

Willits Weekly

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Online & Print



A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

Donations Accepted Edition No. 640

Thursday, May 28, 2026

School board honors retirees, students

Addison Alvarado
Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

On the evening of May 14, 2026, Willits Unified School District held its monthly board meeting. Opening the meeting, Board President Jeanne King read aloud the governance norms in their entirety. During the meeting, the school board had a full agenda, honoring retirees, discussing summer programs, listening to comments, and finally the action agenda.

To jumpstart the meeting, Superintendent John Baker recognized many retirees including but not limited to Joyce Donaldson, Laura Roland, Diane Keith, and more. Blosser Lane Principal Margaret Duran said: "This evening we are honoring years of dedication and hard work that have positively impacted our community. While retirement marks the end of an era, it also celebrates the impacts these individuals had on our students and school

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

Man convicted of drugging, raping co-worker

Posted by Mendocino County DA

A Mendocino County Superior Court jury returned Wednesday morning, May 20 from its deliberations – admittedly after some fits and starts – to announce it had found the trial defendant guilty as charged.

Defendant Matthew Ryan Mayo, age 45, formerly of Crawford Ranch Road in Hopland and Sonoma County, was found guilty of:

- Rape of an intoxicated and/or incapacitated woman, a felony;
- Administering a controlled substance to an unknowing victim to assist in or enable the perpetration of one or more sex felonies, a felony; and
- Distributing a photograph of an intimate part of the woman's anatomy without her knowledge and consent, a misdemeanor.

At the time of the crimes in May 2020, defendant Mayo was a licensed respiratory therapist working at Howard Hospital in Willits. He invited a co-worker over to his home after work on a Friday night to have a beer

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



Above, from left: Student speaker Sara Munoz addressed the gathered attendees at the Mendocino College Class of 2026 Commencement Ceremony last Friday. Mendo Professor Leslie Banta smiles as she comes into the ceremony area. Grads and supporters attend the 2026 graduation event. Mendo music teacher Abigail Strock sang the national anthem at the event. Below: Willits grad Mason Rescina smiles with fellow Willits grad, and birthday girl, Chrystalyn Lundgren at the Friday ceremony.

Photos by Maureen Jennison



College Class of 2026

527 Mendocino College graduates celebrated at annual ceremony

A new group of 527 college graduates were welcomed into the world last Friday at the 53rd annual Mendocino College Commencement Ceremony, with 267 in attendance at the event. The event opened with the grads' processional and followed by Abigail Strock's singing of "The Star-Spangled Banner," a blessing by Martin Martinez, a land acknowledgment, and welcoming statements by Mendocino College President and Superintendent Timothy Krauss.

Student speaker Sara Munoz gave an inspirational speech, and then college board President Noel O'Neill gave the charge to the college; Vice President of Academic Affairs Debra Polak presented the candidates; and Krauss returned for the conferral of the degrees and certificates before Christine Orozco and Yasmin Munoz announced the candidates.

Family and friends gathered to watch the grads walk across the stage, and receive their diplomas.

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

At left: Catie Spackman, top, and Brayden Colletto, bottom, smile with their diplomas. Below, left: A trio of graduates pose together including mother Tina Marie, left, and kids Aria Eva Silveria, and Allegra Rose Silveria, right. A very happy Kaylee Anderson smiles with her diploma.



Don't forget to vote

Jennifer Poole
Editor & Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

The June 2, 2026 primary election is next Tuesday. If you haven't mailed your ballot back yet, you might consider dropping your ballot off at the polls on Election Day or at the official Willits Ballot Drop-Off box, available 24/7, outside Willits City Hall, 111 East Commercial Street.

If your ballot is postmarked by Election Day and arrives at your local Elections Office by June 9, 2026, it will be counted, as per California state law. But according to the California Secretary of State's Office, "to ensure your ballot is postmarked by Election Day, make sure to mail it at least five days before Election Day, June 2, 2026. If mailing after that, or on Election Day, get a hand-stamped postmark from a postal employee inside a United States Post Office."

This is due to changes in USPS policy this year, as the Post Office is now sending mail to regional processing centers before postmarking, which can delay the postmark date.

The Willits Polling Place is open Election Day only, June 2, from 7 am to 8 pm, at the Willits Community Center, 111 East Commercial Street.

The Brooktrails Polling Place is open Election Day only, June 2, from 7 am to 8 pm, at the Brooktrails Community Center, 24860 Birch Street.

The Laytonville Polling Place is open Election Day only, June 2, 7 am to 8 pm, at Laytonville Lions Fire

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

Elections Office to open Saturday in Ukiah

Submitted by Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder Katrina Bartolomie

The Election Office for the County of Mendocino, located at 501 Low Gap Road, Room 1020, in Ukiah, will be open Saturday, May 30, 2026, from 9 am to 3 pm to assist voters with their voting needs.

The Statewide Primary Election, to be held on June 2, 2026 is quickly approaching, and those voters who need help or have questions are encouraged to come into the office or call 707-234-6819.

For additional information or questions, please contact the Election / County Clerk's Office by calling 707 234-6819.



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<https://photographress.zenfolio.com/graduation>



What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from our readers

Yes on Measure A

To the Editor:

Dear Mendocino and Lake County neighbors: We have a chance to strengthen Mendocino College by voting YES on Measure A.

Measure A will keep the college affordable and accessible for students who want to stay close to home, provide funding for essential first-responder and skilled-trades programs that prepare residents for stable, in-demand careers, and renovate campuses, classrooms, and labs so learning takes place in safe, modern facilities equipped for today's workforce.

It will expand affordable pathways to certificates and degrees, helping students graduate with less debt while increasing local job readiness and economic opportunity.

A YES vote on Measure A is an investment in our students, our families, and our community's future - supporting education, strengthening public safety, and building the skilled workforce Mendocino and Lake counties need to thrive.

Please vote YES on Measure A.

Dillon Slater, Willits

Regarding Measure A

To the Editor:

This election will be the first time I will vote against a bond for public education in my community - Mendocino-Lake Community College, Measure A.

I am a retired nurse, teacher, and for the past six years, have been a property owner in Willits. I know how important education is on many levels. We live in a time of chaos, and many changes are needed.

One major challenge is our financial situation. Many folks in our county cannot afford another increase in our property taxes. I know of people in my community who have moved to other states in the past six years because they couldn't afford the property taxes and high cost of living in California.

We will be voting, June 2, in a Statewide Primary Election. Many candidates running for office believe that billionaires should pay their fair share of taxes, and not have special loopholes and tax cuts. These tax revenues can be used for so many healthy projects, such as education.

I am waiting to see how the 2026 elections play out before voting for a \$98 million bond that will increase my tax burden.

Pat Cougar, Willits

Colby Friend for judge

To the Editor:

I wholeheartedly endorse Colby Friend for Superior Court judge in the upcoming election. Colby Friend possesses the ideal balance of legal expertise, integrity, and honesty to sit at the bench and uphold the values of our community.

As a legal document assistant and paralegal in the local area for the last six years, I feel we urgently need a judge who respects the law, follows the rules, and guarantees equal predictable justice for every person in the courtroom. Voting for Colby Friend ensures that your rights will be his priority.

Christina McCluskey, Willits

Senior Center outreach loses county funding

To the Editor:

We find ourselves in a challenging time and are reaching out with an urgent request for your support. As of July 1, 2026 the Mendocino County Department of Social Services has unfortunately eliminated all funding for our outreach department - a loss of \$34,100 per year.

This funding has been the backbone of the essential services we provide, touching many lives in our community. Joanne Moore, our outreach worker, describes her work at the Senior Center as "whatever walks in the door or calls on the phone." She helps people find solutions and get their needs met. She provides information for them, navigates paperwork with them, and connects them with other resources that can help them.

There are major recurring topics she helps with ... Medi-Cal, Medicare, CalFresh, Social Security, and help with PG&E bills. And, there is "a very big pile of everything else ... nothing that needs to be dealt with is too big, too complex, too small or too obscure," according to her. She has a unique and considerable amount of information and experience at her fingertips which she has developed by helping thousands of seniors and adults with disabilities over the past four years at the Senior Center.

We would like to keep using that to help the community we serve. We humbly ask for your generosity so that we can continue this vital work. You can make a difference by sending a check to the Senior Center at 1501 Baechtel Road, Willits CA 95490. If you prefer, you can also donate online at www.willitscenter.com and of course, you're always welcome to visit us in person, speak with our executive director Richard Baker, or connect directly with our outreach worker, Joanne Moore.

Every contribution, big or small, will help.

Richard Baker, director,

Willits Senior Center

Thank you

To the Editor:

Dear community friends: This letter is somewhat late, and for that I have no excuse. I want to express my sincere appreciation to Jennifer Poole and the dedicated and hard-working associates that bring the heartbeat of our community to our homes each week.

Willits Weekly is unique in this age because it continues to inform and entertain in a time when print publications have become a thing of the past. While a society has evolved that seems satisfied with instant satisfaction, I am proud to be a part of a community that prefers explanation over exclamation. We look forward to Willits Weekly and read it page to page.

I appreciate the advertisers that support Willits Weekly, and I support them and make it a point to thank them when our paths cross. I ask other readers to do the same.

The Willits Weekly is indeed a valued member of our community and that comes at great effort. Thank you, Jennifer, and all who labor to bring "our" newspaper to life every week: co-founder and art director Maureen Moore, and current contributors Mathew Caine, Barbara O'Reardon, Addison Alvarado, Danya Davis, and Dan Essman.

Jim Harden, Willits

Senior Center menu for the week

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 28: Balsamic Glazed Chicken, Veggies

Friday, May 29: Turkey, Stuffing, Gravy, Veggies, Roll

Monday, June 1 to Friday, June 5: Menu not available

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.

California deploys more than 2,800 to fight wildfires

Submitted by Office of Gov. Gavin Newsom

May 22 - As California faces an early start to an anticipated busy fire season, Governor Gavin Newsom announced more than 2,800 firefighting and emergency personnel have been deployed to protect California communities.

Earlier this week, Governor Newsom secured federal assistance to fund emergency response efforts to the Sandy Fire in Ventura County and Bain Fire in Riverside County. To date, more than 28,000 acres have burned statewide, including more than 18,000 acres on federal land with the Santa Rosa Island Fire. Over 15,000 structures were threatened statewide, an estimated 45,000 people were under evacuation orders, and an additional 36,000 under evacuation warnings.

California is deploying all available resources to combat wildfires. Over 2,800 firefighters and emergency personnel are working nonstop with local, state, and federal partners to protect communities.

We urge all Californians to stay steady, make a plan, and always listen to local officials during an emergency.

County Social Services monitoring federal funding changes

May 26 - Mendocino County Department of Social Services is closely monitoring recent federal announcements that may impact healthcare and social service programs across California, including funding connected to the In-Home Supportive Services program.

Recent federal actions include the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' decision to delay more than \$1 billion in Medicare reimbursements to California as part of broader anti-fraud initiatives. Federal officials also announced a temporary six-month pause on new Medicare enrollment for hospices and home health agencies.

At this time, IHSS services in Mendocino County continue without interruption.

IHSS provides critical in-home care services that allow older adults and individuals with disabilities to remain safely in their homes and communities. Currently, the program serves 2,513 Mendocino County residents and supports 2,447 approved care providers countywide.

While the full impact of these federal actions is still being evaluated at the state and county levels, Mendocino County Department of Social Services leadership is actively monitoring developments and maintaining communication with state partners to understand any potential effects on local services.

"MCDSS remains committed to protecting access to essential services for our community's most vulnerable residents," said MCDSS Director DeNeese Parker. "We understand the uncertainty these announcements may create and want the public to know that services continue as normal while we carefully monitor guidance from state and federal agencies."

The department will continue providing updates as additional information becomes available and remains focused on ensuring continuity of care and support for Mendocino County residents.



Tyler Ojeda of Willits won Best Bike for his 2004 Harley Davidson Softail.



The Best Automobile was won by Cory Woolley with this 1961 Ford F100.



Snoop's low-rider 1963 Chevy Impala used to roam the streets of Willits with the weekly street ride.



At left: Corvette enthusiast John Yde was honored for his 44 years of participation in the Willits Car Show. At right: Many of the 50 Corvettes are lined up on Commercial Street in front of the Noyo Theater. Below: This year's Willits Car and Bike Show has a swap meet for the first time, where both large and small car-related items can be purchased. At right, below: Hundreds of people check out the blocks of cars on Main and Commercial streets.



Willits Car & Bike Show

Annual Memorial Day weekend event continues to grow, with almost 200 entries and hundreds of attendees this year

Sunday morning was filled with the full-throated rumbles of a vast variety of automobiles and bikes as the owners of the vehicles found their assigned places to display their custom paint jobs, their chromed engine parts, their attention to detail, and the love that they had obviously put into restoration. At last count, 193 cars and motorcycles participated in the 44th Willits Car and Bike Show, which took place on Commercial and Main streets. Fifty Corvettes, from the '60s to the most recent, lined the road in front of the Noyo Theater, the Willits Center for the Arts, and the Fire Station, as well as farther up in front of Bud Snyder City Park. The rainbow display of gleaming colors glistened in the sun as the morning fog burned off, offering a dazzling display of mostly American-made classics.

This year's show was dedicated to a particular Corvette enthusiast who was responsible for many of the classic Ford machines. John Yde was honored with a Lucite plaque as well as a key to the city, which he accepted from Willits Mayor Tom Allman and Willits Chamber of Commerce President Gary Huddle.

"Someone today we really want to appreciate is John Yde," Allman said to the crowd. "This year is the 44th year for John Yde being a part of the Willits Car Show. John is one of the founders, along with Bill Baxter and Bob Hansen. The Willits Chamber of Commerce dedicates the 44th annual Car and Bike Show to John Yde for your commitment to the preservation of the classic cars and your absolute contribution and love of Willits. The Chamber president, Gary Huddle, is going to give you two things. The first thing is a trophy. Hopefully, you'll put it somewhere

and talk about it. The second thing is very important. It's a key to the city, which as mayor, I'm very honored to give to you, so you start work tomorrow.

"You have put so much of your heart and soul," Allman continued, "into getting enthusiasm going from other car owners in distant towns in Lake County, in Ukiah, and Fort Bragg and so forth. We appreciate you very much and you will always be remembered as one of the founding people who started the car show. Congratulations. Thank you very much."

The festivities began with a soulful rendition of "The Star Spangled Banner" by Willits resident Necole Aguilar Barnes, after which, Curtis DeShields played "Taps" on the bugle to honor the Americans who did not return from the wars, as the next day would be Memorial Day. The American Legion Post 174 raised the flag in front of the Little Lake Firehouse.

Some of the automobile participants were as colorful as the vehicles they owned. Aggie Ramos wore a pink dress to blend in with her pink candy-flaked car. "This is a 2022 Corvette," said Ramos. "It was a gift from my boys. I raised them right. When I was pregnant, I had a Corvette, but I couldn't have a baby in the front seat, so I had to sell my Corvette and I got a van. I was always telling my sons, 'Well, I always had to drive a minivan because of you.' Now, they're 38 years old and they surprised me with a Corvette. I actually drive this around all the time. It's beautiful down here with all the trees, so it's pretty to go through the redwoods with the top off and listening to my '70s music."

Read the rest of **Festival** Over on page 9

At right: The 44th Annual Willits Car and Bike Show is officially started with the singing of the national anthem by Necole Aguilar Barnes and a rendition of "Taps" by Curtis Dashiell

Below: Youngsters Mateo and Aleya Campbell find a seahorse at Megan's Memories and Mementos in the vendor section at City Park.



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.

Opinion in news reporting

Standard journalism ethics requires a reporter to keep their personal viewpoint out of any news stories. Sometimes, an opinion by a reporter can slip in to one of their bylined news stories, without the editor knowing until after the fact, to Willits Weekly's regret.

- Jennifer Poole, editor, Willits Weekly

Willits Weekly

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Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

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FOR 3rd DISTRICT SUPERVISOR

5th Generation Mendocino Resident. Protecting Property Rights & Fiscal Accountability.

VOTE JUNE 2nd

Filed for by Russell Green for Supervisor 2026, PFFP 01/14/2023

Willits Weekly's Puzzle Page

Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword



				7	6	9		
	4	1			6			
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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!

REMOTE WORK WORD SEARCH

D H T I Y E P R S L M S V T N G G T C Y
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| ASYNCHRONOUS | GIG ECONOMY | SOFTWARE |
| CLOUD | GLOBAL | SOLOPRENEUR |
| COMMUNICATION | HOURS | TEAM |
| COWORKING | HYBRID | TELECOMMUTE |
| DIGITAL | LOCATION | VPN |
| FLEX TIME | MESSAGE | WORKLOAD |
| FREELANCE | OFFSHORING | WORKPLACE |

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57				58		59				60	61	62		
		63	64							65				
										67				

CLUES ACROSS

- Streetcar
- Take ___ of it!
- SW Asia peninsula
- Beating wings to escape from a perch
- One who revitalizes
- Indicates position
- Dishonorable man
- Singer King Cole
- Short-tailed marten
- One point east (clockwise) of due north
- The god of the underworld in ancient mythology
- Dirt
- Superconducting super collider
- Not good
- A way to sink
- Unwell
- Follow orders
- Deep ravine
- Perfumery practice
- Indian film director Sultan
- Member of U.S. Navy
- Wing-like
- Very fast airplane
- Slang for cigarette
- Most cars still need it

- Political war chest
 - Cools down
 - Diminish toward one end
 - Indigenous person of Thailand
 - Combined
 - Container
 - Expression of satisfaction
 - Thou
 - Return a favor
 - Go over once more
 - Removed
 - 'Silence of the ___'
 - Comedian Rogen
- ## CLUES DOWN
- Children's game
 - Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
 - Own (Scottish)
 - Female follower of Bacchus
 - Subsides
 - Protects from weather
 - Spanish municipality
 - Supermarket chain
 - Domain name
 - Semitic peoples
 - Designs anew
 - City associated with Jesus
 - Cool
 - Bank employee
 - Central nervous system
 - Standardized piece of text
 - A type of fever
 - Baglike structure in a plant or animal
 - Threaten persistently
 - Aspirations
 - Baby's eating accessory
 - Actress Thurman
 - Turn into bone
 - One who saves you
 - Consume
 - Swiss river
 - A part of a river where the current is very fast
 - Categories
 - Expressed amazement
 - It's important in respiration (abbr.)
 - Greek war dance
 - Bland, semi-liquid food
 - Regard in a specified way
 - Taxi
 - Naturally occurring solid material
 - Feline
 - Post-burning residue
 - Elevated railroad

WILLITS POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICE LOG

May 11 to May 17
 By Danya Davis, Willits Weekly

The officers of the Willits Police Department reported **86 incidents** in this 7-day period.

Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

May 11
 3:50 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 800 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.
 8:40 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

May 12
 9:02 am: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of East Commercial Street and North Humboldt Street and issued a warning.
 10:27 am: Officers initiated a fraud investigation in the 100 block of Hazel Street.
 12:34 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 1200 block of South Main Street.
 1:30 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 800 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

1:54 pm: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of South Main Street and West Mendocino Avenue and issued a citation.
 5:12 pm: Officers responded to a report of a suspicious vehicle in the 100 block of Barbara Lane and issued a warning.

7:05 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 100 block of North Main Street and issued a warning.
 9:09 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 400 block of South Main Street.

11:17 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 1600 block of Sout Main Street and issued a warning.

May 13
 12:21 am: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of South Main Street and Alder Lane and issued a warning.
 8:25 am: Officers conducted a stop in the 300 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.
 8:50 am: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 100 block of Barbara Lane.
 9:11 am: Officers conducted a stop near

the intersection of School Street and West Commercial Street and issued a citation.
 2:56 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 1700 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

May 14
 1:27 am: Officers initiated a vehicle theft investigation near the intersection of State Street and North Main Street.
 7:20 am: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 100 block of Nancy Lane.
 5:13 pm: YANEZ, Dominic (62) of Willits was contacted near the intersection of Exley Road and West Mendocino Street. He was arrested on misdemeanor charges of driving under the influence of alcohol, driving with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.08 percent or higher, driving with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.15 percent or higher, and driving with a suspended license (revoked for DUI).

May 15
 8:57 am: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 100 block of Fort Bragg Road.
 11:10 am: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 800 block of South Main Street.
 12:30 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 1700 block of South Main Street.
 1:05 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 1100 block of Magnolia Avenue and issued a citation.

May 16
 9:51 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 100 block of North Main Street and issued a warning.
 11:35 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 100 block of Barbara Lane.

May 17
 12:02 am: Officers conducted a stop in the 500 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.
 5:34 pm: SMART, Amber Keziah (48) of Willits was contacted in the 800 block of South Main Street. She was arrested on misdemeanor charges of violation of a court order.
 8:17 pm: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of Baechtel Road and Sandy Avenue and issued a warning.

Grand jury extends deadline for 2026/27 to June 28

May 25 – The Honorable Ann Moorman, Presiding Judge of the Civil Grand Jury Recruitment/Selection Committee, has extended the deadline to submit applications to serve on the 2026/2027 Grand Jury to June 28, 2026.

Serving on the Civil Grand Jury is an excellent opportunity to learn about the inner workings of government while providing valuable service to the community. The 19 members of the Civil Grand Jury serve for one year and are empowered to investigate the operations of county, city, and district governments; provide civil oversight of local government departments and agencies; and respond to citizen complaints. The Civil Grand Jury sets its own agenda and meeting schedule. Much of the work is performed in small committees allowing for considerable flexibility in the work schedule and meeting locations.

To attract more residents from the geographically distant regions of Mendocino County, the Civil Grand Jury is making it easier for interested members of the public to participate. For example, the Civil Grand Jury has implemented remote meeting protocols using software platforms such as Microsoft Teams to maximize participation while reducing the demand for car travel.

Grand Jurors are compensated \$25 per full panel meeting, \$10 per committee

meeting and attendance at public meetings. Mileage is reimbursed at the current County of Mendocino rate. There is free parking at the Grand Jury office. Each applicant is interviewed by a Superior Court judge before becoming eligible for selection.

Mandatory training for Grand Jurors will be scheduled for late July or early August 2026. To serve as a Civil Grand Juror, the following requirements must be met:

- At least 18 years of age
- United States citizen
- Resident of Mendocino County for at least one year
- Sufficiently fluent in written and spoken English.
- Not currently serving on any other governmental board or commission during the term
- Not presently holding a public office
- Not personally active in any campaign of a candidate for elective office
- Computer skills are highly desirable

Applications and information can be accessed at: www.mendocinocounty.gov/government/grand-jury The application may also be obtained at the Superior Court, 100 North State Street, Rm. 303, Ukiah or by calling the Grand Jury at (707) 463-4320.

Have something to say? Residents of Willits, Brooktrails, Laytonville and Covelo are welcome to send in a letter to the editor about local issues. Please email us: willitsweekly@gmail.com REMEMBER: Deadline is end of day Monday for each week's Thursday edition.



Above, from left: The shade structure allows browsers relief from the sun as they peruse the art supplies. Alice in Wonderland rubber stamps from Emmy Good's collection are for sale. There is something for everyone at the Willits Center for the Arts Y'Art Sale. Below, left: Pearl Marill is always on the lookout for pieces of costume she can utilize in her fashion shows. Below, right: Bonnie found an instrument and is able to play "Home on the Range" following the chart printed below the strings. At right: This woman was looking for a reasonably priced ceramic bowl and she found it. At right, below: A sign for the annual Y'Art Sale hangs on the front of the WCA.



Photos by Mathew Caine

Y'Art Sale

Annual fundraiser for Willits Center for the Arts stocked with unique items donated by the late Emmy Good

This year's Y'Art Sale for the Willits Center for the Arts was a bittersweet event. The Y'Art Sale, an amalgam of "yard" and "art," brings in some of the money each year that is required to keep the doors open and allow the WCA to continue to provide a creative space in which a wide variety of artists, including dancers, lecturers, musicians, and others, can learn or display their art.

The two-day sale offers a shaded outdoor space and an indoor classroom, in which donated items, mostly art supplies, books, ceramics, memorabilia, and tchotchkes are offered for sale.

There was a presence missing from this year's Y'Art Sale, of one who has been a major supporter of the WCA and of the arts in general in the town of Willits. Emmy Good passed away quite recently, leaving a large hole in the ethos of the organization and in all who knew and loved her kind and creative spirit.

"We miss Emmy Good very, very, very much," said Gary Martin, lecturer, teacher, and past curator of the WCA. "She was remarkable. She did so much for the community. She was one of the women who saved the Art Center when it almost closed in 2016. She had the Stamp Shop, which everyone remembers and enjoyed. She used to have children in the shop to do Children's Playtime and tea parties for the kids. She and Bill were just wonderful people. They gave so much to the community."

The classroom at the WCA was dedicated to Good, with much of her interesting and quirky art: Alice in Wonderland inspired rubber stamps, marionettes, dolls, colorful bags from other countries, ethnic instruments, games, and a host of other objects to delight and bring joy to those who purchased them.

"Emmy Good gave us a lot of items," Martin continued. "The classroom is filled with a lot of her collections."

Read the rest of Y'Art | Over on page 11

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In Loving Memory of
Linda Ramsden Blum

It was 5 years ago on June 3rd 2021 That Linda went to be with the Lord. Linda and I were Married on May 27th 1968. We were blessed with two children.
 Most husbands say there spouse was an angel... well I can truly say Linda was an Angel...
 We moved to California in 1983. After a career in the Bay area we settled in Mendocino County.
 Linda was a Beautiful Wife, Mother and a devoted follower of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Linda we all Love & Miss you so MUCH!!! Her favorite Bible verse:
 "A gentle answer turns away wrath but a harsh word stirs up anger" Prov 15:1p

Linda is survived by her husband, Bob Sr., two children, Wendy & Bob Jr., and 4 grandchildren, Kaitlyn, Jackson, Alex & Ethan

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Let's change our county government's culture to
 "Find a way to YES."

Make sure your vote counts:
 • Mail your ballot by Sat. May 30th
 • Drop it in a ballot drop box by June 2nd
 • Vote in person at the polls June 2nd

EricHartForSupervisor.com Facebook.com/EricHartForSupervisor

Willits Giant Yard Sale

261 Franklin Ave.

Bring a wagon to carry all the treasure you will find! Multiple units participating.

SATURDAY, JUNE 20
from 8 am to 2 pm

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
P.O. Box 489, Willits
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-6:30 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.

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Grace Community Church
Celebrating Life In Christ
25 Hazel Street, Willits
Worship Service
10 a.m.
For appointments call:
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St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church
61 W. San Francisco Ave.
Willits, CA 95490
Father Aaron Bandanadam
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/
sainthonywillits@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 Brunanu

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

COME CELEBRATE!

Willits High School
12th Grade Graduation Ceremony:
Thursday, June 4 at 5 pm at WHS' Maize Field

Sanhedrin High School
12th Grade Graduation Ceremony:
Thursday, June 4 at 5 pm at WHS' Maize Field

Baechtel Grove Middle School
8th Grade Promotion Ceremony:
Wednesday, June 3 at 6 pm at WHS' Maize Field

Willits Charter School
12th Grade Graduation Ceremony:
Thursday, June 4 at 5:30 pm at the back field

Willits Charter School
8th Grade Promotion Ceremony:
Wednesday, June 3 at 5:30 pm at the WCS gym

BAECHTEL GROVE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROMOTION CEREMONY PROFESSIONAL PHOTOS
will be available for purchase this year!

SCAN THIS CODE to see galleries and order prints
https://photographress.zenfolio.com/graduation

WILLITS HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONY PROFESSIONAL PHOTOS
will be available for purchase again this year!

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REDWOOD EMPIRE SPRING FAIR

THURSTON AUTO PLAZA

FREE FAIR ADMISSION!

June 5 - 7, 2026

*Grandstands require a ticket
RedwoodEmpireFair.com

Here's What's Happening Around Willits

Saturday, May 30
Lavender Day at Motherland: Join community herbalists Donna d'Terra and Kiohna McCaffrey for a celebration of community and distillery at the Motherland Botanical Sanctuary. Saturday, May 30 from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm. Activities include: Set up and work a copper still; Lavender herb talk; Propagation; Make your own hand-dried incense; Tour of the Motherland Gardens; Herb starts for sale. Bring a bag lunch, tea will be provided. \$50 venmo @donna-deterra / 707-400-8458

Thursday, May 28
Talk with the Supervisor at Brickhouse: Come chat with your 3rd District Supervisor John Haschak at his monthly "Talk with the Supervisor." Thursday, May 28, from 10 to 11 am at Brickhouse Coffee, 3 South Main Street. Contacts: haschakj@mendocinocounty.gov or 707-972-4214.

Willits Farmers Market: Join your neighbors at Summer Market outdoors at City Park on Commercial Street, Thursday, May 28, 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.

Friday, May 29
WECS Children's Art Show: Willits Elementary Charter School celebrates the creativity, imagination, and accomplishments of the youth in our community through a curated showcase of artwork created during the academic year. Friday, May 29 from 3:30 to 5 pm at WECS, 405 East Commercial Street. Also set for that day, WECS Open House and Student Concert Performance. Art Show is a fundraiser for the WECS After School Program, and student artwork and handmade crafts will be available for sale.

Friday, June 5
First Fridays Summer Concert Series: Get ready to rock the block as The Fargo Brothers band continues the Willits Chamber of Commerce's First Friday Summer Series

SCHEDULE

FRIDAY JUNE 5
MONSTER TRUCKS & MUDD BOGGS 6:00pm
Wicked Strong
Playing For Keeps
Survivor
Enforcer
T Max

SATURDAY JUNE 6
MONSTER TRUCKS & MUDD BOGGS & BOAT RACES 6:00pm
Wicked Strong
Playing For Keeps
Survivor
Enforcer
T Max

SUNDAY JUNE 7
LIVE MUSIC
Banda Pacifica
Registro Afinado
Creativos DTC
6-10pm

FREE FAIR ADMISSION!
Gates open at 3pm on Friday Noon on Saturday & Sunday
Parking: \$10
*Grandstands require a ticket

PRE-SALE MONSTER TRUCK TICKETS
Available at all Mendo Mill Stores in Mendocino County
ADULT (12 & UP): \$30
CHILD (3-11): \$25
Price at the Grandstands
ADULT (12 & UP): \$35
CHILD (3-11): \$30

PRE-SALE CARNIVAL WRISTBAND TICKETS
Available at all Mendo Mill Stores Mendocino County, Ukiah Taco Bell, Raley's, Chavez Market, and Creative Workshop
\$32 EACH
Price at Carnival: \$38
Good for any one day

DON'T FORGET THE FAIR FOOD!

Save Money and the wait in line! Buy your grandstand show and carnival wristband tickets early!

www.redwoodempirefair.com

LAVENDER DAY AT MOTHERLAND
Join community herbalists Donna d'Terra & Kiohna McCaffrey for a celebration of community and distillery at the Motherland Botanical Sanctuary. Saturday, May 30 from 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM. \$50

Joe Marcinek Band at Shanachie: The music is equal parts Chicago Blues, New Orleans Funk, Grateful Dead Psychedelia, and Jazz Fusion played by a different lineup of musicians each time. The Friday, June 5 show at Shanachie, features Cliff Porter, Cliff Porter Jr. and Kendall Hoopes plus special guests Steven Bates and Michael Coleman. 8 pm. Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street.

Acoustic Showcase at Shanachie: featuring local musicians, each performing acoustic sets. These nights have been known to be memorable events, featuring any number of notable local musical artists. Saturday, May 30 at 7 pm. Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street.

Wednesday, June 3
Deanne California at Brickhouse: Live piano and vocals by Deanne California, aka Bunny at Brickhouse Coffee, 3 South Main Street, from 12 to 2 pm.

Thursday, June 4
Willits Farmers Market: Join your neighbors at Summer Market outdoors at City Park on Commercial Street, Thursday, June 4 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.

WILLITS FIRST FRIDAY CONCERT SERIES
Presents **THE FARGO BROTHERS**
CLASSIC AND ORIGINAL ROCK BLUES AMERICANA
JUNE 5TH 16-9PM
All ages welcome!

Willits Sober Grad VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Our grad party is right around the corner - Thursday, June 4th at Willits Charter School - and we have volunteer opportunities available:

- Check In 8:30 pm - 11:30 pm
- Carnival Games (4 spots open) 8:30 pm - midnight
- RedBull Slush / Coffee Bar 8:30pm - 4:00am
- Coat Check 8:30pm - 4:00am

If you are interested in filling one of these openings or have questions please contact Melissa Perez: (707)367-0401.

PUNK ON THE PATIO
SATURDAY JUNE 20 2026
featuring 3-7PM \$15 ALL AGES

WHISTLESTOP CAFE
280 E. COMMERCIAL ST. WILLITS, CA

Clean Canvas at City Park: City of Willits hosts the Clean Canvas Art Appreciation and Litter Education Event at Bud Snider Park, East Commercial Street. Saturday June 6 from 11 am to 3 pm. Free chalk art: City will give out free chalk - create, inspire and brighten the park. Art Contest, Food Trucks, Educational Booths. All Ages Welcome. Sponsored by Caltrans Clean California Grant.

Singer Paula Samonté at WCT: Singer and songwriter sensation Paula Samonté brings her unique gorgeous vocals for two shows featuring jazz, classic standards, and timeless music to Willits Community Theatre, on June 6 at 7 pm and June 7 at 4 pm. Accompanied by keyboardist John Simon. 37 West Van Lane. Tickets are \$25, available at www.wctperformingartscenter.org or at the door.

Sunday, June 7
Singer Paula Samonté at WCT: Singer and songwriter sensation Paula Samonté brings her unique gorgeous vocals for a second show featuring jazz, classic standards, and timeless music at Willits Community Theatre, Sunday, June 7 at 4 pm. See Saturday, June 6 listing for more details.

Paula Samonte
Accompaniment by John Simon

June 6 @ 7:00 pm
June 7 @ 4:00 pm
Willits Community Theatre
37 West Van Lane, Willits, CA 95490
\$25

Big River Adventure to benefit Cancer Resource Centers, May 30

Cancer Resource Centers of Mendocino County hosts a Big River Adventure on Saturday, May 30 at Big River Beach State Park. The family-friendly fundraiser, formerly known as the Big River Walk and Paddle offers multiple adventures following the scenic haul road along the picturesque river, including a kiddie race, competitive 5K and 10K runs, a leisurely walk with friends, swimming, or paddleboarding. For the past 31 years, CRC has provided free support, resources, and compassionate care for anyone facing cancer or undergoing testing for a possible diagnosis in Mendocino County. More info, tickets and donate button at www.crcmendocino.org/https://www.crcmendocino.org/en/big-river-adventure

AMERICAN LEGION POST 174 BASEBALL CLUB

AGES 17-19

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CLEAN CANVAS
ART APPRECIATION & LITTER EDUCATION EVENT

11am-3pm JUNE 6th
BUD SNIDER PARK

FREE CHALK ART
Create, inspire, and brighten our park!

ART CONTEST
Show off your talent! Winners announced at the end of the event.

FOOD TRUCKS
Treat your taste buds!

EDUCATIONAL BOOTHS
Learn, get inspired, and help keep our community clean!

CREATE BEAUTY. BUILD COMMUNITY. KEEP IT CLEAN.
ALL AGES WELCOME!

Deanne California aka Bunny

live piano and vocal
Wednesday, June 3rd
12pm-2pm - 2026
Brickhouse Coffee
Willits, CA

SAVE THE DATE
FRIDAY, JUNE 19TH
WILLITS FRONTIER DAYS
HOMETOWN CELEBRATION!

WE'RE KICKING OFF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY WITH A PARTY ON MAIN STREET

VENDOR APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE AT:
WWW.WILLITSFRONTIERDAYS.COM OR BY EMAILING: WFD.HOMETOWNCELEBRATION@GMAIL.COM

WE ARE ACCEPTING VENDOR APPLICATIONS UNTIL: FRIDAY, JUNE 5TH

NOYO Theater
Willits, CA.

57 East Commercial Street - Willits
707-459-6660
www.noyotheater.com

Mid week promotions: Wednesday - Matinee prices to all shows all day.

STAR WARS: THE MANDALORIAN AND GROGU
(PG) 13 2H 12min
Fri: 4:15, 7:00
Sat/Sun: 1:30, 4:15, 7:00
Wed/Thurs: 4:15, 7:00

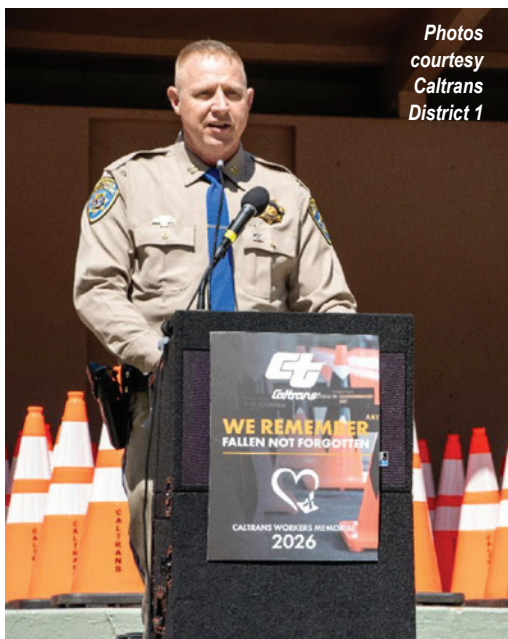
BACKROOMS
(R) 1H 45min
Fri: 4:30, 7:15
Sat/Sun: 1:45, 4:30, 7:15
Wed/Thurs: 4:30, 7:15

THE BREADWINNER
MATINEE PRICES ALL WEEK
(PG) 1H 40min
Fri: 4:45, 7:30
Sat/Sun: 2:00, 4:45, 7:30
Wed/Thurs: 4:45, 7:30

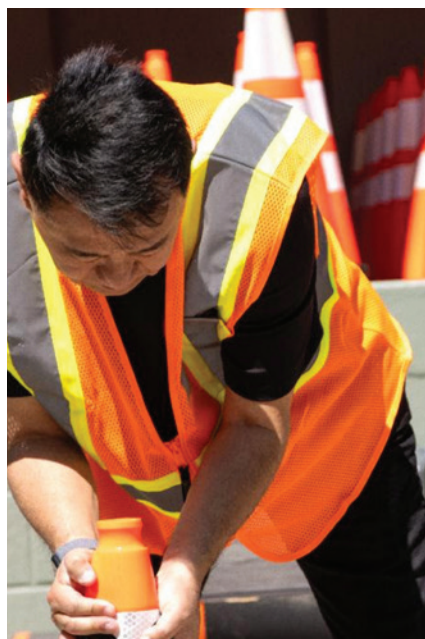
Shows times: May 29 to June 4
Closed Monday/Tuesday
Thrifty Thursday: \$8.00 tickets. Thrifty Thursday films this week in red.

We now have **Open Caption Wednesdays**

This means that, when available, every show on Wednesday will have subtitles on the screen.



Photos courtesy Caltrans District 1



At top, from left: CAL FIRE Captain, Mendocino, Matt McElhinny, plays "Amazing Grace" on the bagpipes following a moment of silence. There are 17 cones representing Caltrans employees killed while on duty since 1921. CAL FIRE Battalion Chief, Mendocino, Alex Leonard, speaks about the partnership between the departments. Above, left: Ukiah Area CHP Commander Billy O'Connor speaks about the close partnership between the California Highway Patrol and Caltrans. Above, right: Caltrans Maintenance workers place memorial cones for each of the District 1 employees killed while on duty. At left: Caltrans District 1 Deputy Director of Maintenance & Operations, Tom Fitzgerald, gives opening remarks at the Caltrans District 1 Workers Memorial

Caltrans District 1 pays tribute to fallen highway workers

Submitted by Caltrans District 1

UKIAH — Caltrans District 1 staff joined local officials May 19 at the Redwood Empire Fairgrounds for the annual Workers Memorial, remembering highway workers who have lost their lives while on the job. This year, the event was hosted in Ukiah for the first time since 2018, having previously been held at the District Office in Eureka.

Since 1921, 195 Caltrans employees have died while working on California's state highways. The memorial not only honors their memory, but it's also an opportunity to emphasize the critical importance of safety awareness among workers and motorists. To help prevent further loss and serious injuries, drivers should slow down, stay attentive, avoid distractions, and move over when they see amber flashing lights.

During the ceremony, a moment of silence was held. Caltrans staff paid tribute to the fallen local workers by placing 17 orange cones, while District 1 Maintenance Manager Paul Johnson read each of their

names out loud, demonstrating solemn respect and remembrance.

"We are grateful for the opportunity to come together and honor the men and women of the Caltrans family whose lives were lost building and maintaining our world-class transportation system," said Caltrans Deputy District 1 Director Tom Fitzgerald. "This event serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of safety on state highways as we continue our commitment to achieving zero fatalities and serious injuries by the year 2050."

Speakers at the event included Director Fitzgerald, Area Construction Engineer Geoffrey Wright, CAL FIRE Mendocino Unit Battalion Chief Alex Leonard, and Ukiah Area California Highway Patrol Commander Captain Billy O'Connor.

Caltrans District 1 oversees state highways across Humboldt, Del Norte, Lake, and Mendocino counties.

Singer Paula Samonté brings jazz, classics, and storytelling to WCT, June 6 and 7

By Steve Hellman for WCT

Singer and songwriter sensation Paula Samonté brings her celebrated vocal artistry to Willits Community Theatre for two special performances on June 6 and 7. In a smooth, sexy and sophisticated style, Samonté delivers an intimate evening of tasty jazz compositions woven with theatrical storytelling.

Accompanied by keyboardist John Simon, Paula delivers an intimate evening of jazz, classic standards, and timeless music in the warm setting of our community theater.

A lifelong performer, Paula has shared the stage with legendary artists including Robin Williams, John Raitt, Nancy Wilson, and Paul McCandless, while also performing internationally and throughout Northern California. Her career has included concerts in Italy, collaborations with symphonies and jazz ensembles, master vocal workshops, and recognition from the City of Ukiah with a Lifetime Achievement Award for her contributions to the arts in our community.

Whether performing beloved classics or reimagining familiar songs with emotional depth and elegance, Paula Samonté creates the kind of evening that feels both grand and deeply personal. Get ready to fall in love with her delightful personality and her unique, gorgeous vocals.

Performances are Saturday, June 6 at 7 pm and Sunday, June 7 at 4 pm. Tickets are \$25, available at www.wctperformingartscenter.org or at the door.



Below: Singer and songwriter sensation Paula Samonté brings two shows featuring jazz, classic standards, and timeless music to Willits Community Theatre, on June 6 at 7 pm and Sunday, June 7 at 4 pm.



At far left: Not all of the entries are slickly painted – this truck is proudly left with its original paint job. At left: Attention to detail won this Cadillac a special award from SpareTime Supply. At left: A classic 1931 Chevy with a rumble seat. Below: This classic Corvette can be seen on Corvette Row along Commercial Street.

Photos by Mathew Cain

The rest of Vote From page 1

Hall, 44920 Willis Avenue.

In Covelo, there is a Drop-Off Only Box, available Election Day only, June 2, at the Round Valley Justice Court, 76270 Grange Street.

Mendocino County ballots can also be dropped off at the Mendocino County Registrar of Voters Office, 501 Low Gap Road, Room 1020, in Ukiah. Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 8 am to 5 pm (excluding holidays), and open Election Day, Tuesday, June 2 from 7 am to 8 pm. Also open on Saturday, May 30, 2026 from 9 am to 3 pm to assist voters with their voting needs.

The first election results for the June 2 primary in Mendocino County will be posted not long after the polls have closed at 8 pm on Election Day, June 2, and will be updated throughout Election Night at www.mendocinocounty.gov/government/assessor-county-clerk-recorder-elections/current-election-results

You can confirm that your Mendocino County ballot has been received at: www.mendocinocounty.gov/government/assessor-county-clerk-recorder-elections/elections/vote-by-mail-absentee-status

You can also track your ballot status at <http://wheresmyballot.sos.ca.gov/> But as the Mendocino County Voter Office notes: "Please be aware that the Where's My Ballot service does not work in all areas of the county."

The rest of Convicted From page 1

or two and watch movies. After she arrived, he first spiked and then offered his guest a beer, which she accepted without knowing that he had added a central nervous system (CNS) depressant, to wit, zolpidem, which is marketed as Ambien.

What he did is sometimes referred to as a "Mickey Finn" or simply "a Mickey," which is a slang term for an alcoholic beverage secretly laced with a sedative or incapacitating drug.

Drugs commonly used in drug-facilitated sexual assaults are primarily fast-acting CNS depressants. These substances – particularly when mixed with alcohol – can rapidly impair a victim's behavior, perception and decision-making capacity, putting the victim at a severe physical and mental disadvantage. CNS drugs are valuable tools for criminals seeking to commit sex crimes as they quickly metabolize and are eliminated as crime evidence from the body, often before the crime can even be reported.

Zolpidem, normally used for patients suffering from insomnia, rapidly produces muscle relaxation and sedation, leaving victims unable to defend themselves. Its effects include slurred speech, loss of the ability to verbally and physically resist, staggering gait, and impaired coordination. For a naïve or new user, zolpidem can cause a rapid shift from consciousness to deep stupor or coma.

Victims of zolpidem poisoning experience anterograde amnesia, meaning they experience partial or complete memory loss for events occurring while under the influence.

In six cases, zolpidem causes a cognitive slowing and impaired judgment which reduces a victim's ability to consent through any accepted norm of informed, voluntary choice. A person under the influence of zolpidem may appear alert but, instead, is operating without executive control or memory encoding.

When defendant Mayo's victim's memory began to return upon her return home, she was able to recall partial visual and physical memories, which she in turn reported to law enforcement.

While this case been pending, the Respiratory Care Board of California, a division of the Department of Consumer Affairs, obtained in July 2023 a court order restricting defendant Mayo's license which denied him the legal ability to work as a respiratory therapist pending the outcome of his Mendocino County case.

The rest of Festival From page 3

Every year the Willits Chamber of Commerce, which is responsible for producing the event, tries to improve the experience.

"This year, we reorganized our entry, so it was a lot more seamless," explained Chamber board member John Kvasnicka. "We didn't have the backup. Things ran smoother. We have a swap meet this year, which we never had in the past. It's in the parking lot next to Flying Dog Pizza. There are lots of cool antiques and automobile memorabilia. We have our Vendors Row full of merchandise. We also have a food court."

The Vendors Row was a collection of booths and pop-up tents situated in City Park. People could meander through the multitude of vendors to look at crafts or to obtain information. The food court offered a variety of fast food and desserts in the parking lot of the Willits Community Center.

Prizes were awarded to the Best Automobile and Best Bike, as well as various awards for favorites from some of the businesses in town. The Best Car was, as described by Kvasnicka, a "1961 Ford F100 built by Cory Woolley from Fortuna, California. A unibody chassis, custom from tip to toe." The Best Bike, again described by Kvasnicka: "Tyler Ojeda of Willits – 2004 Harley Davidson Softail, a one-of-a-kind custom with beautiful chrome, classic Softail lines, and detailed custom airbrush paint. From the stretched handlebars and chrome front end to the custom seat, backrest, and polished details, this bike was built with pride and personality."

Hundreds of residents and visitors lined the streets to look at the colorful vehicles, many with their engines and statistics on display. Adults, kids, and dogs had an epic opportunity to get out and enjoy all that Willits had to offer.

After the jury's verdicts were entered into the record on Wednesday, the court ordered the defendant remanded into custody pending further court proceedings. He is being held without bail.

The prosecution will be given the opportunity on May 28, 2026 at 1:30 pm to present evidence beyond that heard by the jury on whether this case should be legally characterized as aggravated.

Following that circumstances in aggravation trial, the defendant's case will be referred to the Adult Probation Department for a background study and sentencing recommendation to be considered at a sentencing date to be determined.

The law enforcement agencies that memorialized witness statements, wrote and executed search warrants, and gathered the evidence that was presented to the jury were the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office, the Department of Justice DNA crime laboratory in Redding, and the DA's own Bureau of Investigations.

Special thanks are extended to certain witnesses who brought their special training and expertise to bear in court through expert testimony presented to the jury. Those experts were Dr. Kristen Marin (Sexual Assault Response Team) of Adventist Health Ukiah Valley; Carolyn Heitsman (DNA) of the DOJ crime lab; Richard Kreuzer (digital forensics) of Lake County; and internationally-acclaimed toxicology expert, Dr. Marc A. LeBeau of Missouri.

Heartfelt appreciation is extended to the victim who demonstrated great courage in reporting the defendant's crimes despite her memory being partially impacted by the Ambien poisoning; showed her tenacity in confronting the assailant; manifested patience in staying steadfast as the case took six years to work through the investigation and the local courts; maintained personal confidence that the truth was on her side and would overcome evil; and manifested outward confidence in the work being undertaken on her behalf by law enforcement, witnesses, and the prosecution team.

The prosecutor who organized the evidence, prepared the case for trial, and presented the sordid facts to the jury was District Attorney David Eyster.

Mendocino County Superior Court Judge Victoria Shanahan presided over the seven-day jury trial.

The rest of Honors From page 1

community." Duran extended thanks for "the countless hours, the commitment, patience and care [each retiree] brought each and every day to the students and staff at Blosser." In total, the board recognized nine retirees across the district.

Following retiree recognition, the WUSD board honored the 2025-2026 Student Board Member Emelia Velasquez Owsiany. Emelia is a member of Willits High School's graduating class of 2026 and has finished her term as Student Board Member. In praise, Superintendent Baker stated: "We thank you so much for being a part of the board, being a student – being a great student here at [WUSD], and we're going to miss you. Thank you so much."

Continuing the celebration, the board also recognized Willits High School championship teams: Varsity Softball and Boys Golf. The Willits High Schools varsity girls softball team are the North Central League II 2026 Champions. The team was currently awaiting playoffs, and the coach said, "If anybody hasn't made it to a game, come out and watch," explaining: "These girls are pretty good at what they do."

Willits High Schools boys' golf team coach honors student Cole Lane. The coach said: "Over the last four years of his high school golf career, it has been my pleasure to see him work hard to improve his game," and because of Lane's hard work, "He was the all-league gold medalist champion this year, and it's the second time he's done that in his career."

Following the appreciation and acknowledgments, the board heard from all site administrators regarding their annual goal outcomes, where all WUSD shared the positive changes seen throughout the year. Sherwood School saw improvement in their goals, noting that a key point of their writing goal success was high levels of student engagement. Willits High School also saw success in their goals, seeing positive improvement in student learning and achievement, attendance, and also successfully started reducing unnecessary out-of-class time. Baechtel Grove saw growth improving reading and math achievement by providing students with targeted support, additional instructional time, and interventions. To learn more on the district's improvements at each school site, the presentations shared during the board meeting can be found displayed in the meeting's agenda.

In addition, the board also heard about WUSD's varying summer programs. One program, Summer Meals, held from June 8, 2026 to August 7, 2026. WUSD will be providing a healthy breakfast and lunch to children ages 0-18 regardless of income. These meals are available to any Willits child, enrolled in WUSD or not, at Blosser Lane Elementary School. If there are any questions, the district asks that they be directed to the WUSD Food Director.

Superintendent Baker informed the board: "Summer school is going to be from June 8 to June 30 for ninth

grade to 12th grade. Also, for middle school, the incoming sixth-graders are going to have orientation from August 3 to August 7. The ESY [extended school year] for special education students is going to start July 6 and will end July 31.... We have a lot of things happening this summer."

After hearing all informational items on the agenda, the board took a short recess, returning to hear comments from the board trustees, the superintendent, Willits Teachers Association, and more. Board Trustee Jennifer Sookne turned 76 years old the day of May's board meeting, also reporting she has been working hard for "the high school so that we can still have music and looking at the possibility of having a chorus and doing stuff that the kids would like to do and expand it as they learn." Board Trustee Paula Nunez shared: "For the first time in a number of years, I made it to every single open house," also stating: "This was really involving. They all looked really, really great, and they had really good turnouts, which was nice." Nunez also shared positive reflections on WTA's promotion of voting, sharing that she believes it's a good idea for the school district to take an active part.

Additionally, Board Trustee April Lamprich said: "I understand people are passionate and want their voices heard. I respect everyone's right to advocate for what they believe in, and I commend WTA for being organized and starting their campaign efforts early. However, I personally do not believe the open house is the appropriate place for it." Trustee Lamprich emphasized that the focus of the evening should have been on [the Open Houses], creating positive experiences for WUSD students, their work, and their accomplishments. Lamprich also said that accountability in the district is trying to be implemented, encouraging all to reach out, get involved, and have those hard conversations with members of the board.

Superintendent Baker opened his comments expressing thanks: "I want to thank all the teachers, office staff, custodians, maintenance, transportation, food service teams, power professionals, and all the employees across the district contributing to the success of our students every single day." Baker also informed the meeting he attended all open houses and was impressed with each school site. He also shared his excitement regarding the construction taking place over the summer, where Willits High School will receive a new roof. In closing, Superintendent Baker recognized that summer is just around the corner with less than 20 days left in the semester as he is grateful for observing WUSD students' success this academic year.

WUSD's full May board meeting can be found on the district's YouTube channel, at www.youtube.com/watch?v=H67wFVYJXsw

Additional administrative public comments, full statements, and the May 14 action agenda can be found at www.willitsunified.com/page/school-board-resources

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Furry Friends Hoping for a Home

Mama Ramona

This sweet mastiff-mix came to us as a stray, heavily pregnant and clearly having had a difficult life. Not long after arriving at the shelter, Ramona gave birth to her puppies here with us. Since then, she has done everything she could for them, giving every ounce of herself, while quietly carrying the physical toll life has left behind.

Between raising her puppies and dealing with painful cherry eye issues, Ramona looks a little worse for wear these days. But even after everything she's been through, she remains unbelievably kind and gentle. She greets people with softness, leans in for affection, and seems so grateful for every bit of comfort she receives.

Now that her puppies are grown and she no longer has to worry about motherhood ever again, it is finally Ramona's turn to be cared for. Our clinic is treating her cherry eye issues, and things are already starting to look up for this deserving girl. Ramona is very sweet, friendly, and may be tolerant of another mellow canine companion with a proper introduction. More than anything, she deserves a quiet home where she can rest, heal, and finally know what it feels like to be loved without having to give so much of herself first.

Stay tuned for updates and pictures as we follow Ramona's healing journey and help her become the happy, healthy girl she was always meant to be.

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.mendocinoshelter.com. Call 707-463-4427 for more information.

Workin' Cowboy

Cowboy is a hardcore dude – full of himself, better off in the country. He is not great with other dogs, is selective, and needs space. He is smart, reactive, quick, agile, attentive



Ramona

and affectionate to his humans. He's very active and bossy. Cowboy is a working-type dog with big stamina and big demands. This boy is ready to go all day!

To learn more about Cowboy, 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.

Fish Litter

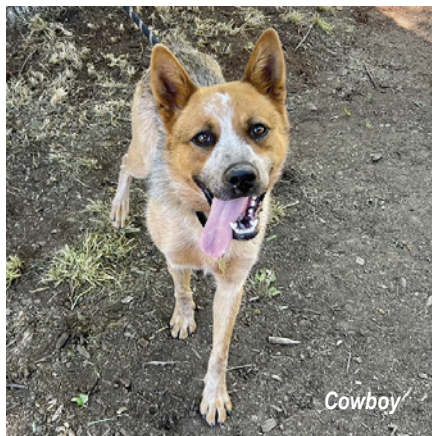
Meet the Fish Litter. These silly little puppies are full of wiggles, zoomies, and puppy kisses. They love to splash around in playtime and then drift off for cozy naps. Each one has their own goofy personality and is ready to swim right into your heart.



Fish Litter Puppy

Times are so different. Puppies are growing up in shelter settings, which is hard on their development. Here at HSMC we are thankful to have such a wonderful foster program where puppies typically don't grow up on site. However, growing up in their forever homes is so much better! Come on down this weekend to meet all our available puppies who are eager to start their new lives with you! We have six tan puppies and one black puppy in our fish litter, who have patiently been waiting for their turns to come. Hook one before they swim away.

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 Wednesday through Friday, 1 to 5 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 11 am to 3 pm; closed Monday and Tuesday (closed select Thursdays, check website for details). Check out all of our available dogs and cats on our website: www.mendocinohumane.org, on our Facebook page, and on www.petfinder.com. Call 707-485-0123 for more information.



Cowboy

The rest of **Y'Art** | From page 5

Next up, in the galleries, will be an exhibit opening on June 6.

"It's going to be from the Willits Center for the Arts Life Drawing group, I believe there are nine along with J.J. Plant, otherwise known as J.J. Crash Bang," said WCA Curator Margi Gomez. "He's from Laytonville. He's going to be doing some beautiful big prints, a lot of salmon prints, also metal sculpture, and some ceramics as well. He's very proficient. He used to be at the Hog Farm and travelled around. He's also a street performer. If we're lucky, we can also get a little juggling out of him. He's a talented guy."

There's always a lot going on at the Willits Center for the Arts, including the monthly exhibit openings, which attract a group of art enthusiasts who enjoy schmoozing with the artists and each other, along with a glass of wine and some treats from Scoops Deli & Catering.

The Willits Center for the Arts is at 71 East Commercial Street and its galleries are open to the public Friday through Sunday, 11 am to 5 pm.

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Posted by **CAL FIRE Sacramento**

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CAL FIRE

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

Those receiving diplomas from the Willits and North County area included: Ana Maria Almanza, Jennifer Alvarez, Aliyah Amador, Tyese Anderson, Margaret Andrews, Rebecca Andrews, Frankie Archibald, Manuel Banuelos, Lacey Bettega, John Bolton, Karina Brito, Mathieus Cohen-Barling, Michelle Coleman, Jason Cox, Elizabeth Cruz, Joshua Delawrence, Briana Dudash, Christopher Dunlap, Stacey Durborow, Jacqueline Estrada, Elaine Figg-Hoblyn, Mary Franz, David Frease, Lilah Garman, Joseph Gates, Jordan Gatto, Ana Gomez, Yesica Gonzalez, William Hahn, Jamey Harden, Esther Hernandez, Drew Hoteling, Sarah Jewell, Jade Johns, Katie Johnson, Taylor Jones, Jacqueline Kettering, Samantha King, Jasmine Knight, Shasara Krois, Katie Lacy, Sophia Leinwetter, Katlynn Lovato, Abraham Lozoff, Rachelle Luedemane, Natalia Luna, Chrystalyn Lundgren, Jessica Mahurin, Jacob Marines Romero, Jessika Matlick, James McDonald, Talisha Melluish, Alvaro Mendoza, Amy Mendoza, Juan Meza, Taylor Pardue, Amarah Potter, Courtney Potter, Megan Powell, Valeria Puche, Otaka Redhawk, Mason Rescina, Camille Rico, Fabiola Rodriguez, Miranda Ross, Ahrezo Sadeghpour, Anya Schwebs, Amanda Sears, Christina Shannon, Logan Shaul, Debra Shoemaker, Britney Short, Phillip Skelton, Catherine Spackman, Kirstin Stich, Ashley Tangermann, Alexis Terkelsen, Jessica Turner, Noe Vazquez, Desmond Wallace, Renae Wells, Shannon Whitewolf, Victoria Willburn, Kaley Wilson, and Fawn Winkles.

After all candidates were announced, Vice-President Polak led the group in the transfer of the tassels, before President Krauss gave closing remarks and wished everyone well on their journey.

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COLUMN | AT THE MOVIES

'Star Wars: The Mandalorian and Grogu'

The Story: The Mandalorian (Pedro Pascal), sometimes known as Mando, is an intergalactic bounty hunter and is known for his daring and for his commitment to fair play and justice. Tiny Grogu is Mando's mischievous adopted son. One look at Grogu and it is clear he is the same species as the legendary Star Wars teacher Yoda. (Possible spoiler: Maybe Grogu is connected to the Force.)

Mando is hired to retrieve a kidnapped family member of brutal gangster slugs known as the Fetts. The reader may recall one of those notorious Fetts in "Return of the Jedi." Our heroic Princess Leia was wearing a metal bikini and was cruelly shackled to a huge gross slug named Boba Fett. Star Wars lore attests that Princess Leia strangled Boba Fett with her chains. We all know he had it coming. When Mando locates the kidnapped Fett, he is cage fighting for money against all manner and race and species of galactic brutalists. And all this is pretty much just the beginning of the flick!

My Thoughts: The good guys are attacked by the bad guys. Then they are attacked again by more bad guys, and then by different bad guys. And that, more or less, is what the picture's about. **Parents:** Alien monsters, and more alien monsters. Could cause some nightmares. The good guys triumph over the bad guys, and most of the monsters are beaten stupid or blown up or shot or set aflame. On the other hand: It's Star Wars continued. And your kids may be attached. You know them. The Mandalorian was a successful Disney TV series. And Pedro Pascal (when you can see his face) makes a great hero model. He's kind. He's considerate. And he's really brave.

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

Willitsian **Daniel Essman** Columnist

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 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 May 7, 2026.
 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

WW609 Fictitious Business Name Statement
 2026-F0182
 The following person or persons are doing business as **FWT, 95 S. Main St., Willits, CA 95490; 707-354-1603.**
 Registered owner: **Hellagood Opportunities, LLC, 95 S. Main St., Willits, CA 95490.**
 This business is conducted by a limited liability company.
 The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on May 7, 2026.
 FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk Recorder on May 7, 2026.
 /s/ Erin Rehder, CEO
 Publication Dates: May 21, 28, June 4, 11, 2026

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