

Willits Weekly

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Firehouse construction to be placed before voters again

Forrest Glycer
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The Little Lake Fire Protection District Board of Directors will again ask voters to approve a small parcel tax to fund construction of a new Willits firehouse.

At its recent monthly meeting, the board approved enlisting the help of political consultants Herb Williams and Chris Coulombe of the Delphi Firm to place the measure on the November ballot.

A similar 2013 ballot initiative, Measure I, narrowly failed, winning approval from about 61 percent of the electorate.

Read the rest of **Firehouse** | Over on Page 9

Caltrans issues falsework collapse findings

Jennifer Poole
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The California Department of Transportation released its investigation report Monday on the January 22, 2015, falsework collapse at the Willits bypass viaduct.

The main conclusion arrived at by Caltrans' team of investigators was that, although the exact cause of the collapse could not be determined, "the falsework was not installed as shown on the approved falsework drawings."

Although the falsework system constructed by contractor Flatiron West "generally conformed to the approved falsework plans,"

Read the rest of **Bypass** | Over on Page 9

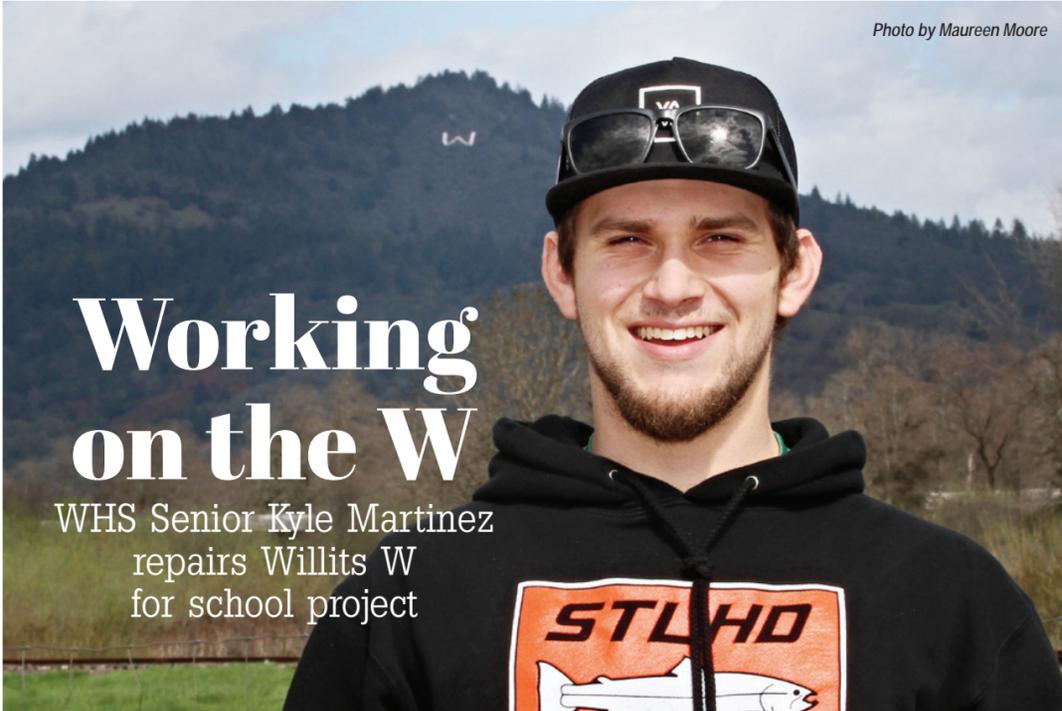
Supes, fire chiefs talk money and problems

Dan McKee
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While supervisors on Monday supported funding aid to Mendocino County's 22 fire districts, they warned the amount of money the departments might receive would probably be far less than they hoped.

Nonetheless, the board postponed making any decision on the issue until its April 5 meeting, giving members of the board's ad hoc committee and county staff time to meet with Auditor Controller Lloyd

Read the rest of **Prop. 172** | Over on Page 4



Working on the W

WHS Senior Kyle Martinez repairs Willits W for school project

Photo by Maureen Moore

Taking on the task of redoing the Willits W is no small feat, but Willits High School senior Kyle Martinez and a group of friends are already making progress to make the W shine bright over town once again.

Each graduating student must complete a senior project their final year in school, and Martinez is excited to get the W clearly visible in the day – and illuminated with solar at night.

Phase one of clearing brush is already complete. Martinez and his work crew – friends Konner Reed, Brendan Slater, Sam Smith and Will Switzer made several trips up to the site to clear brush, branches and other overgrown foliage.

Michael Quinliven of Little Mike's Tree Service also came up to help the group, and removed eight major trees that were blocking the view of the W from town.

"There was tons of sagebrush," said Martinez. "It took a lot to clear it out, but now everything looks much better."

The group has also completed phase two: laying down new white material to ensure clear visibility of the W in the daytime. Before the 55 sheets of 4 foot by 8 foot white vinyl lattice were brought up, sheet by sheet on the 4-wheeler, only old weathered and painted 1 foot by 6 foot boards were making up the W's shape. The idea of using painted pallets was considered, but the bright vinyl lattice was easier to get up to the site, and seemed like a longer-lasting option.

Access to the W is tricky as it is landlocked by private property, though, according to Martinez, the W itself sits on county greenbelt property.



At top, from left: Konner Reed makes his way up the mountain. The W with its new shiny lattice. Kyle Martinez, chainsaw in hand. Above: Kyle Martinez poses in front of the newly redone W. Below: Martinez tacks down the lattice. Below, from left: Sam Smith, left, helps Martinez with the lattice. Martinez and Michael Quinliven work on clearing the space for the new lattice. Martinez and Will Switzer clear brush on one of the work days.

Photos submitted by Erika Rowland, Shannon Germann and Kyle Martinez

Candidates file for June primary election

Twenty-five candidates have filed to run for office in the June election in Mendocino County, according to Assistant Registrar of Voters Katrina Bartolome. However, 17 of them have filed to run for charter commissioner, while only four people have filed to run for three supervisorial seats up for election.

Incumbent supervisors John McCowen (District 2 – Ukiah) and Dan Gjerde (District 4 – Fort Bragg) are running unopposed for the re-election. In District 1 (Potter Valley, Redwood Valley, Talmage), two-term incumbent Supervisor Carre Brown is being challenged by attorney and U.S. constitutional law professor Montana J. Podva.

In the courts, three seats on the superior court bench are up for election. In Department 1, incumbent Judge Ann Moorman is running unopposed, as is Judge Cindee Mayfield in Department 8.

In Department 5, former interim District Attorney Keith Faulder and Mendocino Coast trial attorney Patrick Pekin are competing for the seat of retiring Judge David Nelson.

Read the rest of **Election** | Over on Page 4

Redwood Quality Management given adult mental health contract

Supervisors on Tuesday unanimously approved a plan to shift responsibility for providing mental health services for adults to Redwood Quality Management Company, a Ukiah-based company that has been providing mental health services for children in Mendocino County for the past 25 years.

County CEO Carmel Angelo told the board the shift to RQMC is a two-phased process. Phase 1 began on March 2, when Tom Ortnier, president of the Ortnier Management Group, phoned Angelo to inform her his company would not be providing mental health services for county adults after June 30.

The first phase is a transitional phase, during which time Ortnier will be handing off services to RQMC, Angelo said. Details of the hand-off have not yet been worked out. "This is a work in progress, and it is changing every day," she said.

Read the rest of **Contract** | Over on Page 4

Allman announces mental health initiative petition drive

Mike A'Dair
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Mendocino County Sheriff Tom Allman appeared before the board of supervisors Tuesday morning to announce his intention to circulate an initiative petition among Mendocino County voters to "initiate a temporary (5-year) one-half-cent sales tax in all parts of Mendocino County to develop facilities to assist in the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness."

"These sales tax proceeds, and any interest or penalties collected that relate to this tax, shall be deposited into a special fund of the county treasury

Read the rest of **Petition** | Over on Page 11

County a step closer to establishing pot rules

Damian Sebouhian
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After several months of gleaning feedback from stakeholders such as the Mendocino Growers Association, the Heritage Initiative Committee, Mendocino Cannabis Policy Council and others, Mendocino County is one step closer to establishing its own new rules and regulations for medical cannabis cultivation and distribution.

The board of supervisors' marijuana ad hoc committee, appointed in November 2015 to review and make appropriate recommended changes to the county's 9.31 "Medical

Read the rest of **Pot Rules** | Over on Page 9

Lions propose to remodel Scout Hut

Damian Sebouhian
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Lions Club President Verd VanBezooyen presented a Scout Hut building lease proposal to the Willits City Council during last week's meeting.

The building, located in Recreation Grove Park, is owned by the City of Willits and has been used by Scout Troop 42 since it was first built in 1961, according to VanBezooyen. There is currently no official lease agreement between the Lions Club and the city.

Read the rest of **Hut** | Over on Page 11

What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from readers

Thank you

To the Editor:

We would like to acknowledge and thank the community for their support in attending our 9th Annual Chili Cook-off. We had great teams offering all kinds of chili. The attendees voted and chose the WSI BeanGo's entry, a delicious buffalo chicken chili topped with blue cheese, as People's Choice, and they also got Best Decorated.

Tom Allman was the MC extraordinaire. Ann Alumbaugh and Gerry Gonzalez were super judges, and they accepted the offered bribes and awarded the prizes accordingly, giving the Black Bart team Judge's Choice, and the Relay for Life team the infamous title, Crookedest. Hottest chili was won again by the Hillbilly Chili team.

We would like to send a big thank you to Kemmy's Pies, Scoops, J.D. Redhouse and Willits Power for donating some very generous prizes. Root beer floats served in a large frosted mug were a great success, and the provided corn bread muffins were enjoyed by all.... Hope to see you all again for next year's 10th Annual Chili Cook-off!

Dorothy Roediger,
for the Harrah Senior Center

Concern about area schools

To the Editor:

The Realtor® Code of Ethics begins "Under all is the land." It's equally true that at the heart of virtually every community is its schools. Without a good school system, no community can expect to thrive and prosper. Being supportive of good teachers, staff, effective administrators and students strengthens the whole community.

I read with great concern recently the letter presented to the Willits school board by area teachers and staff, outlining their concerns about administration, school board decisions, student behavior and discipline, and school conditions. I don't even have children, and I've been having trouble sleeping since I read that article.

Every student's education and behavior begins at home. Parents have an obligation when choosing to have children, to participate in and support their children in their education. Schools are not "babysitting" situations. Schools are serious, and ideally, creative places to help young people learn to be active participants in the world. Yes, social skills are developed in school as well as the basics of learning, responsibility and building a future.

Parents have a profound responsibility to their children and greater community, and if those parents are too immature to meet that responsibility, they have some growing up to do just as their kids do. Once you have children, learning to be a good parent is part of that choice.

There's always the option to choose to not have children. Every person is not ready for the responsibility of being a

parent, and that's OK. Choose to work on your own life. For many people that's a great choice.

Having said that, once those young people are in school, behavior becomes the responsibility of, first, the students themselves. Then there's the obvious partnership with educators and staff because of the reality of a school situation. Regardless of the student's home situation, no student has the right to be disruptive, preventing fellow students from learning.

Disruptive students are trying to get attention. What are they trying to draw attention to? Disruptive students do not have the right to rob their peers of the opportunity for a successful learning experience. That's obvious.

I've heard many times of classroom situations where girls go sit on their boyfriend's lap. Children use cell phones and pads in a disruptive way. Students abuse teachers. This kind of behavior slinks and turns a classroom into a jail cell, not a place to learn.

Having good – no let me make that excellent – counselors on staff is important. Effective counselors support students and educators. Education is a partnership, and each person can choose to do their best. Budgeting for adequate counseling staff is essential, particularly to help turn around the situation outlined in the complaints recently made.

Making Willits a better place begins with making our schools better, a whole lot better. Improving our schools is a No. 1 priority in my opinion. If young teachers, and experienced teachers, and parents are choosing to leave because of an untenable situation, we are in deep s-t. There's no point in working on a "Willits after the Bypass" improvement plan without making our schools a top priority at the same time.

I want those good and motivated teachers, administrators, staff, young parents and students to know that I want them to stay here in Willits and help us build a great educational system.

We, as a community, have to find solutions to begin the process of creating much better schools. Let's figure out how we're going to make our schools the best possible, and offer our community's students a great school system that inspires respect and prepares them for successful futures.

Do we need a community meeting? That's what our city hall community center is for. Let's hear everyone's constructive ideas. Ideally our school board is identifying those solutions, but so far, that model is not working. A few people on a school board can't do it all. As has been so wisely said, "it takes a village" to raise a child.

Healthy schools require strong, competent leadership. The leader of a turnaround must have a single unified vision, a simple and explicit mission statement, for where they are going. That vision/ goal has to be inspiring. The leader must create a plan, a roadmap with a timeline and identifying markers to measure success along the way to the target, like any business plan. The focus has to be on today and tomorrow, not yesterday. Effective board members

and administrators need to be identified and supported. Ineffective ones need to be replaced with people who are passionate about the goal of excellent education.

Ralph Waldo Emerson beautifully described holding on to the past as like dragging around a corpse, in his essay "Self-Reliance." The best use for a corpse is let it decompose and create fertile ground for new, nourishing growth.

My letter doesn't address all of the important concerns covered in the recent letter presented to the school board, but I want those teachers and staff to know that they are being heard. Their issues are important to building a better community.

Willits is a fine place to live, and we have challenges, like any town. Choosing to ignore those challenges is obviously not a responsible option. Since change is the one inevitable, we can choose to plan for the most beneficial change. That requires visionary planning that includes better schools and all the other things that make a community a better place grow up and grow old.

Bill Barksdale, Willits

Sen. McGuire's Town Hall

To the Editor:

State Senator Mike McGuire is gearing up for his annual Mendocino County Town Hall next week.

The Town Hall will be held on Thursday evening, March 24 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at the Ukiah High School Cafetorium, 1000 Low Gap Road in Ukiah. The evening will be packed with great presentations from local and state leaders, and neighbors are invited to join the conversation about moving Mendocino County and Northern California forward.

The Town Hall will include: Welcome & introductions: Senator Mike McGuire and Steve Scalmanini, mayor of Ukiah; County of Mendocino update: Supervisors Dan Gjerde and John McCowen; Mendocino Unified School District update: Associate Superintendent Paul Joens-Poulton; Sheriff's Office briefing, latest on Mendocino area activity: Sheriff Tom Allman; California Highway Patrol update: Lt. Bruce Carpenter; Briefing on highway activity: Caltrans District Director Charlie Fielder; State of California update: Senator Mike McGuire; and Questions & answers: Senator Mike McGuire.

"When we work together, California is stronger. That's why we're bringing local and state leaders together to discuss the top issues impacting Mendocino County and the North Coast," Senator McGuire said. "We hope folks come out, bring their neighbors, and join the conversation."

For more information or to RSVP: call 707-576-2771 or email Karlene.Rebich@Sen.Ca.Gov

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Above, from left: Adrian Carrillo, Quinn Jensen, and Blue Barker hold up their cars. The finish line. Den leaders Nolan Lawson and Rossi Jensen.

At left: Cubmaster Mike Lockhart, Scoutmaster Kara Watson, and scouts Christopher Lockhart and David Lockhart cheer the start of a race.

Below: Nolan Lawson with some of the handmade race cars.

Photos by Mathew Caine



Below: Race cars heading toward the finish line.

At bottom, left: A group of happy Pinewood Derby fans. Back row: Ryan Millimore, Kara Watson, Bridgette Lockhart, Mike Lockhart, Whitney Eads, Rossi Jensen, Nolan Lawson, and Angel Homampha. Front row: Steven Michels, Quinn Jensen, Ivan Carrillo, Adrian Carrillo, Arlo Jensen, Nova Knodle, Shawn Dnmver, Seth Lacy, Grayson Lawson, and Blue Barker

Bottom right: Blue Barker, who won first place in his Lion Cubs division.



Pinewood Derby

Willits Cub and Boy Scouts enjoy annual tradition at Rec Grove

Willits Cub Scouts from Pack 42 and Boy Scouts from Troop 42 participated in the annual Pinewood Derby this past Sunday at the Scout Hut in Recreation Grove.

The derby is a long-standing tradition with Boy Scouts of America and involves each scout turning a block of wood into his own unique car. Once completed, the cars are sent down a 32-foot-long wooden race track with three rows.

The 18 participating scouts of Pack 42 were divided into their respective cub groups or "dens": Lions, Tigers, Bears and Wolves, as well as Boy Scouts.

With an electric timer set up at the end of the track, each scout raced within their scout group three separate times to determine the fastest cars.

Adults also raced against each other after the scouts were finished.

Coming in first place were the following scouts: Blue Barker of the Lion Cubs, Steven Michels of the Tigers, Arlo Jensen of the Wolves, Derrick Moore of the Bears, and Ryan Millimore of the Boys.

Among the five adults who raced, Nolan Lawson's car "Superman" upset Verd VanBezooyan's "Kayak" to take first place honors.

All the scouts won awards for participation.

"It's a competition," said Cub Master Mike Lockhart. "But the real joy is in making the cars."

"The car starts with a square block," said assistant Den Leader Nolan Lawson. "You cut it into the shape that you want, and from there you put your tires on and paint it up."

As long as the car weighs no more than 5 ounces and can fit on

Read the rest of **Derby** | Over on Page 11

Howard Memorial Hospital's restaurant, Roots, celebrates National Nutrition Month

By Cecilia Winiger, for HMM

Roots Restaurant and Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital invites the community to "Savor the Flavor of Healthy Right" during its month-long campaign to celebrate National Nutrition Month.

Sponsored by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the month-long celebration is dedicated to helping Americans eat more healthfully. For HMM's Chef Kyle Evans and Annie Frassinello, registered dietitian and diabetes educator, it's the perfect opportunity to make the community aware of how nutrition and food consumption play

a key role in one's overall health and well-being.

"We are lucky to be able to work at a place like HMM that allows us to be creative and prepare healthy food for our community, staff and patients," says Chef Kyle says. "Roots' culinary team is preparing several featured healthy ingredients through March in support of Nutrition Month. Each week we are focusing on ingredients that are beneficial to one's health that are incorporated into our daily specials. At Roots Restaurant we are able to offer delicious food that is healthy and creative that helps support healthy choices. We feature a lot of organic produce that comes from the Commonwealth Garden in our daily specials. I hope to see our community come in and eat our food and enjoy Roots restaurant."

Frassinello explains the connection between a healthy diet and overall health, "It is amazing to see how powerful healthy foods

are at preventing the rising of disease. I love seeing the progress my patients make by taking small steps towards eating more whole foods!"

"Take beans for example: a lot of people don't know all the health benefits beans have to offer. They can help people lose weight, reduce their risk of certain cancers, lower blood sugars, and they are full of vitamins and mineral. They're also a good source of protein," Frassinello adds.

Numerous studies have shown that sensible changes made to diet coupled with increased activity helps prevent a range of health issues including diabetes, coronary artery disease, stroke and some cancers.

Frassinello says this isn't by accident: people feel better when they eat nutritious foods.

"When we eat nutrient-dense, whole foods like fruits and vegetables, whole grains, nuts and seeds, our bodies feel better and function better because these are the foods intended to fuel them," she explains.

With this in mind, Frassinello and Chef Kyle's team have come up with a way to

encourage the community to eat healthier this month. Roots Restaurant is featuring a healthy ingredient every week in March. Community members who choose the highlighted ingredient for the week will get a 15 percent discount on their meal when they eat at Roots.

This week's healthy ingredient is "Great Grains" and next week it will be "Super Seeds and Nuts."

Meals at Roots are offered at very reasonable prices and, Chef Kyle says, this is by design. "We are proud to serve our community, and Roots is a great venue to bring our community together at the table and enjoy great food that just happens to be good for them and at affordable prices," he explains. In the near future, the hope is to create a seasonal menu that is enjoyed by both patients in the hospital as well as patrons at Roots.

Chef Kyle invites the community to come and taste the goodness of healthy eating all year round. Roots Restaurant is open Monday to Sunday, 7 am to 8 pm and located on the first floor of the new hospital on 1 Marcela Drive in Willits.

The Rules: **LETTERS**

Letters & Commentaries: Email letters to willitsweekly@gmail.com. Letters focusing on Willits and 3rd District issues, activities, events and people have priority. Willits Weekly prints letters from residents of Willits and the 3rd District only. To encourage a variety of voices, Willits Weekly limits letter publication from any one writer to once a month.

Typed letters can be sent to Willits Weekly, P.O. Box 1698, Willits, CA 95490, but email is preferred. Letters and commentaries must be submitted with a name, address and phone number, although only the author's name and city of residence will be published. No letters from an anonymous source will be published, although a request to withhold the writer's name will be considered.

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Redwood Meadows is an active independent senior community featuring 101 apartment homes, primarily a mix of one and two bedroom apartments which are single story 4-plex cottage-type set amongst seven acres of park like landscaping.

We are a smoke-free and pet friendly community. We boast a community center where activities are held like card games, Bingo, birthdays and socials. We also have a barbecue area for residents to get together for social functions.

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COYOTE VALLEY CASINO

Weer and try to pin down just how much money is available from the Proposition 172 monies Mendocino County receives each month from the state.

The Mendocino County Association of Fire Districts is asking for some 30 percent of Prop. 172 funds currently split among the sheriff's office, district attorney's office, county jail, and the county probation department. MCAFD estimates the county receives more than \$7 million per year from the state in Local Public Safety Protection and Improvement Act funds, but no one appears to be quite sure of that figure, or where the money goes once the county receives it.

That prompted a recent Mendocino County grand jury to issue a report criticizing the methodology the county currently uses to account for how those funds are used.

That methodology is "not transparent to the public or the departments affected," the grand jury report claims, and this has led to "a perception that public safety is not receiving all of these funds as required by law."

The money comes from a permanent statewide half-cent sales tax, passed by voters and the Legislature in 1993 as partial mitigation for property tax transfers to help fund California schools.

The board of supervisors' ad hoc committee, consisting of board Chairman Dan Gjerde and Supervisor Dan Hamburg, have been meeting with fire district representatives since November of last year to try and find a way to address the funding problem. Its report, however, Hamburg said, wasn't finalized until Monday morning, just hours before supervisors were to take up the issue.

The report made clear, however, that fire and emergency medical services "must receive sufficient funding to provide adequate services."

Such funding would provide "very good value for taxpayers," the report stated.

That county fire districts are eligible to receive Prop. 172 funds have never really been in question, the committee's report stated, although none has received any since the 1993 board of supervisors decided to exclude them.

The ad hoc committee is recommending fire districts should now receive funding in the same proportion as other county public safety agencies.

In response to the grand jury report, the committee also is recommending county staff illustrate how Prop. 172 funds are allocated to public safety agencies in the draft 2016-2017 budget.

It also wants county staff and fire district boards to explore other possible sources of tax revenues to help fund emergency medical services in rural areas, including the possibility of placing a sales tax increase before voters, "a move not real popular with fire chiefs."

There was even talk of a special tax on marijuana sales if and when recreational cannabis is legalized in California.

MCAFD has sought to place an initiative on the November 2016 ballot that would mandate the county budget include a line item for Prop. 172 fire district funding allocations. However, supervisors would not be forced to allocate any funds to the districts.

That proposed initiative has sparked a legal battle between MCAFD and Acting-County Counsel Kathleen Elliott. Superior Court Judge

Janine Nadel in early February tentatively excused Elliott from having to title and summarize the initiative so MCAFD could circulate petitions to gain enough citizen support to place the issue on the ballot. MCAFD attorney Christopher Neary, however, has appealed Nadel's ruling to the California Supreme Court, which will hear the case in connection with another legal battle between the California District Attorneys Association and state Attorney General Kamala Harris. Like Elliott, the DAs Association has filed a writ of mandate with the high court seeking to prevent Harris from issuing a ballot summary and title for Gov. Jerry Brown's "Public Safety and Rehabilitation Act of 2016."

But Prop. 172 funding is not at the heart of the issue, according to Laytonville Fire Chief Jim Little. Instead, it's the increase in the number of emergency medical responses his department has to answer each year, a fourfold expansion since 1985.

Most of the time, his department receives no compensation from individuals or insurance companies for handling those calls, whether they be for illness or as a result of traffic accidents.

"Our experience," he told supervisors, "has been that billing for services has not been efficient" because insurance companies refuse to pay claims until lawsuits are settled, and that can take up to 10 years.

In the meantime, fire departments must use their funding reserves to keep the ambulances rolling, whether within their districts or outside them.

In addition to aging equipment, fire districts also must deal with an aging cadre of volunteer firefighters, and county fire chiefs agree with Little Lake Fire District Chief Carl Magann, who told supervisors he could "see a time ... when [having enough volunteer firefighters] will be a problem."

For many small fire districts totally staffed by volunteers, or with only a paid part-time or full-time chief, the problem is already acute. Old-timers are retiring, and they are not being replaced.

That's because of the expensive, time-consuming, state-mandated training volunteer firefighters must complete, fire chiefs attending Monday's meeting agreed.

Mendocino County's training courses are the same as those in the more densely populated and built-up counties of Southern California, although it's unlikely volunteers here will ever have to fight a fire in a high-rise.

And many of the volunteers who make the commitment to complete the training almost immediately find full-time work with CalFire, other fire departments, or professional ambulance companies, where they are paid for their work.

"We've been called a 'puppy mill' for CalFire," Laytonville's Chief Little said.

If the situation can't be reversed, Comptche Fire Chief Michael Schaeffer said, "I fear our [volunteer] departments will begin to fold, one by one."

"It's a serious, serious problem," Hopland Fire Chief John Bartlett agreed. "We can't keep going on like this."

"I do think," he told supervisors, "we have to begin transitioning to paid staff."

The current system, Magann said, "is designed for failure. And the public won't even know there's a problem until they [one day] call 9-1-1 and don't get an answer."

Faulder is a former public defender, and was an assistant district attorney and chief trial attorney before being named interim district attorney by the board of supervisors upon the sudden death of then-DA Norman Vroman.

He is experienced in criminal defense, civil litigation and property litigation, as well as family and juvenile law.

Faulder serves on the board of Project Sanctuary, is president of the Mendocino County Law Library, and has taught Criminal Justice classes at Mendocino College.

He and wife Jona Saxby live in Ukiah. The couple has two daughters.

Pekin, a graduate of the University of California, Hastings College of the Law, is experienced in both criminal, civil rights and family law.

He is also a firefighter with the Mendocino Volunteer Fire Department, and has coached Fort Bragg's mock trial team for four years.

Pekin's wife, Amanda, is also an attorney. The couple and their three young sons live in Mendocino.

The office of charter commissioner is a new position for Mendocino County. The seats are connected to Measure W, which asks the question: "Shall a charter commission be elected to propose a Mendocino County charter?"

According to Measure W, should Measure W be approved by a simple majority of the voters, the top 15 vote getters of the 17 candidates will be seated as commissioners and charged with the task of writing a charter for Mendocino County.

If approved by voters in a subsequent election, that charter will change the way the county is governed.

Seeking seats on the charter commission are registered nurse Robin Sunbeam, retired teacher and artist Agnes S. Woolsey, retired educator Keith Wyner, retired electronics engineer Michael Burgess, former supervisor Norman de Vall, internet media producer Doug McKenty, aquaponic farmer Jed Davis, journalist-educator Jim Tarbell, retired English professor Ellen Rosser, writer/caretaker David Sowder, economist Michael St. John, small farmer Ali Boecker, grant writer Mary Zellachild, biologist Els Cooperrider, retired union representative Lynda McClure, Ukiah Mayor Steve Scalmanini, and radio broadcast consultant Govinda Dalton.

Additional reporting on this story was done by Dan Mckee.

One key element of the transitional phase is that the county is expected to quickly prepare a contract with RQMC, and that RQMC will sign it.

Under the new contract, RQMC will begin working as the county's sole provider of mental health services for adults on July 1, 2016, and the company's term of work under the contract will last for one year, terminating on June 30, 2017. At that time, the county is expected to enter into another contract, either with RQMC or an as-yet-unknown provider.

Angelo told supervisors she regards the shift from Ortner to RQMC as a very challenging and very important maneuver.

"This is a huge transition," she said. "I think it is a bigger transition than what we had when we went out for the initial contract."

Angelo also said she strongly supports committing to RQMC for a one-year contract period.

In recent weeks, supervisors had balked at a previous proposal by Angelo, who wanted to take 7.5 months to write and circulate an RFP for an adult mental health services provider. At its March 1 meeting, the board urged Angelo to shorten up the time frame before the next RFP. In fact, it was very likely the board's determination to distribute another RFP for an adult mental health provider in the near term, rather than over a 7.5-month term, that convinced Ortner it had worn out its welcome in Mendocino County.

Ortner's March 2 call telling Angelo his company would not renew its contract happened the day after the board of supervisors made its momentous decision.

However, in the face of Ortner's resignation, supervisors accepted Angelo's explanation as to why she did not want to issue a new RFP until sometime early next year. "We need a longer-term transition period to stabilize the situation before we put out the next RFP," she said.

Asked for her response to the board's unanimous endorsement of her company, Camille Schraeder admitted she was "appropriately scared" by the challenge of taking on adult mental health. She also

Supes told to prepare for recession

During Monday budget discussions, county staff told the board of supervisors Mendocino County would do well to start preparing for the next recession.

Assistant CEO Alan Flora pointed out the hefty budget carryovers of the last three "fat" years are expected to end next year.

In 2012-13, the county found itself with a budget carryover of \$6.8 million. In 2013-14, the carryover was \$8.8 million. The trend continued in 2014-15, with a carryover of \$11.7 million.

The difference between 2013-14 and 2014-15 was the 2014 infusion to Mendocino County of \$2.5 million from the state to defray costs for implementing pre-2004 mandates to California counties. The executive office estimated Monday the 2015-16 carryover will be \$2.7 million.

In addition, several key indicators that have gone up annually in the recent past are expected to flatten out or decline slightly. A budget booklet prepared by the executive office showed average single home property values are expected to decline slightly from last year. In addition, Mendocino County's 1 percent share of sales tax revenues is expected to decline, from \$4.5 million to \$4 million, primarily due to the decline in the cost of gasoline.

As a result of these trends, supervisors' discretionary revenue is expected to drop off from the high of \$67.6 million in 2014-15, to \$65.2 million in 2015-16. Overshadowing all of these "minor" indicators is the big indicator difficult to quantify or predict: which is that the United States is in the seventh consecutive year of economic expansion under President Barack Obama. Flora reminded supervisors that seven years of economic expansion is two years longer than the average period of economic growth. "We must prepare for the inevitable next recession," Flora said.

Supervisor John McCowen suggested the board regard the current budget carryover as a nest egg the county can depend upon.

"We keep calling it one-time money," McCowen said, "but for the last five years we've had a very significant fund balance. And if you add to it the special fund we've set aside to enhance certain departmental budgets [which amounts to \$1.3 million], you're looking at \$4 million."

"Although we call this one-time funding," he said, "it seems to reoccur on an annual basis. So maybe we can start talking about having a \$2 million fund balance on an annual basis. And I'd ask, what can we do with that money?"

Supervisor Dan Gjerde suggested putting some portion of it into constructive maintenance of the county's ailing road system. He reminded the board the county ought to be putting \$7 or \$8 million into corrective maintenance, but in reality is only putting \$2 million into that fund.

Supervisor Tom Woodhouse supported Gjerde's position. "I would support anything we can put into roads," Woodhouse said. "It is by far the single most frequent complaint I get from people. People are saying things like, 'I've never seen it this bad,' and they threaten to move away. It's an ongoing source of frustration."

County CEO Carmel Angelo urged the board not to regard the fund balance as a given. "Before we landed in our major economic downturn, every year we would spend our fund balance, whatever it was," she said. "If it was \$50,000, we spent \$50,000; if it was \$500,000, we spent the \$500,000. We didn't save anything."

"Excuse my anxiety, but I do have it, because I'm not convinced that over the next two years we're not going to run into a financial problem. You do have labor contracts coming up in all eight bargaining units. We just spent two hours in here with the fire districts, and we know there's an urgency there. And tomorrow we're going to be talking about mental health."

"So, if everybody gets some of that pie, pretty soon there's no pie left. I just don't want to see this board wind up where you're going to be in a deficit," Angelo said.

Read the rest of
Recession | Over on Page B6



Twining Time & Friends

An evening of music to benefit Willits Community Services

This Saturday night the Willits Community Theatre will host a special benefit concert featuring Twining Time, the musical duo of John Wagenet and Anita Blu, with proceeds going to Willits Community Services and Food Bank. Twining Time will be joined by world-class musicians Hal Wagenet on lead guitar and Mitchell Holman on bass. This will be the first time this quartet

Forrest Glyer
Reporter
forrest@willitsweekly.com

has taken the stage together.

The show starts at 7 pm, and tickets are \$15, available at Mazahar or at the door. There are only 74 tickets available in total, so it's a good idea to get them early. The evening will have a mix of original songs and well-known covers, all, as Twining Time puts it, "in the spirit of old-time mountain music, folk, and vintage country - with plenty of audience participation expected."

John, who's also chief financial officer for WCS, said it's crucial to the community that these organizations keep being supported.

"There's a lot of need out there, and we see it every day at the Food Bank. We serve over 4,000 families every year, and it's just a worthy cause.... It's an ongoing need, and we're always in need of funding."

John and Anita have been playing together for about 2.5 years, including regular shows at the Blue Wing Saloon in Lake County and at the Brooktrails Lodge. Their songs feature the sweet vocal harmonies so often found in old-time music, with both contributing lead vocals and originals. John will be playing

acoustic guitar, while Anita will be adding some keyboards for the show, a new touch for the duo.

John's been writing songs and singing since the 1960s, and Anita's been singing and playing piano since the age of 5. She's performed in many local groups, ranging in styles from jazz to blues to vocal choirs. They're both excited about playing the WCS, and for such a good cause.

"We're looking forward to playing our first sit-down show for the community," John said. "I'm always thinking about how we can raise money for WCS, and this was a way to do it."

Hal and Mitchell have played together since the 1960s when they were members of the seminal band It's A Beautiful Day. They later went on to form Natural Act, which played and toured until 1976. They've each played in many musical acts in their careers, both locally and all over the map.

As brothers being raised in a musical family, John and Hal have also played together a lot over the years, including at the Country Pickers concerts Hal used to present in the '80s and '90s. Hal said he was happy he was asked to be involved with this show.

"What's especially enjoyable to me is that John has given myself and Mitchell an opportunity to collaborate as support musicians for a good cause and for good music."



At top, from left: Mitchell Holman, Anita Blu, John Wagenet, Hal Wagenet. Above: Twining Time & Friends, from left: Hal Wagenet, Mitchell Holmen, Anita Blu and John Wagenet.

Photos by Rosie Wagenet

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Thursday, March 17

"Start Your Garden" Day at Willits Farmers Market: features a "Start Your Garden" day Thursday, March 17, 3 to 5:30 pm at Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. "Local seed supplier Bountiful Gardens will be on hand with locally produced seeds and gardening books. Sanhedrin Nursery's Jenny Watts will provide advice to gardeners along with gardening supplies. There will also be a seed exchange at the Market Manager's table."

'Garlic is as Good as Ten Mothers': The Now and Then Film Series at the Grange presents Les Blank's 1980 film featuring chef Alice Waters of Berkeley's Chez Panisse restaurant and a flavorful musical soundtrack while exploring the history, consumption, cultivation and culinary/curative powers of the stinking rose. The SF Chronicle called this loving ode to garlic "a joyous, nose-tweaking, ear-tingling, mouth-watering tribute to a Life Force." 7 pm at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Come early for trailers & short films – and the 1st annual garlic "finger food" potluck (small fee requested from those without a dish to share). Your donation of \$5 to \$10 helps keep the film series funded. Serving heirloom organic popcorn with real organic butter, garlic and Fair Trade chocolate. Info: 459-6362.

St. Patrick's Day at Shanachie Pub: "It's a St. Patty's Day Party with San Francisco's Queen of Boogie Woogie" Wendy DeWitt, boogie woogie and blues pianist who's had "a career that included touring the United States and Europe with rhythm-and-blues legend Hank Ballard and nearly a quarter century at the helm of a powerhouse blues combo called Blue Saloon. Thursday, March 17 at Shanachie Pub. 8 pm, \$7. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant, enter from Main Street only. Info: 459-9194.



Wendy DeWitt

Friday, March 18

Book Sale in Laytonville: Friends of the Long Valley Public Library hosts a big book sale (at book sale prices) at the book room at the Old Laytonville High School (west entrance, look for the signs). Friday, March 18 from 1 to 6 pm. For more information, phone Shawn 354-3080.

CD Release Parties: celebrate the posthumous release of "You & I," by singer/songwriter Jeff Buckley at two events on Friday, March 18. Noon to 3 pm at Main Street Music & Video, with food by Nikos, and 4 to 7 pm at Shanachie Pub, with food from Adam's Restaurant. "Come enjoy video footage of Jeff, food and loads of giveaways ... CDs, LPs and Limited Edition Posters!" "You & I" was released March 11, 2016. "A former resident of Willits, Jeff's mother, Mary, will be on hand for this very special event"



'A Fool's Errand' KLLG Radio Fundraiser

Friday, April 1
"A Fool's Errand" is a fundraising party to help start KLLG 97.9, a low-power radio station for Willits, on April Fool's Day, Friday, April 1 at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Featuring The Jug Tuckers Band, bluegrass and originals from North Carolina, and Blue Sky Pie. Plus performances by Piccolo Puppet Players and Dangerous Puppets. Doors open at 6 pm for no-host dinner by Zocalo Collective and pie by Kemmy's Pies; music from 7 to 11 pm. "Please come in your most foolish attire!" Silent auction and radio antics. Tickets \$15 at the door; children under 12 are welcome: \$2 at the door.

for a Q&A, so come ready to learn answers to your questions about this iconic musician whose life was cut much too short." Visit www.jeffbuckley.com Info: 459-9194.

Shanachie Pub: Sweet Plot, San Francisco-based music group known for its funkified blend of musical gumbo: Bay Area Funk, California Soul and Vintage Rock'n'Roll. Visit www.facebook.com/plotmusic. 9 pm. No cover. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant, enter from Main Street only. Info: 459-9194.

Saturday, March 19

Ridgewood Ranch Spring Nature Walks: This year's docent-led walks at Ridgewood "Seabiscuit" Ranch, 16200 North Highway 101, 5.5 miles south of Willits, start on Saturday, March 19 at 10 am (rain cancels). Free to the public. Meet at the Ridgewood Ranch Oak Woodlands Conservation Trailhead (conservancy shed). Follow directions to the Golden Rule RV Park for ranch access. All walks are guided. Saturdays through April 16. Visit www.seabiscuitheritage.org/conservancy.html for info or call 707-391-3872.

Pet Adoption Day at Willits Power: Willits Power and Rascal's Rescue are hosting a Pet Adoption Day Saturday, March 19, with the Humane Society of Inland Mendocino County. 11 am to 2 pm. 1600 South Main Street. 20 percent off all pet items, with an additional 10 percent off if customers bring a donation of canned dog or cat food, or if they adopt a pet. Info: 459-6420. Weather permitting!

'Twining Time' benefit for WCS: Willits' own folk duet "Twining Time," John Wagenet (vocals/guitar) and Anita Blu (vocals/keyboard) will join with world-class musicians Hal Wagenet (lead guitar) and Mitchell Holman (bass) to perform a concert on Saturday, March 19 to benefit Willits Community Services and Food Bank. This "fun evening of originals and modern favorites in the spirit of old time mountain music, folk, and vintage country – with plenty of audience participation expected – is set for 7 to 9 pm at the Willits Community Theatre, 37 West Van Lane (behind Shanachie Pub). Tickets, \$15, are available in advance at Mazahar and at the door (only 74 tickets available). Sponsored by Sparetime Supply, Coast Hardware, Willits Redwood Company, North Coast Resource Management, Willits Power and Hardware, Willits Furniture, and Round Tree Glass. See article on page 5 for more details.

Wildfire Dance: Live music by the Funky Dozen. This is a benefit for Mendocino Wildfire Association and Long Valley Fire Department. Saturday, March 19 at Harwood Hall, Laytonville. Doors open at 7 pm for mixer. Music starts at 8:30 pm. Food all night. Tickets: \$20 at door. Advance tickets available at Main Street Music, J.D. Redhouse, Healthy Start and Long Valley Feed Store.

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Human Traffic Awareness Event

Thursday, April 7
"Human Trafficking is here in Willits and Mendocino County!" The Willits Soroptimists and Little Lake Grange are sponsoring an awareness event at the Little Lake Grange Hall, 291 School Street, on Thursday, April 7 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. Guest speaker: Elle Snow, founder of Game Over, Inc., at 6:30 pm; video presentation at 7 pm; Q&A at 7:30 pm. "Learn how you can help stop human trafficking now."

Seeking tax forms? Willits Library has them

Willits Librarian Jill Dorman has announced that free tax forms are now available ("they arrived late") at the Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street, 459-5908. Willits Library is open Tuesdays & Wednesdays from 10 am to 8 pm, Thursdays from 10 am to 6 pm, and Fridays and Saturdays from 10 am to 5 pm.

Parkinson's Support Group

Monday, March 28
Harrah Senior Center hosts a Parkinson's Support Group every other Monday, with Linda Posner as facilitator. The next meeting is on Monday, March 28, 1501 Baechtel Road. Call 459-6826 for more information.

What's Happening Around Town

WCS Country Music Festival: This fundraiser for the Willits Charter School features country artist McKenna Faith (from Ukiah, currently living in Nashville), and local singer/songwriter Sarah Rose McMahon. Plus silent auction and bake sale. Saturday, March 19 at Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street, doors open at 8 pm. Tickets \$20 for ages 20+; \$10 for ages 6-18; under 6 free. No. tickets at www.willitscharter.org/fundraiser or at WCS front office.

Shanachie Pub: Shoring, on tour from Portland, Oregon. "Shoring's music draws heavily from Folk and Americana influences, but also from 60s pop and 70s rock. A rhythm section steeped more in the virtues of Cheap Trick than James Taylor gives the songs a drive and an edge not found in modern Folk." Visit www.shoringmusic.com. Saturday, March 19, 9 pm, \$5. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant, enter from Main Street only. Info: 459-9194.



Sunday, March 20

"How Love Reveals Truth": a worship service presented by ECKANKAR: Experience the Light and Sound of God, Sunday, March 20 from 11 am until noon, at Willits City Hall, 111 East Commercial Street. A panel of speakers will share insights and personal experiences on how they recognize God's love in their lives. The service also features a HU Song. "If you wish to learn new techniques to help you better understand and experience more of God's love and how these techniques can offer insights of higher consciousness, then join us at this worship service." Info: 456-9934.

"It's All About the Soil": California Growers Association monthly event features presentations by Judith Harwood on biochar, Alan Adkisson on bokashi composting, and Dirty Business Soil on bed prep and amendments. Sunday, March 20 at Harwood Hall, 44400 Willits Avenue in Laytonville. CGA business, 3 to 3:30 pm; panel starts at 3:30 pm and continues to 5:30 pm. Sliding scale, \$5 to \$20 donation, sliding scale. Info: Erin at 707-972-3536

Monday, March 21

Brooktrails Community Garden: Garden spaces are available! If you live in Brooktrails and would like to have your own garden plot, please contact Freddie at 459-5267. "We will be having our next Quarterly Meeting on Monday, March 21, with potluck dinner. If you are interested in joining us please call Freddie at 459-5267." For more info,

visit the "Brooktrails Community Garden" page on Facebook.

Tuesday, March 22

Tightwad Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre: All 2D movies that are in their second week are \$5 on Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre for all ages, all showings. This week's Tightwad movies: "Zootopia" and "10 Cloverfield Lane." For showtimes: www.noyotheatre.com. 57 East Commercial Street. 459-6696.

Chamber Mixer at East Hill Vet Clinic: East Hill Veterinary Clinic and Lamont Patent Services host a Willits Chamber of Commerce after-hours business mixer at the clinic, 1200 East Hill Road. Tuesday, March 22 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. "Exclusive behind-the-scenes tour of East Hill's brand-new, cutting-edge facility. Join us for food, networking and fun!" For more info, contact the chamber at 459-7910 or info@willits.org.

Wednesday, March 23

Laytonville High Enchilada Cook-Off: "Do you make the best enchiladas in town? Then come enter your recipe in our Enchilada Cook-Off and win a prize. A fundraiser for Laytonville High School's Sophomore Class of 2018. Wednesday, March 23 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm at the LHS Gym. Enchilada entry fee: \$25. Dinner tickets \$10, \$5 for children; Dinner includes your choice of enchiladas, beans, rice, salad, drinks, and dessert. Tickets available from LHS sophomores. Call Regina at 707-984-0067 to enter the cook-off.

Thursday, March 24

Maundy Thursday Service: on Thursday, March 24 at 6 pm at Willits United Methodist Church, 286 School Street, across from the Grange. "You are invited to stay after the service and walk the Labyrinth." Questions: please call the church at 486-2855.

Friday, March 25

Senior Center Easter Bake Sale: Annual Easter Bake Sale at the Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. Friday, March 25: 8:30 am until sold out. "Enjoy delicious home-made goodies baked by some of our finest bakers." Donations of baked goods welcome: please call the center: 459-6826. All proceeds benefit the Outreach Program.

Good Friday Services: on Friday, March 25 at 6 pm at Willits United Methodist Church, 286 School Street, across from the Grange. "This is a community service, sponsored by the Willits Ministerial Fellowship." Questions, please call the church at 486-2855.

Photos with the Easter Bunny: from 5 to 7 pm at J.D. Redhouse. Come get your photo taken with Mr. Easter Bunny and some of his live furry friends! Digital images are just \$5 each and will be available to download online.

"Native Voices and Environmental Resistance": An evening of film to support the Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians and Round Valley Indian Tribes lawsuit against Caltrans over the Willits bypass. Friday, March 25 from 6 to 10 pm at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. \$20 or sliding scale. Phil Gregory, attorney for the tribes, will discuss the importance of the lawsuit. Films include: "Destruction of Indian Nations: the California Story," a documentary detailing the genocide committed in California against Native American tribes, narrated by Native American actor Floyd Red Crow Westerman. Spiritual leader of California AIM, Fred Short, will introduce the film. Also, "California Natives: Our Story," which documents a rich past, transformative present and hopeful future through stories told in the voices of Native Americans. Coyote Valley Tribal Chairman Michael Hunter produced the film and will speak about it. Maria Gilardin's short film "Ceremony for Pomo Ancestor Sites Destroyed by Caltrans." Will Parrish: Willits bypass resistance slideshow. Brief addresses from Michael Hunter, Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians, and Priscilla Hunter, Coyote Valley tribal representative. Sponsored by Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians and Save Our Little Lake Valley.

Brooktrails Easter Egg Hunt: Brooktrails Property Owners Association hosts the annual Easter Egg Hunt, Sunday, March 27, starting at 1 pm at OHL Redwood Grove Park, west of Clover and Birch. Rain or shine. Hunts for ages 0 to 4, and for ages 5 to 12. Bring your own baskets!

Senior Center Lunch

Week of March 21 through March 25
Monday: Chicken Enchilada Casserole
Tuesday: Pulled Pork on a Bun
Wednesday: Meat Loaf
Thursday: Polish Sausage on a Bun
Friday: Baked Chicken
Harrah Senior Center serves lunch five days per week from 11:45 am to 1 pm. 55 and older: \$5.50 per meal; under 55: \$7 per meal. Includes soup, entrée, vegetable, bread, dessert, and drink. 1501 Baechtel Road. Info: 459-6826.

Plant Your Spring Garden

Tuesday, April 5
Avenues to Wellness presents "Plant Your Spring Garden" by Commonwealth Garden team members Ananda Johnson, Keith Johnson, and Melissa Bouley. Tuesday, April 5, 5:30 to 6:30 pm at the Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. Free: donations appreciated. Refreshments. Info: 459-2777 or atworhealth@gmail.com. Visit www.avenuestowellness.org/

In its fourth year of production, Commonwealth Garden grows food for the Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital year round. The Willits climate, which can range from dry and warm winters to rain and snow in June, offers an abundance of learning opportunities. Topics covered: fall cover crops for spring fertility; orchard pruning; when and if to start seeds; bed preparation; the right time to plant ... weather permitting; necessities: Shade cloth, drip irrigation, pest management and pollinators
If you would like to volunteer at the Commonwealth Garden, please contact Ananda Johnson at 459-2777.

Adam's Restaurant, enter from Main Street only. Info: 459-9194.

Saturday, March 26

Ridgewood Ranch Spring Nature Walks: at Ridgewood "Seabiscuit" Ranch, 16200 North Highway 101, 5.5 miles south of Willits, on Saturday, March 26 at 10 am (rain cancels). Free to the public. See Saturday, March 19 listing for more details.

Shanachie Pub: Richie Blue Band: "Guitarist/Singer/Songwriter Richie Blue's blistering guitar playing and heart and soul vocals have taken him to his current status as one of the top drawing acts on the club and festival circuit" and recent inductee into "The Blues Hall of Fame." Richie Blue's "brand of music although rooted in the blues, is a blend of rock-a-billy, country swing, New Orleans swamp, and soul." Visit www.richieblue.net. Saturday, March 26, 9 pm. \$7. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant, enter from Main Street only. Info: 459-9194.

Sunday, March 27

Easter Sunday at St. John Lutheran Church, 24 Mill Creek Drive, 459-2988. Easter Breakfast at 9:30 am, Children's Egg Hunt at 10:15 am (weather permitting), and Resurrection Celebration at 11 am. "Please join us for special music, praise, and fellowship!"

Brooktrails Easter Egg Hunt: Brooktrails Property Owners Association hosts the annual Easter Egg Hunt, Sunday, March 27, starting at 1 pm at OHL Redwood Grove Park, west of Clover and Birch. Rain or shine. Hunts for ages 0 to 4, and for ages 5 to 12. Bring your own baskets!

10 Cloverfield Lane

Column | At the Movies
The Story: A resourceful young woman (Mary Elizabeth Winstead) is held hostage in an underground bunker by a brutish survivalist type (John Goodman), who just may be sane, because no matter how scary and wacky he seems, there is always the possibility that what he claims is going on outside the bunker just may be real.
My Thoughts: Tension and scares ... oh yeah! I love movies that surprise me, that ignore my expectations. This flick is suspenseful, mysterious and unpredictable. The acting is first-rate. The script gives the characters complexity and depth. Despite the fact that I'm a pretty nice guy, I enjoyed the scenes of psychological and physical terror.
Parents: Not for children. Teens and up.
Note: 92 percent positive reviews from Rotten Tomatoes. This is a good movie.
A Little Joke: (This movie) "demands to be seen before reading a single review." – The New York Times
Willitsian Daniel Essman prefers his reality attenuated by the wisdom of the imagination.

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

Ongoing Events

Willits Winter Farmers Market: from 3 to 5:30 pm every Thursday at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street. Winter produce, local meats and local grains, dinner, baked goods, gift items, chocolates, crafts, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more. Music on March 17: Richard Jeske, guitar, accompanied by Loren Herz-O'Brien on the flute; music on March 24: Dorian May, solo piano.

Free to All Creative Writing Class: Thursdays in the Sunshine Room at the Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road, at 1:30 pm. "Join us to find your inner writer." Class continues on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month.

"Less is More": Willits Center for the Arts' March show. "Less is More" opens with an artists reception, Saturday, March 5 from 6 to 9 pm. Featuring mixed-media work of Dorothy Asbury, Mya Byers, Julie Byers, Tonia Silverstein, and Cella Price. Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. Continues through March 27; gallery hours: Tuesdays and Fridays, 4 to 7 pm; Saturdays and Sundays from 12 to 3 pm. Visit <http://willitscenterforthearts.org>

The Emmental Choral: ongoing rehearsals on Wednesdays, 5 to 6:30 pm, for the Choral's 21st season, at the Little Lake Grange great hall, 291 School Street. No auditions: Open to all who love to sing.

Inner Resources Institute: three free programs at the new Inner Resource Institute, 1500 Hearst Road (at Hearst and Valley roads in the old Grace Baptist Church building). • Morning Meditation: Every morning at 6 am. • Kirtan: Every Thursday at 7:30 pm. Devotional singing and chanting led by Chinmayan. • Sunday Morning Service: 10:30 am. Satsang and fellowship consisting of a short talk on practical spirituality; meditation; Kirtan and worship; and a prayer service in which we pray for individual, family and humanity's needs. Info: 707-357-4676 or innerresourcesinstitute@yahoo.com.

The Mentoring Program: Free classes for girls in grades 6 through 10 in the Willits school system. Friday afternoons from 4 to 5 pm. Class subjects rotate: Herbs, Crafts, Yoga & Movement, Life Skills, and Cooking and Home Arts. Room 4 in the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street, the Cultivate Wellness Studio. Call Michelle Cummins for info: 972-1601.

Tuesday Wii Bowling: Every Tuesday at the Harrah Senior Center Dining Room, 1501 Baechtel Road. 1:30 to 2:30 pm. Info: 459-6826.

Tuesday Night Potluck Bingo: Potluck dinner and bingo every Tuesday at the Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. Be sure to bring a dish to share! 5 to 7 pm; \$5 buy-in; 50 cents per card. Info: 459-6826.

Willits Frontier Twirlers Square Dance Club: Monday night workshops at the Willits Center for the Arts, upstairs in the great room. Newer dancers from 7 to 8 pm; plus dancing from 8 to 9 pm. Lawrence Johnstone, caller. Guests always welcome! Info: Jenny Watts, 459-9526.

Al-Anon Meeting: Thursdays nights from 5:30 to 6:30 pm, at the Baechtel Creek Village Community Room (behind Ride-Aid at the Evergreen Shopping Center. Saturdays at 10 am at St. Francis Episcopal Church Fellowship Hall, 66 East Commercial Street. "Al-Anon Family groups are a fellowship of relatives and friends of alcoholics who share their experience strength and hope to solve their common problems. We believe that alcoholism is a family illness and that changed attitudes can aid recovery."

Drop-in Knitting Circle: Due to popular demand, the Willits Library is holding the drop-in knitting circle every Saturday of the month, from 3 to 4:30 pm at the Willits Branch Library, 390 East Commercial Street. "Bring your projects to share and show off! We will have expert knitters on board who can solve any problems and teach everyone to knit! Bring your own projects – we'll supply the coffee! Sign-ups are not necessary – everyone is welcome to drop in."

Willits Library Public Events: "Pajama Story Time" for families, Tuesdays at 7 pm. "Stories for Crawlers and Walkers," Thursdays at 11 am. Technology group for help with hand-held devices, Fridays at 1 pm. Youth Game Night, ages 10-14, Fridays from 5 to 7:30 pm. Drop-in Knitting Circle, Saturdays from 3 to 4:30 pm. 390 East Commercial Street. More info: 459-5908.

Soroptimists International of Willits: Women's service club aimed at the betterment of girls and women. Meets second and third Tuesdays of every month, noon to 1 pm, at Old Mission Pizza, 1708 South Main Street, in the back room. Women interested in community service are welcome; new members are encouraged to join at any time.

Life Changes: Discussion and support group with Linda Posner, Wednesdays from 10 to 11 am. Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road.

Volleyball Open Gym: at Baechtel Grove gym; Sundays and Tuesdays at 7 pm. Some experience desired not required. \$5 per night; first night free. Info: Jeff at 354-1850.

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.

Smoking Cessation Program: Free "Freedom from Smoking" class sponsored by the Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital. Every Wednesday at the MHM Conference Room, 1 Madrone Street, 6 to 7 pm. RSVP to Jennifer Barrett at 707-540-4208. Walk-ins are always welcome.

Kids on the Run! club for kids kindergarten through 12th grade, sponsored by the Sheriff's Activity League. Started March 12, Saturdays at 10 am at the ball fields between the Dog Park and the Mendocino County Museum. Cost for 2016: \$10, includes a T-shirt and free race entries. Questions? Contact: Michelle Kluskiewicz at 267-608-6262 or Gina Henebury at 707-485-1794.

Free Sheriff's Activity League programs: at Body Works Gym, 1511 South Main Street. Teen gym: Monday to Friday from 2:30 to 5:30 pm; Boxing: Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 6:30 pm; Karate: Kids aged 5 to 10 from 6 to 7 pm, Tweens, Teens and Adults at 7 pm. All SAL programs free to the public. Info: www.facebook.com/MendocinoCountySheriffsYouthActivitiesLeague or Mike Tobin: 354-0565.

Shanachie Pub: World Music Mondays: Sign ups start at 7:30 pm sharp. Music starts at 8 pm.

Jazz Night every second and fourth Thursday. 8 pm. No cover. "Local musicians ... take jazz standards and infuse them with funk, hip hop, world, and free form jamming. The outcome is unexplainable." Open Mic every Wednesday. 8 pm. Sign-ups start at 7 pm. Movie Night every Tuesday, 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Karaoke Night at Al's Redwood Room: Every Wednesday night, starting at 9 pm. 207 South Main Street. Info: 459-2444.
Laytonville Winter Farmers Market: Mondays, November to May, from 2:30 to 4:30 pm at Harwood Hall, 44400 Willits Avenue, Laytonville.



Photo by Gwyn Ware

Above, left: Willits Charter School students work on art projects and music during visiting artist Michael Lott's workshop. Above, right: Willits Charter School art teacher Gwyn Ware and visiting artist Michael Lott.

Below, from left: "La Luna y el Sol," by Vanessa Hernandez. Artist Michael Lott with his paintings, done with acrylic brush and acrylic pen on canvas. "Dragon Eye," by Eileah Frye.

Artistic Expressions

Artist Michael Lott visits Willits Charter for a day of creativity



Photo by Gwyn Ware



Photo by Forrest Glyer

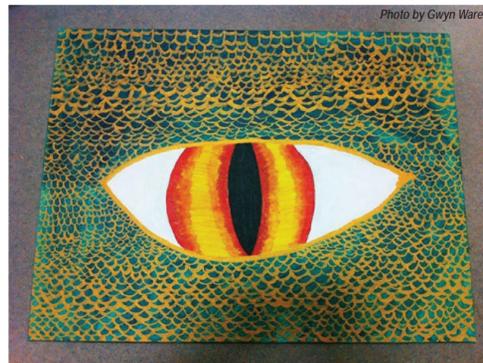


Photo by Gwyn Ware

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She plays the drums. And she's a great listener. A medical care provider who truly rocks.

Meet Kim Silva, FNP-C. Now seeing patients.

Kim Silva, FNP is a board-certified family nurse practitioner who is now seeing patients at the Redwood Medical Clinic. As a family nurse practitioner, Ms. Silva specializes in caring for patients of all ages, including, men, women and children. Ms. Silva treats many conditions and provides a wide-range of services including, sick visits, annual physical exams and management of chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension.

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The rest of Firehouse | From Page 1

but falling short of the two-thirds approval required. Some board members felt the initiative's failure resulted from a lack of education about the measure and what the LLFD does for the community in general.

"When you start looking at what the fire department does, it's incredible," said Director Patrick Charlson. "The amount of special teams we have, the amount of training [the firefighters] go through... It's pretty amazing for a small-town fire department.... Those are the kind of things we need to get out to the community, to let them know what the volunteers and our paid staff do."

Little Lake Fire Chief Carl Magann agreed, pointing out that in addition to fire calls the LLFD helps with emergencies such as hazardous material cleanups and swiftwater response rescues. "There's nothing we can't do that the state department can do," he said. "We have all the ability and the equipment."

Prior to the 2013 vote, there was a major effort to get the word out including hometown meetings and going door to door, but it just wasn't enough, directors told new director Arnie Mello, who was attending his first board meeting.

"In short, that's why I think this is a necessity to hire someone who can guide us on how to educate the people," said Charlson.

The district will pay the consultants \$4,000 out of its general fund; another \$11,000 will come from fundraising and donations.

One fundraising effort will be a June 25 barbecue as part of the city's Frontier Days celebrations. In addition to the food, the district plans to have live demonstrations by firefighters to educate attendees. Many other public safety groups and organizations from the community will be invited to attend to show support.

There wasn't much new to report regarding the fight over Proposition 172 funding, but directors did give Mello a summary of the current status. Passed in 1993, the measure increased the state sales tax by 1/2

The rest of Bypass | From Page 1

the report continued, investigators determined "several key elements were changed or missing."

These multiple deficiencies led to instability at the base of Falswork Bent 3-5, adjacent to Haehl Creek, the report stated, and were "the most probable cause of failure."

The report also noted "certification" by the "designated representative" for Flatiron West's engineer of record "may have been ineffective."

These conclusions are not that different from the more forthright language used in the July 2015 report on the falswork collapse by the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration, which concluded the falswork "was not properly designed, was not erected as per the design plans, was missing components, [and] deficiencies were not identified when inspected and signed off by the project engineer for the company erecting it."

Cal-OSHA's July 2015 report noted that "unstable ground" in the area between East Valley and East Commercial where the viaduct crosses Haehl Creek was "still being investigated," but the Caltrans report found "pad foundations and the bridge foundation were adequate"; that "Falswork Bent 3-5 did not indicate any pile movement or displacement"; and the "Caltrans Structure Representative [who arrived on site the day after the collapse] ... stated that he did not see any indication that the pad at Bent 4-2 sank into the soil."

Cement was being poured for a 150-foot section of the viaduct when the falswork collapsed just before 2:15 pm on Tuesday afternoon, January 22, 2015. Witnesses reported about 20 workers scrambling to run off the top of the span as it collapsed and spilled wet concrete into Haehl Creek, with a couple of workers "riding it down." Three workers were treated at the hospital for non-life-threatening injuries, and one Flatiron worker who was briefly trapped by the wreckage was airlifted out by CalStar helicopter with moderate to serious injuries.



Cal-OSHA levied fines for violations on all three employers at the accident site: Caltrans was fined a total of \$21,600; De Silva Gates-Flatiron West - A Joint Venture was fined a total of \$49,500; and Flatiron West, Inc. was fined a total of \$93,900.

When asked Wednesday about the cost of the collapse, cleanup and reconstruction of the falswork, Caltrans spokesman Phil Frisbie said: "It did not cost the project any extra dollars. It was the contractor's responsibility, and the contractor's insurance covered the cleanup and rebuilding."

When asked if there would be any further consequences to contractor Flatiron West for the failure to install the falswork correctly, Frisbie said he had been authorized to say: "The conclusions to our findings are found in the document [and appendixes] we have provided [which can be downloaded in full from the Caltrans' "Willits Bypass Project News" blog at www.willitsbypass.wordpress.com]. We have nothing further to add at this time."

Frisbie did confirm Caltrans was no longer occupying offices at the old AM&D property on Baechtel and East Hill roads. Caltrans personnel working on the bypass and ongoing mitigation projects are now working from the Caltrans office in Calpella.

A new and imposing fence being constructed around that property has given rise to rumors of various kinds around the community. Willits City Manager Adrienne Moore told Willits Weekly an investment group from China has purchased the building, and "a representative out of the Bay Area essentially would be the landlord" for what the city has been told will be a 3-D printer operation.

Frisbie also said Caltrans is still working out the date with the contractor for opening the bypass to traffic. "We hope to have a ribbon cutting in September, if we can do it," Frisbie said.

The rest of Pot Rules | From Page 1

Marijuana Cultivation Regulation Ordinance," revealed their proposals at Tuesday's board meeting.

The committee, comprised of supervisors Tom Woodhouse and John McCowen, formulated a list of 23 recommendations related to the county marijuana ordinance and the state Medical Marijuana Regulation and Safety Act.

"I want to be very clear," Woodhouse said, addressing supervisors and stakeholders packing the chambers. "This is just a proposal from the ad hoc committee. During this ad hoc we haven't had the opportunity to speak to the other board members and get their input."

The very first recommendation, one many stakeholders seemed pleased with, states that: "the agricultural commissioner, in collaboration with county counsel, take the lead on development of an updated cultivation ordinance, which may also include processing, testing, manufacturing, transportation, distribution and dispensing, with input from relevant county departments."

Because of the small size of the ag commission currently, and the herculean task ahead of it, there is one arena of cultivation not yet under its purview.

"We are recommending all permitting go to the ag commissioner's office with one exception, that of upper-tier growers," McCowen said. "We are recommending - for at least 2016 and possibly through 2017 - that the upper tier stays with the sheriff's office, which has expertise in administering that program and the capacity to do so."

Upper-tier cultivators would fall into permit type 2, which allows for up to 99 mature plants grown outdoors (not to exceed 10,000 square feet of total canopy size), and permit type 2b, which allows for a cultivation area of between 5,001 to 10,000 square feet within a light-deprivation structure.

When state licenses become available in 2018, all permitting authority will be transferred to the county agricultural commissioner.

Among the tasks Agricultural Commissioner Chuck Morse and his staff will be responsible for are "issuing cultivation licenses, issuing nursery licenses, developing a stout track and trace system, developing a unique identifier system for every cannabis plant that will be grown for medicinal purposes, and developing [the] tamper-evident packaging that will be required for product movement throughout the testing and supply chain, from production to final dispensing."

McCowen highlighted what he considered to be important topics for discussion, including appropriate zoning, types of permits, how to handle non-compliance issues, and - to the appreciation of stakeholders at the meeting - the formation of two new cottage permits.

The outdoor cottage permit allows for the cultivation of 25 plants, not to exceed 2,500 square feet of total canopy size. The outdoor cottage permit is not restricted by the

same zoning requirements as other permits, although cultivation must comply with current 9.31 standards for location and setback.

A cottage permit for mixed-light cultivation, otherwise known as light deprivation, allows a cultivation area of less than or equal to 2,500 square feet within a structure. Light deprivation is usually conducted under blanketed hoop houses, allowing the grower to control the light for faster yields, much like an indoor operation. Cottage permits are not restricted to specific zoning, but must comply with current 9.31 standards.

"By implementing these cottage licenses, we will help the state to protect small growers," McCowen said. "That's the intent of a number of the recommendations in here."

There is currently no cottage permit for indoor cultivation, something stakeholders urged the board to include in the final draft.

There are two other outdoor cultivation permits included in the ad hoc committee's recommendations. Type 1 permits allow 50 mature plants, not to exceed 5,000 square feet of canopy size, and will only be permitted in areas zoned for agricultural, rangeland, upland residential and rural residential land use on parcels of at least 5 acres. Type 2 permits allow a maximum of 99 plants to be grown outdoors, not to exceed 10,000 square feet of total canopy size on one premise, permitted only in the same zones as the Type 1 permit, but for parcels of at least 10 acres.

There are two permits for indoor cultivation as well - defined as "cultivation using exclusively artificial lighting" - which would only be permitted in industrially zoned areas. The type 1A permit allows for less than or equal to 5,000 square feet of cultivation area within a structure. Permit Type 2A allows for between 5,001 and 10,000 square feet of cultivation area within a structure.

Justin Calvino, with the Heritage Initiative Committee of 2016, criticized the manner in which zoning requirements have been proposed.

In a letter to the board, Calvino wrote: "We recommend the board not accept the zoning recommendations as specified by the ad hoc committee.... Zoning and parcel size requirements as listed in the ad hoc committee's chart are restrictive and counterproductive to the development of the cannabis industry in our county. Specifically, limiting indoor cultivation to industrial zones, for example, will discourage compliance and participation, especially in the coastal areas."

Several stakeholders, who identified themselves as medical cannabis researchers, strongly urged the board to consider a third outdoor permit type that removes plant limits.

One such advocate was Tracy Ryan of "Cannakids," an organization currently working with researchers around the world to help kids with epilepsy and cancer.

"We need more than 99 plants for what we're doing," said

Ryan, whose daughter, after suffering from a brain tumor, was significantly aided from the use of cannabis. "We have to study at least 150 strains to see which of these strains kill cancer in every form. We're asking you to consider a medical license to be added to this legislation so people like ourselves, who are trying to save the lives of children and adults alike, have the ability to do the research we need to do and move forward with cannabis as an actual pharmaceutical medicine."

Overall, the feedback from cultivators to the board of supervisors, specifically the ad hoc committee, was positive.

"Cal Growers would like to commend Supervisors Woodhouse and McCowen," said California Growers Association board chairman Casey O'Neill. "The recommendations they make are a significant policy breakthrough for Mendocino County."

Among the changes groups like CGA are asking the council to consider include a timeline of no later than June 1 of this year for issuing permits. "This will ensure local farmers do not have to operate another growing season without permits," said O'Neill.

CGA also calls for an amnesty program that would waive penalties to growers who lack building permits, giving those growers time to acquire them.

Supervisor Dan Hamburg voiced his support for several of the growers' ideas regarding changes to the proposed recommendations, including an indoor cultivation cottage permit.

"I would like to see a cottage industry permit to allow for indoor cultivation for up to 2,500 square feet," said Hamburg.

Regarding zoning and parcel size requirements, Hamburg said: "I don't think we want to zone this activity out of existence. We want to figure out ways people can be good neighbors and still encourage an industry that has been beneficial and can be way more beneficial to our county going forward."

Supervisors sounded hopeful as far as crafting an official rules and regulations program by June 1, but as Woodhouse emphasized: "It's more important to get it right, than fast."

All the documents reviewed during the meeting, including the ad hoc committee's list of recommendations and a chart laying out can be found at www.co.mendocino.ca.us/bos/meetings/PublishedMeetings.htm. Click the "03/15/2016 9:00 am" link in the left column to open the agenda summary for the March 15 meeting. Scroll down to item 6b, click the link, and links to all the documents will appear in the right-hand columns: "Permit Types," "License Types" and "Cultivation Regulation" (the text of the 9.31 ordinance), and more.

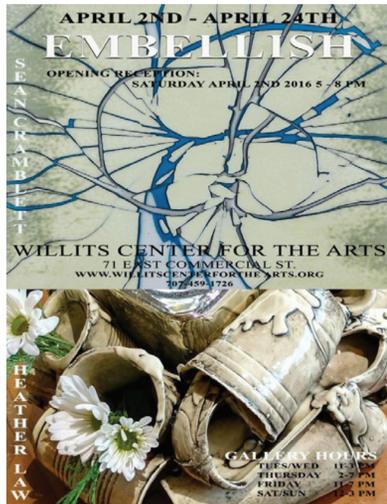


Above, left: Mary Kelly, left, and Holly Madrigal, right, the new staffers at Willits Center for the Arts.

Photo by Jennifer Poole

Above, right: Poster for April show at WCA "Embellish."

At right, below: The Willits Center for the Arts building, located at 71 East Commercial Street.



The rest of **WCA** | From Page 10

"This art center is, in my opinion, one of the jewels of Mendocino County," Kelly said. "And Willits – being the heart of Mendocino County" – as it says on the arch, has a key role to play in making Mendocino County one of the world's great tourist destinations."

Kelly already has connections with artists all around the county: She and her husband collect art, and "there's no better way to meet artists than buying art," she said. Kelly invites artists who'd like to be considered to be a part of one of her themed shows – her first show will open in July during the Frontier Days Celebration – to come by the art center and fill out a card for her files.

One of the goals of the new WCA board of directors is to increase sales of art shown at the center, Madrigal said, as well as to increase the diversity of the artists who exhibit there. One planned project will be to offer docent training to art center volunteers, which should also help keep the doors open longer hours.

Collaboration with other Willits organizations and arts organizations in other areas of Mendocino County is part of the game plan. Madrigal mentioned expanding art classes (currently there's a life drawing class taught by Devi Chase, that's been going for 13 years), bringing in high school students, collaborating with the Mendocino County Museum and the Noyo Theatre, and cross-promoting events like "Draw 'til You Drop" (in Willits) and "Pastels on the Plaza" (in Ukiah).

One big priority is to increase rentals of the beautiful "Great Room" upstairs, "one of the most beautiful spaces in Willits," Madrigal said, which can be rented for private or public events "at very affordable rates." The art classroom is also available to rent, and a grant is being written for lockers for teachers and students. Madrigal plans to apply for other grant funding, too.

Getting new members on board is important too – "you don't have to be an artist to be a member of WCA," Madrigal said. "Anybody in the community who wants to support the center can join."

Although the art center's interior is beautiful – Kelly decorated the Great Room for the recent Willits Chamber of Commerce Mixer held at the center, and it was "stunning," said Chamber director Lynn Kennelly. But the exterior needs some work. A "Let It Shine" Indiegogo campaign to raise funds for repairs, a new flag and awning, and a paint job will launch on Sunday, April 10, with the first of several campaign events at the center, a "Poetry Party," from 2 to 4:30 pm, featuring well-known Willits poets Mary Korte, Dan Roberts, Linda Noel, Bill Ray and more, and music by Kim J. Norton, guitar, and the Emandal Choral.

The Willits Arts Center is located at 71 East Commercial Street. Regular gallery hours – in addition to Madrigal's hours – are Thursdays and Fridays from 4 to 7 pm, and Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 3 pm. Visit www.willitscenterforthearts.org or call 459-1726 for more information, or check the "Willits Center For The Arts" page on Facebook.

The rest of **Petition** | From Page 1

and used exclusively for the planning, preparation, development, furnishing and maintenance of county-designated facilities that will provide mental health services," according to a press release. "No funds may be used for other incidental but necessary purposes, including staffing of such a facility."

According to Allman, 10 percent of the funds raised from the tax increase will be used "for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a public safety/mental health training facility, which will be used for training first responders and mental health professionals in proper and modern mental health methods of treatment techniques."

The ballot measure will also provide for the establishment of an 11-member oversight committee.

Allman's group needs 2,502 valid signatures of registered Mendocino County voters to place the initiative on the November ballot.

If passed, Allman estimates the tax will raise about \$4.5 million a year, or \$22 million over the five-year term of the measure. In a perfect world, he added, this should be enough to construct a building capable of housing all four vital mental health needs the county currently lacks: a 72-hour, lock-down med-psych facility, a crisis/residential facility, a drop-in facility to provide outpatient care, and a drug rehab or alcohol and other drug treatment center.

"I am really excited about this," Allman said. "For the past 10 years, the county has been telling me the reason why we don't have anything like this is the money. I am trying to get past the money part, so we can create a mental health center that will allow us to build the kind of mental health system that I think everyone here knows we need."

County receives \$500K from state

The same morning Allman announced his intention to take the mental health bill by the horns, supervisors authorized Mental Health Director Jenine Miller to accept \$500,000 from the California Health Facilities Financing Authority as payment of the third round of Senate Bill 82, the Investment in Mental Health Wellness grant program.

Miller will use the funds to investigate how a mental health crisis/residential treatment facility might be established in Mendocino County.

She said funds will be used to pay staff to examine where such a facility might be located and how it might be supported financially.

Second District Supervisor John McCowen asked

Miller if she had any sense as to whether or not MediCal receipts might be sufficient to allow the county to operate the facility. Miller replied she has been in contact with other counties that have crisis/residential treatment facilities, and they have managed to keep the doors open using ordinary billing techniques.

"They are able to sustain it using MediCal and Mental Health Services Act [dollars], so if their model can work for us, then, yes, we would be able to sustain it here," Miller said.

A problem with the grant is that all funds are supposed to be expended by June 30 of this year. If they are not spent, the county will have to give the unspent part of the grant back. However, Miller said she would apply for an extension on the spend-down deadline.

"There's no guarantee we will get it," she said.

Howard option still alive
Ace Barash, director of inpatient care at the new Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital, told Willits Weekly that at least two additional plans are afoot locally to establish mental health facilities in Mendocino County.

Barash said a group of medical professionals are actively investigating the old Howard Hospital site. The group has reached the conclusion that Senate Bill 1953, which mandates earthquakes retrofits for older hospitals, does not apply to hospitals when they are being used for mental health purposes.

Barash said the Howard option "is still on the table. It is a possibility that is being explored."

He also noted there are two types of mental health facilities: a "med-psych hospital" and a crisis residential hospital. Med-psych hospitals are locked facilities where people can be kept against their will. Crisis/residential facilities are not locked. People can come in when they feel a crisis threatening and can leave when they are feeling better.

Barash said the two types of facilities are not generally co-located.

"There have been studies that show crisis residential treatment can be very effective at preventing escalation of symptoms," Barash said. "Only 3 percent of those people who receive treatment at a crisis residential facility need to go to a med-psych facility."

Barash added another local group is exploring the option of siting a crisis residential mental health facility on Perkins Street in Ukiah, in the building that formerly housed the Sizzler steakhouse.

Willits Center for the Arts hires manager and curator

The Willits Center for the Arts has hired two professional staffers, new manager Holly Madrigal and new curator Mary Kelly, to help revitalize the center and expand its work in the community and beyond.

"It's so exciting," said WCA board president June Ruckman, "to have these two really high-energy women taking over not only the running of the center, but curating the shows also."

Madrigal is well-known in Willits as a city councilmember and once "the youngest mayor in America"; she will be working at the center – helping to keep the gallery doors open for extended hours – on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 11 am to 3 pm.

This Tuesday morning, Madrigal had the pleasure of showing off the WCA to a Willits resident who stopped by after seeing the open door, who said he'd been living in Willits since 1978 but had never visited the art center before.

Kelly, who grew up in Laytonville and now lives south of Willits, has been involved in making and learning about art since she was 5 years old, thanks to her kindergarten teacher Susan Bradley, who took Kelly under her wing, art-wise. "By the time I was 7, I'd been to every gallery in San Francisco and all of the museums," Kelly said.

Kelly's experience includes being on the board of the Mendocino County Museum, where she was mentored by then-curator, Rebecca Snelsetlaar; earning a double major from Mendocino College in Fine Art and History (specializing in art history); and working as a docent at the college gallery and the Grace Hudson Museum.

"Curating is my passion," she said, and she is looking forward to being able to "up the game" at the WCA, as far as expanding the roster of exhibiting artists, making it more attractive to the "world-class art creators" in the Willits area to exhibit their work at the WCA, and bringing in visitors.

Jennifer Poole
Editor & Reporter
jennifer@willitsweekly.com

Read the rest of **WCA** | Over on Page 11

The rest of **Derby** | From Page 3

the track, it's considered good to race.

There are many websites on the internet dedicated to Pinewood Derby car racing, including tips on how to build a fast car. Since the cars move by the force of gravity, the less friction your car creates, the faster it will go. Tips to lessening friction involve lubricating the axles and wheel bores, making sure your car goes straight and doesn't wobble on the track, and getting your car to weigh as close to the maximum allowed 5 ounces as possible. The heavier it is, the faster it will go.

According to Lions Club President and Scout Master Verd VanBezooyen, the Willits Boy Scouts have been conducting their own Pinewood Derby since 1995, when he built the wooden track they use today. The derby itself is much older.

"The derby became part of the program for scouting back in the 1950s," said VanBezooyen. "Even when I was a kid in the '60s, we were racing pine cars."

This year marks the 65th anniversary of the Willits Pack 42.

"As the Scoutmaster, I am really glad to see the pack growing," said Kara Watson. "Our Boy Scouts had a great time participating and helping out with the event."

To find more information about Pinewood Derby cars, go to www.pinewoodpro.com.

To find out more about Willits Cub Scout Pack 42, call Jennifer at 841-7679; for Boy Scout Troop 42, call Verd at: 489-5364.

The rest of **Artistic** | From Page 8

"I've been branching out slowly but surely from Blackbird to try to bring what I bring to those students there to the community around here," he said. "This is a little bit lighter [than Blackbird], but it's still wonderful and still communicating the same ideas."

A big part of that is encouraging the students to find their inner voice and to be unafraid to share it. He wants to tell all the kids that "you are something of value. You are something worth giving to the world, so embrace that."

Teacher Gwyn Ware was glad to have Lott visit, as she and the charter school like to give the students a wide variety of activities to help them find their passions and interests. In addition to the painting and ceramics classes, there's a gardening project at the school on the weekends which many kids voluntarily attend; an annual "museum hopping" field trip to San Francisco; and student cooks who make food based on the type of art they're studying (currently Mayan), just to name a few of the offerings.

Some of Ware's students also enter the Sip Some Soup competition, getting many of their ingredients from the school garden. They've placed third two years in a row.

With this holistic approach, the students can find interesting ways to use different creative tools for different projects. "On nice days, we'll go out to the garden and paint or draw," said Ware. "And they do garden art. They'll paint rocks, or we'll make ceramic wind chimes. I try to meet them where they're at and where they want to explore."

The school is also planning to start a livestock program now that they've got their garden fence built, which the senior boys built last year. They're going to start with rabbits and chickens, which are often in the class as models to draw and paint as well.

On this day, Lott brought in some of his own paintings to share with the class, which he said are largely inspired by a condition called "synesthesia." This is defined as when one of the senses simultaneously and involuntarily stimulates another sense, which for him manifests as "perceiving sound in music visually."

"[I thought] if I could find a way to paint this, that would be incredible, because what I'm seeing is absolutely beautiful with this music," said Lott, who plays flute and classical guitar, and studied music theory for years. "So a couple years ago I tried to just start depicting what I was seeing and this is kind of what came out."

He uses his art as an example of the type of expression the students should be seeking. "The whole thing with my art is I want to take it, show it, and also have the message that this is my treasure, this is what I found. I want other people to find their own. So not only do I want people to take this in visually, but I want them to take in on some level the message that I'm trying to communicate through my work."

To learn more about Michael Lott and his work, visit www.michaellottart.com.

The rest of **Hut** | From Page 1

we've been meeting there every Wednesday night for the last 20 years," VanBezooyen said, adding the building is in need of some TLC. "Twenty years ago the Lions Club put a roof up, and this year it's leaking and in need of repairs."

Among other things, the proposal asks the city to allow the Lions Club, in conjunction with Boy Scout Troop 42, to make all necessary repairs at no cost to the city.

"We have some good ideas to make it a usable facility," said VanBezooyen. "Not just for us, but for other organizations in the community."

According to the proposal, "All repairs and improvements will be the responsibility of the Willits Lions Club and Troop 42."

Initially those repairs and improvements involve the following: 1. Make electrical wiring repairs to the building. 2. Replace rotten boards on the roof and re-roof the hut. 3. Exterior repairs (siding, trim and paint). 4. Remodel the bathroom (ADA compliant).

The long-term goals are quite a bit more ambitious and consist of the following projects: 1. Remodeling the interior. 2. Installing a small commercial kitchen. 3. Adding an extension to the east side of the hut to provide walk-in refrigeration and additional storage. 4. Install exposed ducting heating and cooling system. 5. Install an ice machine. 6. Fence in the east portion of the property for equipment storage.

Along with equipment storage, VanBezooyen explained the fencing would be used to park the Scout Troop's trailer, and to protect a larger portion of the park from potentially criminal behavior by loiterers.

"In the summertime you'll find picnic tables [moved behind the building], used for all sorts of things I don't think is appropriate for a city park," VanBezooyen said. "It would be nice to get some control in that area."

Building official John Sherman

echoed the importance of allowing the organizations to make improvements to the Scout Hut.

"I think this is a great proposal," Sherman told the council. "We're at a point with this building where we have to decide to bring it back or let it go. It's in some serious need of repair and maintenance."

Sherman added it would be an inspiration and a source of pride for the Boy Scouts to be able to take help take care of the building.

"I think it would be a tremendous opportunity for the scouts themselves to put some direct effort into this building," said Sherman, who used to be involved with scouting. "As they grow older, it's going to be in their hearts. It's one of those things that will encourage scouting to continue and grow."

Mayor Bruce Burton sounded optimistic about the city and the Lions Club reaching an agreement in the near future.

"I'm happy to see you guys taking the initiative," Burton said. "You are perfect tenants for that place, and we'd like to try and get it done."

While the city council expressed good wishes towards the proposal, no action was taken at last week's meeting.

"This is just a presentation tonight," said City Manager Adrienne Moore, "to pave the way forward to bringing back a lease agreement similar to the one we just approved for the Willits Center for the Arts. Staff has been working on this with the Lions Club on putting it together."

VanBezooyen spelled out the ultimate goal of preserving and improving the Scout Hut: "Our vision for the Scout Hut is to always keep it in the theme of scouting and yet develop a facility that can support the community in the event of a disaster or any other needs the community may have."

To learn more about this and other Lions Club activities, call Verd VanBezooyen at 489-5364.



Thursday, March 17th

HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY

SUPER SENIORS DAY!

BINGO AT 11A, 12P FOR \$100 CASH AND 1P FOR \$150 CASH FOR EACH GAME WINNER.
PLAYERS CLUB MEMBERS MUST HAVE EARNED MINIMALLY 50 POINTS TO RECEIVE A BINGO CARD FOR THE 11A, 12P & 1P BINGO GAMES.

BINGO AT 7P, 8P (\$200 EACH GAME), 9P & 10P (\$250 EACH GAME)
PLAYERS CLUB MEMBERS MUST HAVE EARNED MINIMALLY 70 POINTS (THROUGHOUT THE DAY) TO RECEIVE A BINGO CARD FOR THE 7P, 8P, 9P & 10P BINGO GAMES.

BINGO CARDS CAN START BEING ISSUED AT 10A FOR THE 11A GAME, AND 6P FOR THE 7P GAME. THE 12P, 8P, 9P & 10P CARDS WILL BE ISSUED AFTER THE EARLIER GAME HAS ENDED.

IF TWO CUSTOMER'S CLAIM THE WIN TOGETHER, THE PRIZE AMOUNT IS "SPLIT" BETWEEN THE TWO WINNERS.

50% DISCOUNT FOOD COUPON ISSUED
(TO BE USED FOR THAT DAY ONLY) WHEN THE CUSTOMER HAS EARNED MINIMALLY 50 POINTS FROM 10A TO 7P.

5X POINTS FROM 10P TO 12A.

For all the games, there will be a "Second Chance Win"!!!

After a confirmed bingo for these two games (and the winning customer has been processed), the game will continue until a second "Bingo" is won, and the "Second Chance Win" customer will win \$50 Cash for the 11A, 12P & 1P game and \$100 Cash for the 7P, 8P, 9P & 10P games.

The "Second Chance Win" opportunity will be announced before each of the specific games.

Management reserves all rights to cancel or alter any promotion with little or no notice.

SHERWOOD VALLEY CASINO

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Above, left: Virginia, Diana and Leslie of the Bean Go's. Above, right: Relay For Life's chili team with their prize for "Crookedest" team. From left: Liz Gardner, Lois Fluke, Kathy Tobin and Jennifer Sookne. At right: Contestants at the 2016 Senior Center Chili Cook-off. Below: "Miss Chili Pepper" Martha Morgan will be 92 years old this summer.



Photos by Rachel Belvin

Hot and spicy chili for a rainy night

Harrah Senior Center's Chili Cook-off

Those Willits "hillbillies" sure know how make some hot chili – the Hillbilly Pitts team of Michael and Karen Pitts went home with the award for "hottest chili" again this year.

Another repeat winner at the Harrah Senior Center's 9th annual Chili Cook-off was the Relay for Life team, which won the "Crookedest" team award. Just like last year, the Relayers came up with the best bribes – including brownies! – for the judges, Chief Gerry Gonzalez and Ann Alumbaugh.

And the "People's Choice" award was again awarded to the Bean-Go's team, for their Buffalo Wing Chili, the most popular chili last year. The Bean Go's – Leslie, Virginia, Diana and "Miss Chili Pepper 1924" Martha Morgan – take their name from the first Sunday Bingo parties at the center every month. Their colorful table won the "Best Decorated" award, as well.

The judges choose the chili made by the infamous Black Bart Gang as their favorite this year.

The funds raised by this annual event help support the Harrah Senior Center's Outreach Program, which provides help for seniors, disabled people and others in need of just about any kind of service or referral.

– Jennifer Poole



Above, from left: The Black Bart Gang – did the size of those greenbacks have anything to do with their "Best Chili" win? Willits Police Chief Gerry Gonzalez accepts a brownie bribe from Relayer Jennifer Sookne. Jerry Turner and his helper with their chili entry. Below from left: Relayers Liz Gardner, Jennifer Sookne, Kathy Tobin, and Lois Fluke at their table. Members of the Little Lake Fire Department's chili team. The team from Yokum's Body Shop.

Photos by Rachel Belvin



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You could win FREE gas for a year. Receive one entry for every five gallons of gas purchased or 150 points earned in the mini casino on March 19 from 10am to 4:30pm. Drawing at 5pm.

HOWL YEAH!

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Photos by Maureen Moore



Above, left: Shawna Handschug smiles from inside The Book Juggler's windows with her daughters: 3-month-old Alaska and 2-year-old River.

Above, top: Roxie catches up on some cat-themed reading. Above: 3-month-old Sam Munderloh wasn't too enthusiastic - yet - about being in the reading window.

Far left: Ella Garman enjoys a tropical drink while reading her book.

Left: Grady Fonsen smiles from under his straw hat.



Return of the Reading Window

Come read at The Book Juggler through March

Come catch a beachy vibe and relax in the striped lounge in the windows of The Book Juggler. The local bookstore is once again celebrating National Reading Month in March by offering book lovers a chance to read in the Main Street window. Call The Book Juggler to schedule a time slot - it's free! - anytime between now and the end of the month. The Book Juggler is open Monday through Saturday from 10 am to 6 pm and Sunday from noon to 5 pm. They are located at 182 South Main Street and can be reached at 459-4075. For more information, check them out online at www.thebookjuggler.com or on Facebook under "The Book Juggler."

- Maureen Moore



Far left: River Handschug-Perry takes a relaxing midday break to catch up on some reading at The Book Juggler.

At left: Grady Fonsen also enjoyed some ukulele time, completing the tropical atmosphere in the reading window.

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Sat/Sun: 12:15, 3:00, 5:45 & 8:30pm
Mon-Thurs: 4:45 & 7:30pm

ZOOPTOPIA
(PG) 1 hr 48 mins
Fri: 5:30 & 8:00pm
Sat/Sun: 12:30, 3:00, 5:30 & 8:00pm
Mon-Thurs: 4:30 & 7:00pm

10 CLOVERFIELD LANE
(PG13) 1 hr 45 mins
Fri: 6:20 & 8:45pm
Sat/Sun: 1:20, 3:45, 6:20 & 8:45pm
Mon-Tues: 3:45 & 6:45pm
Wed: 3:45pm only

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(PG13) 2 hrs 31 mins
SPECIAL PREVIEWS
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Advanced tickets on sale now!

Movie Times for 3/18 thru 3/24

This Week's Tightwad Tuesday Titles are in RED - All tickets: \$5

Crossword Puzzle & Sudoku

PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PAGE B7

		1	5						
		3		4		2			
				8			4		
				9	1			4	
						6	2		
	2			4			9		
9						8			7
				7					
6	5				1				

Level: Intermediate

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!

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10				
11					12						13	14	15	
16					17			18						
19				20	21			22	23				24	
25							26					27		
28						29				30				
				31	32					33				
	34	35	36						37					
38						39	40	41						
42					43						44	45	46	47
48				49					50	51				
52					53				54					
55		56					57					58		
59					60	61						62		
					63							64		

CLUES ACROSS

- Birds
- Quills
- Coniferous tree
- Type of vessels
- Used for baking or drying
- Promotion of product or service
- Many wombs
- 'On the Waterfront' actor
- Air conditioning
- Heart condition
- Curved shapes
- The 7th letter of the Greek alphabet
- Let it stand
- Famous actor
- Mated
- High and low are types of these
- Marsupial
- African nation (Fr.)
- Huge
- Mountainous area in Puerto Rico
- Crooked
- Canadian law enforcers (abbr.)
- Neat and smart in appearance
- Intent

CLUES DOWN

- Olfactory sensations
- Bon ___
- Turn up
- Bright
- Thick piece of something
- Cause to absorb water
- Morning
- 0 degrees C.
- Dull, heavy sounds
- Eisaku __, Japanese Prime Minister
- Tellurium
- In an angry way
- Homopterous insect
- Above
- Sodium
- Aoris' father
- (Greek myth.)
- Their ring receipts
- Periods of history
- South Dakota
- Mammal genus
- Scotland's longest river
- Potato state
- ___ City, OK 74641
- Connected with touch
- Molding
- High-energy physics
- Of I
- Small pieces of bread
- Third day in Armenian calendar
- They accompany the leader
- 1,000 grams (kilogram)
- Felis domesticus
- Large, flightless birds
- Felt deep affection for
- Suffer death
- Private rendezvous (pl.)
- Not the winner
- Touchdown
- Ancient Egyptian sun god
- Portuguese parish
- Aromatic oil
- Not down
- Mister
- Barium

LAWN WORD SEARCH

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

AERATION	DESICCANT	HERBICIDE	PESTS
ANTS	DRAINAGE	IRRIGATION	RESEEDING
BROADLEAF	DROUGHT	LANDSCAPE	SOD
BROWN	EDGING	MOLES	SPRINKLER
CLAY	FERTILIZER	MOSS	THATCH
CLOD	FESCUE	MOWING	TOLERANT
CLOVER	FOUNDATION	MULCH	TRAMPLE
COMPOST	GERMINATION	ORGANIC	TURF
CRABGRASS	GRUBS	OSMOSIS	WEEDS

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COLUMN | Yokum's Community Mash-Up

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WPD Activity Report

March 6 to March 12

Prepared by WPD Sgt. Jake Donahue

The officers of the Willits Police Department handled 167 incidents this week.

Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

March 6

11:30 pm: Officers responded to a reported domestic battery and vandalism at a residence in the 10 block of Northbrook Way.

March 7

4 pm: Officers responded to the area of the Willits watershed to assist the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office with a death investigation.

7 pm: Officers initiated an investigation of a reported theft from a business in the 1400 block of South Main Street.

7 pm: Officers responded to the 1400 block of South Main Street to contact a subject who was reportedly causing a disturbance on the Greyhound bus. Officers contacted the subject, PYLE, Douglas, 64, of Eureka, and discovered he was the subject of an outstanding Mendocino County warrant, for which he was arrested.

9:10 pm: Officers responded to a reported domestic battery at a residence in the 1200 block of Locust Street.

9:20 pm: HALE, Orren, 54, of Willits was arrested in the 1200 block of Locust Street pursuant to an outstanding Mendocino County warrant.

March 8

8 am: Officers responded to a reported theft in the 10 block of Marcela Drive.

11:30 pm: Officers initiated an investigation into a reported

violation of a domestic violence restraining order in the 400 block of McKinley Street.

March 9

11:45 am: Officers initiated a child abuse investigation at a residence in the 100 block of South Lenore Street.

1:20 pm: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance at a residence in the 1700 block of South Main Street. During their investigation it was alleged that during an argument, FLOWERS, Larry, 74, of Willits twisted the victim's arm, pushed her, and grabbed her by the hair. Flowers was placed under arrest pursuant to 243(e)(1) PC (Domestic Battery).

3:15 pm: Officers responded to a contact about a subject who was reportedly causing a disturbance in the 800 block of South Main Street. When they arrived, they contacted SANDERS, Thomas, 53, of Willits. Officers determined Sanders was unable to provide for his own care due to his level of intoxication and placed him under arrest pursuant to 647(f) PC.

5 pm: Officers responded to a reported trespassing in the 800 block of Railroad Avenue. When they arrived they contacted MATHISON, Russell, 26, of Santa Rosa, amongst a group of several other subjects. Mathison was found to be the subject of an outstanding Sonoma County warrant.

8 am: Officers responded to a reported theft in the 10 block of Marcela Drive.

11:30 pm: Officers initiated an investigation into a reported



OBITUARY | Gary Magratten

Gary John Magratten of Willits passed away March 11, 2016 at the age of 65. He was born in New York on December 19, 1950 to Gregory and Dorothy Magratten. He and Margaret Williams were married July 19, 1975 in Sodus, New York, near Lake Ontario.

A man of many skills, Gary worked as a carpenter, mason, building contractor, and in his later years, a researcher and developer of alternative energy. Gary built a love song of a house for himself and his beloved wife, Margaret. He also built about 40 other homes in Brooktrails. He loved to build magnificent things, and to swim in the ocean.

Gary was a man who loved to serve and was a former member of the Brooktrails Volunteer Fire Department and a volunteer at Brookside Elementary School and at Willits Daily Bread, with his daughter Anne Marie. He was an avid supporter of the orphanage, Casa Hogar de Ninos in Guatemala.

Gary's devoted family consists of his loving wife of 40 years, Margaret Magratten; daughter, Anne Marie Magratten; mother, Dorothy Magratten; sister, Darcy (James) Magratten; brother, Brooks (Paige) Magratten; uncle and aunt, William (Carol) Russell; aunt Linda Russell; sisters-in-law: Barbara (James) Halbert, Jeanette Williams Housecamp, and Anne (Michael) Montgomery; and many loving and amazing cousins, nieces and nephews.

He is predeceased by his father, Gregory Magratten; uncle, "Hank" Russell; and aunt and uncle, Betty (John) Nolan.

There will be a private family service in celebration of Gary's life.

Arrangements under the care and direction of Anker-Lucier Mortuary.

Read the rest of WPD Over on Page B7



Photo by Rod Coats

Gorgeous Articus

Articus is a 1-year-old neutered male mixed-breed dog who currently weighs 37 pounds. Articus is a gorgeous guy! He is very sweet and slightly shy, which we imagine will change once he knows he is safe and loved. He is also house-trained, which is a big bonus! He has lived with other dogs, but seems choosy about his canine friends, so a meet-and-greet with other dogs in his potential home is recommended.

We know he doesn't like cats! This young beauty will grow into a loving and loyal companion! Articus really loves his people, so it is hard for him when he is not with them. His ideal home would be one where his humans are not gone for long periods of time.

The Ukiah Animal Shelter is located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah, and our adoption hours are Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm and Wednesday from 10 am to 6 pm. We have many wonderful dogs and cats, awaiting their forever homes here. To view photos and bios of more of our wonderful adoptable animals, please visit our website: www.mendoshelterpets.com or visit our shelter during shelter hours. More info about adoptions: 467-6453.



Photo by S. Coffman Photography

Shorthair Sparky

This is Sparky, a 2-year-old male purebred German Shorthair. He is waiting for his new forever home! His friend Beans, who is a female, 10-month-old German Shorthair is also here (not pictured), waiting for her new people. We are now taking applications for both of these wonderful dogs, and we cannot wait for you to meet them!

The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County, where you can come visit, play with and/or adopt dogs and cats, is open to prospective adopters from 1 to 5 pm, Wednesday through Friday, and from 11 am to 3 pm, on Saturday and Sunday. 9700 Uva Drive in Redwood Valley (right down the street from the Broller). Info: 707-485-0123 or hsimc@pacific.net or visit www.mendohumanesociety.com.

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Photo by Hollie Nass

Congrats | Birth Announcement

Lindsey Rose Lucier

Lindsey Rose Lucier was born February 27, 2016. She weighed 8 pounds, 4.8 ounces, and was 20 inches long. She is welcomed by her parents, Sandy and Louis Lucier, and her big sister Alison Shuard.

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Raging Water

Eel River is full of water after storms

Water was rushing and whirling at several scenic mile markers out Covelo Road on Sunday, including river hot spots 1247 and 1313. Willits' Matthew Jennison was able to capture a few photos of the refreshing sight while out on a "River Day - Winter Edition" with two of his kids, Gracie and Xander. "The photos don't even do it justice," said Jennison. "I wanted the kids to get to see the Eel River while she's flowing!" The huge amount of water that has fallen over this winter season is evident in these photos, and hopefully will yield many "River Day - Summer Edition" opportunities long into the summer.

At top, left: At mile marker 1247, the waterfalls were spilling over on to the road. At top, right: Water snakes around rocks in the river.

Above: At mile marker 1313, the adventurous group posed for a waterfall selfie, from left: Xander, Gracie and Matt.

Below, left: The river was rushing under the Dos Rios bridge.

Below, right: The raging Eel River.



Photos by Matt Jennison



Cupcake Wars 2016

A little rain didn't faze a group of bakers who braved the weather to attend the third annual Cupcake Wars event last weekend at the Willits Community Center. The event is held as a fundraiser for the Willits Booster Club, which helps to financially support activities and sports programs at Willits High School.

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Bakers came and displayed their cupcakes for the public and judges to taste. Judges Holly Madrigal, Robert Chavez and Brad Walton tasted, and awards were given at the end of the event.

"A donation table was set up to take the place of two contestants who were unable to participate, so they donated cupcakes for the Boosters to sell," explained one of the event coordinators, Bridgett Summers. "Cambria Milani donated lemon cupcakes, and Anne Nava donated two kinds that were both very yummy!"

Best Tasting Cupcake went to the Junior Booster Club - whose table was manned by Daisy Barrett, Karen Hernandez

At top, from left: Leslie Campuzano and Sabrina Garcia take money at the ticket table. Alondra Campuzano, an eager shopper, shows off her box of cupcakes. Voting for People's Choice was as simple as dropping a ticket into one of the voting bags.

Above: The judges - Robert Chavez, Holly Madrigal and Brad Walton - sample cupcakes.

Above, right: The Junior Booster Table and winners of Best Tasting Cupcake, including from left, back row: Karen Hernandez and Daisy Barrett, and front row: Isabella Lopez, Yuseli Campuzano and Alondra Campuzano.

At right: Best Decorated Table and People's Choice winners Katie Summers and Nicole Coughlin.

Below, from left: Emily holds a cupcake made by herself and her mom, Diana Gomez. Kara Watson holds her vanilla cupcake entry. Kaliee Orsi holds one of her lavender honey cupcakes which won for Best Decorated.

Desiree Milani and Omar Diaz pose at the donation table.

Photos by Maureen Moore

Read the rest of Cupcake Over on Page B6



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Easter Bunny & Friends

Return to Willits on Friday, March 25 for photos

Get ready for Easter with the chance to meet the Easter Bunny and snuggle with his fluffy friends! Live bunnies and Mr. EB himself will be at J.D. Redhouse from 5 to 7 pm on Friday, March 25. Bring your kids, your siblings, your husband, or your friendly pet! Local photographer Maureen Moore will be offering digital images for just \$5 each, and they will be available to download online. Monies raised from the event will be split 50/50 with the Little Lake Fire Department. If you attended last year's event at the Little Lake Fire Department, photos are still online and available to download at: <http://photographress.zenfolio.com/easterbunny2015>.

At left: The Easter Bunny and his friends arrived at the Little Lake Fire Department for photos; this year, come see them at J.D. Redhouse.

At right: A young Madison Lawrence snuggled with some of the Easter Bunny's friends several years ago.

Photos by Maureen Moore



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