

Willits Weekly | Edition 6 | January 12, 2017

REAL ESTATE SECTION



Photo by Maureen Moore

Now and Then: The Van Hotel

2 South Main Street, Willits Built in 1924

Built in 1924 by the then owner of the Willits Hotel, G. Van Cleemput, the Van Hotel was originally visualized by Van Cleemput as an addition to the Hotel Willits. The main entrance to the hotel, therefore faces Commercial Street toward the location of the Hotel Willits, which originally stood on the northwest corner of Commercial and Main Street. Because of his fear of fire in the wooden Hotel Willits, Van Cleemput had the Van Hotel built of bricks.



The top of the roof is marked by a row of vertically placed bricks; for the rest of the building, the bricks are in place all wide in a stretcher bond. The first floor bricks are placed in a common bond pattern.

The Van Hotel is also important as it coincides with the completion of the Redwood Highway, just as the Hotel Willits was built following the arrival of the railroad to Willits. Both forms of transportation brought an increase in the amount of travelers through Willits.

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Far left: The staircase to the loft at the main home at Shamrock Ranch. At left: Vineyards and hills are just some of the views seen on the property.

Below: The main home sits on the hill with lovely views of the valley, hills and vineyard.

At bottom, from left: The kitchen of the main home at Shamrock Ranch.

The property's Twin Lakes, best seen from the air.

An equestrian facility, with large indoor arena, is just one of the amenities on the property.

Laytonville's Shamrock Ranch sells for \$20.5 million

The 17,000 acre Shamrock Ranch in Laytonville has been sold for \$20.5 million to a conservation group, say Realtors Kevin Sullivan of Ukiah and Jim Redd of Eureka, who work together on large North Coast property sales as "The Ranch Agents." With the sale to a conservation group, Sullivan said: "Hopefully the ranch is going to stay just the way it is."

Jennifer Poole
Editor & Reporter
jennifer@willitsweekly.com

The sale of the spectacular property – known around the world as a "sportsman's paradise" – was finalized early this year, after being on the market for about four years. Those driving Highway 101 through Laytonville see the beautiful "Shamrock Ranch" gate to the ranch on the east side of Highway 101 south of town.

Shamrock Ranch is a working ranch, with a full cattle and hay operation, a "flourishing hunting business," 25 acres of "profitable vineyards" with Pinot Noir, Syrah and Zinfandel grapes, "first-rate equestrian facilities suitable for breeders," multiple homes, including a seven-bedroom Mediterranean-style villa, abundant water, a rock quarry, two miles of Eel River frontage, and a private airstrip.

The Ranch Agents web page for the ranch, <https://ranchagent.com/ranch/world-famous-shamrock-ranch>, also says the ranch is renowned for its wildlife habitat management, which includes a resident Tule elk herd. "Since 2006, the bull count has more than tripled, and trophy level bulls of this rarer species have been consistently harvested each year."

The Ranch Agents specialize in bigger, ranch and country properties in Mendocino and Humboldt counties, although there's very few ranch properties left that are even a fraction of the size of the Shamrock Ranch. "They're like dinosaurs," Sullivan said. "Over the last 20-30 years, people have been forced pretty much to sell stuff and cut it up. It's expensive to keep [the big ranches in one piece]; you don't make a lot of money out

of ranches, but they cost a lot of money to keep them up. And you've got to pay the fiddler," i.e., the county property taxes.

Without the Williamson Act, which offers agricultural and open space land property owners tax relief in exchange for an agreement not to convert the land to more urban uses, it would be even harder for big ranch owners to keep the land in one piece, instead of subdividing into smaller parcels,

Sullivan said.

To see a video showing the beauty and detailing the amenities of the property, visit <https://ranchagent.com/ranch/world-famous-shamrock-ranch> and check out other "dream" country property listings from the main page. Contact Sullivan at Kevin Sullivan Realty, at 707-489-4610 or Redd at Four Star Realty, at 707-496-3022.

Photos courtesy of www.ranchagent.com



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Gary Auble
of Auble Real Estate
707-459-5638
Lic#611996

Bill Barksdale
of Coldwell Banker Mendo Realty
707-489-2232 Lic#1106662

Patsy Broeske
of Coldwell Banker Mendo Realty
707-841-8053
Lic#1949646

Elida Cardona
of Realty World-Selzer Realty
707-354-1538
Lic#1249091

Zach Carpenter
of Andy Wiese Real Estate
707-671-6392
Lic#01722126

Erin Corley
of Coldwell Banker Mendo Realty
707-354-0954
Lic#1954967

Randa Craighead
of Coldwell Banker Mendo Realty
707-841-7778
Lic#1971901

Nicole Flamer
of Coldwell Banker Mendo Realty
707-354-2301
Lic#1932844

Michelle Goforth
of Coldwell Banker Mendo Realty
707-841-7409
Lic#1461392

Matthew Hollifield
of Lincoln Realty
707-489-3181
Lic#1839656

Douglas Johnson
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707-459-5975
Lic#01888600

Karena Jolly
of Coldwell Banker Mendo Realty
707-354-2999
Lic# 0148206

Sarah Kincade
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Lic#1705781

Travis Koch
of Hometown Realty
707-984-6211
Lic#963150

Adam Lawrence
of Ponderosa & Sun Realty
707-357-2778
Lic#1824539

Roxanne Lemos-Neese
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707-484-6489
Lic#1712217

Barbara Lincoln
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Lic#644801

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Lic#1139481

Christopher Martin
of Realty World-Selzer Realty
707-459-6175
Lic#1265820

Laytonville land

Real estate broker Susan Valencia specializes in rural parcels

"It's always about land in Laytonville," said real estate broker Susan Valencia of Valencia Real Estate. "I specialize in rural parcels, and that is what most people come to the area for. Acreage, ranches and bare land – it's historically been this way, with very reasonable prices compared to Sonoma and Napa

Jennifer Poole
Editor & Reporter
jennifer@willitsweekly.com

counties. In this area, we don't have much of a residential area, it's mostly land parcels, and we have these really beautiful little land parcels, with water and septic – if you can find one."

Right now, she said, "the supply is very low," and prices have gone up, too. There's a "selling community" on Spyrock Road, Valencia said, but "prices have become premium." Some of the 20 acre parcels "way up the mountain" in the Laytonville area, she said, are selling for as much as \$600,000.

A recent sale listed on the Valencia Real Estate website was for a "beautiful and park-like" 10-acre property on North Road, "just minutes" to town, with a three-bedroom manufactured home, a detached metal garage, PG&E, city water and an ag well, listed for \$399,000.

But real estate in Laytonville can only go so high, she said. "You're not going to get a million dollar property, because of Laytonville's make-up – it's just a little stop on the road, an unincorporated community." But, changes in the marijuana industry are likely to continue to affect the whole community, including real estate sales, she said.

Valencia has been practicing in the real estate field since 2000, exclusively in Laytonville and northern Mendocino County. "I've had my own company for eight years," she said. "I also mortgage broker private money loans.



Before starting her own company, Valencia worked with "the one and only" real estate broker Lorne Strider, who passed away in 2010. "I truly got my education old-school with this wonderful gentleman who taught me the ways of the north county," she said. "That's how I started, and my whole career has been right in the area. Competition is very fierce here, but I have no complaints."

Valencia, who moved to Laytonville "going on 20 years ago," was born and raised in Los Angeles. She really appreciates the beauty of her current home.

"There's so many different little corners, unique ecosystems, you can go literally a mile away and find a whole different type of property."

And Laytonville itself is a "very unique community," she said. "You've got roughly 3,000 people in a 50 mile radius. It's very spread out – truly a mountain community. Laytonville has had its share of struggles, it's kind of a rugged and wild little community, but it has the biggest heart in the world."

For more information about Valencia Real Estate, located at 44960 Highway 101, Suite E in Laytonville, visit www.valenciarealestatecompany.com, email broker@valencia-RE.com or call 984-7270 or 489-0765.



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Bill Barksdale inducted into Realtor Hall of Fame

Willits Realtor Bill Barksdale was inducted into the Realtor Hall of Fame on December 8 at a celebration in Ukiah sponsored by the North Bay Association of Realtors. He joins his fellow Willits Realtor Lee Persico, who was inducted in 2014.

Inductees are selected by the membership and must have been a member of the Association of Realtors for at least 25 years.

"I've survived the savings and loan crash in the 1990s and the Great Recession. I feel very honored to have been

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Kent Westwood
of Westwood
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chosen by those that I serve with to join the Hall of Fame," Barksdale said.

Barksdale is a member of the Coldwell Banker International Diamond Society and served as president of the Mendocino County Multiple Listing Service before it merged with the North Bay Association of Realtors. As president of the county MLS, he oversaw the transition of that organization from a paper-based information system to an area-wide computerized system.

Barksdale recently retired from the County of Mendocino Assessment Appeals Board, to which he was appointed by the board of supervisors. He served for two years as chair of that board.

At right: Realtor Bill Barksdale displays his Hall of Fame award.



Howard Hospital earns Level IV Trauma Center status

By Cici Winiger, for HMH

Frank Howard Memorial Hospital is now recognized as one of 11 Level IV Trauma centers in the state. Sonoma County Emergency Services approved HMH as a Level IV trauma center, starting in December. Accreditation as a Level IV trauma center indicates a hospital staff's ability to provide advanced trauma life support prior to transfer of patients to a higher level trauma center. Trauma centers provide evaluation, stabilization, and diagnostic capabilities for injured patients.

The only other trauma center in Mendocino County is Ukiah Valley Medical Center, a 20- to 30-minute drive from Willits. Depending on weather conditions, sometimes the drive can be treacherous or even unpassable during the winter season.

"Earning this designation means patients in Willits and beyond who are seeking care at HMH will be cared for in a standardized manner to assure they are receiving the best care possible for their injuries sustained," said Dr. Michael Medvin, chief medical officer for emergency services at HMH.

"Having us close by to stabilize patients and give them life-saving procedures will improve their health outcomes. We also work directly with Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital to rapidly transport any trauma patient requiring a higher level of care. We also have the ability to share CT scans/X-rays with the trauma surgeon at SRMH while we are on the phone with them, which means seamless communication and improved outcomes."

Amy Buckingham, emergency services manager at HMH, said their goal is to strive to improve the care of injured patients before, during, and after hospitalization. "Our goal is to serve the needs of our community so they don't have to go too far. That's why we always emphasize continuing education and train with our agency partners so that we know we are constantly striving to provide the best of care," she explains.

To qualify as a Level IV trauma center, a hospital must

have the protocols, equipment and staff in place to handle trauma patients," Buckingham adds.

The HMH emergency department also has two trauma rooms, equipped with the best technology, and even has access to specialists at UC Davis Children's Hospital through telemedicine. "We've got all this technology, and with this designation, it will really make a difference for our community."

Kevin Erich, interim president and CEO for HMH, agrees: "We're extremely proud of our team and our hospital. It took a lot of work to get this designation, and we're excited to serve our patients better. The more we are able to serve their needs here, the better for our community and their health outcomes."



Above: Howard Hospital has two trauma rooms, equipped with the highest technology and life-saving equipment, ready to serve the community.

Below: Howard Memorial Hospital.



COLUMN | Selzer on Real Estate

How's the market? Buying vs. renting



Richard Selzer
Columnist

The market continues to be good for buyers. It's so good, in fact, that I thought I'd dedicate a column to explain why renters should consider buying right now. While I know numbers can turn a lot of people off, I think it's important to use an example so you really know what I'm talking about.

Let's say you're a first-time homebuyer who'd like to purchase a \$200,000 home. You don't have money for a down payment, but you have a job and good credit. Here's how this could work:

Estimated monthly expenses	
Loan	\$ 1015
Taxes	\$ 200
Insurance	\$ 85
	\$ 1300/month

"But what about other expenses?" you ask. "If I own my home, I can't call a landlord to fix things."

That's true. At some point, you'll need to paint your home inside and out, put a new roof on, replace the water heater, and fix whatever else breaks. So let's estimate you'll need about 1.5 percent of the purchase price for upkeep each year (about \$250 per month), since that's usually about what it costs.

But wait, there's good news to balance the maintenance expense. You get to write off some of the mortgage payment. Let's say your household income puts you in the 25 percent tax bracket. Some of your mortgage payment is tax deductible: about \$950 (\$750 is the interest on your loan and it's deductible, as is the \$200 homeowner's tax). So, multiply \$950 by 25 percent, and you see you will get back about \$240 per month.

Mortgage payment	\$1300
Maintenance/upkeep	\$ 250
Tax benefits	-\$240
	\$1310/month

Like with anything in life, restrictions apply, but they aren't too bad. First, you need to have good credit (a credit score in the mid- to upper-600s). Next, you need reportable income. It's time to claim that babysitting money or those waitressing tips as income, because if your income isn't reportable, you'll have a tough time getting a loan.

Read the rest of
Market
Over on Page B6

Kent Westwood

Community man and Laytonville-based real estate broker

Though he always had an interest in real estate, finally deciding to make it a career took a winding road for Laytonville's Kent Westwood.

Now a broker with Westwood Real Estate, Westwood originally started out as a microbiologist, then was involved with a trucking business, which ended after he had an accident. The vehicle and auto-industry knowledge served him well, though, allowing him to work as a bus mechanic for the Laytonville Unified School District.

One of the bus drivers, Regina Dickson, had worked in the lending industry and had done some business with Westwood as a broker of private money loans.

Seeing the industry from the lender's side, the two decided to pair up and sell real estate. Westwood received his license in 2000, and the pair worked together: Westwood sold the real estate, and Dickson had her broker's license and handled the lending side.

However, around eight years ago, Westwood decided that he would get a broker's license, and then Dickson came to work for him.

"The roles switched!" laughed Westwood.

Westwood did his schooling online, as he was working fulltime at the bus barn at

Below: One of Kent Westwood's 2016 summer sales: 150 acres in Laytonville. Right: Broker Kent Westwood.



the same time. Since receiving his license, Westwood says he's enjoyed selling properties from Solano to Trinity counties.

"I do many ranch and country sales," said Westwood. "But I also like to sell homes and residences, too. Working with a small lender is also great, because we can offer different financing options. We like to do a lot of seller finance, too."

One sale last summer that Westwood was able to close was for 150 acres on Simmerly Ranch Road in Laytonville, seller-financed, for \$700,000.

In between closing deals, Westwood enjoys spending his time sitting on boards and committees of many local groups and organizations.

Westwood has spent 18 years on the Long Valley Health Center board, and has chaired it six times; he is on the board for the Alliance for Rural Community Health; he just dropped off as the master of the local Grange, but continues to be master of the Mendocino Pomona Grange, and he sits on the board of Autumn Leaves, a 92-unit Ukiah housing facility for the elderly. The property was recently paid off, and \$750,000 of improvements are underway, including new windows, doors and plumbing.

"Autumn Leaves is one of my favorite

projects," noted Westwood.

Westwood is on the Cemetery of the Redwoods board, which oversees Willits and Laytonville properties, and he's also on the ad hoc committee for the sewer district in Laytonville.

A man about town – several towns as indicated by his volunteer efforts – Westwood is knowledgeable about properties in many towns and would love to show interested buyers or ready-to-list sellers how Westwood Real Estate can help handle transactions of all kinds.

Reach Westwood at 984-7078 at the office or 489-1111 on his cell, or email him directly at kentw@mcn.org. His office is located at 44911 North Highway 101 in Laytonville.

— Maureen Moore



Above, from left: Members of Troop 212, including, from left to right: Kenneth Pedersen, Jon Silverstein, Cody Pedersen, Oren Silverstein, Nick Hebel, Josh Wear, Zach Dellett, Aidan Bryant, Delores Pedersen, Patrick Bryant and Roger Wear. Cody Pedersen tosses a tree onto the waiting trailer on West Mendocino Avenue. At left: Josh Wear picks up a tree off a neighborhood driveway.

Cleaning up Christmas in the neighborhood



The rainy weather didn't stop members of Willits Boy Scout Troop 212 Saturday from helping clean up after Christmas around neighborhoods in about half of Willits, when teams picked up old Christmas trees to send them to the chipper.

This is the fifth year for Troop 212 to hold this fundraising effort, and Scoutmaster Kenneth Pedersen notes this was their best year yet: They managed to get about 450 trees collected.

The trees were chipped up in the

parking lot of the old Willits Cafe, and the aftermath was donated to the sewer plant, where the material is used in their mulching process.

Pedersen noted the troop's appreciation to Action Rents for use of the chipper, to Banners and Signs for the new sign, and to J.C. England for use of the dump trailer.

"We really want to thank the community, too, for all of their support with this event," said Pedersen.

Monies raised from this event will

help to cover camping fees, merit badges, awards, supplies, troop equipment and much more.

If you are interested in learning more about the local Boy Scouts or are wanting to join the troop, drop by their weekly meeting at the First Baptist Church located on Wood Street on Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Contact Scoutmaster Pedersen or committee chair Delores Pedersen at 459-2138 for additional info.

— Maureen Moore



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COLUMN | Numbers by Nick

Help with taxes on February 2

Hello Willits friends and neighbors of the Redwood Empire: Welcome to January ... and the year 2017! The holidays are truly behind us.

While preparing to file your taxes, it is an excellent time to review your financial insurance, and see that wealth-building blocks are looked after before the year takes off.

Waiting until close to deadlines like April 15 does not allow the time to review and reflect, as by the time the filing deadline has passed, that means close to ¼ of the year will have flown by.

So, please join me at the Willits Center for the Arts on Thursday, February 2. I'll be hosting a somewhat informal "chat" about how I can help with your taxes, and offer you some valuable insight on investment and insurance plans.

These areas are interdependent, and it's important to review and update at least once a year.

Here are reasons why it is good to have an ongoing relationship with an accountant.

Accountants...

- Work with federal and state tax laws every day and are required to take continuing education classes on the ever-

changing tax laws.

- Keep your financial records up to date.
- Are available throughout the year to help with questions and strategies.
- Can determine what you should pay for estimated taxes.
- Help you navigate LLC, sole proprietorship, partnership and S-Corp.

In summary, having an ongoing relationship with an accountant will *reduce stress, reduce avoidance*, and allow you more time to do what you love to do.

So please join me in the Great Room at Willits Center for the Arts on Thursday, February 2 at 5:15 pm. Light refreshments and beverages will be provided, and there will be a short presentation on upcoming key dates for businesses and individuals for taxes, and the importance of coordinating your taxes, investment and insurance plans.

Please let us know you'll join us by emailing pamela@ncfinancialgroup.com or calling 415-819-6934 to reserve a spot, as seating will be limited.

Thank you, and looking forward to seeing you soon!

Nicholas Casagrande, EA, is an accountant and a financial advisor. His firm, NC Financial Group, is a wealth management firm serving individual clients as well as small-to-medium-sized businesses. Client work includes personal and corporate taxes, investment planning, insurance, and real estate. NC Financial Group's Willits office is located at 675 South Main Street; contact 855-240-6606 or nicholas@ncfinancialgroup.com for more information.



Nicholas Casagrande
Columnist

An individual, stand-alone and independent print piece

WILLITS WEEKLY IS BRINGING BACK THE REAL ESTATE SECTION TO LOCAL PRINT MEDIA

Runs Second Week Each Month

Relevant Local Editorial Content
Open House Advertisements
Available Buyer's & Seller's Agents
Property Listings

GET YOUR OFFICE, AGENTS AND LISTINGS INCLUDED IN OUR NEXT EDITION

Ads	3.25" wide x 2" tall color display ad:	5" wide x 5" tall color display ad:
Commitment and ad copy deadline is the first Friday of the month	\$25/month with 3-month minimum commitment	\$100/month with 3-month minimum commitment
	\$32 on one-run basis	\$120 on one-run basis
3,500 copies each week		
Ads go online and in-print for one price		
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	\$50/month with 3-month minimum commitment	\$225/month with 3-month minimum commitment
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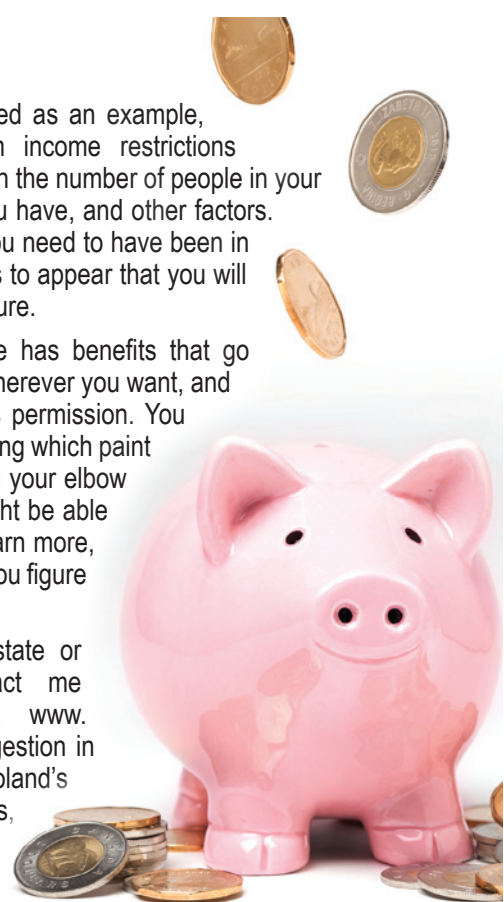
The rest of **Market** | From Page B5

For this particular loan that I've used as an example, there are minimum and maximum income restrictions based on formulas that have to do with the number of people in your household, the number of children you have, and other factors. The final requirement is job stability. You need to have been in your job for at least a year, and it needs to appear that you will remain in that job for the foreseeable future.

Don't forget, owning your own home has benefits that go beyond financial. You can pound a nail wherever you want, and you don't have to ask for anyone else's permission. You get to decide where to plant trees. Choosing which paint color to use is your spouse's choice. And your elbow grease benefits you. If you think you might be able to purchase a home, and you'd like to learn more, call your local Realtor and they can help you figure it out.

If you have questions about real estate or property management, please contact me at rselzer@selzerrealty.com or visit www.realtyworldselzer.com. If I use your suggestion in a column, I'll send you a \$5 gift card to Roland's Bakery. If you'd like to read previous articles, visit my blog at www.richardselzer.com.

Dick Selzer is a real estate broker who has been in the business for more than 40 years.



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 This clean, sunny 3 BD/2 BA home in town is on nearly 1/3 acre. Garage conversion has bedroom, family room & full bath. Wheel chair accessible. \$249,000	 This one of a kind property has been completely overhauled and updated. Has a golf course view perched above hole #2 & overlooks the year round Willits creek. \$395,000

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