauty of Northern California, by way of the famous Redwood Highway. Opening reception for "Road Trip" is Friday, May 15 from 5 to 7 pm. Mendocino County Museum, 400 East Commercial Street.

'4 Dogs and a Bone' at WCT: Playwright John Patrick Shanley's hilariously savage Hollywood satire runs through May 17 at Willits Community Theatre, 37 West Van Lane. Directed by Mathew Caine; starring Dayle Deer as Bradley the producer, Zoe Robertson as Brenda the hopeful new starlet, Jeremy Daw as the impressionable writer Victor, and Sarah France as the wily leading lady Collette. Friday, May 15 at 7 pm. Tickets are \$25 and available online at www.wctperformingartscenter.org or at the door.

Seraphin Band at Shanachie: award-winning emcee and master beatboxer Mr. BMMNM headlines a special Stage Presents Tour stop on Friday, May 15 at 8 pm, celebrating the 25th anniversary of Stay Human. With Devi Genoune, Sol Doc, King Lung, and Nevaeh Travis. Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street.

COLUMN | AT THE MOVIES

"The Sheep Detectives"

The Story: Full-length, live action mystery-comedy. George Hardy, the Shepherd (Hugh Jackman) reads murder mysteries to his attentive herd of quite opinionated and loquacious sheep. Alas, poor George is murdered. The sheep are heartsick. They decide to solve the killing, and capture the killer. The "going about" of their impressive detective work brings to light dastardly Plots, shocking Revelations, surprising Romance, and finally Justice. Plus genuinely sad tears, heartfelt laughter, and vindication for the talkative sheep.

My Thoughts: Scored 93% on Rotten Tomatoes and 94% "Fresh" audience rating. Parents: This flick is truly funny and silly, and yet there are a number of deaths in the story of both sheep and man. You know your own children's reaction to a death in a movie. In "The Sheep Detectives," the sheep believe that sheep don't die, they just go up into the sky and become clouds. That's the story they tell themselves, but then, finally, the sheep come to realize that their shepherd has actually left them, and are quite saddened. This movie vindicates life through action and the brave pursuit of justice. Loving kindness triumphs, and I left the theater feeling good.

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

Saturday, May 16

Brooktrails Fire Department Golf Tournament: This fundraiser for the Brooktrails Fire Department at the Brooktrails Golf course on Saturday, May 16 features a Golf Tournament, a Putting Competition, and a Ribs BBQ Cookoff. Tournament starts at 9 am; entry is \$50 per person; contact Jeramy at 707-367-8565 to register.

Golden Rule Yard Sale at Ridgewood Ranch: Golden Rule Mobile Village's popular yard sale is set for Saturday, May 16 from 9 am to 3 pm and Sunday, May 17, 9 am to 1 pm. Two days of treasure hunting, with 60+ households' worth of spring cleaning, all in one place, at bargain prices. Golden Rule Mobile Village, Ridgewood Ranch, Highway 101 just south of Willits. No early birds, please. Bring your friends, bring your truck, bring your cash—and come ready to score.

Skunk Train Railcoaster Debut: The Skunk Train's "Railcoaster" adventures start Saturday, May 16, and leave from the Willits Depot at 9:30 am, with limited departures available Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday through the summer. "Glide with electric assist across elevated terrain, power down steep grades, and surge through a historic tunnel before rolling into a stunning redwood vista for a picnic lunch." Tickets for 2 (1 Railcoaster) are \$390.22—ask for your local discount! More info: www.skunktrain.com/railcoaster/

Medicare 101 Workshop at the Library: Free Medicare workshop by Sky Savarese for community members turning 65, retiring, or simply wanting a clearer understanding of their Medicare options. Saturday, May 16, from 1 to 2 pm, at the Willits Library, 390 East Commercial.

Refreshments provided.
BUS FET at Black Bart Road: BUS FET features music by Tangled Ends, Weevilism, Splynter, Them, and Yxng Lockwxxd. Camping and food space available. Saturday, May 16; show starts at 6 pm; \$5 entry; 16025 Black Bart Road.

'4 Dogs and a Bone' at WCT: Playwright John Patrick Shanley's hilariously savage Hollywood satire, Saturday, May 16 at 7 pm, at Willits Community Theatre, 37 West Van Lane. \$25. See Friday, May 15 listing for more details.

Hillshaker at Shanachie: Clay Hawkins and Andrew Robertson bring rapid-fire fingerstyle slide guitar and honest, heartfelt songwriting to create a unique brand of acoustic rock on Saturday, May 16 at 8 pm at Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street.

Sunday, May 17

'4 Dogs and a Bone' at WCT: Playwright John Patrick Shanley's hilariously savage Hollywood satire; closing show Sunday, May 17 at 2 pm, at Willits Community Theatre, 37 West Van Lane. \$25. See Friday, May 15 listing for more details.

Wednesday, May 20

Twining Time at Brickhouse Coffee: Wednesday lunchtime live music series features Twining Time, with singer/songwriters John Wagenet and Anita Blu, with an eclectic mix of Folk, Country, Bluegrass, Blues, Americana. Wednesday, May 20, noon to 2 pm at Brickhouse Coffee, 3 South Main Street.

History Makers Family Activity at the Museum: Join us every Wednesday in May for a drop-in Family Activity anytime between 2 and 4:30 pm. May 20: California Dogface Butterfly Art. May 27: Denim Heart Weaving. Mendocino County Museum, 400 East Commercial Street.

Willits Stamp Club: Monthly meeting at the Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. Wednesday, May 20 from 5 to 6 pm. Bring your collection, and enjoy an evening perusing stamps. Refreshments provided. More info: talsofam@pacfic.net.

Thursday, May 21

Bit & Bite at the Museum: Join the Friends of the Mendocino County Museum for light refreshments, history, and conversation. Willits Frontier Days Vice President Marcy Barry will talk about the history of this beloved community tradition that she's supported for 31 years and will share the special events planned for the upcoming 100th year celebration of Willits Frontier Days. Thursday, May 21 at 12:30 to 2 pm, at the Willits Library, 390 East Commercial.

Willits Farmers Market: Join your neighbors at Summer Market outdoors at City Park on Commercial Street, Thursday, May 21, from 3 to 5:30 pm, for the freshest produce available, local meat, farm fresh eggs, hot and cold food from local businesses, along with crafts, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more. The market honors EBT and WIC cards and matches benefits to double your dollars.

Avenues to Wellness at WCA: The Howard Foundation's ATW speaker series presents "Why are People So Sick? - Lyme, Mold & Mystery Illness Demystified," by Terri Turner, D.O. Dr. Turner is an integrative holistic physician who practices Functional Medicine, focusing on uncovering the root cause of illness. Her specialties include Lyme disease, women's health, bio-identical hormone therapy, chronic fatigue, and fibromyalgia. Thursday, May 21, 6 to 7 pm, Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. FREE to the public. Wheelchair accessible. More info: 456-9676.

Friday, May 22

Free Community Breakfast at Methodist Church: The Willits United Methodist Church and the Willits Shelter Action Group host a free community breakfast on Friday, May 22, from 8:30 to 10:30 am. With a wide selection of breakfast goodies, juices, coffee and rolls, at the Methodist Church, 286 School Street, across from the Grange.

Magician Robert Goleman returns to WCT: Fort Bragg magician and mentalist Robert Goleman brings "The Joy of Astonishment" to the Willits Community Theatre, 37 West Van Lane, Friday, May 22 and Saturday, May 23 at 7 pm. This "nothing short of astonishing" show opens with traditional magic and seamlessly transitions into acts of mentalism, featuring extensive audience interaction and participation. \$25, early tickets advised, as Goleman's Willits shows in 2024 and 2025 all sold out; available online at: wctperformingartscenter.org, or at the door.

Cosmic Family Band at Shanachie: local Mendocino County jam band, sharing original music that is a reflection of being a part of this amazing community. Friday, May 22 at 8 pm at Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street.

Saturday, May 23

Y'Art Sale at WCA: Willits Center for the Arts' annual sale of art goodies: Ribbon, Glitter, canvas, Paints, Inks, Easels, Art & Crafting Supplies, Tools and lots more recycled treasures. Saturday, May 23 and Sunday, May 24 from 11 am to 5 pm. At Humboldt Street near Commercial Street, follow the signs.

Magician Robert Goleman returns to WCT: Magician and mentalist Robert Goleman brings "The Joy of Astonishment" to the Willits Community Theatre, Friday, May 22 and Saturday, May 23 at 7 pm. This "nothing short of astonishing" show opens with traditional magic and seamlessly transitions into acts of mentalism, featuring extensive audience interaction and participation. See Saturday, May 23 listing for more details.

Sunday, May 24

Y'Art Sale at WCA: the second day for Willits Center for the Arts' annual sale of art goodies. Sunday, May 24 from 11 am to 5 pm. See Saturday, May 23 listing for details.

2026 Willits Car & Bike Show: Willits Chamber of Commerce presents the annual free Willits Car & Bike Show, Sunday, May 24, 10 am to 3 pm, in downtown Willits. Featuring 100s of cars, live music by Soul Circus, food trucks, beer from Northspur Brewing Co., vendor row on the green, activities and much more.

OBITUARY |

Ned ‘Sonny’ Hatfield

Ned “Sonny” LeRoy Hatfield, 86, of Willits, California, passed away on April 17, 2026.

Born October 15, 1939, in Sacramento, California, Sonny was the son of Lucille (Cardoza) Hatfield and Ned Avis Hatfield. The only son and third of four children, he was known to many simply as “Sonny,” a man who valued his independence and lived life on his own terms.

Sonny was inducted into the United States Army in June 1961 and was stationed at Fort Ord, California until his discharge in November 1963.

After his military service, he began a long and dedicated career behind the wheel. He first worked as a truck driver for Fortuna Lumber Trucking Company, before following his passion for the outdoors as a commercial fisherman in Fort Bragg. Eventually returning to trucking, he worked locally for Cooper Trucking, Landis Morgan, and Nolan Trucking, and later became a long-haul driver.

THE RED POPPY: 106 YEARS OF REMEMBRANCE

The American Legion, Willits Post 174 will be distributing crepe poppies at various locations through May 16 (Armed Forces Day) in memoriam to those who paid the ultimate price for our freedom. Please join us by displaying this flower of remembrance.

The poppy story: After World War I, the poppy flourished in Europe. Scientists attributed the growth to soils in France and Belgium becoming enriched with lime from the rubble left by the war. From the dirt and mud grew a beautiful red poppy.

The red poppy came to symbolize the blood shed during battle following the 1915 publication of the wartime poem “In Flanders Fields.” The poem was written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, M.D. while serving on the front lines.

On September 27, 1920, the poppy became the official flower of the American Legion family to memorialize the soldiers who fought and died during the war. In 1924, the distribution of poppies became a national program of the American Legion.

The Friday before Memorial Day, May 23, 2026, is National Poppy Day.



He found a deep sense of freedom both on the open road and at sea. Later in his career, Sonny drove and dispatched for Bud-Dee Trucking before starting his own business, Ned L. Trucking. He concluded his working years with Cliff Walker Trucking, retiring in 2013.

When he wasn't working, Sonny could usually be found fishing, hunting, or at the casino, enjoying the simple routines that defined much of his life.

Sonny is survived by his stepson, Kenny Knight; his daughters, Karla Van Hagen, Angela Hatfield, and Lisa Stevenson; his half-brother, Charlie Grimes; and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Neva Hatfield; his son, Steve; his sisters, Marlene, Corky, and Barbara; and his half-brother, Ronnie Grimes.

In accordance with his wishes, cremation has taken place, and a private family celebration of life will be held.



Celebration of Life for Clarence Holmes

Join us to celebrate the life and memory of Clarence R. Holmes, whose love and kindness touched the lives of so many in the Laytonville community and beyond.

We invite our community, family, and friends to share memories in honor of a life well-lived. May 23, 2026 at 1 pm, 47000 Meadow Lane, Laytonville. Pot luck; we will provide meat and beverages. NO ALCOHOL, please.

— Roger Ham, Post Adjutant

Avenues to Wellness presents Dr. Terri Turner on ‘Why Are People So Sick?’, Thursday, May 21

Submitted by ATW

Avenues to Wellness presents “Why are People So Sick? – Lyme, Mold & Mystery Illness Demystified” by Terri Turner, DO, on Thursday, May 21, 6 to 7 pm, Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. FREE to the public. Wheelchair accessible.

For 31 years, Dr. Turner has worked with patients facing complex and multiple diagnosis medical conditions, including Lyme disease, mold exposure, and multiple system “mystery illnesses.” In this talk, she breaks down these confusing health challenges and guides us in the search for answers.

Turner is an integrative holistic physician who combines alternative therapies, osteopathic manipulation, and herbal medicine with the best of conventional medical care. Board certified in Internal

Medicine and Neuromuscular Medicine, she has previously trained medical students and has started three osteopathic medical schools.



Terri Turner, DO
Why Are People So Sick?:
Lyme, Mold & Mystery Illness
Demystified
Thurs May 21, 6-7pm

Since 1995, Dr. Turner has practiced Functional Medicine, focusing on uncovering the root-cause of illness. Her specialties include Lyme disease, women's health, bio-identical hormone therapy, chronic fatigue, and fibromyalgia. She practices at Lake County Tribal Health and in Sebastopol.

Avenues to Wellness is a community-based wellness program of the Frank R. Howard Foundation. They offer a speaker series the third Thursday of the month at the Willits Center for the Arts. Visit: avenuestowellness.org for an online archive of past events. Call 456-9676 for more information.

More of **Wildfire** | From page 2

An hour-long virtual public workshop to explain the grant process and requirements was set to be held on May 13, 2026. Check www.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/grants/wildfire-prevention-grants to see if the workshop will be posted online.

The Wildfire Prevention Grants Program will also host a series of “office hours” to assist with various steps in the Wildfire Prevention grants process, including answering questions. Please check the Wildfire Prevention Grants webpage for exact dates, times, and locations for each office hour event. A recording of each will also be made available on the Wildfire Prevention grants webpage. At least 40 percent of available grant funding will support projects that deliver direct and meaningful benefits to disadvantaged communities.

“California’s strength lies in the layers of resilience we build together. As we face a changing wildfire environment, the state remains steadfast in supporting communities with the resources and partnerships needed to safeguard our future,” said California State Fire Marshal Daniel Berlant. “Our commitment is clear: we understand the challenge, and we are fully dedicated to creating a safer, more resilient California for generations to come.”

For more information about CAL FIRE’s Wildfire Prevention grants, including previously awarded projects and application details, visit CAL FIRE Grants at www.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/grants/wildfire-prevention-grants

Senior Center menu

Willits Senior Center is serving lunch in its indoor dining room, Monday through Friday, from 11:45 am to 1 pm. Drive-through lunches are available from 12 to 12:45 pm, outside the Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road.

Thursday, May 14: Mediterranean Chicken Sandwich

Friday, May 15: Carnitas Burrito Wet w/Green Sauce

Monday, May 18: Chicken Salad Sandwich

Tuesday, May 19: Pulled Pork Sandwich

Wednesday, May 20: Meat Loaf, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy

Thursday, May 21: Asian Chicken Wrap

Friday, May 22: Hot Dogs w/Chili

Activities: Bingo on Friday nights, 5 to 7 pm. Exercise class weekday mornings from 9 to 10 am.

Meals on Wheels: The Senior Center Meals on Wheels program delivers lunch Monday through Friday, excepting holidays. To sign up call Juliana at 459-6826, who can help fill out the application form. Call 459-6826 the day before needed to schedule home meal delivery. Delivered throughout Willits.

Transportation for seniors: Call 459-5556 to schedule. Pick up and drop off for grocery shopping, banking, doctors’ appointments. Senior Center Thrift Shop: 459-2176

The Senior Center is in need of volunteers to help with the many activities here at the center, including volunteer Meals on Wheels drivers.

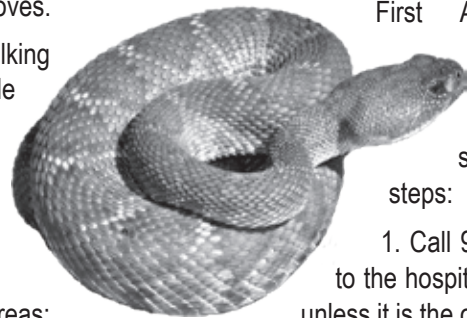
“Volunteers are one-third of our workforce, which allows us to offer many services to our members and community.” To learn more about volunteering: 459-6826.

The rest of **Snakes** | From page 1

- Stay Alert:** Always watch where you step or place your hands, especially in tall grass, leaf litter, brush piles, or near logs and rocks.
- Protective Clothing:** Ensure appropriate clothing is worn, including boots, pants, and gloves.
- Use Tools:** A walking stick or trekking pole can help deter snakes by creating vibrations that encourage them to move away.
- Avoid Risky Areas:** Do not climb on rocks, logs, or piles of wood without checking for snakes first. Stick to well-used trails when feasible.
- Minimize Attractants:** Control rodent populations and secure pet food or bird seed to reduce prey that draws snakes near structures.

Recognizing Rattlesnakes: Rattlesnakes may use their rattle as a warning, but they do not always rattle before striking. They can strike up to one-third of their body length and are often camouflaged, so careful observation is essential.

California is home to nearly 50 native snake species, including 7 species of rattlesnakes. They vary in color from reddish to golden tan, often with hourglass-shaped bands. Visit <https://californiaherps.com/identification/snakesid/rattlesnakes.html> to find out more about rattlesnakes and how to ID them.



First Aid and Response: Immediate medical attention is critical if bitten. If bitten, you should take the following steps:

- Call 911 immediately and get to the hospital. Do not drive yourself unless it is the only option.
- Keep calm and still. Lay or sit down with the bite at a neutral position to slow venom spread.
- Remove constrictive items. This includes rings, watches, or tight clothing near the bite area.
- Clean the wound. Wash with soap and water and cover with clean, dry dressing.
- Do not attempt to self-treat the wound. Do not cut the wound, attempt to suck out venom, or apply a tourniquet.
- Help identify the snake. If safe, take a photo from a distance to help medical personnel identify the snake.



The rest of **Laytonville** | From page 1

their ideas about addressing the problems in the county, and what qualifies them to do the supervisor job. Then each candidate presented prepared closing remarks.

If your question did not get asked at the forum, questions can still be submitted by email to: 2026.lville.supe.forum@gmail.com. The questions will be sent to each candidate. A video of the meeting is posted on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScjofjxN160. The audio can be enhanced by using the YouTube “Close Captions” option or by clicking the “Show Transcript” option.

We would like to thank Supervisor John Haschak “for channeling Jim Shields,” the late publisher of the Observer, by suggesting that we host a forum in Laytonville.

Thank you to Jayma, Rolo and Chiquita for opening up Harwood Hall. Thanks to Alison Pernell for moderating, Darwin Long and the Laytonville Grange for providing the PA and the zoom mic. Big thanks to Beth Hogan for providing snacks and drinks for the audience, Mackenzie O’Donnell, Paolo Shere and Dave Zoratti for setting up the room, all the people that submitted questions, and especially the candidates that attended.

More of **Q&A** | From page 1

How do we restore, the restorative process of our land, right?

My ancestors are in this ground, and I know it's about 13,000 years because Caltrans pulled out artifacts that said so. And my people believe we've been here since the beginning of time. So I would just ask you, even if you didn't vote for me, think about that. Think about how we continue going on without destroying and taking everything. This is a beautiful land and I know most of you have moved here from other areas because you love it so much. So I just ask what are we setting forward for our youth? What are our generations? What are we leaving them? There's a lot of great projects that are happening in this county and one of them happens to be over there in Noyo with the flotation devices that are making energy, that are desalinating water. So let's keep working towards those types of projects. Thank you.

Clay Romero: Probably at the very core of everything we are in water. And this is something that we have to be very very careful of. I grew up on the north side of Steel Lane in Laytonville, there's a lot of water there because of the underground tributary that runs underneath that that property as well as several others. But I know that the people down the street when I was quite young, we were hauling water to their place because all they had left was mud. I'm very mindful about this. Maybe it's because I've just been here for so long, and I've seen so much of it. And sure, there's other things that we could be very careful about. The trees we have – there's some very nice things here. But when it comes down right down to it, I don't think we're going to be running into a problem with water and to protect it? The best that we can do is maybe ration it on those occasions when we have droughts, but at the end of the day, we're beholden to. I don't know, God, the weather patterns.... We can't just make it rain. Thank you.

Russell Green: Well, as far as a favorite, I'd probably have to say Lake Mendocino because I really like boating there and wakeboarding. And that kind of comes back to the issue of the diversion in the dams that we talked about earlier and why it would be not very smart to let those come down. Obviously our huge redwood trees up by Leggett, Dos Rios River. And like Clay said, everything revolves around the watershed, specifically the interconnected system of rivers, aquifers, and forests that make this place survivable. It's everything at once. It's economic – without reliable water, cannabis, wine, agriculture collapse. It's environmental. The redwoods and the salmon runs depend on stream flow and groundwater. It's our quality of life. Every resident, rich or poor, depends on the same aquifers and wells. And then there's justice. Water scarcity hits marginalized communities first and hardest. As far as a specific asset, I'd probably say the Eel River watershed. It's the largest in the county, supports the most agriculture, faces the most pressure from agriculture and climate change, and has the most to lose. Championing its restoration isn't abstract, it's concrete work that benefits Willits, Laytonville and the coast. Thank you.

Eric Hart: I'm actually going to agree with Buffy here. The diversity of the environment in this county is my favorite thing. It's what attracted me here. It's what I love about it. I apologize to the person who asked the question, but I can't pick one particular thing. As far as what we will do to protect the environment here, mankind is at the top of the food chain. We have the power. Whether you believe that we were put there by some higher force or whether we put ourselves there, the conclusion is the same: That we have a responsibility to act as good stewards for the environment. This is for several reasons. The beauty I don't think I need to convince anybody of that. The responsibility that we have morally to the environment. I don't think I need to convince anybody of that either. What is also important and helps people understand why the environment is a priority for us and why we should protect it, is that it's also one of the biggest definers of public health. The air we breathe, the water we drink, all of that impacts health. It's asthma rates, it's cancer rates = all of that is impacted by how we treat our environment. In addition, it is one of our strongest economic assets. The recreation, the agriculture, the tourism, the fishing – all of these things bring money into our county and make it important that we protect it. So, it is not just a moral issue, it's an economic issue and it's a public health issue. Helping everybody understand that whether they're an environmentalist or not is how we get everybody on board in protecting the environment.

QUESTION: Recent investments and planning efforts aim to diversify the local economy following the decline of the cannabis industry and the impact of the 101 bypass. What strategies would you pursue to diversify and support economic development in our district and the county?

Clay Romero: OK, to support economic development. A lot of this goes back to ... well, the diversity part of it is whatever the people would like to do. And it should be in the county's best interest to make sure that whoever is pulling out a permit is going to be successful in doing it because if they're successful in doing it, over time, those successes and that money is going to come back to support the county better, and I would very much like to see that. I know as far as the cannabis industry goes, it's been hit very very hard. I'm not sure how well this is actually going to pan out over time, but I think now is the time that we ought to just take the 10A17 ordinance and set it to one side. I don't expect there's going to be any appreciable amount of money coming from this. I would hope that there would be a lot of other things that would take its place. Anything that's physical in particular would be very very important.

I know when I look at Silicon Valley for example, well they're successful because of silicon, but I certainly don't want it quite that big here. I think that would be a little bit abusive for this community. But we do need a physical item that will take its place. As far as cannabis goes – I'm not a cannabis user, I'm just a fair businessman. And I would very very much like to see cannabis treated like any other agricultural product. Do you have enough water for it? Do you have enough power to do what you need to do to process or pack it? and that that would probably go a long ways towards making things go a lot better for us. Thank you.

Russell Green: To me, everything comes back to Planning & Building. We can't just make people do economic activity here. We have to make it attractive for them to do so. And so far, in my experience, it's been obstruction all the way. This seat obviously only has one vote out of five on the board, but I would entertain something like essentially a menu for permits where you can walk in, you can pick your permit that you want, you pay your fee, and there's not much red tape after that. Obviously there's going to be issues of density and some check boxing, but it doesn't have to be anything near what it has been so far. No more call for consultation black boxes. Every permit has a flat fee, a required docs list, and a timeline guarantee. There's things like pre-approved plans, create a library for vetted ADU designs or ag buildings. Templates, commercial facades, just any way that we can make it easier to get the permitting done. You might have a concierge service for major employers, if someone's bringing 20 jobs, then they get a dedicated staffer who walks them through the department and actually gets the permits through, because all we can do is get out of the way and hope that we can get whatever economic activity will come here. Also something like a sunset clause where if the county doesn't respond within 30 days, your permit just gets approved. Something like that. Another thing is remote work infrastructure like broadband expansion would be great. Starlink has helped with that but you know good internet will make a lot of remote jobs feasible here that weren't before. Just like I said basically in my experience all the problems have stemmed from not being able to get the permit from the government itself. So, back to rolling out the red carpet instead of the red tape, and getting people permissions to do whatever it is that they want to do within reason.

Eric Hart: I think the last long-term successful economy in in Mendocino was the tribal economy. I mean, they were thousands and thousands and thousands of years with no problems. Since then, we've been boom bust, boom bust, boom bust. And we need to get away from that concept. Those are great money makers, but we need to have a better core structure for our economy here. That means we need to be encouraging businesses that bring money into the county, not just circulate money and not just extract money. We need to encourage local ownership of businesses and industry. The external ownerships, the larger corporations that come in with, you know, 20 jobs that are low-paying – we're not going to say no, but that's not who we should be supporting. We should be promoting the ones that keep the money in here and aren't extracting it out and aren't extracting our resources. We need to make it easier for small businesses to operate. That goes back to what I was talking about earlier about making changes in the county culture and helping the people who work there find a way to “Yes” for our residents.

We need to grow the job skills that we have locally with local trade education. MCOE has done a great job with that. So has Mendocino College. I'm really looking forward to the new center that's opening up here with fire, trade, and healthcare in Willits. I Read the rest of **Q&A** | Over on page 11

The Joy of Astonishment

featuring
Robert Goleman

an Evening of
MAGIC and Mentalism

\$25

MAY 22ND & 23RD 7:00 PM
wctperformingartscenter.org
37 West Van Lane, Willits, CA

Magician Robert Goleman brings 'The Joy of Astonishment' to WCT, May 22 and 23

By Steve Hellman

Only Fort Bragg magician Robert Goleman can bring "The Joy of Astonishment – An Evening of Magic and Mentalism" to the Willits Community Theatre on May 22 and 23 at 7 pm. Goleman's dynamic and engaging two-hour event opens with traditional magic and seamlessly transitions into acts of mentalism, featuring extensive audience interaction and participation.

Audiences and critics alike have described Goleman's show as "nothing short of astonishing." A truly mind-bending and unforgettable evening.

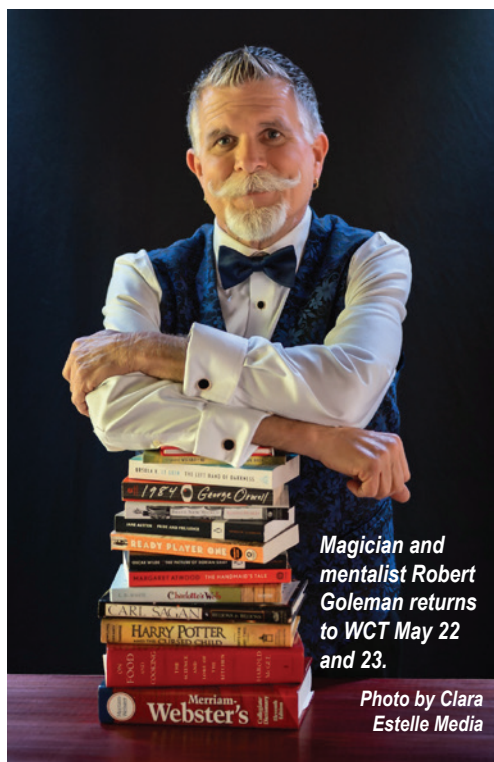
Goleman says, "The Joy of Astonishment" is more than just a magic show – it's a heartfelt invitation to rediscover joy, awe, and humor, at a time when we could all use a touch of wonder." Enchanting you with his own brand of magic and gasp-inducing feats of mentalism, Goleman crafts experiences that will leave you surprised, inspired, and grinning from ear to ear.

"The real magic happens not just on stage," Goleman says, "but in the moments shared with those around you." He promises to lift spirits, rekindle curiosity, and remind us that even in uncertain times, the power of joy, laughter, and astonishment can transform our outlook – and bring us closer together in the most extraordinary ways.

"In a world that often feels divided, a night of magic is a rare chance to connect and to celebrate the wonder that still exists all around us." Join Goleman for this remarkable opportunity to experience the emotion of intense delight, and a great sense of surprise and wonder. You are guaranteed to leave with a smile, and unforgettable memories.

Early tickets are recommended, as his previous shows at WCT in 2024 and 2025 have all sold out. Tickets are \$25 and available online at: wctperformingartscenter.org, or at the door.

Season sponsors for WCT are NC Financial, KZYX-Z Radio, KLLG Radio, Penserra Group, Big Fish Construction, the Community Foundation of Mendocino County, and Jerry Drew Painting.



Magician and mentalist Robert Goleman returns to WCT May 22 and 23.

Photo by Clara Estelle Media

Quiet Petra

Petra is a shy, sweet girl. It takes time for her to warm up and to know she is safe in her environment. She does well on a leash with humans she feels safe with. Petra will take time to get used to her surroundings. She will need a quiet home with little traffic of people coming in and out. Petra will need time to bond with her immediate family.

To learn more about Petra, or to view other adoptable animals, visit www.milofoundation.org or the Milo Foundation Sanctuary Facebook page. The sanctuary is currently doing pet adoptions by appointment only. Please complete a pet-adoption application before requesting an appointment. You can reach the Milo Foundation at 459-4900.

Miss Molly Mac

Molly Mac is new from Lake County Animal Control. She is one smart pup, with a curious demeanor and a gentle and loving heart.

She's learned that treats are a very good thing and they're a great way to open her up and earn her trust. With a little patience and a few snacks, her personality really starts to shine.

Come adopt Molly Mac and help guide her through this life.

The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino is located at 9700 Uva Drive in Redwood Valley. Feel free to visit us, no appointments needed! We are open

his evaluation. As new people walked in and out, he was curious and engaging. Tommy walks nicely on leash and enjoys getting out for walks. We want this young dog (about 9 months old) to be adopted into a home where he will know kindness, and be inundated with TLC ... because he deserves nothing less.

The Mendocino County Animal Shelter, located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah, is open to the public from 9:30 am to 5 pm Tuesday through Friday, and 10 am to 3 pm on Saturdays (closed for lunch each day from 1 to 1:30 pm). Make sure to pre-fill out the adoption application available at www.mendocinanimalshelter.com. Call 707-463-4427 for more information.

The rest of Q&A

We also need to increase local higher education access, so four-year programs so people can learn locally and not leave the county to get their four-year degree. And then they can start businesses here locally. And that may mean working with Mendocino College and Sonoma State – Sonoma State actually offers four-year programs here, just nobody really knows that they do that. We also need to encourage growth in areas where we already excel. We've got a really peculiar skill set, being a rural county. We've got a lot of creativity. We can take that and turn that into offering rural products and rural processes for other counties to take up. And that's my time. Thank you.

Buffey Wright Bourassa: For me, the priority is supporting what's already in place, our small businesses, our local food production, tourism that benefits economies, and our workforce training that connects people. That also includes sectors like healthcare, education, and skilled trades. So I've been out and I've been having conversations, and I think this is really important. I was talking with Assemblymember Chris Rogers a few weeks ago and he had mentioned GO-Biz and I was, like, what is GO-biz? So GO-biz is really important for us to recognize, because California has already created a framework through the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development – GO-biz. And California jobs first. And Mendocino County is part of the Redwood Region in that effort. It's been going on for quite some time. I've been a part of the Redwood Region as a tribal members, showing up to those meetings via Zoom. So the regional plan recognizes the strengths of rural counties like ours and focuses on sectors that fit our economy, including agriculture, food production, tourism, outdoor recreation, clean energy, and workforce development. So to me the question isn't whether or not we have a plan, it's we do and are we organized enough to get on board? We don't want to be left behind. So as a supervisor, I'd work to make sure that District 3 is not left behind. That means aligning county priorities with the state that's already investing in this. Also making sure that it makes sense for us and educating our community, because a lot of our community doesn't know about these things. When I had mentioned it to anyone, they were like what are you talking about Buffy? So I made sure to do a little research, and I'll continue to do those kind of things. And how this looks in our county, just for an example, is the cannabis equity grant. And you can go to the Mendocino County website, and you can look that up and see that it's brought in, I think about \$6 million to help relieve some of the pressures. Thank you.

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CLASSIFIEDS

Brown Bag Lunch Program
Every Saturday at 1 pm sack lunches are served by local churches, community organizations, and families at Bud Snider Park on East Commercial. Come at 1 pm to be assured a lunch!

Do you need food?
Willits Food Bank, 344 Railroad Avenue, Willits, CA 95490. Open Wednesdays & Fridays, 11 am to 4:30 pm. New Client Choice model where you select your own items. Bring shopping bags. Bring an I.D. Info: (707) 459-3333

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LEGAL NOTICES

Willits Weekly can run legal notices including fictitious business name statements, foreclosure notices, storage unit auctions, and more. Contact us for more information at willitsweekly@gmail.com

ww608
Fictitious Business Name Statement
2026-F0181
The following person or persons are doing business as **Indigenously-Rooted, 307 Creekside Dr., Willits, CA 95490; 707-354-2988.**
Registered owner: Antonio Martin Amador, 307 Creekside Dr., Willits, CA 95490.
This business is conducted by an individual.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A.
FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk Recorder on May 7, 2026.
/s/ Antonio Martin Amador
Publication Dates: May 14, 21, 28, June 4, 2026

The rest of Gleaners

an element of surprise and unpredictability in what people find at the sale, which makes for a fun event.

In the midst of inflating prices for everything, the Gleaners chose to keep plant prices low to encourage Willits residents to grow their own food and beauty. The group knows from experience what abundance can come from home gardens and orchards that are well-tended.

Proceeds from the sale, which included donations, surpassed \$3,700, and will be used to cover Gleaner expenses and to offer grants to local farmers who would like to improve their productivity.

If you would like to volunteer to glean fruit this summer or fall, or if you would like to apply for a small farm grant and live in inland Mendocino County, email gratefulgleanersofwillits@gmail.com or leave your name and a phone number on the Gleaner voicemail at (707) 367-7391.

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Senegalese guest artists visit La Vida Charter School for drumming intensive

By Jaclyn Luna for La Vida Charter School

La Vida Charter School students and staff were delighted with a Senegalese drumming lesson from guest artists Saliou M'Boup and Bara M'Boup. The father-and-son duo taught three lessons at the school on Tuesday for elementary and middle school students, and one on Wednesday for high school students. They brought with them plenty of drums and knowledge to share.

Saliou opened the lesson by talking about different types of drums and showing students the djembe, then transitioning to talk about the continent of Africa, various countries in Africa, the people and the over 200 languages spoken in the continent. He said, "One of the ways that people are able to communicate, even if they don't speak the same language, is they use the drum."

Students learned about the break, and the three main sounds played on the djembe; the bass, tone, and slap. Together with Saliou and Bara, students got hands-on experience playing and singing a song called, "Cuckoo." Curator Leyna Lightman, who coordinates the guest artist series at La Vida, said of the primary elementary class's performance: "Most volume of the day! Smallest bodies, most volume!"

Saliou and Bara brought drums they had made a few days earlier at an animal-to-drum making workshop. The drums had been crafted using the hide of a goat named Benjamin that was raised on Ridgewood Ranch. The meat from the animal was made into birria and was served at a fundraiser for food access.

Students got to feel and hear what the drums sounded like during the drying process. Saliou explained the drums were both made from the same goat that was raised on the ranch. He said: "It all came from this land. It is very special that we were able to make these and bring them, and share them with you." The natural curiosity of the children led to a discussion of the different materials used to make the other drums such as cowhide, and some drums that are made of plastic.

Saliou talked about the healing nature of drums. He said, "Music is healing." He explained that human bodies are made up of 70% water. He talked about the vibrations of music and how they can be seen if you place a glass of water next to a speaker. He stated: "That's the vibration of that frequency going

through the water. The water will pick up on that, and it will change the molecular structure of the water, so it's actually moving around as the sound is going through." He went on to explain that all instruments made from wood, skin and rings have a natural frequency and when they are played together, he said: "It is tuning the water in our body to a healing frequency."

To demonstrate this concept, Saliou had students and teachers put their arms in a djembe one at a time to feel what the djembe feels like when being played. He played the drum while audience members felt the vibrations travel through their bodies.

Saliou and Bara traveled to Mendocino from Southern California to be part of the animal-to-drum workshop, drumming lessons at La Vida, and a community drum activation meal where the first beat on the newly made drums was performed. "Saliou was really touched by his ranch and La Vida connections and how meaningful it was to work with Benjamin-the-Goat's hide," said curator Lightman, "and he chose to donate a drum jointly to La Vida and Ridgewood Ranch, so the people here can keep learning and playing and carrying on West African culture." Saliou presented the dedicated drum at a Ridgewood Ranch dinner and during a meeting with La Vida high school students.

Bara and Saliou brought with them a deep wisdom of West African drumming, as well as performing and teaching children. Bara was born in Senegal and originally traveled to America through his work as the Director of Music for the Ballet Bougarabou, a renowned Senegalese dance company based in Dakar. He has performed with a variety of musicians, including Tina Turner, the Rolling Stones, Stevie Wonder, and Peter Gabriel.

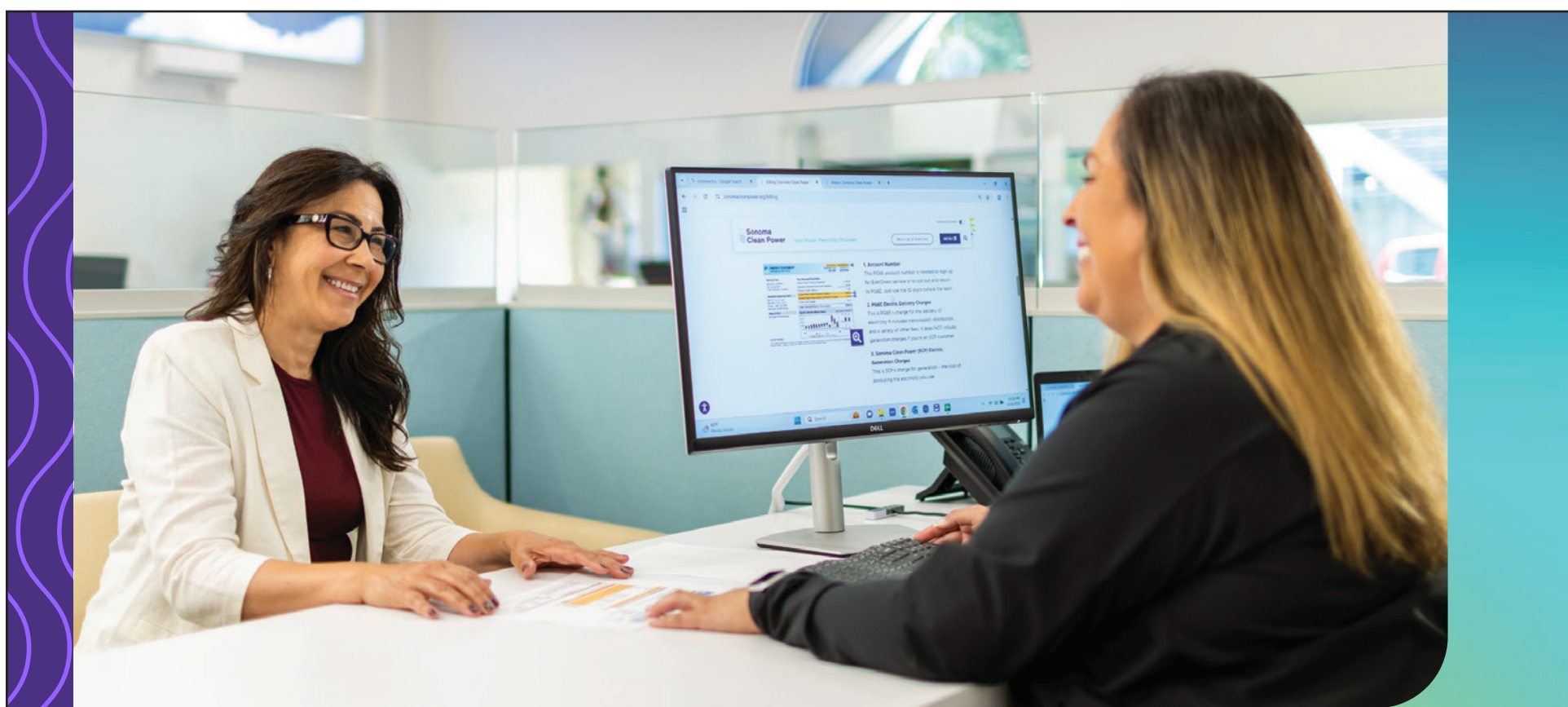
Saliou works at an after-school program in Southern California. He created a West African drumming curriculum that is utilized in the Los Angeles Unified School district and surrounding areas. Lightman said, "Saliou teaches the teachers." He also performs in musical group, The Mafé Ensemble.

Curator Lightman says she is excited about the guest artist series planned for the upcoming 2026/27 school year. For more information on La Vida Charter School, visit <https://lavidaschool.org/>



At top: Master drummers Bara M'Boup and Saliou M'Boup, with Leyna Lightman who arranged the guest artist visit. Above, left: Elementary students joyfully play the djembe drum during La Vida Charter School's drumming intensive. Above, right: Saliou M'Boup encourages elementary students to listen to their drums. Below: La Vida Charter School high school students and staff pose with Saliou M'Boup, Bara M'Boup, and the freshly made drum (back row), that was dedicated to La Vida school and Ridgewood Ranch.

Photos by Jerri Jo Idarius



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