

Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

Donations Accepted Edition No. 391

Thursday, February 25, 2021

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Joanne Moore
Reporter
joanne@willitsweekly.com

Good work and lots of it, good deeds, a good audit that will include Pine Mountain and Ridgewood Ranch, and a new firehouse “really taking shape.”

The snow, though, did significantly increase the department's workload.

“Between 2 pm and 2 am, we ran around 35 calls,” he said. Then he proceeded to describe a particularly harrowing one in more detail.

Read more of **LLFD**
Over on Page 9

Forrest Glycer
Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

She said they were asking the Howard Hospital Foundation to sign a memorandum of understanding to hold the property and not sell it to anyone else for 90 days, while the county and the Measure B committee looked "one last time" at potentially using the old Howard building. The foundation was expected to vote on the matter Tuesday afternoon.

Read more of **Facility**
Over on Page 2



**Photos by
Maureen
Jennison**



If you have an Instagram account, you are undoubtedly aware that the time has come to enjoy Hamantaschen, the triangular, sweet-filled shortbread cookie traditionally eaten to celebrate the Jewish holiday of Purim. This year, Purim is celebrated from sundown on Thursday, February 25 through sunrise on Friday, February 26 – commemorating the triumph of

Maureen Jennison
Graphics & Photographress
maureen@willitsweekly.com

Regardless of origin, or meaning, they're just downright delicious, easy-to-make, and can offer a creative outlet for the bakers in all of us.

Shunning the traditional poppyseed, jam, date, nut and

Basically, anything triangle-shaped and eaten in late February seems to be on the right path.

Learn more at: www.myjewishlearning.com/the-nosher/what-are-hamantaschen/

By Smitten Kitchen

Direct link: <https://smittenkitchen.com/2008/03/hamantaschen/>

Ingredients:

8 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
3 ounces cream cheese at room temperature
3 tablespoons sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon orange zest
1 1/3 cups plus 4 teaspoons flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
Various fillings: jams, poppy seed (traditional) or other

Read the rest of
Cookies *Over on Page 10*



Above, from left: Adding vanilla to the eggs. Mix the eggs first for easier incorporation. Zesting an orange with a microplane takes off just the right amount. At left: The dough seemed crumbly after the flour addition. Below, from left: The best mixer to the rescue, the hand! A Mason jar lid was the perfect circle cutter and made rounds ready to fill, here with poppy seed. Varying levels of victory with cookies staying in shape, post-oven. Don't OVERFILL is sage advice.



Forrest Glycer
Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

A lot of that had to do with support for the state's Senate Bill 59, which according to its current language would extend the repeal date of state provisional cannabis licenses to July 1, 2028 for those in California. Currently provisional state licenses are set to expire on January 1, 2022.

The supervisors voted unanimously to send a letter in support of SB 59, and also voted in favor of other recommended actions regarding cannabis, including extending the county's "sunset" deadline to relocate cultivation out of certain residential zones, and to further clarify the need for applicants to meet their environmental requirements – especially

Read the rest of
Licenses
Over on Page 11

Forrest Glycer
Reporter
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During the COVID-19 update at the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors meeting Tuesday, county Public Health Officer Andy Coren said that more than 22,000 doses of vaccine have now been administered in Mendocino County, including at least 14,000 initial doses. That means that 20 percent of the county population for ages 16 and older has now been given at least one dose.

Dr. Coren said that, overall, the vaccine distribution has been going smoothly in the county “despite all the challenges,” and that he recently made the move to decrease the age from “75 and older” to “65 and older” as a criteria to have access to the COVID-19 vaccine. This “will represent another 12,830 individuals in our county,” according to Cohen.

“And this is because I got feedback from nearly

Read the rest of
Vaccines
Over on Page 11

Pg. 3

Willits Weekly's
Puzzle Page

Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword

Table with 9 columns and 9 rows for a Sudoku puzzle.

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!

FAITHFUL WORD SEARCH

Table with 20 columns and 20 rows for a word search puzzle.

Table with 5 columns and 4 rows for crossword clues.

Table with 15 columns and 15 rows for a crossword puzzle grid.

CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Ancient Persian city
- 5. Spindles
- 11. Stake
- 12. Retrain
- 16. Close by
- 17. Commercial
- 18. One who publicly announces
- 19. American ballplayer
- 24. Junior's father
- 25. Go up or climb
- 26. Concern
- 27. When you hope to get there
- 28. Iacocca and Oswald are two
- 29. Plant of the lily family
- 30. Male college organization
- 31. National capital
- 33. Raccoonlike animal
- 34. Symbols of fertility
- 38. Astronomy unit
- 39. Series of ridges in anatomy
- 40. Hebrew leader
- 43. A portent of good or evil
- 44. Supreme goddess
- 45. Gelatinous substance
- 49. Engage in a contest

- 50. Famed ballplayer Ruth
- 51. Pledge
- 53. ___, denotes past
- 54. Revival
- 56. Spanish surname
- 58. Gold
- 59. Elsa's sister
- 60. Workplace
- 63. Large quantity of something
- 64. Engraved
- 65. Discount

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Shoe
- 2. Disquiet
- 3. Posture
- 4. Large nests
- 5. Soviet 'Second Symphony' composer
- 6. Joins two pipes of different diameter
- 7. Exist
- 8. Overdose
- 9. Pleat of fabric
- 10. Predict the future
- 13. Burgeoning technology
- 14. Having made a valid will
- 15. Having no fixed course
- 20. ___ route

WILLITS POLICE DEPARTMENT
POLICE LOG

February 15 to February 21

By Danya Davis, Willits Weekly

The officers of the Willits Police Department handled 102 incidents in this seven-day reporting period.

Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

February 15

10:54 am: KNIGHT, Keegan Shea (30) of Ukiah was contacted in the 1500 block of South Main Street. He was arrested pursuant to 11351 H&S (Possession of a Controlled Substance for Sale), 11378 H&S (Possession of Methamphetamine for Sale), 11379 H&S (Sale or Transportation of Methamphetamine), 11352 H&S (Sale or Transportation of a Controlled Substance), 11375 (A) H&S (Possession for Sale of Designated Substances), 11366.8 (B) H&S (Use of a False Compartment to Conceal), 3454 PC (Flash Incarceration), 496 PC (Receiving Stolen Property), and on felony charges of possession of ammo by a prohibited person, and violation of probation.



Keegan Knight of Ukiah.

6:02 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity near the intersection of Alder Court and Alder Lane.

February 16

1:36 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 400 block of East Hill Road.

9:38 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 300 block of Robert Drive.

11:06 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 600 block of Redwood Avenue.

February 17

1:25 am: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 700 block of South Main Street.

10:00 am: Officers responded to a report of harassment in the 100 block of Harms Lane.

11:22 am: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 100 block of Creekside Court.

6:40 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 1700 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

7:50 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 100 block of Williams Street.

11:30 pm: LINDECARNES, Kolton Hunter (29) of Willits and HAMILTON, Andrew Gene (22) of Willits were contacted in the 100 block of Barbara Lane. Lindecarnes was arrested pursuant to 23152 (A) VC (Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol) and 23152 (B) VC (Driving with a Blood Alcohol Content of 0.08 % or Higher). Hamilton was arrested pursuant to 647 (F) PC (Public Intoxication) and on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (alcohol).

February 18

12:59 pm: Officers responded to a report of threats in the 100 block of Bush Street.

County hires interim public health director

Submitted by the Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency

The Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency announced the appointment of an interim public health director on February 17.

Mary Alice Willeford, a longtime Mendocino County employee, recently accepted the position. Willeford has been a county employee for 19 years, notes Dr. Jenine Miller, Mendocino County Health and Human Services director, OOC. Willeford has worked at the Public Health Department for the past six years.

"Mary Alice brings over 30 years of fiscal and administrative expertise to her new position. She possesses wide-ranging skills from her many years working in Public Health, as well as nearly two decades working in other county positions," says Dr. Miller.

"Over the last 19 years, I have had the pleasure of working for Mendocino County in two health service departments. I am dedicated to providing services to our community and I'm excited to be part of the Public Health team in this new role. I believe my experience in administration, fiscal, and program management will bring a fresh perspective to the department," says Willeford.

Dr. Andy Coren remains the public health officer for Mendocino County.

Dr. Miller agrees Willeford's multifaceted administrative background will be a boon for Public Health.

"There is a notion that a director of Public Health should always be a nurse or a doctor," Miller explains. "However, it is a county's director of nursing and public health officer that possess the medical knowledge necessary for guiding and supervising medical staff, as that is their primary area of expertise.

"Public Health departments depend on strong administrators to help all our

5:18 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity near the intersection of Locust Street and Hazel Street.

February 19

12:58 am: Officers responded to a report of threats in the 100 block of East Commercial Street.

7:44 am: Officers responded to a report of illegal camping in the 200 block of East Hill Road.

10:35 am: Officers initiated a missing person investigation in the 200 block of Madden Lane.

3:52 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 300 block of Creekside Drive.

8:59 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 700 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

9:02 pm: Officers responded to a report of illegal camping near the intersection of East Hill Road and Haehl Creek Drive.

9:33 pm: Officers initiated a missing person investigation in the 400 block of East Valley Street.

10:13 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of Manor Way.

11:11 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 100 block of Pearl Street.

February 20

12:34 am: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of School Street.

1:38 pm: Officers responded to a report of illegal camping in the 400 block of East Hill Road.

2:00 pm: Officers initiated a fraud investigation in the 300 block of Redwood Avenue.

7:48 pm: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 400 block of East Valley Street.

February 21

10:54 am: Officers initiated a burglary investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

1:41 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 1600 block of Elm Lane.

3:28 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 1400 block of South Main Street.

4:59 pm: Officers responded to a report of harassment in the 1600 block of Elm Lane.

5:14 pm: MCBRIDE, Michael Barry (30) of Willits was contacted in the 100 block of Barbara lane following a report of an assault. He was arrested pursuant to 245 PC (Assault with a Deadly Weapon), and on misdemeanor charges of possession of a controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia.

10:15 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 300 block of Laurel Street.



Above, left: Daisy Ellsworth, RN administers a COVID-19 vaccine to a patient. Above, right: Another local gets "the jab" during an Adventist vaccination clinic.



STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINES
Daisy Ellsworth, RN, cares for patients, volunteers for COVID clinics

Submitted by Adventist Health Howard Memorial

We continue with sharing our Adventist Health team's stories in our response to this pandemic. We're sharing another view from the frontlines, as our team continues to fight this pandemic on two fronts – caring for patients with COVID-19 as well as pivoting toward protecting the community through our vaccination efforts. Daisy Ellsworth, RN is now fighting the pandemic on both fronts, having cared for COVID patients and now helping in our vaccination efforts.

Ellsworth has been a member of our Howard family for over 13 years. On a normal workday, Ellsworth's day job is caring for patients in the hospital, helping patients recover. During her days off, however, you can find Ellsworth on the other side of the frontlines, helping during our vaccination clinics.

One clinic was held on Valentine's Day and Ellsworth wore her red scrubs to mark the occasion. "It's all about love and I'm doing this because I love our community and my job," she said.

As someone who has cared for COVID patients, Ellsworth knows firsthand why this is so important. "I volunteered because I really want everyone to get vaccinated. The sooner we get this done, the sooner we will have less people who come down with it or die from it. I've cared for COVID patients and I've seen how hard it is for them and for their families. It's sad and it's hard. Anything I can do to help protect our community from having to deal with that, I'll do it."

To Ellsworth, every vaccine represents a light at the end of the tunnel, a step closer to ending this pandemic. As she administers her last shot of the day, you wouldn't know that she has been doing it for 6 hours. She gives the same care, the same compassion and the same smile as she had for the first one. "It's fun," she said, "and I love seeing everyone, including patients I've taken care of. I will keep doing this for our community."

Thank you, Daisy and to all our teams who are continuing to care for patients during this pandemic, but also helping to vaccinate so many to bring us closer to ending this challenge. We are forever grateful for your courage and dedication.

COVID- 19 VACCINE INFORMATION

How to sign up

Due to the limited supplies, we are still following state and local public health guidelines on prioritizing those in the higher tiers and are able to vaccinate persons who are 65 and above. If you are eligible, please make sure to sign up for notifications from Adventist Health about vaccine

Advertisement for Restaurant El Mexicano featuring enchiladas and street tacos.

Advertisements for John Ford Ranch and Bud Garman Construction Services, Inc.

Advertisement for Willits Center for the Arts featuring Jeanne Jesse and Laura Corbin.

Advertisement for C Browns Corner featuring beer, wine, gas, and diesel.

Advertisement for Maureen 'Mo' Combs-Steffens featuring her life story and family.

interesting objects mixed in with the organic waste.

“Your imagination cannot capture all that we find in the green waste. What we mostly find are children’s toys. They seem to end up in the yard and then into the yard waste. There is no toy store that carries the variety of toys that we find in the green waste,” mused Mileck. “I used to bring them home for my kids until they started smelling them. Then they figured out where they came from and didn’t want them so much.”

After the green waste is picked through, it goes into the grinder. “We then mix the ground material with 25-percent chicken manure and chicken parts. We mix it together and then we put it into these aerated static piles. The pumps, which we build in-house, pump air through the pipes and into the pile. We’re always building on the freshest part of the pile and taking away from the oldest part. These piles are constantly moving.

“Then we take the material,” he continued, “and put it under the roof where we have total control of the moisture, during which process we break up the pockets and mix it up. The material stays in the aerobic piles for about two months and then under the roof for about three or four weeks. After that, we put it through the screen which separates out anything under 3/4 [of an inch]. The parts that are larger go right back into the system, which serves to ‘inoculate’ the material.”

Although Mileck’s product is only sold to dealers who bag the compost for retail sales, the product is totally certified for use in organic farms by the California Department of Food and Agriculture. Cold Creek Composting donates a lot of its product to local gardens such as those at Adventist Health Howard Hospital and the Willits Harrah Senior Center.

Cold Creek Compost maintains a symbiotic relationship with Mendocino County. “The State of California found me and asked me to build a permitted facility,” Mileck said. “It was a huge undertaking. Then the City of Ukiah got on board and wanted me to do it so they could comply with state regulations. Masonite jumped in too because they needed a place to dump their ash. At one point, we were the largest recycler of power-plant ash in the north state. We’ve changed since then. Now we don’t only do agricultural material. We take in municipal waste too.” The facility recycles all but 1 percent of the materials it takes in.



Above, from left: Coach Mattie Owen takes the temperatures of all the team swimmers. The butterfly is one of the most difficult strokes to master. It is cold and foggy as the swim team works out at 7:30 am.



Back in the Water

Willits High School Swim Team begins practicing – just for fun, since they most likely will not compete this year

All dressed up (in swim attire) and nowhere to go. The Willits High School Swim Team, under the direction of Coach Mattie Owen is an exercise in esoteric fitness. “We’re not going to have any meets this year as of this time,” Owen explained. “We have a coaches’ meeting this Wednesday about it but with county regulations, we may not be able to do it this year. A lot of the other swim teams that we usually swim against are out of Mendocino County and regulations say you can’t cross county lines for sports. So, as of right now, we’re just conditioning, which we do three times a week for an hour.”

In the cold (35 degree) morning air, the fog from the rising steam in the pool obscured the view of those hearty high schoolers who were practicing their form and conditioning their bodies merely for the pure joy of doing the best they could. They were there to learn to be the best swimmers that they could be without having to prove themselves to anyone but themselves.

Warmups consisted of 500 meters (20 lengths of the pool) at an easy pace, after which, Coach Owen ran them through drills consisting of the four basic competitive strokes: freestyle, back stroke, breast stroke, and butterfly. After having to leave the pool to dive off the blocks to practice their competition starts in the cold air, the 85-degree pool felt warm and they were glad

to return to the warmth. The afternoon swim crew of beginner and intermediate swimmers was treated to 60-degree weather. The two groups were broken up in order to be able to observe COVID-19 protocols.

“We feel safe,” said Willow Daun-Widner, who is the Monday-morning pool manager and a swim team member. “We’re literally swimming in disinfectant.” In addition to which, they stayed in their lanes and “we have proper COVID protocols,” added Owen. “I’m the only coach on deck. I keep my distance. The kids keep their masks on when they’re on the pool deck. They remove the masks when they get into the water which is heavily chlorinated. Everything is being disinfected constantly. The reason I have two different groups is so I can split everyone up into their single lanes, so they’re keeping their distance.”

Monday and Wednesday mornings from 6 to about 7:30 am, the pool is open for people to swim laps. The \$5 entry fee goes toward equipment for the swim team: swim caps, goggles, flags, and other necessary items.

Owen hopes to be able to run her water aerobics classes in the summer, which is a very popular activity for seniors and others looking for a low-impact workout. She should be able to offer swim lessons while observing distancing and other protocols.



Cheerful Tessa

Hey you! Get closer and I will tell you a little secret. This girl is as sweet as pancakes topped with sweet maple syrup. Tessa is a mixed-breed low rider that has the cutest personality. She is a mellow dog who is easy to take out for walks and has great indoor manners. This cheerful and enjoyable dog appreciates a good game of toss and catch – tennis balls being her personal favorite! Tessa is a sweet, good-natured dog who is very social with people. She is 2 years old and weighs 69 pounds.

For more about Tessa or to see the Mendocino County Animal Shelter’s canine and feline guests, and for information about services, programs, events and updates about COVID-19 and the inland shelter, located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah, visit: www.mendocinanimalshelter.com. For information about adoptions, please call 707-467-6453.



Loving seniors Ally McBeal and Skipper

Meet Ally McBeal and Skipper! Ally McBeal is a female medium-breed gal who is 12 years old and Skipper is 14-year-old fox-terrier male. Skipper and Ally McBeal lived a long life in a home with their favorite human, but tragically their owner recently passed away. These two senior dogs have now found themselves homeless and we desperately want to fix that! These two may be up there in age but they still have a lot of love to give. They are a bonded pair that we are requesting stay together. They are going to be getting a clean bill of health at our vet and we are currently accepting applications for Ally McBeal and Skipper. You may apply at www.mendohumanesociety.com.



The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County, 9700 Uva Drive in Redwood Valley, is open Wednesday through Friday from 1 to 5 pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 11 am to 3 pm, by appointment only, for intakes, adoptions and fostering. For information or any questions, call 707-485-0123 or, for cats, you may email catteam@hsmc.org and, for dogs, you may email dogteam@hsmc.org. Visit www.petfinder.com or the “Humane Society for Mendocino County” page on Facebook to see available dogs and cats, visit www.mendohumanesociety.com to learn more.

At left, top: Coach Mattie Owen gives instructions to the afternoon group.

At left, center: The team practices diving off the starting blocks.

At left: Willow Daun-Widner works on her breast stroke.

At far left: The morning team is divided into two groups to allow distancing.

Photos by Mathew Caine

Randy Cantua
Insurance Agent
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Awana: Tuesday, 6:15 p.m.
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www.eckankar.org

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St. John Lutheran Church
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ALL ARE WELCOME

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Facebook: www.facebook.com

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



Above: Sally Rulison and Keith Monroe describe to Robin Pilatti, right, the three different varieties of squash seeds they brought to the event.

At far left: The Little Lake Grange parking lot is bustling with enthusiastic gardeners by 12:30 pm. At left: Joselyn passes out seeds with her grandmother, Barbie Svendsen, who is a Little Lake Grange member and usually coordinates the Sunday Grange Breakfast.

Below: This sign announces the seed-sharing event at the Willits Little Lake Grange, formerly the Willits High School.

Information about granges and the seed-sharing events was available inside the Little Lake Grange.

Thallia Bird wears a necklace of wild rose hips she collected along Sherwood Road.

Seed Sharing

Around 200 people visit Little Lake Grange on Saturday to pick up free locally grown and naturalized seeds

Warm weather and sunny skies helped make last Saturday's seed sharing a well-attended and successful event for veteran and novice gardeners. Around 200 people browsed through to shop for free seed at the Little Lake Grange's parking lot from noon to 3 pm. They were there to pick up locally grown and naturalized seeds for Willits' diverse ecosystems and talk with noted local experts about the seeds they were giving away.

Ree Slocum
Features Writer
willitsweekly@gmail.com

Patricia Kovner, a longtime gardener from Laytonville, said she was there to talk with Jamie Chevalier, Donna d'Terra and others about their seeds. "These people are gold mines of information and they're all here together, today, and we get to be outside so, of course I'm going to be here!"

This reporter mingled around the tables and displays – some brimming with seeds and seed packets – and recorded a few conversations between gardeners giving away seeds and those receiving them. The wealth of information became apparent.

Donna d'Terra, one of the county's revered herbalist teachers, told one participant: "I use boneset to reduce flu symptoms at the very beginning when your teeth and everything hurts. And some herbalists say boneset can be used to help mend broken bones." d'Terra continued answering questions about other herbs from her collection.

Octogenarian and avid seed saver, Jane Evans, lives

outside of Laytonville. She's gained a reputation over the years for her passion to save endangered seeds – ones that are nearly extinct. She brought her table with information and lots of seeds from her seed library. "My hobby is saving rare seeds that are dying out. We're losing seeds! I want to bring them back and keep them in our gene pool," she emphasized.

Sally Rulison grows a variety of squashes that have naturalized to her unique climate on the top of Sherwood Road out of Willits. She talked about one of her favorites: "I got the original Sweet Greek winter squash seeds about eight years ago from Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds and I've been growing them from my own seed since then. Somebody said it's really hard to save winter squash seeds but we've been successful all this time and they always come out looking and tasting good," she said.

Rulison also dates each squash she harvests. "They sort of lose their sweetness. So I wait a month for them to cure, when they're at their peak. Then we start eating them. As time goes on, they get less sweet."

Jamie Chevalier, owner of Quail Seeds, talked with gardener Karina McAbee and informed: "Plants all have different scents to their leaves and they put out their fragrance. Those terpene [scent] molecules call to the other plants. 'Hey, I'm here!' Then the other plants put out their scent. It's how plants talk to each other and it makes the plants in

Read the rest of
Seeds
Over on Page 9



Far left: Many varieties of unusual and usual herb seeds are found on Donna d'Terra's table. At left: Gardener and goat-herder Sara Grusky passes out a variety of seeds, including unusual varieties of corn, from Green Uprising Farm.



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More of **LLFD** From Page 1

fire department responded to it along with ambulance, Sheriff's Office, and Fish and Game.

"Quickly, the conditions up there changed," he continued. "We had trees down, power lines down, bunches of snow, and it was turning into ice.

"Eventually, we had to make a decision to leave our vehicles up there.... Search and Rescue brought their Arctic Cat and each of us came down three at a time, and we got off the hill," he said. "It was a little scary situation, but we all got out OK."

The night, however, was young. "We got down into town, and calls were pouring in left and right," he said. "I'm very proud of this department. We stepped it up. We were here until about 2 o'clock in the morning. A couple just stayed the night waiting for calls."

In fact, it was so busy county-wide, that dispatch at Howard Forest had to shift local calls coming in to a "branch director" at the fire department.

"Basically Howard Forest gets overwhelmed, and they just shift all the calls to you, and it's up to your department to decide where you send your apparatus, and what order you're going to send it in," said Wilkes. "When you become branch director, it's your job to triage those calls as they come in."

Wilkes was at a training in Sacramento when the snowstorm hit, so Howard Forest designated Deputy Chief John Thomen as branch director.

"John was handling that from his cell phone," said Wilkes. "It takes experienced and trained personnel to do that correctly.... John pulled that off."

Dispatch being handled by Howard Forest is relatively new for the department, and Wilkes reported that it's going "well. So far it's been really good.

"Our folks only have to respond on one channel," he said. "As a duty officer, we only have to carry a pager. We're not carrying around a great big radio monitoring the channel. You just wait for your tone to go off.

"There are some bumps in the road, some challenges," he said. "It's a little harder as duty officers in the sense that things that we took for granted like dispatch calling you on the phone and saying 'Hey, can you come over here and do this quick smoke check?' It doesn't really happen that way through Howard Forest. But we figured it out."

And sometimes Howard Forest dispatch has nothing to do with people in need getting help when they get it from Willits' firefighters.

For example, firefighters weren't the only ones who stayed the night at the firehouse during the recent snowstorm.

Board member Tony Madrigal told his colleagues that three people, who "had no place to go," spent the night on cots in the apparatus bays.

"They tried to go to the Red Cross, and that didn't work," he said. "Then the firefighters pitched in.... They wanted to [pay for] a room, but there were no rooms to be had in Willits. "You can't just leave those people here at the station by themselves," he continued. "So we had three, John Thomen, Eric Alvarez, and Aaron Branscomb, stay and spend the night.

"I want to again thank our firefighters for what they do," said Madrigal. "We really do look out for our people."

Wilkes also had a story for the board of another firefighter going above and beyond in the helping department.

He read a letter to the board from an appreciative woman who had been helped by a man she called an "angel named Abraham."

The writer had been on her way south, had vehicle troubles, and had to leave her car in Willits for two weeks. When she came back "with a car haul trailer to pick up my car," Abraham helped her get the right tie downs and "tied down my car for me.

"He didn't have to. He wanted to. He wanted myself and my 13-year-old grandson to be safe," she wrote. "I tried to pay [him] for helping us, and he refused.... You have an incredible man in Willits."

"We know him as [volunteer] Abe Lozoff, and I've talked to him about it," said Wilkes. "You know, these are the kinds of things that we do ... helping our community. I think it was an extremely nice act, and I think any of our folks would do the same thing."

Little Lake Fire is also trying to help the larger community by "including the Pine Mountain Water District ... [and] Ridgewood Ranch ... into our ISO [Insurance Services Office] rating," Wilkes told the board.

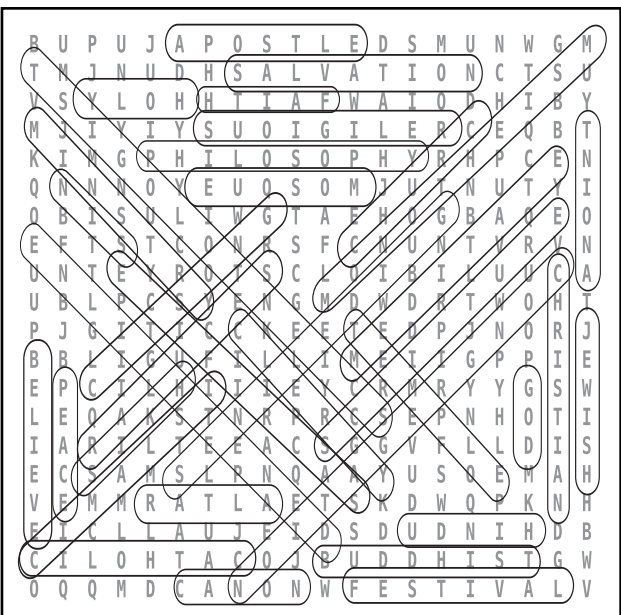
That rating is a score from 1 to 10 based on an exhaustive, highly detailed audit that indicates how well-equipped a department is to put out fires.

The lower the number the better the rating. And the lower the rating, the higher the probability of getting fire insurance and getting it at a good rate.

Wilkes told the board that Little Lake had "finished all the paperwork" for the department's audit. And, at their last meeting, he told them that they had a rating of 3, which is excellent.

"We are trying to include the Pine Mountain Water District

Read the rest of
LLFD Over on Page 10



LEGAL NOTICES

WW306 Fictitious Business Name Statement 2021-F0035

The following persons are doing business as The Woodrose, 1540 South Main Street, Willits, CA 95490.

Registered owners: Dipchand Shah and Varsha Shah, 1119 South Main Street, Willits, CA 95490.

This business is conducted by a general partnership.

The registrants commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A.

FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on January 28, 2021.

/s/ Dipchand Shah
Publication dates: 02/11, 02/18, 02/25 and 03/04/2021

WW309 Fictitious Business Name Statement 2021-F0058

The following person is doing business as KGM Glass, 1260 North Main Street, #3, Fort Bragg, CA 95437.

Registered owner: Kevin Greer Minard, 31000 Camp One Ten Mile Road #C, Fort Bragg, CA 95437.

This business is conducted by an individual.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A.

FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on February 4, 2021.

/s/ Kevin Minard
Publication dates: 2/18, 2/25, 3/04 and 3/11/2021

WW307
**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF MENDOCINO**

Filed February 4, 2021
CASE NUMBER SCUCVCPT 21-75071
ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

Petitioner **Antonio Ramirez Madrigal**, aka Antonie Ramirez Madrigal filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

**Antonio Ramirez Madrigal to Tony Madrigal
Antonio Ramirez Madrigal to Tony Madrigal**

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING
Date: March 19, 2021, Time: 9:30 a.m., Dept. E
Superior Court of California, County of Mendocino
100 North State Street, Ukiah, CA 95482
Date: 02/04/21
Publication Dates: February 18, 25, March 4, 11, 2021



The rest of
Seeds
From Page 8

your garden make more flavor molecules."

Claudia Wenning is a traditional naturopath and functional medicine practitioner. "It covers the broad complementary approach to health care," she informed. She also said, "My true love, actually, is growing herbs and turning them into remedies. Nature is our ally. It's up to us if we decide to ask nature to help us come back into balance." Wenning said that it's one of her objectives when helping people.

Little Lake Grange President Annie Waters said about this and the other seed-sharing events in the county, "What this is about is the community creating their own food supply. It's really a farmers market for free seeds," she laughed. "One of our hopes with this program is for the granges to not become a relic of the past. Granges need to be relevant, be more resilient and interactive with the community's true needs in this time."

Some of this was echoed by Redwood Valley Grange President Jini Reynolds, who was handing out seeds and later said, "Our hope for the national granges for this year is that seed saving will spread across the nation. We will share the importance of people knowing their area and what grows well there. It's victory garden time!"

Most of the seeds at all the Mendocino County seed-sharing events were provided by Matt Drewno, head gardener for the Stanford Inn & Resort on the Mendocino Coast, where produce grown in the garden graces many

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5	2	1	9	6	7	8	4	3
8	1	9	7	2	5	3	6	4
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Freezer Empty? We can help!
Due to health concerns in Mendocino County, John Ford Ranch will be taking meat box orders (not individual package orders) for pick-up: Rancher's Choice Box - 50 pounds: steaks, roasts, and ground beef. Still \$325 (\$6.50 per pound). Hamburger Box: 25 pound box of hamburger in 1 or 1.5 pound packages: \$150. Natural ranch-raised grass fed beef, no hormones or antibiotics. Call 459-5193 to arrange pick-up. Leave a message, and we'll call back.

Stay Safe
I'll be back to help you with your Alterations and Sewing Needs when it is safe to do so.
Barbara the Seamstress

Willits Food Bank Open
Willits Community Services & Food Bank continues to distribute food, following COVID-19 safety provisions, to hungry families and individuals in the Willits area, with an increase in numbers served. The front office at 229 E San Francisco Ave is closed to the public, but the back door area is open for food distribution on Wednesdays and Fridays from 1 to 4:30 pm. Info: 459-3333; financial donations to WCS can be mailed to 229 E. San Francisco, Willits CA 95490.

Help Wanted
Willits Weekly needs another part-time news reporter. News training or experience preferred, but not required. Hours are flexible depending on interest. Email a note or a resume to willitsweekly@gmail.com.

Help Wanted
Willits Senior Center Outreach Worker. Preference Bilingual. Assist Seniors in Obtaining Services. \$13.50 Hour. 32 Hours Weekly. This is a "learn as you earn" entry-level position. Call: 459-6826.

Classified ads are just \$10 for 30 words for 2 weeks! Deadline is every Monday!

plates and recipes at the inn's Ravens Restaurant. The inn's garden is a biointensive research garden – part of Ecology Action. Drewno not only grows the plants with everything that implies, he also cleans, packages, catalogues and distributes the high-quality seeds that are naturalized for the coast.

Many gardeners took seeds grown in different climates to try growing in their own areas. They have successes and enjoy experimenting. "It gives us more diversity when local seeds are spread into different communities," commented Waters in a text. "This will increase our food security into the future."

Did you miss out on this event? Would you like some seeds? All of the seeds after the seed-sharing events were sent to the Yokayo Seed Project's Seed Lending Library in Ukiah. If you do take seeds and grow the plants, they ask that you let some go to seed and give them back to the seed bank for other gardeners. Follow the protocols in the following website and bring them back to the seed bank. For more information, visit www.mendolib.org or call 707-463-4490.

You can order seeds online from North Coast Opportunities Gardens Project Seed Library. They ask for a donation to pay for handling and shipping fees.

For more information about rare seeds, contact Jane Evans at 707-272-4009.

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into the ISO rating to see if we can get some kind of a different rating up there for those folks because it's so hard to get fire insurance up there," said Wilkes.

"We're working on getting that in the ISO package and to see if it's a benefit or not a benefit, and they're working with us on that.

"And we're doing the same sort of thing with Ridgewood Ranch because we provide service down there," he said. "They basically have a firehouse substation for us.... They respond to our calls. They have a water system, and they have some commercial business down there. So we're certainly trying to see if we can't help them a little bit too.

"It's some additional paperwork, but it's the least we can do for how much they benefit us ... with calls on the Ridge and vegetation fires, vehicle accidents ... anything we need. They come up and train with us. They respond with us. It's a really good relationship right now."

Really good also describes the progress being made on the new firehouse.

"It's really taking shape ... going really well," said Wilkes. "Things are moving fast.... Most of the trades are in the same place at the same time. It seems like a very coordinated effort.

"There is siding on the apparatus bay ... that's the [red] color the firehouse is going to be. It looks really, really good."

He ended his report to the board, saying: "Everything is going really well."

Haschak agreed the county needs to help come up with a "strategic plan" soon, and said that he and Williams, who sit on the Measure B ad-hoc committee, along with others have been "gathering information" from other counties and cities to help come up with the best plan.

"With the city of Willits and the residents in that area, they want information," he said. "And so I think right now we need to get the information out to the people in Willits. If there's other options besides the old Howard Hospital we need to be looking at those too, but being on the ad-hoc with Supervisor Williams, we haven't found any other real viable options at this point. So if someone can come up with a site and a plan that works economically and socially and everything for what we're trying to do with the Measure B money and this PHF, bring it forth. I think we're open for ideas."

departments best serve our community. Mary Alice's breadth of experience is the perfect match for what we need to augment the team."

Dr. Miller will work with Public Health to supervise Willeford, who began her duties on February 21, 2021.

Directions:

Cream butter and cream cheese together until smooth. Add sugar and mix for one minute longer, then add egg, vanilla extract, orange zest and salt, mixing until combined. Finally, add the flour. The mixture should come together and be a tad sticky. If it feels too wet, add an additional tablespoon of flour.

Form dough into a disc, wrap in plastic, and refrigerate for at least an hour.

Preheat oven to 350°F.

To form the hamantaschen, roll out the dough on a well-floured surface until it is about 1/4-inch thick. Using a round cookie cutter (3 inches is traditional) cut the dough into circles. Spoon a teaspoon of your filling of choice in the center. Fold the dough in from three sides and firmly crimp the corners and give them a little twist to ensure they stay closed. Leave the filling mostly open in the center.

Bake on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper and bake until golden brown, about 20 minutes.

Cool on racks. "Resist the urge to try a still-hot one unless a jam-burnt tongue is as much of your Purim tradition as are these cookies," Smitten Kitchen jokes.

Here's another bonus citrusy recipe which is also perfect to enjoy at this height-of-citrus time:

Lemon Buttermilk Cake

By Dianne Rossmando, Baking at Home with the Culinary Institute of America / The Culinary Institute of America

Direct link: <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/lemon-buttermilk-cake-51113420>

Ingredients

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, plus more for greasing, at room temperature
1 3/4 cups sugar
2 2/3 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 1/4 cups buttermilk
1 tablespoon lemon zest
5 tablespoons lemon juice
4 large eggs, at room temperature
3/4 cup confectioners' sugar, plus more as needed

Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Generously grease and flour a 9-inch Bundt pan or line 36 muffin tins with paper liners.
2. In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, combine the butter and sugar and beat on medium speed until the mixture is smooth and light in texture, about 5 minutes. While the butter is beating, sift together the flour, baking soda, and salt, and set aside. In a small bowl, combine the buttermilk, lemon zest, and 4 tablespoons of the lemon juice and set aside.
3. Add the eggs to the butter-sugar mixture, one at a time, beating well and scraping down the bowl after each addition. In three additions, alternate adding the sifted dry ingredients and the wet ingredients to the butter-sugar mixture, stirring on low until just incorporated.
4. Pour the batter into the prepared Bundt pan or fill each muffin cup two-thirds full with batter. Bake until the center of cake springs back when touched and a skewer inserted near the center comes out clean, 1 hour to 1 hour and 15 minutes. Bake cupcakes until they rise in a dome shape and spring back when lightly pressed with a fingertip, 16 to 20 minutes.
5. Remove the cake from the oven and let cool completely in the pan on a wire rack. Release the sides and bottom of the cake from the pan with a narrow metal spatula or knife. Invert the pan and turn out the cake.

Place a wire rack in a baking pan and set the cake, right side up, on the rack.

6. In a small bowl, combine the confectioner's sugar, the remaining 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and 1 tablespoon cold water, and stir until very smooth. Add a little more confectioners' sugar or water as necessary to achieve a glaze consistency (similar to that of honey). Spoon the glaze

evenly over the cake. When the glaze has firmed, transfer the cake to a plate. Slice and serve at room temperature.

Above: The lemon buttermilk cake was a perfect morning treat for breakfast, along with a hope-yours-can-be-more-caffinated-than-mine cup of coffee. Have any Pye in the Skye pottery collecting dust? It's my favorite – and I'd love more! Email me!

Photo by Maureen Jennison

the "Sensitive Species Habitat Review" which has been a sticking point as of late.

If passed, SB 59 could give quite a bit more time for the approximately 1,100 applicants currently in the Phase 1 permitting process in Mendocino County, so long as they continue to show that they are making progress towards coming into full alignment with both county and state regulations, including the California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA, rules.

The bill is currently "working its way through committees at the state level" according to Fifth District Supervisor Ted Williams, a member of the cannabis ad hoc committee for the county.

Third District Supervisor John Haschak, the second member of the cannabis ad hoc, added that "there's going to have to be negotiations on it in the legislature" before it is approved.

"[California Department of Food and Agriculture] has over 5,000 provisional licenses," said Haschak. "Mendocino County has about 700 of those, and CDFA recognizes that they won't be able to complete all those in the existing timeline before January 1st, 2022. And so they want an extension, too, whether it's six years or two years."

"We understand this wouldn't be a blanket provision," said Williams. "We wouldn't just get another couple years. Applicants would be required to continually show progress, perhaps every quarter. But given the state of the county's permitting and the state licensing, it's clear that neither county nor state will be able to get the work done in time."

"[SB 59] really is the hope for us to continue the transition from the illegal market to a responsible regulated market," Williams continued. "I know that some people believe that SB 59 doesn't go far enough towards addressing the underlying CEQA problems. We don't want to get into that. We feel that trying to tie other needed changes to this request for extension could sink the extension, and more than anything we need time."

It was a shift in tone from Williams compared to the February 9 supervisors meeting, when he declared that the county's cannabis ordinance effectively had "stage 4 cancer," and that "we know this thing is going to die, it's just a matter of when and why, and how long we can keep it supported."

At that meeting Williams repeatedly said the county had a "bad ordinance" which didn't properly prepare applicants to be able to get their state license. He then estimated that at least 90 percent of applicants in the county wouldn't get their state license before January 1, and would be on the brink of either having to stop operations or going back to becoming "outlaws."

Williams still warned at the meeting last Tuesday that based on "the quality of applications" many applicants in the county may not be able to meet state requirements.

"There's really no way for staff to look at the application and know with certainty how the state will process it," said Williams. "We're only making a guess. What we know is if the project description doesn't describe all development on the parcel, it's very likely that it will be rejected by the state and there won't be another attempt."

"Staff has pointed out their best guess – 75 percent of the applications may be very low quality and may not pass," Williams continued. "We would rather ask applicants to carefully reconsider their application – to perfect it, resubmit it 100 percent complete because we don't want to see them fail.... As I understand it, if they're not successful, they're out of Phase 1, and there's no re-entry to Phase 1, so they may be waiting to go through Phase 3, and that could be a very long wait."

Haschak said they have been sending out "correction letters" to applicants asking them to fix certain elements of their application, but Williams said that since time and resources are so limited for the county, this sort of back-and-forth approach likely wouldn't continue.

Williams suggested that applicants thoroughly look over their application to make sure it is accurate and complete before submitting it, to give themselves the best chance of moving forward.

Julia Acker Krog, the assistant director for the county cannabis program, said that they had put together a pool of consultants for applicants to potentially use to help them with their process, and to help show proof of progress towards getting a state license.

"The county is not vetting or approving or condoning these consultants," she said. "We're providing a sort of repository for these consultants to be able to connect with the cultivators and be able to review some of their

past work and their statement of qualifications."

Williams pointed out that applicants didn't necessarily have to use one of those consultants, or any consultant at all if they chose not to.

He said that the date extension for people relocating out of "sunset" zones that they were asking the board to approve was intended to fix a contradiction in the dates previously laid out by the county.

"This is simply when the board took action previously there were two dates in our code," he said. "We only changed one of them so in effect we told cultivators that they need to relocate by a certain date, but then we didn't change the date that allows them to relocate so they're effectively trapped. They're in an area that has been deemed inappropriate for cultivation, but they're actually not allowed to transfer out. And so we're hoping this won't be seen as a controversial change. And I would argue that it was almost a clerical error, that I think the board intended to shift both dates previously."

As for the Sensitive Species and Habitat Review, Williams suggested that the county had been applying it too broadly, which had been slowing down the permitting process.

"The [SSHR] that we've been struggling with for a lengthy period of time now is a mitigation effort that only applies to new non-contiguous development," he said. "And we seem to be applying it much broader than it was ever intended. And as a result we're looking at the half-million dollars to pay Fish and Wildlife biologists. We're looking at a potential six-month to a year process that extends beyond the state's provisional sunset. And we're just creating a hurdle that was not envisioned by the [mitigated negative declaration]."

"And so we're asking the board to provide clarity to staff that we want to follow what was in the MND literally," he continued, "meaning existing cultivation efforts do not need an SSHR. New expansion that's contiguous does not need an SSHR. New development that is non-contiguous would be subject to this SSHR. So we would keep the contract with CDFW moving – we would still need those biologists. But it would be a much smaller pool that we would need to process and we may have some hope of getting through it this year."

Much of the discussion that followed focused on what the definition of "contiguous" would be for the county, since contiguous development would not be subject to the SSHR.

First District Supervisor Glenn McGourty, who has worked in the wine industry for many years, first suggested that within "line of sight" of previous development on a parcel might be a good criteria. But after hearing from the Planning and Building staff – who currently are in charge of cannabis permitting activity – and others, the board seemed to lean more towards a firmer definition of 1,000 feet from any previous development on the parcel owned by the applicant. The cannabis ad hoc committee and staff planned to explore the matter further.

During public comment, many in the local cannabis industry called in to voice approval for SB 59 and the board's support of it, including representatives for the Mendocino Cannabis Alliance, the Covelo Cannabis Advocacy Group, and Flow Kana – one of the largest cannabis companies in the county.

Amanda Reiman of Flow Kana said that despite the efforts of the company they had only been able to get one annual state cannabis license as of yet – for manufacturing.

"We currently hold provisional licenses for processing and distribution in Mendocino County," said Reiman. "We began the local licensing process in 2017. And despite constant attention and a desire to progress have only been able to obtain a state annual permit for our manufacturing facility. This issue is shared across the supply chain in Mendocino County where upwards of 90 percentage of licensees are on provisional licenses that will expire at the end of 2021. This includes over 1,000 small farmers who have been stuck in CEQA purgatory."

Michael Katz, executive director of the MCA, said the group also supported the other changes in cannabis policy the board was considering

"We fully support directing the ad hoc and staff to begin implementing the SSHR only on non-contiguous expansion," he said. "Thank you, this is an extremely helpful move."

Katz added that MCA also supported the definition of contiguous to "allow for contiguous expansion to include all expansion within 1,000 feet, or connected by any previously disturbed soil including pre-existing roads."

all of our partners that the 75-year-old restriction was making it difficult to fill the appointments in some places," said Coren. "This has happened since Adventist Health has had several clinics in Ukiah and Willits and now on the Mendocino coast."

He said the county will continue to prioritize and vaccinate those 75 and older and others in the state's Tier 1A category who are the most vulnerable to COVID-19.

"Our vaccine supply is still a major challenge," said Coren, "with the [county] health jurisdictions getting less than the multi-county entities – and being unable to see all the allocations coming into the county to coordinate.

"However, we have developed a close relationship with Adventist Health," he continued. "And they are now regularly telling us how much they have administered and where they want to have their clinics. They have also been open to suggestion recently to administer more in Willits and on the coast to address those older populations."

Other news delivered by Dr. Coren was that four more people in the county died from COVID-19 in the last two weeks, bringing the total up to 43 since the pandemic began.

Two of those who passed away were due to a recent outbreak at the Mountain View Assisted Living facility in Ukiah, according to Coren.

As of Tuesday, Coren said that outbreak had grown to "involve" 23 residents and eight staff members at the facility.

"The outbreak largely was attributed to a delay in reporting a staff member who became positive," said Coren, "because that skilled facility sends their labs to Texas and there's a significant delay. So that staff member worked for a full week transmitting her infection. We have begun with them some technical assistance, and BinexNOW testing, which they're doing alongside of their PCR send-out testing. But it gives them an immediate response to know who actually has turned positive."

The only other detail he gave out about the four who passed away in the last couple weeks was that one was Latino and one was Native American.

Coren said that of the total positive cases in the county – which stood at 3,795 as of Tuesday – about 52 percent were Latino and 8 percent were Native American. Both of those numbers are about double their percentages of the county population.

Another recent outbreak has taken place at a California Conservation Corps workplace, according to Dr. Coren, involving six new cases.

"The CCC has their own testing procedures, and we have a call set up to discuss that with them," he said.

On a more positive note, the outbreaks at the county jail in Ukiah, at the Round Valley Reservation in Covelo, and one in Fort Bragg have all now been "closed" according to Coren.

Coren noted that, overall: "The causes of the outbreaks and the cases in our community continue to be predominantly community spread (44 percent)". Other causes include household spread (27 percent), "congregate living" (9 percent), and workplace-related (7 percent).

Coren went into some detail about who was receiving vaccines and why.

"The hospital and their clinics and our rural clinic partners are focusing on vaccinating the elders," he said. "The county Health Department and our clinic partners are focused primarily on vaccinating those with occupational exposures such as [In Home Supportive Services workers], schools, agriculture and food service workers – who are among the most vulnerable, and they are a mostly Latino population. To accomplish this, we coordinate with employers in the eligible industries, and ask them to schedule their workforce with our clinics."

Coren later added that he will propose beginning March 15 the county begin "opening up vaccines to the very vulnerable populations with certain chronic diseases and disabilities of any age down to 16 years old." He said this will keep them in sync with the California Department of Public Health, which is planning this move as well.

As far as mass vaccine events, for

this week there were just two county-organized "second dose" clinics planned on February 23 and 24. However, he said that both the county and the multi-county entities such as Adventist Health have been adding vaccine appointments thanks to some first doses which came in that were delayed by the Texas snow storms. On Tuesday, Adventist Health announced a vaccination clinic at Willits High School on Thursday, February 25, for those 65 and over; all slots were full as of late Wednesday afternoon.

Coren said that the first vaccine requiring only one dose per person, created by Johnson & Johnson, is expected to arrive in the county within a month "if all goes well."

He said that the county has been utilizing "My Turn," <https://myturn.ca.gov/>, a website created by the state for residents to submit information and see if they're eligible to receive a vaccine yet.

The website "has been tested and worked well," according to Coren. "Except last week we had some bad experiences," he added. "Some non-county residents tried to jump into Mendocino County to get vaccinated and became incensed and even unruly when their credentials were denied. This is supposed to get fixed soon at the state level."

Regarding schools, Coren stated that "our education sector is well-vaccinated," and talked about the prospects of opening schools soon.

"One by one the schools and school districts are sending in their safe reopening plans and safety checklists for the department to review and for approval prior to posting [to the state]," he said. "We have gotten three of these requests. The Ukiah Unified School District, Fort Bragg Unified School District and Leggett so far. And we are giving feedback as needed, and they are posting and submitting their plans to the state."

"Ukiah Unified School Board opened last week," he continued, "and the Fort Bragg Unified School District is opening this week. We have been providing technical assistance to help them arrange testing, which has been working well."

"Since our cases now average less than 25 per day on average, the K-6 schools can open," he went on. "They start in a few grades and increase after they've been approved and start opening, and they can stretch their legs and feel how their precautions are working. The middle and high schools can begin to open once our case rate is less than 7 cases per day average for two weeks. That is the red tier. So we need to get those case numbers down for our schools as well as for businesses to begin the opening process."

"So everyone, vaccinated or not, please mask up, social distance, avoid gatherings large and small with anyone out of your household," he said in closing out his summary.

According to the latest dashboard posted by Mendocino County Public Health on Tuesday, the average number of new daily positive cases for COVID-19 during the last week is at 11.71.

For the current cases, 70 are in isolation, three are in the hospital, and two are in an intensive care unit, while over the course of the pandemic, 3,677 have been released from isolation.

Coren noted that one of those two in the ICU was actually from outside of the county, though there were also two Mendocino County residents in hospitals outside the county.

Coren said that testing rates have been low recently in Mendocino County, as they have been elsewhere in the state.

He said the county has been working on setting up a "travel team" to do testing in some of the smaller towns in the county. After some negotiations, a contract has been set up so that a testing station should rotate between Willits, Boonville, Laytonville, Covelo and Point Arena, every Friday from 9 am to 6 pm, landing in each town about once per month, according to Coren.

Testing is still taking place regularly at the Ukiah Fairgrounds, Sunday through Thursday from 9 am to 6 pm, and at the Fort Bragg Veterans Hall every Tuesday.

Inspired by local physician, spine surgeon comes back to Willits to fulfill life-long dream

Submitted by Adventist Health Howard Memorial Hospital

Ten years ago, while still in his first year of medical school, Dr. Yoshihiro Katsuura, MD came to Howard Hospital on a whim. It was during those times spent in the area that he realized his calling and set in motion a dream and a promise to be back someday to serve this community.

Today, he is back fulfilling that dream as a spine surgeon joining Adventist Health Howard Memorial and he said it feels like home. "I grew up in the Bay Area, but I have always been committed to coming back to Mendocino County, because of my time spent here as a medical student."

His path to Mendocino County has had many pit stops along the way, but Katsuura said he was always focused on his destination. "While I was in medical school, I had a longtime friend whose mom was a nurse in the OR at Howard. His exact words were, 'You should go and check out the hospital. It's a neat little hospital and Dr. Bill Bowen works up there. He's amazing.' I was intrigued. So, I just showed up one day, Dr. Bowen put me to work and I really liked the area and the people, and so I kept coming back."

For the next 10 years, he did just that. During every major holiday he spent his time off from medical school, working at Howard in the surgery department, volunteering and learning from Bowen as well as working in the emergency department.

"I lived with my friend's mom, Cynthia, every summer and winter break, spending a few months each time," shared Katsuura. "I got to know the area and the people really well. I remember everyone, especially the nurses who helped me. This one nurse, Amy, was awesome and showed me how to start IVs and a bunch of other things. Anything I wanted to learn, she was enthusiastic to teach. I also remember the patients. I thought it was nice how the community depended on the hospital and this fostered such commitment from the people who worked there, not only to take care of immediate problems, but also plan for the future and train the next generation."

While he never thought of going into orthopedics, he always wanted to be a spine surgeon. Katsuura said the time spent with Bowen and at Howard inspired him to become an orthopedic spine surgeon. "I always wanted to be a neurosurgeon. But seeing Dr. Bowen and seeing the difference that he made for his patients and his passion for what he did convinced me to go into orthopedics, and I'm glad I made the right choice."

"I think I realized," he continued, "that to adequately treat a spine patient, you need to understand the entire musculoskeletal system, which is what you learn in orthopedics. Pain overlaps quite a bit in the body, for example in the shoulder and the neck. You have to have clinical knowledge of both to make an accurate diagnosis."

While spine surgery might be one of the more difficult surgical fields, Katsuura said he enjoys the challenge: "Spine surgery requires precision and there's not a lot of room for error. That makes it more complicated than standard orthopedics – it's more than shoulders and knees, there's more risk involved. I'm a details-oriented person and so I think it suits my personality. People come to me totally incapacitated and they can't walk or they're becoming paralyzed, and then to have become pain-free, walk again, and live a normal life is incredibly satisfying."

As a spine surgeon, Katsuura specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of conditions of the spine for both adult and pediatric conditions. He believes in using surgery only when necessary and in maximizing the use of minimally invasive techniques.

Katsuura attended medical school at the Royal College of Surgeons in Dublin, graduating with honors. He then underwent an orthopedic-surgery residency at the University of Tennessee College of Medicine at Chattanooga – a level-one trauma center. Katsuura later

pursued a fellowship in spine surgery at Hospital for Special Surgery and Weill Cornell Medical College. He always knew he would be back at Howard, and so tailored his training to what the community would likely need, focusing on trauma, oncology, pediatrics, and degenerative spinal conditions.

Following his fellowship, Katsuura joined the spine-surgery faculty at both Hospital for Special Surgery and Weill Cornell Medical College, which was a great honor. He now serves as the medical director of spine surgery at Adventist Health Howard Memorial.

He could not have found a better place to do it. Having been back for a few months now, Katsuura said, the hospital is a little different but still the same as the one he fell in love with years ago. "It looks different from the old hospital and there are some new people. But the passion and culture are still the same. Everyone is pulling on the same rope, in the same direction. That's very hard to find. I think people at Howard take great pride in what they do, and the patients can feel that."

"We are excited to have Dr. Katsuura as part of our orthopedic team," shared Judson Howe, president for Adventist Health in Mendocino County. "The expertise he brings is much needed in our community and will ensure that our patients will never have to drive far for exceptional care. Having the convenience of not having to travel, but also to be taken care of by people they know and trust, can make a big difference in health outcomes."

"Dr. Katsuura's experience and dedication to rural health care is a perfect fit for our community," added Howe. "He will be a great addition to our team, and we are blessed that he has chosen our community to practice."

Katsuura is now seeing patients at Redwood Medical Clinic, located at 3 Marcela Drive in Willits. To make an appointment, call 459-6115. To learn more about Katsuura and conditions he treats, visit <https://doctors.adventisthealth.org/provider+Katsuura/1665184>.

February 25 is last viewing day for Willits Science Fair projects

Submitted by Willits Science Fair

The virtual Willits Science Fair has been happening online this week, from February 23 to 25. Judging took place on February 23, and the fair will be open for virtual viewing on February 24 and 25. Virtual viewing will be accessible through the Willits Science Fair's website at: <https://sites.google.com/willitsunified.com/sciencefair/home>

The Willits Science fair is an annual event hosted by the Willits Unified School District where Willits students in Grades 3-12 display their scientific research and showcase their own ideas, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

This year's science fair will be an online, virtual event and all students in grades 3-12 throughout all Willits schools are encouraged to participate. Willits students enrolled in private schools and homeschool students are also welcome to enter the fair. Additionally, teachers of students in Kindergarten through second grade are welcome to display projects conducted by an entire classroom of students at our virtual fair.

All projects that are entered into the fair will earn a ribbon. Many projects at the Willits Science Fair are also awarded special recognition and/or prizes sponsored by local businesses and individuals.

Additionally, the Willits Science Fair is a qualifying fair for the Mendocino County Science Fair. The Mendocino County Fair will also be a virtual event and will occur in March 2021. For more information on the Mendocino County Science Fair, please visit the Mendocino County Office of Education website at: <https://www.mcoe.us/student-programs-services/student-events/science-fair/>

If you have questions about the science fair, or if you are interested in judging or sponsoring an award, please contact Erin Vaccaro at sciencefair@willitsunified.com or call/text 707-513-8742.

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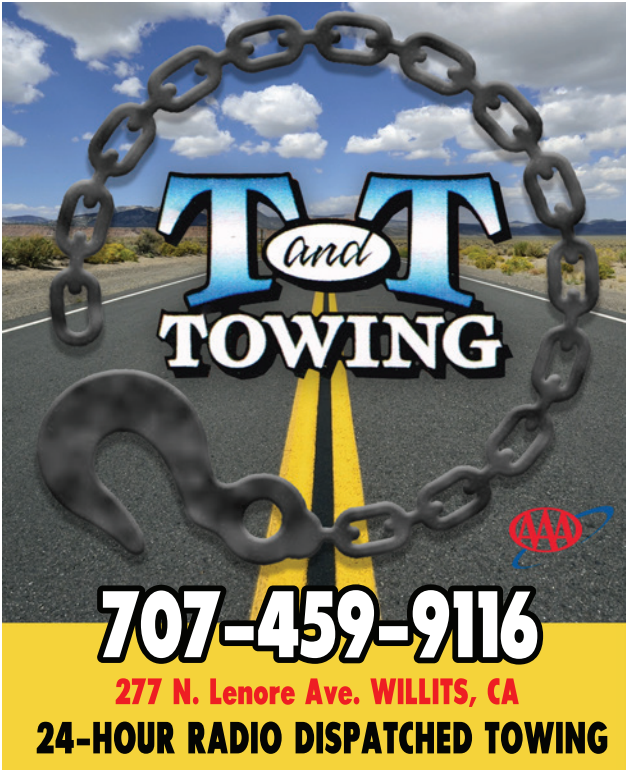
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