

Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

Online & Print

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It's Real Estate Section Thursday!

WILLITS COMMUNITY TELEPHONE DIRECTORY 2020

Supervisors ask for 'fix' to AB5

Jennifer Poole
Editor & Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors added a last-minute addition to their state legislative lobbying platform at their January 9 meeting: a "fix" for Assembly Bill 5.

AB 5, which requires that 1099 contractors in many industries in the state of California now be hired as "employees," has caused confusion and controversy, and sparked several lawsuits.

Known to many as "the bill to help Uber workers," AB5, authored by Rep. Lorena Gonzalez (D-San Diego) is set to have wide-reaching impacts throughout the state. Impacts to arts organizations like Audacity Youth Theatre in Pleasanton which cancelled its spring season of theater in the schools, and the Island City Opera in Alameda which is postponing its spring production due to AB5 have already been reported.

Independent truckers have been granted a stay in their lawsuit against AB5. Translators, who often have short-time, niche employment with various clients like the courts or social service agencies,

Read the rest of **AB5**
Over on Page 11

County to research proposed Adventist partnership

Mike A'Dair
Reporter
mike@willitsweekly.com

On a unanimous vote, the board of supervisors on January 7 directed Acting County Counsel Christian Curtis to research an array of legal questions associated with a December 3 offer of a business partnership conveyed by Jason Wells, president of Adventist Health Howard Memorial and Adventist Health Ukiah Valley.

Wells' letter proposed that Adventist Health and the county work together to address the county's lack of mental health facilities. Wells suggested that, if Adventist Health is granted a 30-year lease by the Mendocino Coast District Hospital, in Fort Bragg, then Adventist would turn part of the Coast Hospital into the equivalent of a psychiatric health facility, or a PHF. In addition, Adventist would convert the currently empty six-bed intensive care unit at the Ukiah Valley Medical Center into the same type of facility.

Together, the two facilities would provide 16 beds for use as an in-county lock-down mental health

Read the rest of **Partnership**
Over on Page 11



Above: The Willits Weekly crew, front row, from left: reporter Zack Cinek, editor/publisher Jennifer Poole, Roxie the canine mascot, chief photographer and art director Maureen Moore, and reporter Forrest Glyer. Back row, from left: Real Estate ad salesperson April Tweddell, photographer and features writer Ree Slocum, police log editor and billing helper Danya Davis, reporter Joanne Moore, graphic artist Patsy Jordan, and photographer/features writer/Calendar editor Mathew Caine. Not pictured: Reporter Mike A'Dair, features copy editor Jackie Cobbs, and movie reviewer Dan Essman.

Photo by Steve Eberhard

Will AB5 end Willits Weekly?

We hope not, and ask the community to chip in to save our local community newspaper

With our readers' help, your locally owned and independent newspaper hopes to survive new California law AB5, passed on the last day of the 2019 Legislative session, which threatens our financial viability.

Willits Weekly has been publishing since May 2013, serving the Willits community with a successful model allowing us to cover local news and small town happenings in an era when local newspapers are shutting down, being "regionalized," or enduring newsroom cuts all the way down into the bone.

Part of that model is that all of Willits Weekly's contributors are freelancers – most billing under 10 hours a week, several less than

that, and none even close to fulltime. None of our freelancers want to be "employees," they work remotely on their own equipment, as 21st technology allows us to have a digital newsroom without a physical office.

None lack health care benefits, and they are paid an hourly wage considerably above minimum wage. About half of Willits Weekly's freelancers are on Medicare already; others have health insurance through a spouse, a "real job," or have their own Obamacare. Their pay is properly reported to the IRS as 1099 payments as required.

Complying with AB5 by putting
Read the rest of **Help**
Over on Page 11

Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

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Soroptimist Support

For the past several years, Willits Weekly has partnered with the Soroptimist International of Willits to help distribute their annual Community Telephone Directory, and 2020 is no different.

Read the rest of **Phone book**
Over on Page 10

At right, top: 2020 Soroptimist members, left to right: Marilyn Harden, Loraine Patton, Kitty Norris, Vicki Ham, and Jennifer Andrews. In front: Barbara O'Reardon, and Heidi Ahders. Not present: Fran Schatz, Susan Soss, Trisha McKeon and Jane McCabe. At right: the last four years of phone book covers for the Community Telephone Directory.



Haschak appointed BOS chair

Mike A'Dair
Reporter
mike@willitsweekly.com

At the first meeting of the board of supervisors for 2020, which took place on January 7, Third District Supervisor John Haschak was appointed chair and Fourth District Supervisor Dan Gjerde was appointed vice-chair.

The board adopted a calendar of 25 meetings over the next year, generally on the first and third Tuesdays of each month. The board also agreed to hold two off-site meetings during the year, although the locations of the two non-Ukiah meetings are still to be determined.

The board voted unanimously to continue its practice of establishing its two standing committees but to convene meetings of those committees on an "as-needed" basis.

The board currently has two standing committees, the General Government Standing Committee and the Public Health, Safety and Resources Standing Committee. Both are Brown Act compliant bodies, meaning they have to be noticed in advance, in compliance with the Brown Act. They also require county staff to be present at the meeting.

Read the rest of **Chair**
Over on Page 10

City Council funds groundwater improvement project

Forrest Glyer
Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

Last week the Willits City Council unanimously approved some initial funding for the Groundwater Improvement Project, enabling the city to move forward with plans to enhance their groundwater system and give it the capacity to support all city customers if some sort of emergency were to make the main water supply unavailable.

City Engineer and Project Manager Andrea Trincado Slater said the increased groundwater available would be beneficial in multiple ways.

"The goal of the project is to create a secondary source of water that can act independently of the surface water supply in case there's an emergency," she said. "And it can also be used conjunctively with the surface water to improve water quality and better manage the resources."

Possible emergencies she mentioned which could impact the available surface water include drought, fire or earthquakes.

Read the rest of **Council**
Over on Page 10

Edie's birthday

To the Editor:

February 5, 2020 marks the date for our Supercentenarian Edith "Edie" Recagno Keenan Ceccarelli to add one more year to the 111 years since she was born right here in Willits. Yes, 112 years ago and looking forward to a no-host birthday luncheon on February 6, starting at 11:30 pm, at the Willits Senior Center, for this beautiful little lady. Mark your calendar!

Evelyn Persico, Willits

A rally cry

To the Editor:

I struggle with this writing. It isn't so much writer's block as it is the very real possibility that I don't understand California Assembly Bill 5 and its impact on Willits Weekly.

I waffle because regular employees normally receive minimum wage, sick leave, unemployment and workers' compensation benefits. Evidently under AB5 independent contractors will be classified as employees [even those making well above a minimum hourly wage like Willits Weekly's freelancers]. Such reclassifications would surely place an impossible financial burden on the shoulders of our beloved Willits Weekly. It seems counter-productive that the same people AB5 is trying to protect would lose their jobs.

If I've got that wrong, please shout it from the highest rooftops. I won't be offended in the least. I get things wrong all the time so it wouldn't be anything new.

If, on the other hand, I'm right, please discuss this situation with friends. There has to be a way we can save Willits Weekly. We are blessed to even have a small-town newspaper; many were shuttered long ago.

Retirement party for Sheriff Tom Allman, Feb. 1 at Carl Purdy Hall

Submitted by Heidi Dickerson

A week in Hawaii, a child's tractor from Garton Tractors, a case of the Paulis' Yokayo wine each month for a year, and an overnight at the Thatcher Hotel with dinner and wine are just a few of the items for a live auction being held during the celebration of Sheriff Tom Allman's service and retirement.

The headlining auction item is the last ever "Dinner at the Jail," which has brought in thousands of dollars for local nonprofits over Allman's tenure. This time Mendocino County's Search and Rescue will be the beneficiary of the auction, which will be led by the sheriff and State Senator Mike McGuire.

The event takes place on Saturday, February 1, from 4 to 10 pm at the Redwood Empire Fairgrounds Carl Purdy Hall in Ukiah.

Mendocino County Search and Rescue is an unpaid, all volunteer, non-profit whose members conduct search and rescue operations whenever the Mendocino County

We're so fortunate to be able to read about the latest Little Lake Fire Protection District board meeting, Willits City Council meeting, Mendocino County Board of Supervisors' meeting, Brooktrails Township board meeting, any proposed rate increases from the same entities – it's all there – and I haven't even touched on disaster planning through LFLD, CalFire, Sheriff's Office, and Willits Police Department.

Where would we be if, when planning a fundraiser, we have no outlet to publicize the event? I don't know how many times I've been told, "If I had known...." Now imagine it was the memorial service held for a loved one. Last week.

I don't need to continue pointing out the many benefits Willits Weekly provides, so I will concentrate on just one more. A few short weeks ago Willits Weekly produced one of the most loving tributes I've ever had the pleasure of reading, written for Opal Miner. We need to remember such closeness, such affection Willits Weekly holds for us and the community they serve.

Gail Richards, Willits

Customer Service class

To the Editor:

The Willits Chamber of Commerce is happy to report Mendocino College North County Center has developed a course to help anyone improve customer service. Chamber members and local businesses have asked for assistance in providing training for their staff in improving customer relations.

Sheriff's Office calls upon them. A local community of volunteers train to develop required skill sets which include: ground search teams; all-terrain vehicle operators; K-9 (canine) handlers; unmanned air squadron pilots; underwater search and recovery divers; logistical support; and fundraising.

Master of Ceremonies Spencer Brewer will introduce the auction and official presentations, and the local group Double Standby will get the crowd dancing until 10 pm.

Appetizers from local restaurants including Dora's Café, Crush and Slam Dunk Pizza, will be served. Search and Rescue volunteers will provide barbecued meat for dinner. Mendocino wines and beer will be on hand and served by the Lions Club, Katrina Kessen, and volunteers from the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office.

The coordinating committee includes Jennifer Seward, Rose Britton, Katie Fairbairn, Jay Epstein, Katrina Kessen, Travis Scott, Heidi Dickerson, Mary Ellen Chadwick, Johnny Keyes, Jared Chaney, and the Savings Bank of Mendocino County.

Tickets are \$25 each. A limited number is available on Brown Paper Tickets. More information can be found at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/4489002.

Mendocino College North County Center has responded by offering a class in "Customer Service," on Fridays from 9 to 11:50 am, starting January 21 and running through May 22.

No matter if you are a local business, a corporate chain or a non-profit organization, this class is designed to help you and your staff improve customer service within your organization.

Please support our efforts in helping you improve your business by sending one or more of your staff to this important class. Not only is this training close to home and a reasonable cost, it supports our local college and improves your business.

This course will cover the principles and techniques of delivering excellent customer service. Topics include employer and customer perspectives, interpersonal communications, developing empathetic customer resolutions, customer retention strategies, as well as marketing and sales strategies.

The course covers individualized communication and problem-solving skill development as well as the efficacy of customer service in achieving general business, hospitality, food service, and retail industry goals.

• Solve a customer service issue with empathy and professional communication.

• Assess the customer experience when service includes effective listening and diplomatic disagreement techniques.

• Evaluate and measure short- and long-term attainable customer service standards for employees, employers and customers.

• Analyze communication and information technology to increase sales, target marketing, and improve customer experience.

Willits Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

WUSD seeks bond funding to repair schools

Submitted by Willits Unified School District

At the December 11, 2019 Willits Unified School Board meeting, trustees authorized the issuance of \$17 million in general obligation bonds to repair aging school facilities, paving the way for Measure G to appear on the March 2020 ballot.

According to the resolution, the bond funding would be used to:

- Improve student safety and security
- Fix deteriorating roofs, plumbing, heating/cooling, and electrical systems
- Pave parking lots
- Repair school facilities
- Modernize classrooms, science labs, and other facilities
- Purchase a pool cover to allow the pool to be used year-round
- Update athletic facilities

The bond is structured such that property owners will pay \$40 per \$100,000 of assessed value, per year. The median or typical home's average assessed value is approximately \$181,419. Therefore, the annual cost of the bond would be about \$80 per year, per residence. (Assessed value is different than market value and can be found on a homeowner's property tax bill).

In California, school facilities are funded through community tax dollars. Willits Unified has some of the oldest schools in the county and old schools require maintenance. Willits High School was built in 1929 and still has its original boiler, although it has been retrofitted to run on natural gas rather than coal or diesel as in years past.

The remaining Willits Unified schools were built in 1952 (Brookside Elementary), 1953 (Baechtel Grove Middle School), and 1989 (Blosser Lane Elementary). Another example is the 50-year-old portable classroom buildings at Brookside Elementary. Three of the six classrooms cannot have students in them and must be replaced.

WUSD Superintendent Mark Westerburg reports: "When it rains hard, every school in the district takes in water. Our goal with this bond measure is to make sure our schools are safe and well-maintained. We understand no one wants to pay additional taxes, however, it's the only way we can afford to do major repairs. To minimize the burden on taxpayers, we will also seek any matching funds and grants available from the state."

WUSD can only seek matching funds if it has funds to contribute. For example, if state funding requires a 60/40 split, school districts must come up with 40 percent of a project's cost to receive the 60 percent of state funds. Today, WUSD could not afford a 40 percent contribution for a major project, thus losing out on the opportunity for state-funded repairs.

The current school board trustees and school administrators have reviewed prior WUSD bond initiatives and structured Measure G to minimize risk for taxpayers in several ways. First, Measure G bond funding is limited to repair and maintenance activities only. There are no new facilities planned with the need for expensive architectural schematics and the risk of potential overruns.

Second, the money will be drawn down in four phases, spaced to ensure that WUSD schools are appropriately maintained for the next 12 to 15 years. During the term of the bond, the cost to taxpayers is

Read the rest of Election Over on Page 13



Leadership Mendocino tours Willits

Countywide master class enjoys a day in the North County with talks from local business people, artists, volunteers, media, and more

"Leadership Mendocino is a masterclass in Mendocino County," explained Holly Madrigal, program director. The Friday that Willits Weekly spent with this organization, as they explored the best of what Willits

has to offer, easily demonstrated this as the 30 classmates were treated to talks, demonstrations and tours from several eclectic business people, a city planner, artists, tourism promoters, and a garden manager. The purpose of the day was to demonstrate many of the positive aspects of the town, with an eye to the town's place in the larger diverse area that is Mendocino County.

"It's about 30 people in the class," explained Madrigal, "that take the course each year, meeting one Friday each month to learn about a different aspect of the

county. Today is Arts, Media and Tourism Day. We fill these class days with as much information as we can with a really vibrant group of people.

"The program is part networking, part learning about the county," she continued. "I grew up here and still find new things to learn. This is actually the 27th year [of Leadership Mendocino], and just under 700 people have gone through the course, including such leaders as Sheriff Tom Allman.

"It's a year-long class, which includes a very diverse group of students from all over the county. We have people from Covelo, Willits, Ukiah, various coastal communities, and from all different sorts of professional backgrounds: retirees, small business owners, salesmen, politicians, city planners, architects, bankers and more. I

love showing off Mendocino County and all we have to offer.

"We have a Local Government Day," continued Madrigal, "where we elect supervisors from the class and debate real issues. Our congressman, Jared Huffman, spoke with us. We have a Natural Resources Day where we went to Point Arena. We had a tour of the Mendocino Redwood logging site. We spent one whole day in Covelo, learning about the historical trauma and visited Live Power Farm where they farm using draft horses. We're going to do an Agriculture Day in Potter Valley, which has a rich farming history as well as water issues. It's a diverse education."

Each class member has to come up with a project that will benefit the community, usually in the year following the class. In years past, such projects as the Bicycle

Repair Station at City Park have been created by students. The aim of the program is to create the future leaders of the county and to instill them with knowledge and a respect for the positive aspects as well as the inherent problems of creating new directions in Mendocino County. It is also an excellent opportunity to network with people who can get things done and build new professional relationships.

The fee to be in the class is \$1,100, but "there are several scholarships," Madrigal said. "We don't turn anyone down for lack of resources." Several of the students were in the class at the behest of the organizations for which they work and who paid the fee.

This particular day began upstairs at

Read the rest of Tour Over on Page 13



From far left: Scarlett Trillia, at right, owner and director of Red House Coworking Space, leads a discussion of cannabis tourism.

Noel Woodhouse of North Street Collective tells the attendees about the facility that provides a creative living space for artists.

George O'Hanlon and Tatiana Zaytseva of Willits' Natural Pigments give an overview of their international fine art paint business.

Far left, below: The attendees enjoy a healthy, tasty meal at Roots Restaurant.

At left, below: Chris Baldo explains the history and purpose of Roots of Motive Power.

Photos by Mathew Caine



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Willits Weekly's
Puzzle Page

Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword

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7	4	3	9					
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Level: Intermediate

BACK TO BUSINESS WORD SEARCH

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

ACCOMPLISHMENTS	GRIEVANCE	OFFICE
ANNUAL	HIRE	OVERTIME
AVAILABILITY	HOURS	PAYCHECK
BENEFITS	INTERNSHIP	PROFIT
BOSS	JOB	PROGRESS
CAREER	LEAVE	PROMOTION
CASUAL	LOSS	REFERENCES
CONFERENCE	MANAGEMENT	SERVICE
CUSTOMER	MARGINS	SUPERVISOR
DEDUCTIONS	MEETINGS	UNION
EMPLOYEE	NETWORKING	WAGES
GOALSETTING	NOTICE	WORKERS

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	69							70					

CLUES ACROSS

- Recurring TV show
- Throws out
- Iberian Peninsula microstate
- Gossip
- Atomic #20
- Ivy League institution
- Of I
- 'He Is ___': Scripture excerpt
- Musical genre
- Heavy cavalry sword
- Ancient Olympic Site
- Satisfies
- Popular flower
- Shared services center
- Drain
- A way to attack
- Urban Transit Authority
- Spiritual leader
- Postponed
- N. American plant with edible purple-black berries
- Gazes unpleasantly
- Gets up
- Capital of Ukraine
- Returned material authorization (abbr.)
- Golf score
- Superhigh frequency
- Swiss river

51. Felons

- Succulent plants
- Soluble ribonucleic acid
- Deliberately setting fire to
- Infamous singer Zadora
- Anwar __, Egyptian statesman
- Influential sports mag
- Aromatic Mediterranean plant
- Sixth note of a major scale
- Unit of explosive power
- Large watertight chamber
- Popular street
- A way of watering

CLUES DOWN

- Mollusks
- _, _ denotes past
- Anchor ropes
- Large Middle Eastern country
- To make a mistake
- Ancient governor
- Extents
- Chinese surname
- NYC subway 'residents'
- Essential oil used as perfume
- A way to treat injuries (abbr.)
- Session
- Units of land areas

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!

WILLITS POLICE DEPARTMENT
POLICE LOG

December 17, 2019 to January 12, 2020

By Danya Davis, Willits Weekly

The officers of the Willits Police Department handled **565 incidents** in this 28-day reporting period.

Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

December 17

2:26 am: Officers responded to a report of rape in the 100 block of Marcela Drive.

2:22 pm: Officers responded to a report of an assault in the 300 block of South Main Street.

3:32 pm: Officers initiated a fraud investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

3:42 pm: Officers responded to a report of sexual assault in the 100 block of Spruce Street.

December 18

9:23 am: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

7:43 pm: Officers responded to a report of a prowler in the 100 block of Hazel Street.

9:22 pm: Officers initiated a burglary investigation in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

December 19

9:08 am: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 1600 block of Elm Lane.

4:52 pm: Officers responded to a report of an assault in the 400 block of East Hill Road.

5:41 pm: Officers initiated a kidnapping investigation in the 300 block of East Commercial Street.

8:36 pm: Officers responded to a report of a prowler in the 600 block of South Main Street.

8:46 pm: SANUDOTORRES, Jose Alonso (37) of Atwater was contacted in the 600 block of South Main Street. He was arrested pursuant to 647 (F) PC (Public Intoxication) and on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (alcohol).

December 20

1:17 pm: Officers initiated a hit-and-run vehicle collision investigation in the 1500 block of South Main Street.

December 21

8:51 am: GOWER, Jason Andrew (28) of Eureka was contacted in the 21000 block of Baechtel Road. He was arrested on felony charges of grand theft from a building and violation of probation.

1:34 pm: MOON, William Blake (24) of Ukiah was contacted in the 1500 block of South Main Street following a report of suspicious activity. He was arrested pursuant to 148 (A) (1) PC (Resisting Arrest).

6:11 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

6:48 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

9:25 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

December 22

5:27 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 600 block of East Commercial Street.

December 23

12:46 am: LILLY, Matashia Crystal (33) of Willits was contacted in the 1000 block of South Main Street. She was arrested pursuant to 368 (B) PC (Elder or Dependent Adult Abuse Resulting in Great Bodily Harm or Death).

8:48 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1500 block of South Main Street.

3:25 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 400 block of East San Francisco Avenue.

3:25 pm: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 100 block of Mill Creek Drive.

December 24

7:23 am: Officers responded to a report of arson in the 100 block of Kawi Place.

8:19 am: GRAY, Michele Lea (47) of Redwood Valley was contacted in the 300 block of Creekside Drive following a report of a suspicious person. She was arrested pursuant to 451 (D) PC (Arson).

December 25

3:52 am: LILLY, Matashia Crystal (33) of Willits was contacted in the 1000 block of South Main Street following a disturbance. She was arrested pursuant to 273.5 PC (Domestic Corporal Injury).

10:01 am: Officers responded to a report of an assault in the 1400 block of South Main Street.

8:17 pm: MCCANN, Levi Jonathan (44) of Redding was contacted in the 200 block of South Main Street. He was arrested pursuant to 647 (F) PC (Public Intoxication) and on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (alcohol).

10:11 pm: Officers responded to a report of an explosion in the 100 block of Manor Way.

December 26

7:25 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 200 block of North Street.

9:34 am: ROSTON, Bobby Gerome (35) of Ukiah was contacted in the 800 block of South Main Street. He was arrested pursuant to 3056 PC (Violation of Parole) and on felony charges of battery with serious injury inflicted.

11:05 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 300 block of Robert Drive.

11:41 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

December 27

9:03 pm: Officers responded to a report of an assault in the 100 block of South Lenore Avenue.

9:36 pm: Officers responded to a report of an assault in the 100 block of East Commercial Street.

December 28

7:42 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

10:57 am: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 1500 block of South Main Street.

7:21 pm: Officers initiated a missing person investigation in the 1200 block of Locust Street.

December 29

2:59 pm: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 1500 block of South Main Street.

December 30

11:12 am: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 1200 block of Locust Street.

12:02 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

4:45 pm: Officers initiated a missing person investigation in the 200 block of East Commercial Street.

December 31

12:14 am: Officers responded to a report of an assault in the 100 block of Northbrook Way.

10:16 am: Officers initiated a missing person investigation in the 100 block of Holly Street.

5:07 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

6:34 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

9:38 pm: BAKER, Natalie Ann (37) of Latrode was contacted in the 100 block of North Main Street. She was arrested pursuant to 11364 (A) (1) H&S (Possession of Drug Paraphernalia) and on misdemeanor charges of resisting an officer.

January 1

10:05 am: Officers responded to a report of threats in the 100 block of East Commercial Street.

January 2

9:56 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 300 block of North Main Street.

3:26 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1100 block of Locust Street.

Read the rest of WPD Over on Page 13



Crab Fest

Rotary Club auction and all-you-can-eat dinner is back, on January 25

On Saturday, January 25, at 6 pm, Willits will once again have the opportunity to win amazing prizes, bid against friends and family members, listen to some tasty music by The Basics, and contribute to the Rotary Club Scholarship Fund and Harrah Senior Center. And there will be food ... all-you-can-eat crab, pasta, salad and French bread, served by members of the senior class of Willits High School and the Willits Future Farmers of America.

Back after a one-year hiatus, due to the lack of legal crab in 2019, this year's Rotary Club Crab Fest should once again prove to be the fun-for-the-whole-family event that has been a mainstay annually for over 10 years.

"Half of the proceeds go to the Willits Senior Center," says organizer Ann Alumbaugh, "and the other half to our scholarship fund which usually provides \$1,000 to \$1,500 for 10 deserving seniors who have applied and have gone through a vetting process by the Rotary."

The cost per person is \$50, and no

one goes away hungry. Before dinner, attendees can mingle, peruse and bid on fabulous silent auction prizes, buy their paddles and quarters, and visit the no-host bar.

Once dinner is over, even more fun begins with the usually wild and unpredictable quarter auction in which the participants place a designated number of quarters in a bucket as paddle numbers are called for each item indicating the winners of that item. In the past, the quarter auction has provided a crazy-fun time full of laughs and competition.

Tickets can be purchased from any Willits Rotary member, at Willits Furniture, Willits Senior Center, or Tri Counties Bank. The event will be held at the Willits Community Center, 111 East Commercial Street. For more information, call Alumbaugh at 459-1440 or 707-841-1315.

The Willits Rotary Club is expecting to do their annual Drive-Up Crab Sale, cooking the crustaceans on Main Street, sometime in February, depending on the available supply of crabs. Look for further announcements.



Willits Unified School District has immediate openings for

Substitute Bus Drivers

The School District will pay for all licensing costs plus 50 hours of training for qualified applicants selected for this opportunity



Applications available at the Willits Unified School District Office 1277 Blosser Lane (south end of Blosser Lane campus) Contact Mattie Pinon, DMOT Assistant 459-5111 or Laura Sleeper, Human Resources 459-5314, ext. 1102

Little Mouths
ARE A
BIG DEAL

LITTLE LAKE
HEALTH CENTER

CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT TODAY
(707) 456-9600
45 Hazel St., Willits
SE HABLA ESPAÑOL. WE ACCEPT MEDI-CAL, MEDICARE, PARTNERSHIP AND OTHER INSURANCE.
littlelakehealthcenter.org
MLHC HEALTH CENTERS IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER.

Thursday, January 16

Willits Farmers Market: Winter market at the Little Lake Grange, 271 School Street. Thursday, January 16, 3 to 5:30 pm. Veggies, fresh salad greens, local meats, sausage and eggs, local grains, savory and sweet baked goods, including pies and handcrafted bread. More: gift items, jams and jellies and savory preserves, olive oil and balsamic vinegar, blue oyster mushrooms, fair trade chocolates, Willits-roasted coffee, tea, fire cider, crafts, knitted goods and jewelry, live music, free herb talks, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more.

Friday, January 17

Wolf Tree at Northspur Brewing: Friday, January 17, 5 to 8 pm, 101 North Main Street. "Wolf Tree brings solo acoustic Alt Country and Americana to Willits' delightful new brewery, Northspur Brewing. He sings a well-crafted collection of songs by artists such as Son Volt, Townes van Zandt, and Gillian Welch and plays guitar, mandolin, and harmonica. Come for the libations and company; stay for the music!"



Willits High School Basketball: Willits vs. St. Helena: JV 6 pm, varsity 7:30 pm. Willits High School Gym, 299 North Main Street. (Varsity Coach Tim Conrad, JV Coach Trey Henson).

Shanachie Pub: Wailing Aaron Jennings: Friday, January 17, 8 pm. "Champions the traditions of Honky Tonk and Western

Swing while giving a knowing wink and a nod to the modern world." Visit: <http://wailingjennings.com>. 50B South Main Street.

Saturday, January 18

Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop: Richard Jeske will demonstrate how to properly prune fruit trees and grape vines for the home gardener. Starts indoors at the Hub, 6390 South Main Street. After lunch, class will resume at Jeske's home orchard on East Hill Road. \$20. To register: 459-5926. Space limited. Saturday, January 18, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm.

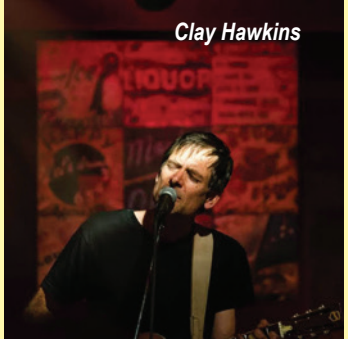


Richard Jeske

Auditions for William Shakespeare's Comedy, "The Winter's Tale": Saturday, January 18, Sunday January 19, Sunday January 25 and Sunday January 26. "The Winter's Tale" is a play about redemption. In the play, jealousy compels a king to makes some bad choices, which wreaks havoc in the world around him. But because of the healing aspect of nature, and also because of a flat-out miracle, the play has a positive ending. All auditions 2 pm. Roles for 15 males and for eight females ranging in age from the mid-teens up to senior citizens. Also four male and four female dancers. Rehearses late February through March; opens Friday, April 10 with 10 shows; closes Sunday, April 26. Scripts for "The Winter's Tale" are available at the Willits Library. Info:

director Mike A'Dair at 707-200-2462 or michaeldair69@yahoo.com.

JFK Murder Debate: Fifty-six years after the assassination of President Kennedy, the Warren Commission's finding that Lee Harvey Oswald, acting alone, was the assassin, remains a matter of continuing controversy. The validity of the Commission's finding will be debated on stage at the Willits Community Theatre, 37 West Van Lane, Saturday, January 18 at 7:30 pm. Don Samson will argue the commission got it right; Mike A'Dair will argue they got it wrong. Q&A after the debate. \$5 at the door.



Clay Hawkins

Shanachie Pub: Clay Hawkins Duo: Saturday, January 18, 8 pm. "Blending rapid-fire fingerstyle slide guitar and honest, heartfelt songwriting." Visit: <http://www.clayhawkins.com>. 50B South Main Street.

Sunday, January 19

Auditions for William Shakespeare's Comedy, "The Winter's Tale": Sunday January 19, 2 pm. See January 18 listing for details.

LocalLights: All open mic show, Sunday, January 19, 2 to 5 pm, Willits Center for the Arts. This is a family-friendly event open to all ages and performance art of any kind. Suggested donation: \$5. Info: 459-7054.

MOON LADY AND COSMIC PICKLE PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

TOMMY CASTRO

AND THE PAINKILLERS

VALENTINES BLUES

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 14TH, 2020

A FUNDRAISER FOR THE LITTLE LAKE GRANGE CHURCH HALL

\$30 TICKETS

DINNER TICKETS \$15

DOORS OPEN 6PM

MUSIC 7:30PM-10:00PM

NO HOST BAR

LOCAL HANDCRAFTED BEER + WINE

NO HOST COFFEE + DESSERT BAR

TICKETS LIMITED TO 250

TICKETS SOLD HERE

UKIAH CO-OP | WILLITS MOON LADY | MAIN ST. MUSIC | 1 MENDOCINO BOOK CO. | EVENTBRITE

Hello Twenties!

WILLITS CHARTER SCHOOL CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF ARTS AND EDUCATION

JOIN US FOR A NIGHT FULL OF ART AND STUDENT PERFORMANCES

\$15 FAMILY OF FOUR, \$5 EACH

FAMILY STYLE DINNER WILL BE SERVED

Silent Basket Auction

THERE WILL BE A BAKE AUCTION FOR THE SENIOR TRIP.

LOCATED LITTLE LAKE GRANGE 291 SCHOOL ST. WILLITS, CA 95490

FRIDAY, JANUARY 24TH, 6:00PM-8:00PM

Willits Rotary Club Crabfest

January 25

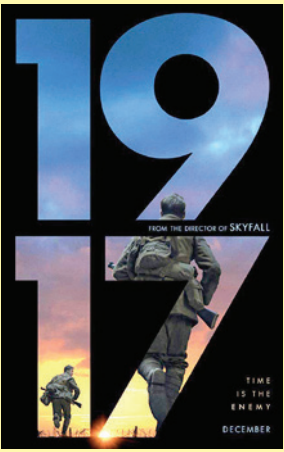
The Willits Rotary Club Annual All-You-Can-Eat Crabfest is back after a one-year hiatus due to the lack of legal crab in 2019. Saturday, January 25, 6 pm, Willits Community Center, 111 East Commercial Street. Fresh crab, pasta, salad and French bread. No host bar. Music by The Bassics. Silent and Quarter Auctions. Half of the proceeds go to the Willits Senior Center and the other half to the Rotary scholarship fund which usually provides \$1,000 to \$1,500 for 10 deserving high school seniors who have applied and have gone through a vetting process by the Rotary. \$50. Tickets available from any Willits Rotary member, Willits Furniture, Willits Senior Center, Tri Counties Bank. Info: Ann 459-1440, 707-841-1315.

What's Happening Around Town

Ongoing LocalLights shows will be on the third Sunday each month.

Tuesday, January 21

Tightwad Tuesdays: Select films in their 2nd or subsequent weeks are discounted to \$6 on Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre for all ages, all showings. This week's Tightwad Tuesday movies are "1917" and "Little Women." Visit www.noyotheatre.com, call 459-6696 or check the ad in Willits Weekly for show times. \$7 East Commercial Street.



Eckhart Tolle Class: at the Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. Tuesday, January 21, 5 to 7 pm; showing the video "Signposts to Awakening" which comes from Eckhart teachings and "is not normally available to the general public." Info: Andrea, 707-513-8139. Free event.

Lady Wolverines High School Basketball: Willits vs. Middleton: JV 5:30 pm, varsity 7 pm. Willits High School Gym, 299 North Main Street. (Coach Fred Austin).

Thursday, January 23

Willits Farmers Market: Winter market at the Little Lake Grange, 271 School Street. Thursday, January 23, 3 to 5:30 pm. See January 16 listing for details.

Movie Night: Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. Thursday, January 23,

5 to 6:30 pm. "Come to the library to watch a free movie! Check our Facebook page to see what we will be playing."

Friday, January 24

Willits High School Basketball: Willits vs. Ft. Bragg: JV 6 pm, varsity 7:30 pm. Willits High School Gym, 299 North Main Street. (Varsity Coach Tim Conrad, JV Coach Trey Henson).

Willits Charter School 20th Anniversary Variety Show: "A very special Variety Show Fundraiser to celebrate 20 years of WCS. This is a culmination of one full semester of student work in the area of theater, music, choir, art, and ceramics. Also, a family-style dinner, a silent auction, and a faculty rock band, plus an auction for bake sale items that will go towards the 12th grade trip. All other monies raised at the Variety Show go back into our electives and Friday Academy classes." Friday, January 24, 6 to 8 pm. 1431 South Main Street.

Shanachie Pub: Outlaw Kindred: Friday, January 24, 8 pm. "Spinted Outlaw Grass/Folk teaming with tradition and old world ascetics." Visit: <https://outlawkindred.com/home>. 50B South Main Street.



Outlaw Kindred

Celebrating 40 years of service

Mendocino County Sheriff Tom Allman

Feb 1st 2020 4-10PM

\$25 Limited Dinner Tickets 4-6PM

S10 Dance Only 6-10PM

Live Music by Double Standtyrd

Hospice Bereavement Support Group

Wednesdays – begins February 26

This facilitated 8-week group provides an opportunity for the bereaved to explore the normal symptoms of grief, as well as recognize the individual nature of its expression and duration. With a fuller understanding of the grief process and effective techniques to manage stress, we can move toward recovery and affirmation of a continuing life. Will meet on the following Wednesdays: February 26, March 4, 11, 18, 25, April 1, 22 and 29. 10 am to 12 pm. Adventist Health Homecare & Hospice Building, 100 Sanhedrin Circle. Registration/Info: Roland Hulstein, 456-3248. Adventist Health Home Care Services.

Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop

January 18

Richard Tootreese Jeske will demonstrate how to properly prune fruit trees and grape vines for the home gardener. Topics include heading vs. thinning cuts, summer vs. winter pruning, tree parts and health and vigor, sun requirements, tools, ladder-less orcharding, and what best in our region. Starts indoors at the Hub, 6390 South Main Street. After lunch, we will resume at Richard's home orchard on East Hill Road. \$20. To register: 459-5926. Space is limited. Saturday, January 18, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm.

Willits Garden Club

The Willits Garden Club will meet on the second Tuesday each month in the Willits Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road, 1 pm, in the Conference Room.

The ongoing 2020 meeting speakers are as follows:

Tuesday, February 11: Sparetime Hardware & Garden

Tuesday, March 10: Food Bank & Community Services

Tuesday, April 14: Annette's Flowers

Tuesday, May 12: Parducci Garden Tour

Tuesday, June 9: Picnic and Hospital Garden Tour

Subject to change. For more information, visit willitsgardenclub.org, or Willits Garden Club on Facebook.

MENDOCINO COLLEGE NORTH COUNTY CENTER

SPRING CLASS ANNOUNCEMENT

You or your employees can dedicate just one day a week to building and refining your customer service capacities!

BUS-107 Customer Service

Register for Section #1007 - 3 Credit Hours

Meets Fridays 9-11:50AM

This course will cover the principles and techniques of delivering excellent customer service. Topics include employer and customer perspectives, interpersonal communications, developing empathetic customer resolutions, customer retention strategies, as well as marketing and sales strategies. The course covers individualized communication and problem solving skill development as well as the efficacy of customer service in achieving general business, hospitality, food service, and retail industry goals.

"Courteous treatment will make a customer a walking advertisement." – J. C. Penny

Mendocino College North County Center
372 E. Commercial St. Willits, CA 95490
707 459 6224 www.mendocino.edu/enroll

WHO KILLED JACK KENNEDY?

A debate between Don Samson & Mike A'Dair

Moderated by Louis Rohlicek

Saturday January 18th 7:30 pm

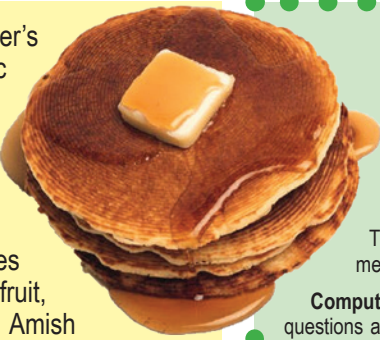
Tickets \$5 at the door

Willits Community Theatre

Gluten-Free, Quality Bacon, organic local farm fresh eggs, real butter, juice, organic coffee or tea.

\$8; \$7 seniors, \$5 children under 10. Sides of organic fruit, \$2 to \$3 and Amish organic maple syrup, \$1. Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street.

Auditions for William Shakespeare's Comedy, "The Winter's Tale": Sunday January 26, 2 pm. See January 18 listing for details.



AT THE MOVIES

'1917'

The Story: World War 1 suspense action drama. Two men, Lance Corporal Blake (Dean-Charles Chapman) and Lance Corporal Schofield (George MacKay) are chosen to deliver a critical message to a general at The Front. They have to cross No Man's Land. It is a landscape of bomb-craters and mud and blasted corpses – and well-fed rats. The two protagonists are at constant exhausting risk. The meaning of courage is simplified: just take the next step, just carry on, as time is running out.

Dan Essman *Columist*

My Thoughts: MacKay and Chapman project stolid British courage; it's the War and one does what one must. In "1917," the Great War to End All Wars is shown as an ugly unglamorous monstrosity that chops men into little pieces and pins ribbons on what remains. That noted: the best war movies are anti-war, for example Stanley Kubrick's "Paths of Glory" or "Full Metal Jacket." And while we're mentioning the master craftsman Kubrick, "1917" has tour-de-force cinematography by Roger Deakins. I cannot stress in any wise how dazzling and dizzying the cinematography is. This movie is a technical masterpiece of movie-makers' art, and a suspenseful and epic journey that will reward the viewers. I unhesitatingly recommend it.

Parents: War movies should be horror movies, this is no exception. It is absolutely not for children.

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

Auditions for Shakespeare play in Willits

The Willits Community Theatre will be holding auditions for "The Winter's Tale" by William Shakespeare on Saturdays and Sundays over the next couple of weeks.

Auditions will be held Saturday January 18, Sunday January 19, Saturday January 25, and Sunday January 26. All auditions are at 2 pm.

"The Winter's Tale" is a play about redemption. In the play, jealousy compels a king to makes some bad choices, which wreaks havoc in the world around him. But because of the healing aspect of nature, and also because of a flat-out miracle, the play has a positive ending. Shakespeare scholars consider the play to be a romance, because it has elements of both comedy, tragedy and the miraculous.

There are roles for 15 males and for eight females ranging in age from the mid-teens up to senior citizens. The director is also looking for four male and four female dancers.

"The Winter's Tale" will rehearse from late February throughout March and will open on April 10. It will play for 10 shows and will close on Sunday, April 26. Scripts for "The Winter's Tale" are available at the Willits Library. For questions or for more information, call director Mike A'Dair at 707-200-2462 or email him at michaeldair69@yahoo.com.

Who Killed Jack Kennedy?

A debate between Don Samson & Mike A'Dair

Moderated by Louis Rohlicek

Saturday January 18th 7:30 pm

Tickets \$5 at the door

Willits Community Theatre

Willits Garden Club

The Willits Garden Club will meet on the second Tuesday each month in the Willits Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road, 1 pm, in the Conference Room.

The ongoing 2020 meeting speakers are as follows:

Tuesday, February 11: Sparetime Hardware & Garden

Tuesday, March 10: Food Bank & Community Services

Tuesday, April 14: Annette's Flowers

Tuesday, May 12: Parducci Garden Tour

Tuesday, June 9: Picnic and Hospital Garden Tour

Subject to change. For more information, visit willitsgardenclub.org, or Willits Garden Club on Facebook.

Add your event in Willits, Laytonville or Covelo to our calendar!

Email us: willitsweekly@gmail.com

Ongoing Events

Free Firewood at the Senior Center: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 to 11 am. Bring current Senior Center membership card. Info: 459-6826.

Computer Lab at the Senior Center: Tuesdays, 2 to 4 pm. Bring questions and your device (or use ours). Learn and get repairs. \$3 donation. Open to everyone.

Munchies and Music: Friday Nights at Northspur Brewing Company, 101 North Main Street. 6 to 10 pm. With Greg and Malakai Schindel.

"Art Expo": featuring drawings and paintings by Alma Soleada. Re-Evolution Gallery, 15 West Mendocino Avenue. 11 am to 6 pm, Tuesday to Saturday.

Friday Night Live: Vendors, food and entertainment. 1722 South Main Street (Evergreen Shopping Center). 5 to 8 pm.

Linda Posner's "Word Buffet": KLLG-LP, 97.9, "Poems and Sayings to Start Your Day." Sunday, 10 to 10:30 am.

Meatless Mondays: at Roots Restaurant at Adventist Health Howard Memorial, 1 Marcela Drive. "Serving delicious plant-based options every Monday," 7 am to 5 pm.

Collective Care: A Holistic Support Group: Fridays, 10 to 11:15 am. 44650 Highway 101, Laytonville. Holistic community support and information. Children welcome. By donation. www.nestersisterbotanicals.com.

Night to the Bar with Les Tarr: Radio active blues programming for tragically hip and twisted, Fridays, 9 pm to midnight. 97.9 FM, KLLG.

Willits International Folk Dancing: Class meets every Thursday, 7 to 8 pm, Willits Charter High School. New dances taught 7 to 8 pm. \$0 - \$5 sliding scale. Info: megster1989@yahoo.com.

Willits Frontier Twirlers Square Dance Club: Mondays, 7 pm, upstairs gallery of the Willits Center for Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. Sliding scale \$0 to \$5/class. 707-484-3385 for info.

Little John's Place: Every Thursday Pool Tournament. 6 pm, \$5 buy-in. "We'll buy the pizza, you buy the beer." Saturday nights: Free Pool 9 pm to 12 am during December. 383 South Main Street. 459-5636. facebook.com/littlejohnsplace/.

Free Herb Talks: by the Mendocino Herb Guild. Every Thursday, 4 pm, at the Willits Farmers Market, indoors for the winter at Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street.

Roots Engine House Tours: Docent-tour of the Engine House most Wednesdays and Saturdays, 10 am to 4:30 pm. Join a Roots of Motive Power docent to view classic motorcycles, a steam train engine, and more – up close.

Marijuana Anonymous 12 Step Meeting: Every Tuesday at 6 pm. Meeting place is the Back Alley building in Catherine Lane, directly behind the United Methodist Church, which is at the corner of School and Pine, right across from the Grange.

Brown Bag Lunch Program: Lunch served to the hungry in the City Park across from the Willits Police Station every Saturday at 1 pm, served by various community-minded organizations. For information, call the Food Bank at 459-3333.

Boomer's Friday Night Karaoke: 1st, 3rd & 5th Friday of every month, Boomer's Saloon, 45020 Highway 101, Laytonville. 9 pm to 1 am. No Cover. 21+ Please bring I.D. Hosted by DJ-Ken Steely Entertainment with KJ/DJ-Ken Steely & Anna. Come for dinner, stay for the fun.

Willits Farmers Market: Winter Market at the Little Lake Grange, 271 School Street, from 3 to 5:30 pm every Thursday. Veggies, fresh salad greens, local meats, sausage and eggs, local grains, savory and sweet baked goods, including pies and handcrafted bread. More: gift items, jams and jellies and savory preserves, olive oil and balsamic vinegar, blue oyster mushrooms, fair trade chocolates, Willits-roasted coffee, tea, fire cider, crafts, knitted goods and jewelry, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more.

Emandal Choral: The Choral is open to all who wish to sing a cappella songs of peace and justice. Every Wednesday from 5 to 6:30 pm at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Info: 367-1573.

Friday Potluck Bingo: Harrah Senior Center presents Potluck Bingo on Friday nights. Doors open at 5 pm; games begin at 5:30 pm. Minimum bingo buy-in \$5. 1501 Baechtel Road. Info: 459-6826.

Weekly Parkinson's Discussion and Support Group: Every Thursday, 10:30 to 11:45 am. In the Conference Room at Willits Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. Info: 459-1941.

Tibetan Buddhist Meditation Group: Meets every Tuesday at 6:30 pm, at the Muse, 31 East San Francisco Avenue. Info: 456-9425 or honemann@yahoo.com.

Willits Community Drum Circle: 7 to 10 pm at the Saint Francis in the Redwoods Episcopal Church, 66 East Commercial Street. Every 2nd and 4th Friday. Free. Everyone is welcome. Info: 459-4932.

Willits Library Activities: Tuesdays: 3:30 to 4 pm "Wiggle Time" (Explore movement and self-expression); Wednesdays: 11 to 11:45 am "Play Group" (Self-directed playtime, with toys, ages 0 to 4); 2:30 to 3 pm "Storytime" (Books, songs, rhymes and movement, ages 3 to 6); 3:30 to 4:30 pm "Lego Club" (bring your imagination and start building); Thursdays: 2:30 to 3:30 pm "Storytime and More" (with coloring and board games); Fridays: 5:30 to 5:50 pm "Dance Workout" (Fun, upbeat dance); Saturdays, 11 am to 12 pm "Write Live" (We provide a prompt and a space to create writing); 2:30 to 4:30 pm "Drop-In Knitting" All skill levels. Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. Info: 459-5908.

Drop-In Knitting Circle: Saturdays from 2:30 to 4:30 pm at the Willits Branch Library, 390 East Commercial Street. "Bring your own projects or your yarn and needles; we have people who should be able to help solve problems and/or help you learn to knit or crochet. Sign-ups are not necessary – everyone is welcome to drop in." Info: Lotus Baker at 456-9037, or lotusb3@earthlink.net.

Soroptimist International of Willits: Women's service club aimed at the betterment of girls and women. Meets the second Tuesday at 4 pm and the third Tuesday at noon each month at St John's Lutheran Church Hall, 24 Mill Creek Drive. Women interested in community service are welcome; new members are encouraged to join at any time.

Weekly Life Changes Discussion and Support Group: Wednesdays from 10 to 11:30 am. In the Conference Room at Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road.

Free Sheriff's Activity League programs: at Body Works Gym, 1511 South Main Street. Teen gym: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 3 to 5 pm. Karate: Thursday. Little Dragons-ages 3 to 6, 5:15 to 6 pm. Youth Karate-ages 6 to 11, 6 to 7 pm; Twens to Adults-ages 11 and up, 7 to 8:30 pm. All SAL programs free to the public. Info: "Mendocino Sheriff's Activities League" on Facebook or Mike Tobin: 354-0565.

Shanachie Pub: Mondays, 7 pm: "Monday Blues & Beyond" with Blue Luke & Special Guests. Tuesdays, 8 pm: "Wabi Sabi" with host Mitchell Holman, formerly of It's A Beautiful Day ("Whitebird") features different artists every week. Singer-songwriter Aaron Ford every first Thursday at 7:30 pm. No cover. Jazz Night every second and fourth Thursday, 8 pm. "Local musicians ... take jazz standards and infuse them with funk, hip hop, world, and free form jamming. The outcome is unexplainable." Open Mic Night every Wednesday. Sign up for the lottery for 20 minute time slots from 3 pm, when the Pub opens, to 7:30 pm. Music starts at 8 pm. "An eclectic array of local musicians and performers from around the world, often turning into an evening full of unexpected surprises." Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Laytonville Farmers Market: Mondays, from 2:30 to 5:30 pm at Harwood Hall, 44400 Willits Avenue, Laytonville. Local fresh fruits and vegetables, artisan goat cheeses, ranch meats, eggs, handcrafted clothing, live music and much more.

Call for Artists:

Willits Center for the Arts

WCA is looking for jewelers and clothing artists for a Pop-Up shop for the February 2020 Show. Contact gtm1950@gmail.com with a few photos of your work.

The resolution the council passed last week approved a professional services contract with LACO Associates “for a not to exceed amount of \$97,200 for preliminary engineering on the city’s Groundwater Improvement Project.”

It also approved “a budget amendment of \$27,200 for the water fund to pay for the contract.”

LACO Associates submitted a letter to the city talking about the project’s importance.

“Although the drought of 2013 and 2015 are in the past, this project is crucially important to the city’s resiliency,” read the letter from Vice President Rod Wilburn, “and LACO is excited to offer a proposal to support the city in seeing it accomplished.”

According to LACO, as constructed, the current well system used by the city only has the capacity to supply about 490,000 gallons per day – less than a third of what is used during the “peak flows” in the summer by the approximately 5,500 people who use the Willits water system.

“The [current] system is inadequate to meet the community’s needs in the event of severe or protracted drought,” LACO stated, “or if the surface water system or its single pipeline were damaged, especially if such events occur in summer months.”

Trincado Slater explained that the project will be separated into three different phases, with Phase 1 construction planned to begin around July of this year.

“The project will consist of the replacement of 3,600 feet of pipeline, that would be Phase 1,” she said.

According to LACO, these pipe upgrades will increase the transfer capacity from the city’s two wells – the Elias and Long 20 wells – to the groundwater treatment plant.

Trincado Slater said that Phase 2 will include “pump electrical and control upgrades at the wells,” and Phase 3 will consist of “a clear well tank installation to act as a buffer between the groundwater treatment plant and the system.”

The overall cost of the project is estimated at around \$1.5 million, but Trincado Slater said a large portion of that will likely end up being covered by state grant money through Proposition 1 – the Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014.

“As previously reported to council, city staff and LACO Associates worked together to prepare a grant application that has resulted in an award recommendation of \$551,156 from the North Coast Resource Partnership for Proposition 1 funding,” Trincado Slater stated in her agenda summary report.

However, since the grant is not yet in hand, and the project had already been budgeted to come from the city’s water fund, she recommended that the city move forward with the project using city money for now. They could then potentially reimburse the water fund once the grant money came in.

“The way we need to design this project is to design it as a whole,” she explained. “To have a well informed project.... So when we’re designing we have the whole project, and then when we start to get to the plans and specifications, we start to break it out into Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3.”

“And my intention is to attempt to get the Phase 1 reimbursed when we can clearly define those tasks, but right now with this, I want to just go forward with the assumption that we’re paying for it completely ourselves, and it looks like we have plenty of funding to do that at this stage.”

She added that city staff planned to seek additional grant money for the other two phases in the future.

“With the groundwater management plan and the preparation of plans and specifications, we will be in good order to apply for a second round of funding ... through Proposition 1 funding. Another round of funding is going to be available soon, so that’s the intention of the city if we can pull together our resources to apply for the grant.”

She also noted that there will be upcoming public workshops to inform the public about the details of the ongoing project, and allow those in the community to have input.

New cloud-based budget software

In an effort to make the city’s budget operations more efficient and transparent, the city council also approved funding last week for a contract with OpenGov, described in the agenda summary report as “the leader in cloud-based tools purpose built for local government.”

According to the summary report from Yujun Du, city finance director and treasurer, the software from OpenGov will include tools to “provide an end-to-end budget development solution that will drastically modernize and streamline the city’s current process,”

“The budgeting and planning tools will allow the city departments and budget staff to reduce manual and clerical efforts during the budgeting process, provide a central collaborative location to develop budget number and evaluate scenarios, project workforce and personnel costs, and ultimately provide the publication of the budget document,” said Du.

“This part of the OpenGov cloud will provide the greatest efficiencies to city staff and provide powerful analytical capability to allow us to be forward thinking in our future strategy for the city. Finance staff expects that the use of this software, once the templates get created, will save as much as 75 percent of the work spent creating the budget book in future years.”

Du pointed out that OpenGov “has partnered with over 1,900 governments, including over 100 in California such as Redding, Ukiah, Clearlake, Healdsburg, Mendocino County, and many others.”

The contract which the council chose – “Option 2” out of three possible options offered in the report – will have an annual fee of \$14,982 with a one-time setup fee of \$14,000.

Option 3 would have included more interactive tools for public viewing of budget information, but was considerably more costly – \$25,746 annually with a one-time setup fee of \$22,000.

In the end, the council came to the agreement that Option 2 was the best choice given the city’s current available funding.

Councilmember Madge Strong and others pointed out that the city already publicizes budget information regularly, and the new OpenGov software should help them get it out more efficiently.

“Any time a financial report comes on the city’s agenda, that is all public information,” said Strong. “And so now we are going to be able to do those kinds of reports with greater ease and accuracy I think, by not having to hand calculate everything every time we make a change at a meeting.”

As part of the changes to the budget system, Du said that staff is also recommending “reorganizing the finance department,” by eliminating two positions – senior accountant and office assistant 1 – which are currently vacant anyway, and adding one full-time and one part-time accountant 1 positions.

The annual salary savings of the finance department reorganization with those changes was estimated at \$39,223, which Du pointed out could help offset the cost of the OpenGov contract.

Impact of AB5 on local businesses

Towards the end of the meeting Strong encouraged people to reach out to their government representatives regarding the new AB5 law in California and the negative impacts it’s having on some businesses in the community.

“I hope that people will contact our representatives in Sacramento to try to alleviate the burden that this AB5 is requiring for all sorts of people that have [previously] been treated as independent contractors,” she said.

“[Businesses] can’t consider them contractors anymore; they have to consider them all employees. And this is even if they do like one hour a week or a few hours a month of work, they are supposed to be now categorized as employees.”

“And it’s an incredible paperwork burden and financial burden on small businesses,” she continued. “And Willits Weekly in particular I know is threatened – their existence is threatened by it.”

“So I would love to see Sacramento at least give everyone more time – because there wasn’t very much time for these businesses to see what their options are – and really have a threshold where the small businesses aren’t going to be adversely affected. So I hope people will as individuals contact their legislators.”

Councilmember Greta Kanne also commented on the topic of AB5.

“And I would just like to encourage anybody from the public who wants to contact their representative about this issue to use the words ‘micro business’ versus ‘small business,’” said Kanne. “Because most legislators have no idea what micro business really is – and that’s those of us who have fewer than five employees. And when they talk about small business, that’s anyone with 100 employees or less. Huge difference between an organization with 100 employees versus five or three.”

“So they need to hear the message loud and clear that when they pass laws they have real impact on micro businesses,” she continued. “The vast majority of businesses in Mendocino County are micro. So they need to hear that distinction and know that is has real repercussions.”

The Office of Assemblymember Jim Wood has notified Willits Weekly that Wood’s District Director Ruth Valenzuela will be at the Willits City Council meeting on January 22 to make a public comment on concerns with AB5.

Hazmobile drop-off January 17, 18

Strong also wanted to remind those in the Willits community that their last chance for the next few months to drop off household hazardous waste material at the Mendocino Solid Waste Authority facility in Willits on Blosser Lane to be picked up by the Hazmobile will be on January 17 and 18, from 9 am to 1 pm.

She said that most items you can drop off for free, though there are a few things that the Hazmobile either won’t take or will charge money for.

Among the items you can drop off for no charge are motor oil, antifreeze, gasoline, solvents, paint, paint thinner, batteries, toxic cleaners, fluorescent light tubes, acids, bases, pesticides, herbicides, pool chemicals and medication.

There is a daily load limit of 15 gallons per vehicle per day, and businesses must make an appointment and pay a per gallon fee.

After January, the next chance to drop off household hazardous waste at the Willits facility will be April 17-18. There is a schedule available on the city’s website, www.cityofwillits.org, under the Community link.

Public invited to January 22 ‘goal setting workshop’

The next Willits City Council meeting on January 22 at 6:30 pm will consist mainly of a “goal setting workshop” where city council and staff will review progress on previous goals and set priorities for the future.

City manager Stephanie Garra-brant-Sierra said the public is welcome to come attend and give input.

For those interested, there is a long list of city goals and the progress that’s been made on those goals at www.cityofwillits.org, under the January 22 ‘Agenda’ link.

There will also be an ad-hoc committee meeting regarding potential changes in the mobile vendor rules in Willits on Thursday, January 16, at 6 pm.

Both meetings will take place at Willits City Hall in the council chambers.

Over the past several years, the board of supervisors has established standing committees at the first of the year and has appointed supervisors to sit on the committees, but has not activated the committees, so that generally they meet seldom or never.

For example, in 2019, the General Government Standing Committee met twice, and seven scheduled meetings of the committee were cancelled. The Public Health, Safety and Resources Standing Committee did not meet, and eight of its scheduled meetings were cancelled.

In recent years, the supervisors have preferred to stay away from standing committees, and instead have used ad hoc committees as a way of conducting business outside of regular meetings. The Standing Committee format has been criticized as being costly, slow and a drain on county staff, whereas the ad hoc committee format has been praised as being more flexible.

However, some members of the public have asked the supervisors to use the standing committee format more often; as then at least the public can be informed of when and where the meetings will take place, and they can be informed about the agendas of each meeting.

Under the ad hoc committee format, the only people who are informed about the meeting are those people that the committee members invite to the meeting; the general public is often not informed, although there are some exceptions.

At the first meeting of 2020, Fifth District Supervisor Ted Williams said he would support not making appointments to the county’s two board standing committees. However his suggestion did not receive support, and the committee appointments were made.

Second District Supervisor John McCowen and Williams were appointed to the Public Health, Safety and Resources Standing Committee, and Fourth District Supervisor Dan Gjerde and First District Supervisor Carre Brown were appointed to the General Government Standing Committee.

Economic Development and Financing Corporation Executive Director Heather Gurewitz came to the podium and requested that the board not appoint Supervisor Williams to the EDFC Board of Directors.

“Over the past year, since Supervisor Williams has been on our board, he has made absolutely no effort to contact other board members or the executive director, or other staff, regarding what we do, what are operations are, how we operate, or to understand what the organization is about,” Gurewitz said.

“Our lending program is particularly complicated, and it seems that his interest is not in actually working with us. If he wants to be removed and direct [county] staff to investigate us, that is perfectly fine – but he doesn’t need to be on our board to do that,” Gurewitz said.

Gurewitz’s statement threw a brief monkey wrench into the planned appointment of supervisors to an array of committees, work which had already been done, in advance, by Haschak. Haschak asked if any other supervisor would care to sit on the EDFC but received no takers.

Therefore, the board unanimously approved the entire slate of appointments, as recommended by Haschak, including reappointing Williams to the EDFC board of directors, and appointing Supervisor Gjerde as the board of supervisors’ second representative to the EDFC board.

Later in the afternoon, the board considered an agenda item that was brought forward by Williams, proposing that the county’s executive office would do an assessment of EDFC, “documenting total county contributions [to it] and return on investment.”

McCowen reminded the board there were certain intangible benefits conferred by EDFC upon the county’s well-being, which may not be measurable.

“We all know that EDFC is in the business of making loans and that they are often in the position of being the lender of last resort, to assist people who either seek to expand, or to start a business who don’t have access to conventional financing,” McCowen said. “So, by definition, these tend to be high-risk loans. There’s an effort to secure collateral, but there are a number of loans that do go bad and wind up being written off.

“So, part of the assessment is those loans that have been successful and have resulted in assisting businesses to grow or to start: What has been the benefit to those businesses? What taxes have they paid? What has been the increase in property tax value? And the number of people employed? ... There is a lot of value potentially to EDFC that won’t show up on the bottom line, and so I just think you have to keep that in mind,” McCowen said.

The supervisors agreed that it would be a good policy to do an assessment of EDFC, and Williams’ agenda item was approved unanimously.

This year’s phone book, featuring local residential numbers, cell phone numbers, and advertisements for local businesses is included in the January 16 edition of Willits Weekly distributed at local businesses and newsstands around town.

Mail and home delivery subscribers will not receive the book inside the edition, because it’s too thick and heavy to send through the mail or to “throw” in your driveway, but no worries! An additional 1,000 copies of the book will be placed around town for convenient pickup, including at the Willits Chamber of Commerce, the Willits Library and the Savings Bank of Mendocino County.

Helping the non-profit club distribute the other 3,000 printed copies of the book by inserting into Willits Weekly is another partnership and reciprocal benefit for small-town businesses and groups. Readers look to the newspaper for copies of the book; readers who may not think about picking up a phone book get a copy in their hands when they pick up the edition.

Willits Weekly also does the same for the annual Willits Frontier Days event program in June.

If your non-profit group has a project, booklet or flyer you would like help spreading throughout town – reach out to Willits Weekly and see what we can do to help.

Businesses are also welcome to contact Willits Weekly for assistance with distribution of marketing materials, flyers and more.

For inserting info, call 972-7047.

– Maureen Moore

have reported losing work due to AB5.

Freelance writers working for out-of-state clients, including one longtime local freelancer for national publications, are being informed that their clients won’t work with California freelancers anymore.

The language of the fix, brought to the board by new Chair John Haschak, reads that Mendocino County supports “cleanup legislation for AB5 that includes an exemption for government agencies, small businesses, and expanding the exemptions for journalists and photographers.”

Deputy CEO Sarah Dukett presented some background on the issue.

“A lot has come up around a bill that was passed at the end of the [state Legislative] session which is AB5,” Dukett started off. “AB5, you probably heard on the news, was originally proposed to deal with the rideshare or the gig industry, so Uber, Lyft etc., but what it does is some major changes to all freelance workers, reclassifying them as employees.

“And what’s come up is there’s going to be effect on government in terms of some of the contracts we have in place that would be considered independent contractors, that may now be re-classified as employees, but also small businesses in our community like the Willits Weekly. That bill has some exemptions for journalism and photography, but it’s very limited.... so a lot of our small papers may suffer as well as small businesses that rely on independent subcontractors,” Duckett said.

“This issue is going to be a major issue,” she continued. “I’ve reached out to our lobbyist in Sacramento, they believe there’s going to be some cleanup legislation, but this is a really, really big deal in Sacramento right now. There’s a number of lawsuits going on, as well as some of the gig industry apps, Uber/Lyft, are working on putting a ballot initiative on the ballot in November, so a lot’s really changing, and we don’t know how implementation is going to work or if there’s going to be major changes.

Supervisor John McCowen, who objected to the length of the lobbying platform and its lack of specificity, said AB5 “absolutely should be amended, it should be a top priority.”

Supervisor Haschak called a fix to AB5 “critical” to Willits Weekly. “It’s not publishing this week because of AB5 and their fear of economic viability at this point, so we need to be acting on specific things, as well as the big picture.”

Supervisors ended voting unanimously to support Mendocino County’s lobbying platform, including the additional request for a fix to AB5.

OPINION | California’s new gig worker law is disrupting the music industry and threatening all performing arts

By Brendan Rawson, Special to CalMatters

California has overreached in its effort to address the challenges in today’s tech platform gig-work economy.

The live music sector, the progenitor of the term “gig” work, is being swept up by this law. The irony would be comical if it were not such a serious problem.

There are some worthy arguments to be made for Assembly Bill 5 by Assemblywoman Lorena Gonzalez, San Diego Democrat.

It could improve the lot of workers trying to piece together a living in this expensive state. It should help capture unemployment taxes from unscrupulous employers misclassifying workers as independent contractors.

However, the law has created a tangle of red-tape and administrative expense for large portions of California’s cultural sector.

To illustrate: In 2019, San Jose Jazz presented more than 1,000 musicians across 326 different performances. The vast majority were independent musicians and singers from California, the nation, and around the world.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics defines musicians under code, 27-2042 Musicians and Singers. This is distinct from the category for Fine Artists, 27-1013 Fine Artists Including Painters, Sculptors and Illustrators.

For some big name acts, we contract with their corporate agent and pay the agency for the band’s performance. However, for most musicians, we work directly with the band leader to agree on a price and terms, providing them payment as independent contractors. They, in turn, pay their band members in accordance with IRS Schedule C filing rules.

Under AB 5, we will be required to inform all U.S.-based musicians that they must now become employees of San Jose Jazz, or incorporate themselves before they will be allowed to perform for us.

If band leaders choose to pursue incorporation,

freelancers on the payroll will up our labor costs 30 percent. With labor costs and printing costs roughly equal, and together making up by far the biggest share of expenses to put out Willits Weekly, that 30 percent increase is a significant amount.

Also, the increased liability of having employees will require Willits Weekly to incorporate, instead of operating as a simple sole proprietorship, and the increased complexity of full payroll and corporate taxes will also mean we’ll need more help to do those tasks.

Freelancing for newspapers is a time-honored occupation, and the benefits to publications and to readers go far beyond costs, including allowing for a diversity of voices and expertise brought to the table by particular freelancers with specific interests and knowledge.

Thanks to lobbying from the California News Publishers Association, AB5 gives freelance reporters, editors and photographers a partial exemption, allowing them to submit up to 35 submissions a year to any one content buyer. That arbitrary “35” figure does not much help weekly newspapers putting out 50 editions or more a year. It also equates a quick promotional story for a fundraising event to a big story for a magazine that a reporter might spend two months writing.

AB5, which was passed to codify the 2018 “Dynamex” court decision, but which critics say expands that decision and has created a number of unanswered legal questions, has impacts far beyond editorial workers. Every laborer in California is now considered an “employee” unless specifically exempted in the text of AB5.

A lawsuit filed by two national groups, the American Society of Journalists and Authors and the National Press Photographers Association, claims AB5 would unconstitutionally affect free speech and the media, and calls the 35 submission a year cap “irrational and arbitrary.”

There is an injunction hearing in that lawsuit scheduled for March 9. Willits Weekly hopes for an stay to be granted in the implementation of AB5 for editorial freelancers until the litigation is complete.

Willits Weekly cancelled our January 9 edition – the first one planned after our annual holiday break – due to fears that the onerous restrictions of the new law would make it impossible for us to continue publishing.

treatment facility. The county would be expected to provide funding from Measure B tax revenue to pay for the remodeling of the Coast District Hospital.

Wells’ letter noted that this option would be considerably cheaper than either building a new facility or remodeling the old Howard Hospital in Willits.

On Tuesday, Curtis was directed to research the legal ramifications of this proposal. Specifically, he was asked to research:

1. Is this legally consistent with the Measure B ordinance?
2. Can the county use or give Measure B Mental Health Treatment Act funds to the Adventist system to run or operate an Adventist mental health facility?
3. What kind of covenant restrictions can be imposed to ensure that it remains a mental health facility for X amount of years into the future?
4. What are the necessary controls to oversee the development and ongoing maintenance and management of the facility or facilities?
5. The hospital facility in Fort Bragg is leased. What are the additional implications, if any, to using public funds to develop a private facility that is leased?
6. What if Adventist Health goes out of business or sells to another hospital? Is there a way to protect the county’s investment?

In addition to looking into the above six questions, Curtis was directed to research requests posed by the City of Willits in a resolution passed by the Willits City Council in May 2018, relative to the potential use of the old Howard Hospital as a mental health facility.

Specifically, in Resolution 2018-30 the City of Willits requested:

1. That the City of Willits be granted the right to participate in the county’s evaluation of old Howard Hospital, as well as in the approval process for using the hospital as a PHF;
2. That the county acknowledge that the county’s right to approve and license use of the old hospital as a mental health facility would be subject to the city’s fire, safety, zoning and building ordinances and to the city’s general land use authority;
3. That before the county approves the use of any site, anywhere, as a PHF, that the county will first perform a detailed study on the financial feasibility of siting the facility in Willits; “including the likelihood and costs of attracting enough physicians and other mental health professionals to ensure that the facility is appropriately staffed by licensed professionals on a 24-hour basis;” and
4. That, prior to deciding to site the facility in Willits, “the county will first perform a detailed study on the likely and potential effects and impacts to both the City of Willits generally, and to the residents and businesses in the vicinity of the site.”

But after consulting with a number of advisors and supporters of Willits Weekly, Willits Weekly has decided to continue publishing through at least March 5. At that point, if there is no court injunction, Willits Weekly will have to decide if it’s economically feasible to continue our work.

How can you help? People ask us why we don’t sell the paper. One reason Willits Weekly started as a free circulation newspaper, with expenses paid for by advertisers (thank you!) is because buying and maintaining newspaper boxes is expensive. Boxes are routinely stolen and vandalized – not ours, because locals know there’s no money in them, but a box we placed in Ukiah was stolen within a week.

The money needs to be collected often, again due to fear of theft. And our advertisers like the free circulation – typical of an urban weekly (yes, Willits is a city) – because it helps to expand readership to those who might not normally buy a newspaper. Willits Weekly prints 4,000 editions every week.

We appreciate our subscribers, who helped us get adjudicated to run legal ads, but the costs of delivery mean regular subscription revenue is not high. What we do offer is “street subscriptions” – readers send in (PO Box 1698 in Willits) an annual amount of their choice (normal home delivery price is \$50/year), but continue to pick up Willits Weekly on the street, for free, on Thursdays, while considering themselves subscribers.

We are talking to supporters around town about other ideas to ensure Willits Weekly has enough in the bank by March so that we feel confident about entering our eighth year of publishing in a sustainable fashion. Some have suggested asking for larger “sponsorships” that would be acknowledged in the paper; others suggest we consider operating as a nonprofit, but we know the IRS is reluctant to grant nonprofit status to media outlets.

We are happy to accept any suggestions – or donations – that will help save our local community newspaper. Call Jennifer Poole at 459-2633 or Maureen Moore at 972-7047 or email us at willitsweekly@gmail.com. Thank you!

P.S.: Bill author Rep. Gonzalez has acknowledged the need for “clarification” of AB5 in this 2020 Legislative session. We’d appreciate calls to our state legislators, Assemblymember Jim Wood (916-319-2002 or 707-463-5770; assemblymember.wood@assembly.ca.gov) and state Senator Mike McGuire (916-651-4002 or 707-468-8914; senator.mcguire@senate.ca.gov), asking for an exemption to AB5 for small or micro businesses, small nonprofits, churches, and local governments, school districts, and public agencies.

to cannabis already, and that the formation of a new ad hoc committee would mean that the board of supervisors would have three ad hoc committees dedicated to cannabis issues.

The two existing ad hocs, which were formed in 2019, are the cannabis economic development ad hoc, consisting of Supervisor Williams and Fourth District Supervisor Dan Gjerde, and the cannabis cultivation ad hoc, consisting of supervisors Haschak and McCowen.

McCowen also raised the specter of the Brown Act. “To have a member from one of our local ad hocs on cultivation, and a member from the other ad hoc, who are each working with another supervisor on cannabis-related stuff, to pull one of them from each, to be on an ad hoc for the regional committee, to me instantly implicated the Brown Act,” McCowen said.

“County counsel, I believe, thinks you can draw a fine enough line to say, this is only going to be dealing with state legislation, it’s not really related, and of course, none of the four supervisors involved are going to be talking to anybody about other issues, other than what’s in that ad hoc, when they’re in that ad hoc meeting.

“We can come up with a narrative that supports that we think these are all separate ad hocs and Brown Act compliant. It’s not always that easy to convince the public,” McCowen said.

McCowen proposed to dissolve both the cultivation and the economic development ad hoc, and to create a new cannabis ad hoc, with himself and Williams as members. This new ad hoc would work with regional committee on state licensing issues as well as with county cannabis issues.

However, when Williams asked County Counsel Curtis for his recommendation on how to stay on the right side of the Brown Act, Curtis said, in his view, the board should keep the current membership of the regional ad hoc – Williams and Haschak – intact. He said that to dissolve the current regional ad hoc and to appoint a new one with different members came perilously close to having a “serial meeting” under the Brown Act.

McCowen moved his proposal, and it was seconded by Gjerde. During discussion of his motion, McCowen made it abundantly clear what the fall-out of the vote would be, should it be defeated.

“If there is a regional committee appointed, that is not the current cannabis cultivation ad hoc, I don’t see that I am participating in an ad hoc, going forward,” he said.

McCowen’s motion was defeated 2-3, with Brown, Haschak and Williams voting no. Haschak then asked for another motion, but none was forthcoming. He then used his prerogative as board chair to appoint two members to the regional ad hoc, and he appointed himself and Williams.



Above: Chris Forest talks about creating his paintings for “Poems of Life Outside the Garden.” Below: Rita and Ralph Santos study their friend Chris Forest’s art.

“Three Divergent Artists”

To each his own: Varying mediums come together for one fantastic show

An opening party for the exhibit, “Three Divergent Artists,” was held for the public on Saturday, January 4 from 6 to 8 pm at the award-winning Willits Center for the Arts.

The idea for the exhibit came to Curator Gary Martin when he wanted a collection of three dynamic artists whose experiences and art were very different from one another. “I could tell it would make a wonderful show,” he said after he chose Michael Mills, Chris Forest and Paul Reiber. From people’s responses attending the event, he was spot on.

The work of each of the three artists has been shaped by a wide range of influences throughout their lives. Some pieces reflect those influences more obviously. For others, viewers are thankful for the added clues found in the artist statements or gallery

Read the rest of **Artists** Over on Page 13



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(R) 1 hr 59 mins
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Sun/Mon: 1:25, 4:20 & 7:15pm
Tues-Thurs: 4:20 & 7:15pm



At top: Opening night at “Three Divergent Artists” drew people from different areas of the county. Above: The “Three Divergent Artists,” from left, Michael Mills, Paul Reiber and Chris Forest, take a moment to pose for the camera. Below, left: Paul Reiber’s “Boy with Rooster” is the show from the California nutmeg tree. Below, right: “The Deciduous Universe,” a painting by Chris Forest, illustrates industrialization’s effects on the natural world. Below, right, bottom: A beautiful sign made by Michael Mills is a gift for the WCA.

Photos by Ree Slocum



The rest of **Repair** From Page 2

expected to be \$40 per \$100,000 assessed value, and the phased approach enables trustees to respond to changing economic conditions to ensure that the tax rate retain \$40 per \$100,000 of assessed value.

Although \$17 million is available, the trustees do not have to use it all. For example, if state funding enabled the district to save enough money, the tax burden could go as low as \$10 per \$100,000 of assessed value. Third, current school board trustees and concerned citizens have the benefit of hindsight.

School Board President Alex Bowlds said: “With strict public oversight and experience as our guide, we will make pragmatic decisions. We will seek to hire local vendors to do the repairs, and we’ll work with community partners who have the students’ and the taxpayers’ best interests in mind. Given the condition of our schools, it would be irresponsible not to secure the funding we need to keep our schools safe and in good repair.”

Westerburg agreed and said: “We provide an excellent education for our students. While our school sites may be old, we can still be proud of them and keep them functional and attractive.”

The rest of **Artists** From Page 12

in junkyards and friends’ homes that become his “palette for these layered constructions.”

It’s difficult to believe that Mills’ “MD-FDs” is actually one of those pieces. “I found a sign in a friend’s backyard. It was bent in half, and I asked if I could have it and she gave it to me. I put it on my garage floor, and I was able to flatten it by stomping on it, and then I drove the truck back and forth across it. I got it pretty flat,” he laughed during his art talk.

Paul Reiber graduated in 1981 from the Fine Woodworking Program at the College of the Redwoods in Fort Bragg. He specialized in fabricating wooden chairs with carved embellishments. He has three of them in the show.

During the time he made furniture, Reiber’s woodworking became more carved and sculptural. He found it compelling. Many of his pieces in the show are carvings that were crafted in the past 20 years. “It’s interesting for me to see a bunch of work laid out [in this show]. It’s very interesting to see my progression,” he commented.

Because of the collection, he noticed how much grief there is in his work. “None of my figures look particularly ecstatic or happy. That’s interesting,” he said contemplatively. His adult son died a couple of years ago, and Reiber made a few pieces right after that. One is titled “What the Living Carry.”

“It’s about that weight the survivors carry,” he said. “I think, in retrospect, some of [these pieces express] environmental grief that I think we all carry, if we’re aware of it or not. Watching our world die is a sad thing.” His sculpture, “Thou Shall Not Destroy Hope,” speaks to that.

At the Chicago Art Institute, before it offered art instruction, Chris Forest was concentrating on learning all about theater. “The only art class I took there was scene design,” he laughed. For five years he was able to see all the art exhibits at the institute. It likely set the tone for his future artistic expressions.

In the 1970s Forest was inspired by the silk-screen design work of American Modernist artist Charley Harper and began creating designs of his own. At one point he and Harper were showing their work in the same gallery. “That’s where I sold hundreds of the silk-screened cards,” he said. His designs are equally as beautiful and fanciful as Harper’s and some are gracing the walls in this show.

When Forest and his wife moved to Mendocino County, he started teaching himself how to paint with acrylics. “I’m trying to de-trivialize art. Art is insipid because it’s used so widely for just about everything. You look at a sunset and say, ‘Oh, my god, it’s so beautiful!’ What they don’t say is, ‘There’s pollution that’s causing the sunset!’ You leave the dirt out of the flower, and admire the flower never thinking of the dirt. I want to introduce the dirt,” he explained.

Compelling expressions of the “dirt” are seen in his paintings that make up “Picture-Poems of Life Outside the Garden.” “The paintings that make up ‘Life Outside the Garden,’ for all their differences, spring from the same motif – the attempt to convey in broad metaphor what it feels like, to me, to be alive here and now,” he expresses in his artist’s statement.

He finishes his statement with, “Such is the topsy-turvy world explored in this exhibit, wherein I offer viewers neither fine art to be celebrated nor riddles to be solved, but only my uneasy feelings giftwrapped in the poesy of paint.”

“Three Divergent Artists” will be showing through January 31. The Willits Photo Club has new photographs on display in the upstairs gallery now through March 31. The WCA is located at 71 East Commercial Street. Hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 11 am to 5 pm.

The rest of **Gig** From Page 11

they will then need to take on the responsibility of payroll and HR administration for the rest of their band.

In many performing arts disciplines, such as jazz, musicians are constantly reconfiguring line-ups, performing as sidemen in various bands, and as one-time special guests for specific performances.

We will now be obliged to devote tremendous time and resources to constantly hiring, managing and tracking of musicians through this cumbersome process.

AB 5 unnecessarily complicates other work arrangements found in community cultural programming such as small festivals, neighborhood street fairs, parades, and summer music series in our local parks.

San Jose Jazz is best known for producing our large Summer Fest which brings tens of thousands of visitors and requires hundreds of temporary roles to execute.

The vast majority of previously contract work roles will now be required to be employees.

For instance, we are required by the City of San Jose to hire off-duty police officers through their Secondary Employment Unit program to ensure a safe and well-run festival. Under AB 5 we will be required to classify these moonlighting officers as San Jose Jazz employees with the attendant oversight and administrative requirements.

Typical of such legislation, AB 5 comes with a hefty list of exempted categories that are a Who’s Who of the politically connected and well-funded: lawyers, doctors, accountants, brokers, builders, and others.

Actors, choreographers, dancers, directors, producers,

The rest of **Election** From Page 2

major parties in California (the Democratic Party, American Independent Party, and the Libertarian Party) are allowing California’s No Party Preference voters the option to vote their party ballots if the voter chooses to do so for the Primary Election.

We mailed out postcards to all “Vote by Mail” voters registered as No Party Preference (Decline to State or Non-Partisan) in early December asking voters to return the postcard with one of the allowed party choices marked by December 27, 2019.

We have received many of the completed postcards back. If you haven’t had a chance to return the postcard yet, please do so at your earliest convenience and return it to our office; or you may call our office in lieu of returning the postcard. When you call, we will ask you to verify specific information related to your voter registration and will be able to get you one of the three party ballots.

The Republican Party, The Green Party, and Peace & Freedom Party did not choose to allow NPP voters this option. We do not know why these parties did not allow this. If NPP voters would like to vote one of these ballots, they need to re-register with that party.

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

The rest of **Tour** From Page 3

the Willits Center for the Arts where the students could see photographs created by local lens people as they listened to Willits Community Development Director Dusty Duley welcome them to the town and explain plans for the future, including strategies for new housing and employment.

He was followed by the owner of Natural Pigments, George O’Hanlon, who gave a short overview of his internationally known niche fine art paint business. Next, Noel Woodhouse of North Street Collective explained his concept of supporting artists by providing them an insular place to create, which has attracted painters, photographers and writers from all parts of the country.

The next section was “Mendocino County Tourism as an Economic Driver” with Executive Director Travis Scott and Partner Relations Director Katrina Kessen of Visit Mendocino, speaking on the various aspects and statistics of tourism in the county. Following them, Scarlett Trillia, owner and director of Red House Coworking Space, led a discussion on the difficulties of instituting cannabis tourism.

Lunch was provided at Roots Restaurant at Adventist Health Howard Memorial. The attendees expressed their enjoyment of the tasty food, much of it grown across the street at the Commonwealth Garden, and later were treated to a tour of the garden maintained by the Frank R. Howard Foundation. The tour was given by Garden Manager Mellisa Bouley.

Next up was a tour of Motive Power by co-founder Chris Baldo who explained the history and purpose of the organization and allowed the students to go through an antique caboose and other equipment.

Finally, the Willits tour ended up at the new Northspur Brewery, where attendees heard a panel about “Modern Independent Journalism” in the county, including Jennifer Poole, editor and publisher of Willits Weekly; Alicia Bales, program director at the

The rest of **WPD** From Page 4

January 3
10:26 am: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 100 block of Page Court.

7:38 pm: Officers initiated a missing person investigation in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

January 5
8:36 am: OLVERA, Areli (26) of Willits was contacted in the 1700 block of South Main Street. She was arrested pursuant to 11377 H&S (Possession of Methamphetamine), 11364 H&S (Possession of Drug Paraphernalia), and on misdemeanor charges of disobeying a court order and possession of a controlled substance.

5:04 pm: Officers initiated a missing person investigation in the 400 block of South Main Street.

6:28 pm: LOPEZ, Miguel Angel (38) of Willits was contacted in the 1700 block of South Main Street. He was arrested pursuant to 647 (F) PC (Public Intoxication) and on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (alcohol).

6:28 pm: LOPEZ, Miguel Angel (38) of Willits was contacted in the 1700 block of South Main Street. He was arrested pursuant to 647 (F) PC (Public Intoxication) and on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (alcohol).

7:18 pm: HENDRY, Jimmy Dell (70) of Willits was contacted in the 1000 block of South Main Street. He was arrested pursuant to 273.6 PC (Violation of a Protective Order).

11:33 pm: Officers initiated a missing person investigation in the 23000 block of Nutmeg Place.

January 11
12:54 pm: Officers initiated a missing person investigation in the 100 block of East Commercial Street.

3:41 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 100 block of North Main Street.

January 7
12:34 am: PEREZ, Jose Miguel (21) of Willits was contacted in the 1700 block of South Main Street. He was arrested pursuant to 647 (F) PC (Public Intoxication), 242 PC (Battery), 1203.2 PC (Violation of Probation), and on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (alcohol).

11:03 pm: TOLBERT, Anthony Daniel (31) of Laytonville was contacted in the 1400 block of South Main Street. He was arrested pursuant to 647 (F) PC (Public Intoxication) and on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (alcohol).

9:28 pm: FELTON, Myles Cameron (33) of Willits was contacted in the 100 block of Manor Way following a disturbance. He was arrested pursuant to 243 (E) (1) PC (Domestic Battery), 647 (F) PC (Public Intoxication), and on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (alcohol).

January 12
8:58 pm: Officers initiated a hit-and-run vehicle collision investigation in the 300 block of Coast Street.

KZYX radio station; and Adrian Fernandez Baumann, managing editor of the Mendocino Voice.

It was a long day, filled with vital and fascinating information about the county of Mendocino and more specifically, the town of Willits. More importantly, it was all information that could be used by the motivated future leaders to foment positive change.

“You just find out about all these little corners of the county that you might never go to,” commented Sarah Reith, news reporter at KZYX and member of the class. “I’m getting a lot out of this program, said Molly Rosenthal from Little River, who works for Healthy Mendocino. “There’s a lot of entrepreneurial spirit here. I’ve lived in the county for six years and had no idea about some of this.” Rosenthal added that she enjoys being able to make professional connections with the other students.

Debra Lennox, an architect from Comptche and president of the board at Mendocino Art Center, shared, “I love Leadership Mendocino and look forward to it every month. It’s fascinating and the people are motivated. I didn’t know half of what was here in Willits. Every month I learn something to bring back to the board.”

Imil Ferrara of Covelo has wanted to take the course for years and is participating to build relationships. “It is easier to get things done when you know people who know how to do things.”

Maureen Mulheren, Ukiah City Council member and candidate for the Second District Supervisor, commented, “I’m learning about myself and my leadership style and how to hone that to meet different demographics.”

The Leadership Mendocino program’s monthly classes are held August through May. Each year up to 30 applicants are accepted. Applications are not being accepted yet for next year’s program but for general information, visit: www.leadershipmendocino.org.

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