

Willits Frontier Days

99th Annual
Celebration

2025

*California's Longest Running
Continuous Rodeo*

THANK YOU TO OUR MAJOR SPONSORS







Hours: Monday – Friday: 9 am - 6 pm
Saturday & Sunday: 10 am - 5 pm

We are a family-owned and operated mercantile nestled in the heart of downtown Willits. Since 2007, we've been proud to offer brands that fit the Mendo lifestyle, including contemporary, western, and workwear clothing.

What began as a small selection of toys and gifts has grown significantly over the years, and we take great pride in showcasing local artisans whenever possible.

Just like our store, our café—affectionately known as "The Sweetshop"—is open 7 days a week. We offer a variety of fresh salads, sandwiches, paninis, and smoothies, along with our popular tea and espresso menu. However, what truly sets The Sweetshop apart is our Cowlick's ice cream and our very own handmade fudge!

We're not just here for our two-legged customers; we also cater to our four-legged friends, offering the finest feed and grains at a range of price points to suit every need.

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Message from our President:
Fred Barry

Welcome to the 99th Willits Frontier Days Rodeo! It's a privilege to be the President and to extend a warm welcome to everyone. Our rodeo isn't just a tradition; it's a community celebration.

From volunteering my time to serve on committees to now leading as President, my journey with the Willits Frontier Days Rodeo has been deeply rewarding. I've watched as my own daughter, inspired by my involvement, has joined in, with running for Willits Frontier Days Sweetheart and her being apart of starting our Willits Frontier Days Juniors program.

This year, our theme, "Traveling Through the Generations," reflects our commitment to inclusivity. We strive to create an environment where everyone, regardless of age or ability, can participate and thrive. From the thrilling rodeo events to the excitement of the Ferris wheel, there's something for everyone to enjoy.

As we gear up for the 99th Willits Frontier Days Rodeo, I'm filled with anticipation for the joy and excitement that each event will bring. Whether it's the BBQ, Rodeo, Truck Pulls, or the parade we're dedicated to making sure that every moment is filled with smiles and laughter.



Past Presidents

Marcy Barry	Chuck Persico
Chris White	Dr. Raymond Babcock
Dale Briggs	Lee Persico
Kent Standley	Louis Zanella
Kathy Goss	Galen Hathaway
Richard White	Merrill Williams
Jim Jennings	Kenneth Jamieson
Jack Tharp	Gus Goren
Ralph Baker	Mel Clatty
Dennis Rohrs	Frank Whitney
Logan Anker	Faris Whitney
Rick Crowder	
Harold Jorgenson	

The fine print:

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Maureen Jennison, Marcy Barry and Karen Cavanaugh

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Vet on Scene



Jamie Conner is a Mendocino County local who grew up in Redwood Valley, where she participated in the local rodeos, high school rodeo, and 4-H. Jamie attended Chico State, where she received a bachelor's degree in Animal Science.

Jamie graduated from Midwestern University in Glendale, AZ in 2022. She studied mixed animal medicine with an interest in ruminant and equine medicine. She is glad to be living back in the county with her husband where she has the opportunity to serve her local community working as an associate veterinarian at Mendocino Equine and Livestock.

Willits Frontier Days – 2025 Events

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Admission</i>
Sat, June 14	10:00 am	Sweetheart Judging <i>Poise and Personality</i>	Willits Frontier Days Office Area	Free
Fri, June 20	5:00 pm	Hometown Celebration	Main Street Willits	Free
Sun, June 22	8:00 am	Horse Show <i>Sweetheart Horsemanship Judging during show</i>	Jack Tharp Arena	Free
Fri, June 27	6:00 pm	Truck Pulls	Jack Tharp Arena	\$25 - Adults \$15 - Child (12 and under) Free - Child (2 and under)
	9:00 pm	Street Dance <i>Featuring Joe Peters Band</i>	Tennis Courts	Free
		Carnival Opens today!	Old Ball Field	
Sun, June 29	6:00 pm	Sweetheart Crowned	Rodeo Grounds	\$25 - Adult (limited tickets)
Thurs, July 3	7:00 pm	CCPRA Rodeo <i>Rockin' M Rodeo</i> <i>With the Diablo Ladies</i>	Jack Tharp Arena	\$30 - Box Seats \$25 - Adult \$15 - Child (12 and under) Free - Child (2 and under)
	9:00 pm	Western Dance <i>Featuring Nick Tyrell</i>	Tennis Courts	Free
Fri, July 4	10:00 am	Horseshoe Competition	Rec Grove	\$75 Entry Fee <i>Free to watch</i>
	11:00 am	Main Street Parade <i>"Traveling Through Generations"</i>	North Main Street	Free
	12:00 pm	Country Music Rodeola	Recreation Grove	Free
		Western BBQ	Recreation Grove	\$25 - Adult \$15 - Child (3 & up)
	4:00 pm	Water fights	Fire House	FREE
	7:00 pm	CCPRA Rodeo <i>Rockin' M Rodeo</i> <i>With the Diablo Ladies</i>	Jack Tharp Arena	\$30 - Box Seats \$25 Adult \$15 - Child (12 and under) Free - Child (2 and under)
Sat, July 5	7:00 am	Lions Club Cowboy Breakfast	Recreation Grove	\$15 - Adults \$10 - Child (12 and under)
	8:00 am	Jr. Rodeo	Jack Tharp Arena	\$10 - Adult
	7:00 pm	Bulls and Broncs	Jack Tharp Arena	\$15 - Adult \$10 - Child (12 and under)



Board of Directors and honored advisors:
From left: Jeff Cook, Amanda Sizemore, Jaden Doak, holding her daughter Oakley, Karen Cavanaugh, Lee Persico, Kinzie Vogel and Hadley, in front. Not pictured: Genevieve Neary, Matt Harbour, Steven Spackman, and Steven Hoyle.

Willits Frontier Days Boards 2025



Executive Board:
From left: Secretary Hailey Riley, Vice President Marcy Barry, Treasurer June Sizemore and Second Vice President Bruce Cartwright. Not pictured: President Fred Barry.

In 1926, the Willits Development Association came up with the idea of sponsoring a community activity to raise funds for the construction of a much-needed hospital. Through the efforts of many prominent citizens, including Dr. Raymond Babcock, Frank Taft, Judge E.M. Whitney, Judge Fred Foord, Deed Wimmer, Frank and Bill Whitney, Joe Quadrio, Edward Morris, Carl Edenfeldt, Allen Sacry and the American Legion Post, a plan was hatched, and the first Willits Frontier Days Rodeo occurred in July 1927.

Coincidentally, at this same time, Frank R. Howard, the young son of Charles S. Howard, owner of Ridgewood Ranch and champion racehorse Seabiscuit, was injured in an automobile accident at the ranch. The boy's doctor, Dr. Babcock, approached Howard

about erecting a hospital in Willits in memory of young Frank, who did not survive the fatal crash. Mr. Howard agreed and decided to build the Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital shortly thereafter.

Even though the original idea of having a rodeo to fund construction of a hospital was no longer necessary, the American Legion decided to carry on with their plans for the event anyway.

The celebration was an instant success, and the American Legion ran the show until 1932, when the Willits Volunteer Fire Department accepted the leadership role. Looking to the future, the fire department borrowed money to improve the rodeo grounds by having individual volunteer firefighters sign promissory notes.

The Willits Frontier Days Association was born and incorporated in 1950, when a group of local businessmen and ranchers took over the proverbial “reins” of the event. The continuity of Willits Frontier Days has remained unbroken since 1926.

As a non-profit organization, Willits Frontier Days still operates as it did in the beginning, with no associated individual or organization getting any financial reward. Residents and clubs work together to put on the events and decide together how to spend the profits of each show to benefit our community.

Interested in getting involved and helping the tradition of Willits Frontier Days continue into the future? Call 707-459-6330 or email us at: willitsfrontierdays@gmail.com for information on joining.



Willits' **Lisa Arkelian**, 17, is a junior at Willits High School and is excited to run for Willits Frontier Days Sweetheart this year.

She is supported by family members including mom Sam, and dad Dan; siblings Elena, Dana and Joe; and grandparents Marty and Debbie.

Arkelian enjoys being on the softball team at Willits High School, where she plays in the pitching position. She also loves participating in rodeo events and working at John Ford Ranch.

"I'm also is a member of the Willits Frontier Days Juniors Club," said Arkelian. "We volunteer and help put on several barrel/poles series events and also hold roping nights along with helping Willits Frontier Days put on all the rodeos."

"I love to do team roping," explained Arkelian. "I'm a header in the team roping events, but I also love to do breakaway, too."

After her graduation next year, Arkelian notes her interest in a career and schooling in the ranch management field.

"I've always wanted to run for Sweetheart," said Arkelian. "I grew up watching all the girls and some of my closet friends compete, and I'd love to join the list of winners which includes my sister who won last year."

Arkelian is available by phone at (707) 354-3114 or by email at lisaarkelian19@icloud.com.



**Lisa
Arkelian**
(707) 354-3114
lisaarkelian19@icloud.com

Potter Valley's **Kristen Helms**, 17, is a junior at Ukiah High School, where she enjoys participating in JV softball and is president of the Family Career and Community Leaders of America. She is also a member of the Ukiah Future Farmers of America and Ukiah 4-H, and plans to take a market lamb, three rams, one ewe, one dairy goat, and one Boer goat to the county fair this year, as well as entering pictures in the Junior Building.

During her time in FFA, she has been able to attend the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana. She is also the past 2023 Potter Valley Rodeo Queen.

"I'm not just a part of a community, but I am part of a family within 4-H and FFA, and also being this year's JV softball captain for my school team," said Helms.

"I also love to show livestock," continued Helms. "I show horses, dairy goats, Boer goats, and sheep."

Along with her love of livestock, Helms also is an avid reader, and is currently enjoying reading "Forever Never" by Lucy Score.

In the rodeo arena, Helms enjoys participating in barrel and pole-bending events. She also enjoys gathering cattle with her family in Potter Valley, and riding her quarter horse, Thumbtack.

"My plans for when I graduate from high school are to go to Feather River College in Quincy to get my Agriculture Business degree and my teaching credentials," explained Helms. "I'm running for Willits Sweetheart because I would like to be the face of a hard-working and supportive community, especially since they are always kind and caring."

Helms is available by phone at (707) 380-4703, or by email at: kt.dopers26@gmail.com.



Kristen Helms
(707) 380-4703
kt.dopers26@gmail.com

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Grand Marshal:

Paul & Bonnie Riley

Paul and Bonnie Riley have managed the Willits Frontier Days front gates for over two decades, demonstrating unwavering support for various local organizations. Their commitment extends to Willits volunteer fire department, youth organizations, such as FFA and 4-H, as well as sports showcasing their dedication to fostering community spirit and engagement. They also are local business owners including currently running Paul Riley Drywall and previously running House Doctor Paints for many years. We would like to thank them for their continued support of the Willits community.



Heritage Award:

Jeff Cook

Buckle Sponsored by Harrah Industries

Jeff Cook has dedicated 24 years to Willits Frontier Day, where he has made significant contributions, including designing and constructing the announcer's booth. He put many hours into maintenance and painting around the grounds, demonstrating his commitment to even the smallest tasks. For the past 15 years, he has taken on the new role of leading the parade and distributing thousands of flags as well as addressing the city of Willits during the proclamation, further enhancing the community spirit of this cherished event.



Top Hand:

Steven Hoyle

This year's Top Hand Award goes to Seven Hoyle. Steven has given countless hours of his time to help at all the Willits Frontier Days grounds for the past several years. He has taken on various tasks such as weeding, welding, operating equipment, helping to set-up events as well as serving beer. Without volunteers like Steven, Willits Frontier Days would not continue. We are truly grateful to have Steven as part of our team.





Sponsored by 101 Trailer & RV Supply

Beef BBQ

WHEN & WHERE:

7/4/25 | Noon | Rec Grove Park
Adult: \$25 & Child (3 & up) \$15

Even as the parade comes to an end, the sizzling aroma of barbecuing beef can already be caught in the air, wafting out of the barbecue pit at the Rec Grove Park. The line can get long, but anyone who's been through it before can testify that the Annual Beef Barbecue is worth the wait – even when the team serves some 4,000 people during the luncheon.

Putting this monumental meal together takes the combined efforts of many local individuals, service clubs and businesses. However, under the direction of Mike Frahm and the help of many others, the event continues to be a success.

The barbecue fire crew lights the coals around midnight to make sure they are just right by the time the cooks arrive around 6 a.m. Many dedicated volunteers work through the night and into the day preparing cowboy-style beans, salad, garlic-buttered French bread and corn on the cob.

Roasted over oak coals since the crack of dawn, the Black Angus tri-tip roast is absolutely delectable. Tickets are available from the Sweetheart contestants and at the event, which starts at noon.



Horseshoe Tournament

WHEN & WHERE:

7/4/25 | 10 a.m.
Rec Grove Park
Free to attend
\$75 entry fee



Country Music Rodeola

WHEN & WHERE:

7/4/25 | 12 p.m.
Rec Grove Park
Free to attend

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AGRICULTURE

AGR-180 Fall Sustainable Veg & Fruit Production

ART

ART-228A-4380 Beginning Painting I
ART-228B-4381 Beginning Painting II
ART-228C-4382 Intermediate Painting I
ART-228D-4383 Intermediate Painting II
ART-522-0524 Watercolors for Older Adults
ART-542-0842 Ceramics for Older Adults

AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE

ASL-200-0202 Sign Language: Level I

BUSINESS

BUS-107-4264 Customer Service

CULINARY ARTS MANAGEMENT

CAM-70A Vegetarian Cuisine-Summer/Fall
CAM-70B Vegetarian Cuisine-Fall/Winter

CHILD DEVELOPMENT

CDV-101-2367 Curriculum in Early Education
CDV-200-0220 Child Growth and Development

COMPUTER SCIENCE

CSC-520-4384 & -4403 Beginning Computer Skills I
CSC-526-4385 & -4404 Beginning Computer Skills II

ENGLISH

ENGL-210-4356 Creative Writing
ENGL-212-4357 Intermediate Creative Writing
ENGL-503-4358 Writing for Older Adults
ENGL-560-4359 & -4360 Basic Reading & Writing
Formerly ENG 200
ENGL-C1000-4354 & -4355 Academic Reading & Writing

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

ESL-3C-4344 Communication Skills C
ESL-503C-4345 Communication Skills C (Non-Credit)
ESL-507A-4343 Beginning ESL A (Non-Credit)
ESL-7A-4342 Beginning ESL A

ETHNIC STUDIES

ETH-202-0227 Racial and Ethnic Relations

HEALTH

HLH-214-4298 Health and Nutrition

HUMAN SERVICES

HUS-152-4277 Basic Skills for Service Workers

MUSIC

MUS-230A-0223 Beginning Voice
MUS-230B-0224 Intermediate Voice
MUS-230C-0225 230C Singers' Repertoire I
MUS-230D-0226 230C Singers' Repertoire II
MUS-281-4278 Concert Choir I
MUS-530-0305 Singing for Older Adults
MUS-580-4279 Chorale for Older Adults

PSYCHOLOGY

Formerly PSY 200

PSYC-C1000-4300 Introduction to Psychology

STATISTICS

Formerly MTH 220

STAT-C1000-4297 Introduction to Statistics

THEATRE

THE-234A-0253 Tap Dance: Beginning
THE-234B-4388 Tap Styles and Performance
THE-236A-0066 Yoga: Beginning
THE-236B-0067 Yoga: Advanced Beginning
THE-268-4387 Dance Rehearsal
THE-536-4379 Yoga for Older Adults

WORK EXPERIENCE

WEE-196-0194 Work Experience Education

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FOR INFO: CLAYTON: 805-286-7457 KEVIN: 707-354-1099 MARCY: 707-272-5395

CCPRA Rodeo

WHEN & WHERE:

7/3/25 | 7 p.m. & 7/4 | 7 p.m.
Jack Tharp Arena | Box: \$30, Adult:
\$25, Child (12 and under): \$15

The California Cowboys Pro Rodeo Association is a group of top-ranked cowgirls and cowboys who participate on a circuit of professional-grade rodeos throughout the state.

The contestants participate in eight events – bareback, saddle bronc, team roping, calf roping, steer wrestling, breakaway roping, barrel racing and bull riding – hoping to win the coveted All-Around title.

After the points from all the events are tallied, the cowgirl and cowboy with the highest cumulative scores win the title, a coordinating engraved buckle created at Outlaw Saddlery, a wad of cold hard cash, and bragging rights for the duration of the year.

The livestock for the events, the bulls, broncs and horned-alike – ‘rodeo stock’ as they are referred to in the trade – are provided by Rockin’ M Rodeo. The bulls and broncs give the boys a challenge to hang on to, and the steer and calves try to give the ladies a run for their money.

In addition to the eight CCPRA Rodeo events, cowboys and cowgirls from Lake, Mendocino and Humboldt counties can compete in local team roping events as well. Trophy buckles, also engraved by Outlaw Saddlery, are awarded to the top-scoring Header and Heeler.



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Bull Riding:
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Thank you to those who sponsored buckles for these CCPRA events!

Bareback Riding:
Willits Taco Bell

Saddle Bronc Riding:
East Side Ranch

Barrel Racing:
T&T Towing

Breakaway Roping:
Willits Taco Bell

Team Roping Header:
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Team Roping Heeler:
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3 Marcela Drive, Suite D, Willits

Orthopedics
707-467-5278
3 Marcela Drive, Suite C, Willits

AdventistHealth
Howard Memorial



Hometown Celebration

WHEN & WHERE:
6/20/25 | 5 to 9 p.m.
Downtown Willits
Free to attend

The Hometown Celebration is held along the Main Street corridor in downtown Willits.

Many brick-and-mortar vendors, restaurants, cafes and shops open their doors with specials and sales for those who come and celebrate for the evening.

Pop-up booths are set up for many other businesses in several parking lot areas. South-of-town and other businesses, service groups, clubs and organizations offer goods to buy, raffles, and games and fun for the kids.

Food, treats and tasties are available from local restaurants and vendors who serve many street-friendly eats for attendees as they stroll around downtown.





Horse Show

WHEN & WHERE:

6/22 | 8 a.m. | Jack Tharp Arena
Free to Attend

Equestrians have been showing their skills as accomplished riders at the Willits Frontier Days Horse Show since the beginning of the event in the late 1920s. English and Western disciplines are both showcased, and a high point and reserve high point winner are selected from each group and are awarded prizes for their day's efforts. Five local perpetual trophies are available: Barbara Hamilton, John Fish, Randy Clark and Don and Petie Coleman, the R Horse Ranch, and the Goss family. These trophies are for local riders aged 17 and under who live in Mendocino County.



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Jr. Rodeo

WHEN & WHERE:

7/5/25 | 8 a.m.

Jack Sharp Arena | Adult: \$10

CCPRAers have to start somewhere, and the Junior Rodeo event is the place for the little buckaroos to hone their arena skills before competing with the big guys and gals. Many of the junior contestants also have been in the saddle since they were very little, many with practical ranch experience already under their belts.

Events at the Junior Rodeo include many of the CCPRA events, just on a smaller scale. Calf and steer riding offer the little ones a chance to get ready for the bulls, and the Mystery Scramble gives everyone – contestants AND spectators – a great giggle. Though competition can be fierce even on the smaller scale, the parents of these little ones are always cheering them on and supporting them in every event.

Like the CCPRA Rodeos, the stock is provided by Humboldt County's Lou Bugenig and Mike Mora of West Coast Rodeos, and the winner of the event also receives the All-Around title and an engraved buckle. The overall high-point winner for the day will have the honor of receiving the Bud Suttles Memorial Trophy.

Major Event Sponsors:

Eastside Ranch | Willits Kids Corner

Les Schwab of Willits

Buckle Sponsors:

Cotati Large Animal Vet | Willits Wild Bunch

Gravier's Chevron





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Main Street Parade

WHEN & WHERE:

7/4 | 11 a.m. | Main Street | Free to Attend

The strip of Main Street between Commercial Street and East Valley Street gets a holiday-themed makeover on the morning of July 4, as the annual parade kicks off and turns Main Street into a red, white and blue extravaganza.

Community members and visitors from all over the county and beyond line the sidewalks of historic downtown Willits to watch the glitter, horses, dancers, floats, balloons, gunfighters, bands, flags, tractors – and usually a surprise or two – march down Main Street.

Several entrants have made the parade an annual or generational tradition for their families – some riding since they were just little buckaroos, including members of the Persico families and many others.

Annual favorites include the Willits Frontier Days Sweetheart contestants, the current Grand Marshal and Heritage Award winners, Roots of Motive Power antique logging equipment, Willits Horsemen's Association, Willits Police Department, Little Lake and Brooktrails Fire Departments, CalFire, as well as many other emergency personnel – with sirens and lights blazing, of course.

The announcer's stand, located at the corner of East Mendocino Avenue and Main Street, introduces each entry and provides information. Though many viewers stake out seats in the early hours of the morning, the parade starts at 11 a.m. and is free to attend.



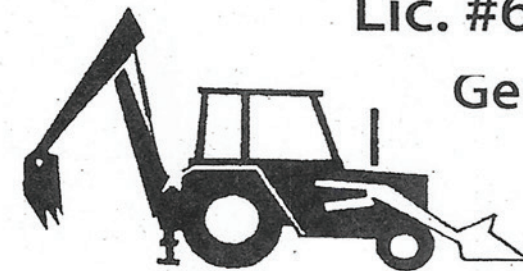
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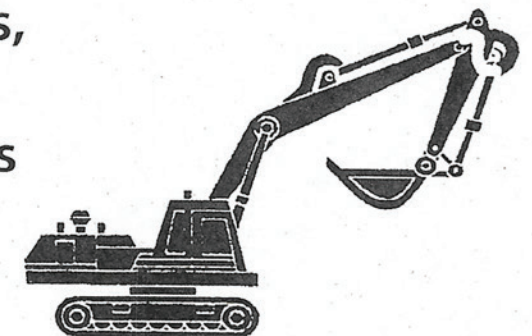
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WILLITS FRONTIER DAYS' 14TH ANNUAL MARY BURGESS MEMORIAL

RANCH RODEO



COMING SOON TO
WILLITS FRONTIER DAYS

SAVE THE DATE: OCTOBER 11, 2025

Dancing Music

WHEN & WHERE:

Joe Peters Band | 6/27/25
Following Truck Pulls
Rodeo Grounds | Free to Attend

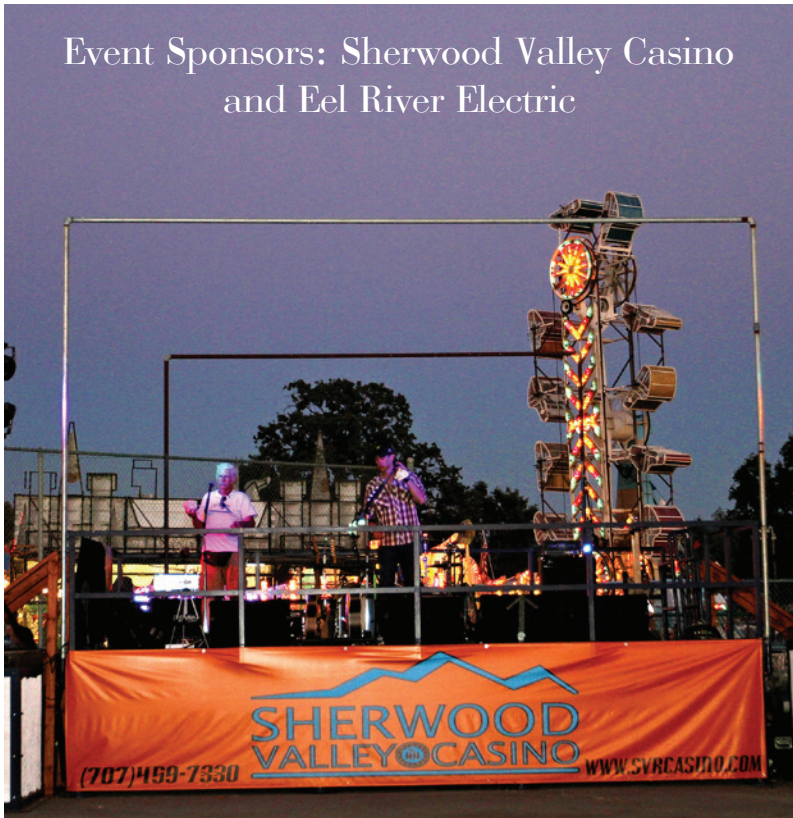
Nick Tyrell | 7/3/25 | Following Rodeo
Rodeo Grounds | Free to Attend

The street dances and band performances give the over-21 crowd a chance to hang out with friends or make new ones while dancing the night away to DJ or band-made country tunes.

This year, the Joe Peters Band and Nick Tyrell will perform for the gathered crowds. Sponsored by Sherwood Valley Casino.

The Beer Garden offers cowboys and cowgirls a watering hole, and something for the youngsters to long for.

Remember: no backpacks will be allowed. Please leave them at home. Dances are held at the Rodeo Grounds from 9 pm until midnight. Be safe, have fun, and make each dance a night to enjoy for all!



Event Sponsors: Sherwood Valley Casino
and Eel River Electric

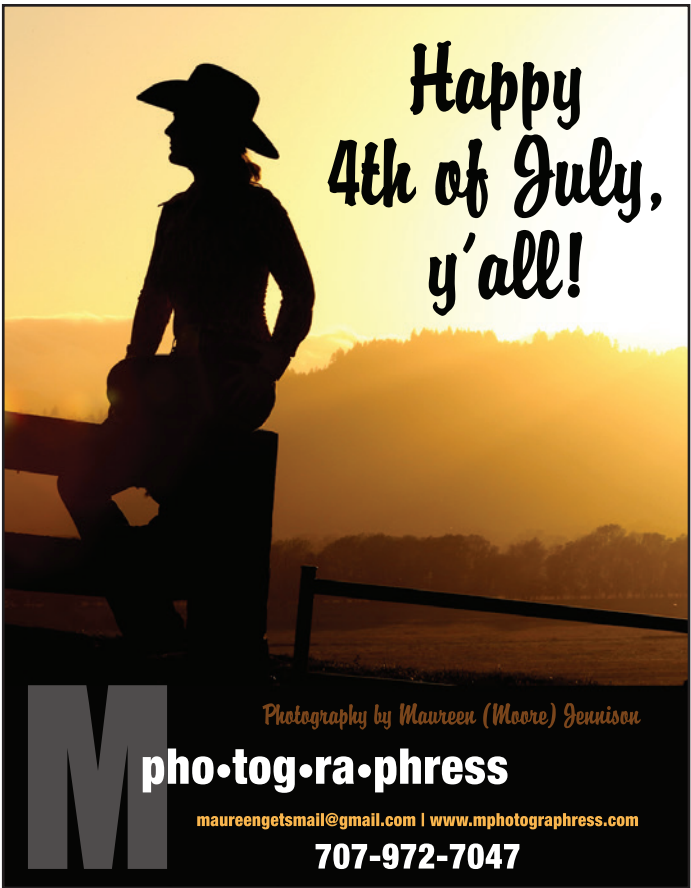


Carnival Fun

WHEN & WHERE:

Opens 6/27/25 | Old Ball
Fields Questions:
1-916-761-1722

The night sky overlooking the Jack Tharp Arena glows bright with the lights from the Johnston Amusements carnival every year. The carnival offers rides, food and fun for kids and adults. Classics like the Gravitron and the Zipper give those hoping for a thrill a ride of a lifetime. The cotton candy, carnival games including darts, ping pong balls for goldfish, and more test the skills of all attendees. Everyone is welcome to enjoy tasty food including corn dogs, candy apples, ice cream, and popcorn as they stroll through the clean and well-lit midway. Johnston Amusements has been bringing these quality family entertainment options to Central and Northern California fairs and festivals for over 50 years, spanning three generations



Happy 4th of July, y'all!

Photography by Maureen (Moore) Jennison


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THURSDAY 7/10/25

Time onlys start at 6:30 pm
Race starts at 7:00 pm

THURSDAY 7/17/25

Added money each race
Buckle Series: Must make 5 out of 6 to qualify

THURSDAY 7/24/25

More details to follow

THURSDAY 8/7/25

THURSDAY 8/14/25

FRIDAY 8/22/25

Call Marcy 707-272-5395
or Hailey 707-272-1088

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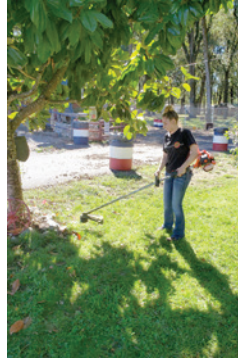
WHEN & WHERE:
 6/27/25 | 6 p.m. | Jack Sharp Arena
 Adult: \$25, Child (12 and under): \$15

The Jack Sharp Arena gets to serve a different use on Friday night, when the Truck and Tractor Pulls replace the bulls and broncs that usually inhabit the space. Local boys and girls, and a roster of professional drivers who are a part of the MLM Motorsports crew, try their trucks and tractors against The Terminator, a weighted sled that is hooked to competitors' vehicles. The drivers must begin from a parked position, be hooked to the sled, then methodically, or with much gusto, drag the sled down the arena and hope to make it across the 300-foot-mark finish line.

The sled has an increasable weight that can be altered to allow different levels of resistance for each class of drivers. Classes include: Super Street, Street Diesel, OMG Class, Stock Diesel, 4,500-pound, 5,500-pound, 7,200-pound, Pro Modified trucks, 5,800-pound tractors, Country Modified, 6,000-pound and 8,000-pound. Awards are given, as are bragging rights, to those who are able to dominate The Terminator. Many drivers compete with MLM at their other events, and come back to Willits year after year for this fun event.

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Willits Frontier Days Juniors Club

The Willits Frontier Days Junior Program was initiated by former sweetheart Hailey Riley and past president Marcy Barry.

Hailey leads a group of enthusiastic young equestrians who actively engage in community service, volunteering at local events and assisting the Willits Wild Bunch with the Toy Run as well as the Willits Christmas Program which they provide filled Christmas stocking to all the kids.

They have also served Thanksgiving dinners to seniors and donated raffle baskets to various organizations.

This year, the group has exciting summer plans, including a drive-thru taco dinner, a barrel and pole series, and a team roping jackpot series. Their goal this year is to raise funds so that their group can attend the National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas, so keep an eye out for their upcoming fundraisers. If anyone would like to donate to the group, please contact Hailey Riley at 707-272-1088 or Marcy Barry at 707-272-5395.



Above: Juniors members, from left: Arya Sizemore, Hailey Riley, Bailey Baker, Hazel Cooke, Lisa Arkelian, Dana Arkelian, Triniti Freudenberg, Emmie Artega, Rylee Demarta, Danielle Barry, and Hadley Vogel. Not pictured: Taylynn Artega, Riley Schreiner, Zoey Schreiner, Macy Harbour, Katie Spackman, and Elena Arkelian



Carol Anne Souza

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Willits Frontier Days Jr.

START TIME 8:00 AM



★ ★ ★

**THE LIONS CLUB WILL BE SERVING
BREAKFAST IN THE REC GROVE STARTING
AT 7:00 AM**

05 JULY

ADMISSION FEE \$10.00 ADULTS
Location: Jack Tharp Arena

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FRI. JULY 11, 2025 @ 6:00PM
 &
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Happy 4th of July!



Save The Dates:

Willits Frontier Days
Team Roping Buckle
Series.




Location Willits
 Frontier Days
 Rodeo Grounds

July 18, 2025
August 15, 2025
Sept. 19, 2025

Willits Frontier Days
 Jrs
FLAVORED ENERGY DRINKS

Little Lake Fire Department Waterfight

WHEN & WHERE:
 7/4/25 | Little Lake Fire Department
 4 p.m. | Free to attend



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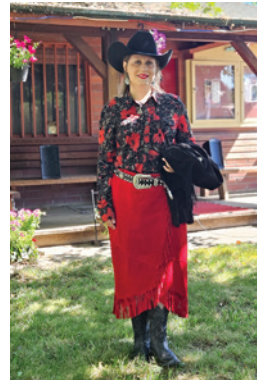
Sweetheart Buckle
Sponsor
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WHEN & WHERE:
Appearance & Poise: 6/14/25
Noon | Rodeo Grounds

Horsemanship: 6/22/25 | Jack Tharp Arena
During Horse Show | Free to attend

Crowning Winner: 6/29/25

Selecting the next lady to represent Willits Frontier Days is decided on ticket sales, poise and personality, modeling, a speech, equestrian knowledge, and a horsemanship riding pattern. Candidates are responsible for helping create awareness of the WFD events by selling tickets in the community. Those crowned Frontier Days Sweetheart help out in the arena every year, handing out awards, chasing cattle, riding in the parade, and posing with winners for photos, as well as making appearances at other rodeos in the name of Willits Frontier Days.





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Honor



Past Willits Frontier Days Sweethearts

1926	None	1959	Marian Whitely Ross	1992	Amanda Hiatt Hower
1927	Marie Scholegel Novaglie	1960	Carol Collier McClendon	1993	Amy Ford
1928	Martha Warner Kelton	1961	Mardi Wilson Hinton	1994	Marta Trevey
1929	Lola Butts	1962	Linda Allen Banks	1995	Tori Nunnemaker Minton
1930	None	1963	Susan Fonsen Neilson	1996	Georgianne Dawson Crosky
1931	None	1964	Sue Hardaway	1997	Patricia Garrity Murray
1932	Enola McKenzie Reed	1965	Sharon Baker Arno	1998	Ileah Leone
1933	Betty Akins	1966	Leslie Cogburn Scaglione	1999	Mary Garrity Fonsen
1934	Amy Gardner	1967	Joan Scholegel	2000	Olivia Grupp
1935	Jemma Pedroncelli Serventi	1968	Clydeen Smith Dick	2001	Katherine Whitby
1936	Elizabeth Wendt Ferguson	1969	Mousey Clatty	2002	Sandi Short Sandroni
1937	Alice Gibellini Wade	1970	Kam Maize LaLaguna	2003	Mattie Pinon Owen
1938	Dorce Brown	1971	Margaret Smith	2004	Tina Holguin
1939	Ernistime Casteel DeBoer	1972	Paulette Wilcott Somdahl	2005	Ashtan Bloomquist
1940	Evelyn Robley Bergson	1973	Jann Clatty Rickey	2006	Darcy Ford
1941	Pauline Standley Perez	1974	Kathy Persico Graves	2007	Courtney Figg-Hoblyn
1942	Melba Dempsey Lewis	1975	Lorraine Soulliere Crabtree	2008	Kinzie Barlow
1943	Ann Cox McGinnis	1976	Tami Tharp Romberg Mayfield	2009	Lindsey Bowlds
1944	Anna Ford Hardwick	1977	Kelly Bielenberg Eoff	2010	Stephanie Standley Hightower
1945	Lillian Kroh Nolan	1978	Julie Canepa Belvin	2011	Riata King
1946	Georgia Stovall Welch	1979	Liz Persico Day	2012	Rachel Belvin Ramirez
1947	Anne Crabtree Henderson	1980	Cindy Kostanecki Kelly	2013	Lilja Lamkin
1948	Lillian Kroh Nolan	1981	Stacey Blalack McKinley	2014	Haley Schuck
1949	Betty Mast Campbell	1982	Caroline Kostanecki Durupt	2015	Caitlyn Forrester
1950	Wanda Lane Johnston	1983	Saundra DuCross Norman	2016	Halee Reed
1951	Gretchen Mullen Weber	1984	Chrissy Kostanecki	2017	Hailey Riley
1952	Yvonne Dusseau Leever	1985	Tracey Ford Moody	2018	Lilah Garman
1953	Claire Shawnago Huffman	1986	Kristine McBride Tyrrell	2019	Jaden Doak
1954	Joan Neary Von Weien	1987	Kim Colwell Lebo	2020	Jaden Doak - No contest held
1955	Shirley Merritt Nikolashin	1988	Nicol Persico Kunka	2021	Claire Case Brackett
1956	Betty Ann Stansberry Erbes	1989	Dina Pinon Parker	2022	Danielle Barry
1957	Patricia Moreno Door	1990	Melanie Ulvila	2023	Hazel Cooke
1958	Letha Schumaker Wiley	1991	Lanae Shuster Lamkin	2024	Elena Arkelian



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Lions Club Pancake Breakfast

WHEN & WHERE:

7/5/25 | Rec Grove Park

7 am | Adult: \$15,

Child (12 and under): \$10

One great tradition of Willits Frontier Days is the Willits Lions Club Cowboy Breakfast held at the Rec Grove Park in the morning.

The Lions Club gets busy early to make sure the crowd can grab a hot plate of pancakes, ham, eggs and hot coffee.

Tables are available at the park to sit and eat, and tickets are available from the Sweetheart contestants and at the event, which runs from 7 to 11 am.



Happy Frontier Days!

Willits Kids Corner

Indoor Playground and Family Fun Center!

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We're SO grateful for the community's encouragement as we work to create something special for local kids and families.

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Nick Tyrell

Playing the Western Dance
on July 3 starting at 9 pm

Nashville Recording Artist Nick Tyrel returns to Willits Frontier Days Rodeo this Summer. Whether he's writing alongside some of the industry's top songwriters and producers, or opening for popular acts such as Lee Brice, Dustin Lynch, Cole Swindell, REO Speedwagon, Styx, The Steve Miller Band, (and more), it seems that the singer-songwriters list of achievements in music never stop growing. The NorCal native is set to share the stage with Lynyrd Skynyrd in August 2025.



Joe Peters Band

Playing the Street Dance on June 27 starting at 9 pm

Joe Peters: A Cowboy, A Songwriter, A Force to Be Reckoned With

Born in the Country Music Capital of the West—Bakersfield, California—Joe Peters was raised on the grit and glory of country life. From an early age, he was just as comfortable with a rope in his hand as he was with a guitar slung over his shoulder. At just 8 years old, he won his first rodeo and picked up his first guitar, strumming along to the sounds of Waylon Jennings, George Strait, and Merle Haggard—the very foundation of his musical soul.

As Joe shot up to a towering 6'5" in his teenage years, he transitioned from rough stock riding to team roping, competing across the West while fine-tuning his songwriting and playing for anyone who'd listen at rodeo grounds. Just as he was hitting his stride in the roping world, tragedy struck—his horse rolled over on him in a devastating accident. Forced into a long recovery, Joe turned even deeper to his music, writing and recording his first song at American Sound Recording Studio (now the Bakersfield Music Hall of Fame).

With the help of his roping partner Justin Pensinger, Joe fought his way back into the saddle and back into competition. The two became best friends, roping partners, and in

2013, qualified for the ACTRA National Finals. Music was always in the mix—every town they rolled into, Joe found an open mic and played. "The music bug had really gotten under my skin at that point," Joe recalls. "All I wanted to do was play, sing, travel, and rope!"

Then, in 2015, everything came crashing down. Justin Pensinger, Joe's best friend and roping partner, passed away in a tragic accident. Heartbroken, Joe sold his horse, walked away from rodeo, and buried himself in the family business.

But music has a way of pulling a man back to where he belongs. By 2017, Joe was playing local bars, packing in 400-500 people a night. Then came 2019, a trip to Nashville, and a defining moment—sitting on the laundromat floor of a Holiday Inn, pen in hand, the words just started pouring out. They haven't stopped since.

Joe released his debut EP in 2020, and by 2021, he was working with some of Nashville's top songwriters and recording in Music City. His name is now tied to some of the biggest in the industry—he's shared the stage with



Brooks & Dunn, Cody Johnson, Jason Aldean, Parker McCollum, and Tim McGraw.

That JP brand he wears? That's Justin Pensinger's brand, a permanent tribute to his late friend. And while Joe is back in the saddle roping, these days, it's just for fun—because the real ride is happening under the neon lights, where his music is taking him places he never imagined.

One thing's for sure—Joe Peters is just getting started.

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Rockin' M Rodeo

Chuck Morris, three-time Sierra Circuit Saddle Bronc Champion, owns and operates Rockin M Rodeo. Morris competed in the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association for 20 years, was a two-time National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association National Champion, and a California High School Rodeo Association State Champion. Morris has provided rough stock to rodeos across the state since 1997.

Rockin M Rodeo's Morris has been a rodeo cowboy his whole life and during retirement he wanted to stay involved in a sport that he truly loved.

"I always had a passion for bucking horses and raising them just seemed like the natural next step," Morris said. "Horses get a reputation just like bucking bulls, some for being rank and hard to ride. Others get a reputation for being rider-friendly and easy to make a good ride on. Bucking horses are the same as race horses or jumping horses. They are bred to buck just like race horses are bred to run."




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Kaleb Whitehurst

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Clayton Cooley

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a welder after graduation



Sofia Perez

Received \$500 and looks to become
a nurse after graduation

Giving Back to the Community

Willits Frontier Days is proud to contribute to our community's well being. Over the years, we have had the privilege of sponsoring the St. Jude's rodeo, donating to Willits Otters, Little Lake Fire Department, and the Seabiscuit Therapeutic Riding Center program, as well as donating numerous baskets to various nonprofit organizations.

Last year, we had the honor of taking over the Willits Christmas Program from the Willits Rotary. In 2024, we were able to help make Christmas happen for 103 families. We look forward to our year of 2025.



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“Lefty” the Rodeo Clown

Lefty is an “Old School Rodeo Clown.” Growing up watching the likes of The Red Skelton Show and Hee Haw, the entire family, including grandparents, would gather to laugh and enjoy the comedy.

Watching Miles Hare and Rob Smets fearlessly protect the bull riders and Lecile Harris keeps the crowd on the edge of their seats wondering what he was going to do next put a passion in Lefty.

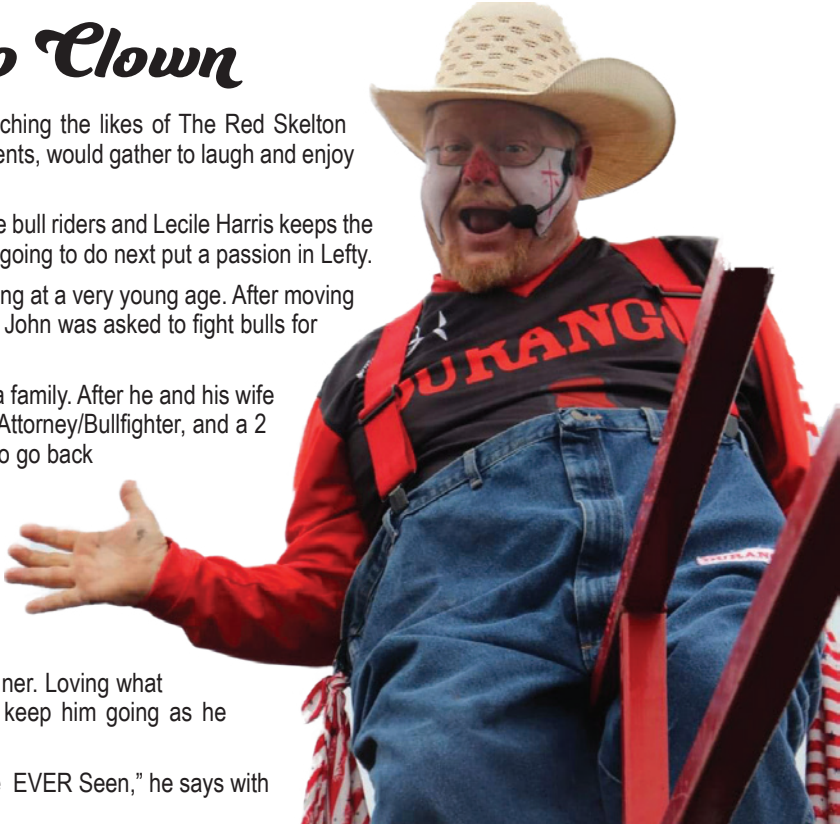
Unbeknown to his family and friends, John Started rodeoing at a very young age. After moving to Wisconsin, thinking his rodeo life had come to an end, John was asked to fight bulls for Little Britches of Wisconsin.

After 4 years and a baby, he hung up the cleats to raise a family. After he and his wife successfully raised 3 great kids, 2 of whom rodeoed, an Attorney/Bullfighter, and a 2 time College National Finals Bareback rider, it was time to go back to his passion.

John lost his complete left arm in a horrific tractor accident but that was NOT going to stop him. This is when the name LEFTY came about. Lefty puts on his baggies, applies his makeup, and keeps the crowd entertained.

Lefty is a multiple award-winning Rodeo Clown / Entertainer. Loving what he does and the smiles and laughter from the crowds keep him going as he travels the United States.

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In Remembrance

Tracy LeCris



Tracy was a cherished friend and family member who dedicated over 30 years to volunteering for Willits Frontier Days, she was the secretary for the last 14 years and has worn many different hats throughout her years of volunteering. Her sudden passing has left a profound sense of loss among those who knew her. She will be greatly missed. Stop by and have a drink at the bar, I'm sure she will be there in spirit having one with us.

Margie Harrah Handley



If ever there was a person that left a big whole in the world when she passed, it was Margie. The proud daughter of Bob Harrah, she carried on his tradition of sponsoring and presenting the Heritage Award for many years. Full of energy, always a smile on her face, she served at the Barbeque with Willits Rotary Club.

In Remembrance

Russ Oakley



A man with giant hands, ALWAYS in the arena helping a young competitor – Russ Oakley will be missed by Willits Frontier Days! A Heritage Award recipient, and supporter of Willits Frontier Days (all their events – gymkhanas; Jr. Rodeo; Team Roping and the Ranch Rodeo) – Russ was the very definition of a cowboy.



Brian & Rochelle Beeson

Brian and Rochelle Beeson, lifetime ranchers, were an integral piece to the Ranch Rodeo. The family has entered every year and were happy to cheer on all the other riders! They will be missed in the arena and in the sidelines, - or being a tremendous support "fund raising" at the beer stand. The smiles, the laughter and the love that they brought will always be remembered.

Dan McBride



Although he suffered with poor health the last few years of his life, "back in the day" Danny was the "go to" guy for painting projects at the rodeo grounds. More than once, he made Willy "sparkle" and painted both the arena fence inside and out, as well as the bucking chutes. Danny wanted to be sure the Willits rodeo put it's best face forward to our visiting competitors and spectators.

John Pinches



John Pinches will be fondly remembered by all who had the pleasure of experiencing Willits Frontier Days, where he served as the junior rodeo announcer for many years. A prominent figure in Mendocino County, Pinches was a respected rancher, budget advocate, and three-term county supervisor known for his down-to-earth wisdom and unwavering support for rural communities. He passed away at the age of 73. His legacy is further enriched by the fact that his mother was a past sweetheart of the event, and he was often seen enjoying the Beef Barbecue surrounded by friends and family.

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If you're interested in being a major sponsor, call Maureen Jennison at 707-972-7047 or email willitsfrontierdays@gmail.com for info, availability and price list. Also, stay up-to-date on our Facebook page and in the pages of Willits Weekly.

Stay tuned for a few more surprise options, too, as things get closer!

- Hair color / hair highlights
- Eye color
- Lip stick color
- Finger nail color
- Underwear color
- Blouse color, short sleeve
- Add a vest - coordinating pattern
- Add painted fringe detail to vest
- Skirt color
- Add painted pattern detail to skirt
- Add necklace - chain
- Add bracelet - chain
- Sponsor the Hat
- Sponsor the Boots
- Sponsor the Tiara
- Sponsor the Rope
- Sponsor the Belt Buckle
- Sponsor the Name on belt, painted
- Sponsor the Spurs



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2025 Committee Chairs

Rodeo: Marcy Barry, Fred Barry, Lee Persico

Junior Rodeo: Marcy Barry, Kat Willits

Horse Show: Mattie Owen and Pinon Family

BBQ: Mike Frahm, Russ Rountree, Eldon Miler, and Steve Spackman

Parade: Mattie Owen, Katie Cooley, Heather Miya

Gates: Paul and Bonnie Riley

Back Gates: Kenn Pedersen, Kara Garvin

Breakfast: Willits Lions Club

Advertising: Karen Cavanaugh, Marcy Barry, Maureen Jennison and Jaden Doak

Sweetheart Contest: Persico family, Tina Holguin, Kiri Silva

Sweetheart Dinner: June Sizemore, Fred Barry and Hailey Riley

Entertainment: Marcy Barry and Jeff Cook

Truck Pulls: Marcy and Fred Barry

Security: Bruce Cartwright

Carnival: Marcy Barry, June Sizemore

WFD Arena Crew: Fred Barry, Bruce Cartwright and Steven Hoyle

Gardening: Amanda Sizemore WFD crew and Willits Frontier Days Juniors

Sweetheart Raffle: Genevieve Neary, Marcy Barry

Margarita Booth: Persico Ladies

Beer Booth: Fred Barry, Rod Cavanaugh, Bruce Cartwright, Steven Hoyle

Vendors: Kinzie Vogel

Hometown Celebration: Ashtan Bloomquist, Jake Whitehurst

Scholarship: Jeff Cook, Dan Pinion, and Bobbie Tilley

Local Barrels: Riata King

Local Team Roping: Bobbie Tilley

Rodeo Stock: Rockin M Rodeo Company

Willits Frontier Days Jrs.: Hailey Riley

Thank You!

The Executive Board, the Board of Directors and Staff Committee Chairpersons wish to express our heartfelt gratitude to the folks who show up "just because" and lend a helping hand with the many tasks that need doing before, during and after our annual 4th of July celebration. All BBQ Crew helpers; Bobbie and John Tilley; Eldon Miler, Bouthillier's Construction; the Cavanaugh family; the Cooley family; King family; Kathy Goss; Danielle Barry; the Garman family; Laura and Danny McBride; Willits Lions Club; Little Lake Fire Department volunteers; Maureen Jennison; Mendo Mill of Willits; Mike and Michael Frahm; Nita Tharp; Nor-Cal Recycled Rock; Northern Aggregates; the parade crew; Delores Pederson; the Persico family; the Pinon family; Hailey Riley; the Riley family; Todd Hollifield; Rotary Club of Willits; T&T Salvage and Storage; Tammy Carlson; Med Star Ambulance; Willits Boy Scouts; Willits Chamber of Commerce; Willits High School baseball team; Willits Frontier Days Juniors; Willits Police Department; Kenan O'Shea and City of Willits Public Works Crew; Amanda Sizemore and Willits Weekly.

We sincerely apologize if we have missed listing any of our other "caretakers" and hope you will understand and forgive us. Please know this is far from being a complete list of those we want to publicly acknowledge, but our gratitude is heartfelt just the same.

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