

Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

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A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

Donations Accepted Edition No. 398

Thursday, April 15, 2021

Water availability is the next county crisis

Jennifer Poole
Editor & Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors heard dire forecasts about water availability and California's ongoing drought at their meeting Tuesday, at a workshop organized by the board's ad hoc water committee, First District Supervisor Glenn McGourty and Second District Supervisor Mo Mulheren.

"I'd like to report that our next county crisis has arrived – we're barely out of COVID and here comes

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

BOS encourages written comment for April 19 cannabis meeting

Submitted by the
Mendocino County
Executive Office

At the special meeting of the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors on Monday, April 19, the Cannabis Cultivation and Cannabis Facilities Ordinances will be considered.

Due to the high level of public interest on these matters, it is anticipated that the board may not have sufficient time to hear from all speakers who sign up. Although the board has scheduled a special meeting for these two items, early indications are that there may be more people wishing to speak on

Read the rest of **Comments**
Over on Page 4

County announces reduction in vaccine allocation

Submitted by the
Mendocino County
Executive Office

On the evening of April 7, the California Department of Public Health announced significant vaccine allocation changes. Unfortunately, the State of California is receiving a reduced supply of COVID-19 vaccines from the federal government for allocation to local health jurisdictions and providers.

The Centers for Disease Control indicates there are approximately 1 million first doses available for

Read the rest of **Vaccine**
Over on Page 4



Photos by
Maureen
Jennison

Fruit Blossom Beauty

Warm weather makes for beautiful blooms, and hopefully fruit, too!

It's sure feeling a lot like spring for the last few days with wonderful sunny weather and blossoms appearing everywhere, including the apple and pear trees. Sunshine is only part of the recipe for a delicious fruit harvest, however; another major component is rain – which we certainly have not had our fair share of yet.

Maybe more rain is on the horizon, but in the meantime, giving fruit trees a little extra boost of water from the hose, any water tanks or catch barrels, or even saving shower water or sink water (with biodegradable soaps!) can help get the trees through this drought.

– Maureen Jennison



Above: 2021's Sober Grad party was a little different, taking the virtual route, but gifts were given out just the same, purchased with funds raised from events like the Sober Grad Tri-Tip Dinner.

Photo by Maureen
Jennison

Below: Previous attendees Melodie Sorace, left, and Cyndi Clark, right, pick up dinners to enjoy, all while supporting the Sober Grad cause.

Photos by Jennifer Poole



Time for Tri Tip

Willits Sober Grad holds annual Drive-Thru Dinner fundraiser on April 23

Even as the event draws nearer, there's still some tickets left for Sober Grad's biggest fundraiser of the year, the Tri-Tip Dinner.

The dinner for four includes a complete meal of marinated and barbecued tri tip, baked potatoes, salad, bread, cookies and a rose, and will be available for pick-up at the

Willits High School Ag Farm on April 23.

Tickets for the dinner are \$60 each and are available at Cat's Meow, or from Karen Thiel at Willits High School.

Sober Grad is a non-profit organization that helps all senior graduates in Willits have a safe and happy graduation

night party – one filled with loot and gifts and cold hard cash. The trade-off? Come stay the night at the alcohol-free party.

Since Sober Grad's creation back in 1986, there have been no senior deaths on graduation night.

More information: 459-6201 or 459-7700.

Supes approve increased cannabis enforcement

Forrest Glyer
Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

At Monday's special meeting, Mendocino County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved directions to county staff which, if followed through on, could dramatically increase enforcement measures on non-permitted cannabis farms.

There ended up being six different actions approved at the April 12 meeting. The main targets of the increased enforcement would be non-permitted farms spotted using

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

Willits City Council's proposed 2021 goals

Submitted by
City of Willits

The Willits City Council had a goal setting workshop on April 6. Council members have been asked "to identify and approve goals to guide the organization and to aid the development of the Fiscal Year 2021 – 2022 budget."

The list below, not in ranked order, has 14 potential goals for the city.

The City Council is asking for any public comments on these goals to be submitted prior to council adoption at the April 28 City Council meeting.

Please submit any comments to City Manager Brian Bender at bbender@cityofwillits.org prior to April 22, at 12 pm.

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

MCSO arrests 2 after traffic stop

By Sergeant Mike Dygert
for MCSO

On April 8, at about 10:15 am, a Mendocino County Sheriff's Office deputy conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle in the 22000 block of East Side Road in Willits.

The deputy contacted the occupants of the vehicle, driver David Mairs, 29 of Clearlake Oaks, and passenger Caytlin Collicott, 23 of Willits.

The deputy conducted records checks on both subjects and learned Mairs had a \$80,000 felony arrest warrant out of Sonoma

Read the rest of **Arrests**
Over on Page 4

No on 10% cannabis expansion

To the Editor:
To the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors: As a resident of the Willits area, Little Lake Valley, I have a number of concerns regarding the “Wild West” mentality related to cannabis grows in our area.

One of these concerns is the extensive burden that will be placed on our already stressed water resources. If the county proceeds with allowing up to 10% of a parcel’s land mass for cannabis cultivation, it would be reasonable to postulate that there would be further drawdown of the valley’s aquifer. There is more than anecdotal evidence that excessive water consumption by cannabis growers has resulted in existing shallow wells, i.e. approximately 30 feet, to go dry. How many homeowners, whose sole water source is their well, have the financial means to drill a new “deep well,” to the tune of \$ 20,000 to \$25,000?

Mendocino County has been in an ongoing drought, with no relief in sight in the foreseeable future. That being the case, then why further exacerbate the situation by potentially increasing water usage by 30 to 50 percent?

In case you haven’t noticed, there has been a significant increase in the number of water tanker trucks plying our rural roads. Am I so foolish to assume that there are that many construction jobs that require that much water for dust control?

Other issues that I see as problematic:

- The permitting process
- Overall cannabis program management
- Compliance, site inspections, i.e. terms and conditions of the permit
- Adequate means to actively enforce requirements
- Site-specific land usage
- Water quality and availability
- Air quality, i.e. odor mitigation

I believe that it is incumbent on our elected officials to adhere to the requirements of CEQA to fully assess the potential impacts as it relates to Phase 3 implementation.

Though not necessarily an environmental issue, when has the quality of life been assessed? What do citizens of this county (not just those with the most money and loudest voices) really wish to see as a desired outcome?

The issue is not unique to Mendocino County: just look south to Sonoma County that is wrestling with similar issues and a populace that is less than enthusiastically receptive and have registered similar complaints as to those locally.

All being said, I would opine that some of my concerns would be valid whether I live in Willits, Redwood Valley, Ukiah, Boonville, Fort Bragg or Leggett. Let’s collectively spend the necessary time, resources and effort to “get it right the first time.” Vote No!

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Roger Ham, Willits

Sober Grad’s biggest fundraiser coming up

To the Editor:

I just want to remind everyone that on Friday, April 23 is Sober Grad’s biggest fundraiser of the year, our Take Home Tri-Tip Dinner for 4! This is the tri-tip dinner that includes not only a delicious marinated and barbecued tri tip and a mixed veggie salad, but it’s the one that has those awesome potatoes!

Sober Grad’s Take Home Tri-Tip Dinner also includes a loaf of freshly baked bread thanks to Tam and Kashaya Adams of Emandal, a beautiful rose from Flowers by Annette, and

The Rules: **LETTERS**

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

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.

Willits Weekly

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What do YOU think? Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from our readers

four yummy cookies made by Kay Moen.

Tickets are available at Cat’s Meow (open Tuesday - Saturday, 11 am to 5 pm. They are also available from Karen in the Willits High School office, at the WUSD District Office, and from many WHS seniors.

You can also call 459-6201 to reserve a ticket. Dinners are pre-order only, and there are only 200 available, so get yours early!

The County of Mendocino has given Sober Grad preliminary approval to hold an outdoor in-person party, so the school board and committee members are busy at work preparing for another variation of our very successful Sober Grad parties. More on that at a later date.

Joyce Waters, Willits

Shared concerns about social media

To the Editor:

This letter is a response to Robin Goldner’s column “Data Mines and Dopamine” in Willits Weekly.

I share Robin’s concerns about the misinformation spread about vaccines and other important health-related issues and ways many large internet companies contribute to these problems. “I am not a conspiracy theorist but I do read and think about the effects of the internet on humans,” Goldner said, “In my opinion the vaccine doesn’t infiltrate our minds, but big tech companies do. I am convinced that corporations like Microsoft, Facebook, Twitter, Google and YouTube already infiltrate and influence our minds.”

We should all be concerned about this problem that has influenced our elections and endangers our democracy and our lives. Shoshana Zuboff is a professor emerita at Harvard Business School and faculty associate at Berkman Center for Internet and Society at Harvard Law School. She is also the author of “The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power.”

In the book Zuboff offers a disturbing picture of how Silicon Valley and other corporations are mining users’ information to predict and shape their behavior. “I define surveillance capitalism,” says Zuboff, “as the unilateral claiming of private human experience as free raw material for translation into behavioral data. These data are then computed and packaged as prediction products and sold into behavioral futures markets – business customers with a commercial interest in knowing what we will do now, soon, and later.”

Zuboff was also one of the experts in the recent film “The Social Dilemma,” a docudrama directed by Jeff Orlowski (who directed “Chasing Ice and Chasing Coral”). The film goes into depth on how social media’s design is meant to nurture an addiction, manipulate its use in politics, and spread conspiracy theories. The film features interviews with many former employees, executives, and other professionals from top tech companies and social media platforms such as Facebook, Google, and Apple.

In response to increasing pressure to address these issues, the CEOs of Google, Facebook, and Twitter were called to Congress to testify about their role in promoting disinformation and extremism online. While lawmakers on each side of the aisle focused on different concerns, they were united in their belief that self-regulation isn’t working and it’s time for Congress to step in.

A few highlights of the testimony follow:

“Your business model itself has become the problem,” Rep. Frank Pallone Jr. (D-NJ) said in his opening remarks.

There was bipartisan agreement that Big Social’s addictive design techniques and algorithmic harms are contributing to a growing public health crisis, similar to the one caused by Big Tobacco. Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA) said: “Our kids – the users – are the product. You – Big Tech – are not advocates for children. You exploit and profit off them.”

Rep. Kathy Castor (D-FL) asked the CEOs whether they had watched “The Social Dilemma,” “where former employees of yours or other big tech platforms say they do not allow their kids on social media?” She cited a

2019 JAMA Pediatrics study showing the risk of depression for adolescents rises with each hour spent on social media.

There are certainly many benefits of social media. And most of us use the internet for work and pleasure. Yet, there is a growing concern.

The creators of the film say, “To support the need for bold reform of Big Social’s business model, we have joined the coalition of 40+ advocacy groups led by Accountable Tech calling for a ban on surveillance advertising. As legislators reflect on the testimony shared during last week’s hearing, this is a critical moment to make your voice heard.”

You can learn more and sign the petition here: <https://www.bansurveillanceadvertising.com/>

Jed Diamond, Willits

No to big grows

To the Editor:

In a recent letter, ex-Supervisor John McCowen tried to make the case that we should allow big grows and give up our Rangeland zone to the cannabis industry. His logic is that because we’ve allowed water for other agriculture, in fairness, we should allocate water for cannabis, too.

Apparently he is not capable of dealing with the reality of our situation, which is that our water has been over-allocated, and we have yet another drought year ahead of us. And this will likely be the norm in years ahead with climate change upon us. Real leadership deals with the science and the facts at hand even if those facts are not desirable. We’ve seen no indication of leadership so far on this matter, excepting John Haschak. So, heads up folks, they are working hard to shove this one down our throats and rushing this through to avoid an EIR.

A recent memorandum by the State Water Resources Control Board to 40,000 farmers, municipal officials and others warned of potential water shortages. They urged us to start planning now for potential water shortages later in the year and recommended a reduction in irrigated acreage, among other things. Farmers don’t truck in their soil and their water and are not artificially supported like the cannabis industry is.

In addition to this cautionary warning, we have recent letters from the Laytonville Area Municipal Advisory Council and the Round Valley County Water District stating they now have quality and/or quantity water problems which they believe are cannabis-related.

Among the over 400 letters submitted to the Planning Commission, (about 98% in opposition to this expansion plan), were letters from folks in both Laytonville and Covelo complaining that their wells had gone dry once the big growers moved in. Some of those big growers are the very growers that John McCowen and Supervisor Ted Williams are favoring with this plan, and the county has done nothing to help those folks with the dry wells. This is why we need an environmental impact report on this plan to know what the cumulative impacts will be. The county is ignoring public opinion, rushing this plan through to avoid the EIR, which would reveal the actual impacts – the science.

McCowen claims there is a cannabis shortage, but actually the market is already glutted and the price is low. Canada and Mexico legalized their industry, and federal legislation is headed to the Senate floor soon, so this price drop is likely to remain the trend. This expansion is all about short-term gains, if that, with long-term destruction.

In fairness, I suggest that before any farm tours of cannabis are allowed that we have tours instead of the thousands of acres now littered with abandoned hoop houses, garbage dumps, eroded hillsides, transient camps, miles of fortress-like fencing, and litter-strewn waterways. Only after a cleanup plan is in place to protect our investments, which will no doubt have to be paid for at taxpayers’ expense, should a plan for farm tours of the not-trashed-out properties be allowed.

County policy has allowed the destruction of our lands and our communities, and it has to be county action to clean it up. We need a cleanup – not an expansion at this time. From what we’ve seen so far the public overwhelmingly does not support this expansion plan, and if our leadership does not support what the public wants, then it is not a representative government, but tyranny.

I urge you all to flood the board of supervisors with your letters of opposition to this destructive expansion plan before the April 19 special meeting. It is critical that they hear from you now!

Email: bos@mendocinocounty.org or write to: 501 Low Gap Road Room 1010 Ukiah, CA 95482.

Sheila Jenkins, Willits

Willits Youth Soccer Kids are thrilled to be back in the game as the spring season begins

There’s no crying in soccer, unless you’re under 6. The 3- to 5-year-old athletes had the time of their lives at the Willits Youth Soccer opening, running, kicking, scoring, laughing, seeing their friends, and finally getting to engage in a social outdoor activity.

Sometimes, however, there were little aches and pains and missteps which would cause the littles to run to the sidelines to find comfort in the arms of a parent or other family member. But mostly they had fun.

They had the opportunity to release some of the pent-up isolation energy that had built up over the last year and their families enjoyed the excuse to take on their kids, interface with other humans, and share some socially distanced interactions with old friends as they watched the children cavort in a semi-organized manner. They could be seen playing in hoodies and princess-party dresses. There was a distinct lack of electronic screens being used by the parents. They had better and more entertaining distractions in the activity of their little ones.

Since they missed the 2020 Willits Youth Soccer fall season, organizer Saprina Rodriguez created a short six-week spring season to give the kids a chance to get outside and exercise, have fun, and see old friends. “U6 is always fun to watch,” said Rodriguez with a smile. “It’s a little bit of ‘bunch ball’ even though we’re only playing four-on-four. There’s not a whole lot of passing going on, but they are just so excited to get in there and kick that ball. As you can see, sometimes they run so fast, they run past by the ball.

“Tonight, Wednesday,” she continued, “we have our first youth soccer under-6 game. This is the spring program. Typically, we only do spring for older kids, but this year we’re including the younger kids because of the COVID situation. We weren’t

able to have our fall 2020 season. This is kind of our makeup season. Our official season starts on August 1st.”

Willits Weekly also attended a game on Saturday morning, an under-10 division competition which approached a more nuanced and efficient soccer exhibition. The teams did not all bunch up on the ball. They played positions which allowed for more passing and actual defense. One could see that as the players gained experience, they became more serious about learning the fine points and becoming more proficient at passing, defending and scoring.

“In the U10 division, they use a goalie and they pass to each other,” Rodriguez explained. “You will see less bunching up around the ball. Because of the smaller teams, each player is getting more touches on the ball. Every player on the team, regardless of their skill or strength are getting touches on the ball.”

The soccer program is using a field behind the rodeo grounds exclusively as the Little League has the first rights to all the fields during their regular season. As there are not as many kids playing baseball due to the wariness of the pandemic, they generously allowed Willits Youth Soccer to utilize that field on which three soccer fields have been constructed.

“We have a contract with the City of Willits,” continued Rodriguez. “We had to contribute an initial payment of \$20,000 to help pay for the creation and maintenance of the fields. It was a condition of the original grant. We get the fields for a certain amount of time.

“Right now, Little League has the field and they were gracious enough to let us use this field that

Read the rest of Soccer Over on Page 12

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Willits Weekly's
Puzzle Page

Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword

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FRUIT-FILLED WORD SEARCH

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Ocean surface indicator (abbr.)

4. American time

7. Satisfaction

8. Diving duck

10. Very small amount

12. Metrical units

13. An ignorant or foolish person

14. Sino-Soviet block (abbr.)

16. It may sting you

17. Turn outward

19. Perform on stage

20. 'CSI' actor George

21. Localities

25. Make a choice

26. Indicates position

27. One of Thor's names

29. Indian musical rhythmic pattern

30. 'The Raven' author

31. Take in solid food

32. Legendary QB

39. Sorrels

41. Organization of nations
42. Texas pharmaceutical company

43. Mathematical term

44. Expression of disappointment

45. Abba __, Israeli politician

46. Hide away

48. Salad restaurant

49. Daughters of Boreas (mythology)

50. Men's fashion accessory

51. Political action committee

52. Unhappy

CLUES DOWN

1. Make unhappy

2. Heard the confession of

3. Capital of Taiwan

4. Fiddler crab

5. Brazilian dances

6. Fit with device to assist breathing

8. Brother or sister

9. Pastries

HOW TO SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

WILLITS POLICE DEPARTMENT
POLICE LOG

April 5 to April 11

By Danya Davis, Willits Weekly

The officers of the Willits Police Department handled **123 incidents** in this seven-day reporting period.

Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

April 5

- 1:18 am: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 300 block of South Lenore Avenue.

6:36 am: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 1400 block of South Main Street.

11:24 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

4:06 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 1400 block of South Main Street.

9:05 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

April 6

- 7:57 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation near the intersection of West Highway 20 and Blosser Lane.

4:49 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 1700 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

5:32 pm: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 300 block of South Lenore Avenue.

April 7

- 3:57 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 100 block of Barbara Lane.

8:27 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of Creekside Court.
- April 8

1:36 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

11:10 am: Officers initiated a vehicle theft investigation in the 1600 block of South Main Street.

12:38 pm: HERNANDEZ, Uriel Aldean (25) of Willits was contacted in the 200 block of Margie Drive following a report of a domestic disturbance. He was arrested pursuant to 415 PC (Disturbing the Peace),

The rest of Arrests From Page 1

County for failure to appear for possession of illicit drugs for sale while being in possession of a loaded firearm. Mairs also had Mendocino County misdemeanor warrants out for his arrest.

The MCSO deputy was further advised that Collicott was on California Department of Corrections state parole.

A search of the vehicle was conducted, and the deputy located a glass methamphetamine pipe that belonged to Collicott in the vehicle that contained a usable amount of suspected methamphetamine.

The rest of Comments From Page 1

this item than there may be time available.

Consistent with the Brown Act and the rules of procedure for the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, Board Chair Dan Gjerde anticipates that it may be necessary to limit the total amount of time for public comment. Due to the volume of public interest, speaking time may be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Information and sign up for telecomment can be found here: <https://www.mendocinocounty.org/government/board-of-supervisors/agendas-and-minutes/bos-telecomments>.

Because time for oral comments may be limited, the public is encouraged to submit written comments in advance of the meeting by emailing the board at bos@mendocinocounty.org through the Mendocino County online eComment platform at <https://mendocino.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>.

"In recent years, county supervisors, county planning commissioners, and county staff have deliberated in dozens of public meetings on the terms and conditions for permitting the regulated portion of the cannabis industry in Mendocino County," said Chair Gjerde. "Monday's two public hearings are a continuation of these many years of deliberations."

For more information, please contact Clerk of the Board staff at 707-463-4221.

and on misdemeanor charges of violation of a protective order, battery against an officer, and resisting an officer.

2:30 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 100 block of North Main Street.

7:18 pm: Officers initiated a missing person investigation in the 1200 block of Locust Street.

April 9

- 9:08 am: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 300 block of South Lenore Avenue.

2:42 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 100 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

4:08 pm: Officers initiated a fraud investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

April 10

- 6:57 am: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 800 block of South Main Street.

8:35 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 1400 block of South Main Street.

11:16 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 100 block of Alder Court.

April 11

- 2:46 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 100 block of Marin Street.

5:55 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of South Street.

5:58 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 100 block of Marin Street.

6:17 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 700 block of South Main Street.

10:07 pm: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 100 block of North Main Street.

10:16 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 700 block of Coast Street.

Collicott's parole officer was contacted and responded to the scene. The parole officer issued a violation of parole hold (3056 PC) on Collicott.

Both Collicott and Mairs were arrested and transported to the Mendocino County Jail. Collicott was to be held without bail due to the parole violation.

In accordance with the COVID-19 emergency order issued by the State of California Judicial Council, bail was set at zero dollars, and Mairs was released after the jail booking process, on his promise to appear in court at a later date.

The rest of Vaccine From Page 1

allocation by the state this week. This is a 33% decrease from last week. Specifically for the Janssen vaccine, this is close to a 95 percent reduction from approximately 572,000 doses last week to 67,000 doses this week.

This reduction is caused by near-term supply challenges at the national level, as well as increasing proportions of California's vaccines being delivered through the federal direct allocation programs.

The State of California plans to reduce first dose allocations across local health jurisdictions' geographies proportionately across the board. This means that most local areas and providers will see approximately 65 to 67 percent of their last week's total.

This reduction in first doses does not affect second doses. The County of Mendocino will focus on administering second doses, which continue to be timed 3-4 weeks, as applicable, after first dose allocations.

The state plans, starting with next week's allocation, to begin using both federal direct allocations and available inventory data, to adjust allocations at local health jurisdiction and provider levels.

We continue to expect vaccine supply for state allocation to increase by the end of April.

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At right: Soroptimist International of Willits members, including, from left: Vicki Ham, Marilyn Harden, Jane McCabe and Kitty Norris, hold copies of the 2021 Community Telephone Directory, freshly restocked at the Willits Library.

Below: Jane McCabe, left, and Kitty Norris hand a copy of the phone book to Library Technician Giselle Delotch.



All about the Soroptimists

Local club reminds community about membership drive, 50th birthday, and phone book restock

For 50 years, the Soroptimist International of Willits club has been supporting women and girls – since their charter date of April 3, 1971. The club looks to celebrate their birthday month with a membership drive.

"We are always looking for new members, and we welcome men as well as women," explained SIW's Vicki Ham. "We are a service club working to help women and girls in our community. We present scholarships and grants within the community, as well as aiding other service organizations within the community such as Kids Club, Friends of the Library, and more. As a no-guilt club, we will not ask you to do more than you feel you have time to do. We are currently presenting Zoom speaker meetings every



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third Tuesday at noon, and the public is invited."

One of the biggest fundraisers for the club is the annual Community Telephone Directory. The 2021 book was printed and distributed initially on March 11, and a restock of directories was just completed at the Willits Library on Tuesday.

"Our community phone book is our major fundraiser, which we use to support our projects," explained Ham. "The book is free to the community as our funds for service come from our advertisers. The book is loved by many in Willits, and residents look forward to its yearly publication."

Ham explained: "Soroptimist is an international organization of volunteers who work to improve the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment. We are a global volunteer organization that economically empowers women and girls by providing access to education, the single most-effective anti-poverty intervention. Over 80,000 Soroptimists in 122 countries and territories contribute time and financial support to community-based and international projects that benefit women and girls."

If you are interested in joining the Soroptimists, they are currently meeting via Zoom and the link is available by contacting: siwillits@soroptimist.net or by contacting any member as listed in the Soroptimist Community Phonebook.

— Maureen Jennison

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All of the advertisers on this page included their ads in the 2021 Soroptimist International of Willits Community Telephone Directory. They also chose to bundle their ads again to run in the paper alongside some Soroptimist content, further supporting the non-profit with their additional run. Thank you, advertisers!

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Above, left: Pete Swanton and Link pose perfectly for the camera in front of the eye-catching logo which includes Link's distinctive eyebrows. Above, right: Pete Swanton and Dan Miller are building a 32 foot by 9 foot platform with planting troughs at each end. The city approved the platform that's taking up two parking spaces. It will have a shade cover and picnic tables for Flying Dog Pizza outside seating. Below: The most recent experiment at Flying Dog Pizza is Blue Oyster Cult – made with blue oyster mushrooms from Mulligan Farms in Laytonville. Below, center: The regular menu is available to take with you. You'll find pizzas with names like Blue Luke (named after musician Blue Luke Andrews) and vegan, gluten-free Bug Guts (named for the local band). Below, right: Employees Indigo Senerchia, left, and Audrey Edwards take time out from making pizzas to pose with the logo and Pete Swanton, right.



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Flying Dog Pizza and Vinyl

The former Main Street Music and Video gets a fresh look

Anyone who frequented Main Street Music and Video through the 32 years they've been open has seen remarkable changes in the past five years and especially in the last year. Pete Swanton, owner of the video store and Shanachie Pub, started a pizzeria, and last week installed a new logo on his huge Main Street window panes.

The convertible vehicle filled with friends that was painted on the window for years is now replaced with a stylized rendering of a dog with goggles around his neck. It's Link, Swanton's dog buddy.

If you look from a certain angle, he might even look a little grumpy, which wouldn't be a surprise. According to Swanton, "Link does not like to fly. He'll go but he's not happy. I don't take him if it's bumpy. If it's not, he'll just sit there and check it out. He barks at people when we land and they come near the plane. We zip all over the place."

They chose Link as the mascot, "Because we wanted an animal, and he's my dog that people know around town, so he's familiar. Olan Cox [from Mendo Wood Fired Pizza and Catering in Ukiah] is the guy who helped put [the wood-fired pizza oven] together and he came up with the name 'Flying Dog,'" Swanton told. They added the "Pizza and Vinyl" to include the food and music parts of the business.

The eye-catching logo was created by designer Leo Gerous, who's also an employee at Flying Dog Pizza and Vinyl.

The owner was also happy with the final tweaks and printing that were done by Kiersten Hanna from Braggadood in Fort Bragg. "Kiersten was quite an asset," he said and added, "There's lots of talent in this little town. We're very lucky."

New additions to the

Flying Dog Wood Fired Pizza & Vinyl

Blue Luke – Pesto Sauce, Artichoke Hearts, P. Reyes Blue Cheese, Roasted Onions, Fresh Mozzarella, MozzProv & Parm.Rom.....\$16.00

Bug Guts Veggie Supreme – Pesto Sauce, Mushrooms, Sun Dried Tomatoes, Black Olives, Roasted Peppers, Shaved Zucchini, topped with Spicy Giardinera (pickled vegetables).....\$17.00

Classic Cheese – Red Sauce or Pesto, MozzProv & Parm.Rom.....\$15.00

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The rest of
Water From Page 1

the next one," Supervisor McGourty said, to introduce the water supply workshop.

CalFire Mendocino Unit Chief George Gonzalez chimed in with the water and weather experts, suggesting the board should consider declaring a local drought emergency.

"I do have high concerns about the fire season, this year, real concerns about the lack of water we've experienced so far.... From what I've seen in the rivers, from what I have seen physically walking through the forests, and throughout areas of the county, we're in dire need of a declaration," Chief Gonzalez said. "I have stations that are already starting to go dry, those on well systems. Our Covelo station used to have great water, but now the water is slightly colored and starting to smell; we're reaching the limits of the well."

CEO Carmel Angelo said the board had declared drought emergencies "early" in previous years.

"We are definitely investigating that as a water community," Supervisor McGourty replied. "There's a few implications we're concerned about ... but I would say it's very much on the horizon" He said he expected to bring the question to the board "within a month."

McGourty started his presentation with the U.S.D.A. Drought Monitoring Map, and pointed out the red band of "extreme drought" going "right through Mendocino County." He also discussed how none of his weather sources, including the 60-day Drought Outlook map, expects any changes to the dry weather.

"We're in a drought for the foreseeable future," he said. "We've gotten 13 inches out of our normal rainfall of 39 inches. So we're way behind, and things are not good in terms of our weather."

Don Seymour, a supervisor/engineer with the Sonoma County Water agency, was the next presenter, focusing on Lake Mendocino in Ukiah.

"We don't have a lot to look forward to, in potential changes to the hydrology," Seymour said, "and just to sum it all up: With regards to our water supply conditions, this is the worst it's been since 1976, 1977. I'm sure you're all seeing [Lake Mendocino's] extremely low levels."

Seymour's first slide was a graph showing acre-feet at Lake Mendocino throughout the calendar year – by year – going back to 2014. The black line at the bottom was the 2021 water level – showing 36,427 acre feet as of April 8, hardly more than half of 2020's 70,000-plus acre feet of storage in early April. The year 2020 was declared "the third driest year for Lake Mendocino," by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Supervisor John Haschak asked Seymour to confirm a report he'd heard that "water storage in Lake Mendocino right now is usually what we see at the very end of the [season], right before the rain starts."

"Absolutely," Seymour agreed, "I would say we're at a point where we're lower than we'd want to be at the end of the water year, October 1."

The rest of
Goals From Page 1

List of potential city goals

1. Administrative/Finance/ Personnel (1)

Develop and implement a long-range fiscal sustainability plan for City finances in order to promote the City's economic health by balancing revenues and expenditures to solve systemic problems.

2. Administrative/Finance/Personnel (2)

Create a realistic staffing plan for the City Council to budget for appropriate and future staffing needs (e.g. Public Works Director).

3. Public Works/Utilities/Infrastructure (1)

Maintain and improve infrastructure systems of water, wastewater, public facilities and streets capable of managing growth while responding to current City needs.

4. Public Works/Utilities/ Infrastructure (2)

Implement a City Street Improvement Program capable of bringing 25% of City streets to a PCI of 85 or greater within the next five years.

5. Community Development/Planning (1)

Complete and update the City's General Plan to be used to guide future development within the City including encouragement of housing opportunities and sustainable economic development. Estimated time frame 3-5 years.

6. Community Development/Planning (2)

Develop and complete a plan to annex properties adjacent to the City that are currently in the County.

Jared Walker, from the Redwood Valley County Water District, suggested water rationing was on the horizon for his district. "Redwood Valley and Calpella both are probably going to be in pretty dire situations here, probably within the next month. Probably gonna be down to what we would refer to as critical public health and safety water only," Walker reminded listeners that Redwood Valley residents in 2014 were allowed only 50 gallons per person per day. "That's getting pretty dire," he said, "with these latest numbers ... I really don't think there's any other option at this point."

Supervisor McCourt asked Walker about the district's plans to discontinue providing agricultural water. "That will be on next Monday, the 19th, we will cut off the roughly 200 ag connections to Redwood Valley customers."

"This is a very dire situation," McGourty responded, "and it's going to be really critical that everybody implement water conservation measures. This is not the year to expand your garden or your landscaping."

Supervisor Haschak wondered if supervisors had any interest in a moratorium on new well permits. "One of the issues I've been hearing a lot about is wells being dug, lots of wells in the Willits Little Lake Valley, up in Covelo area. So, with this water shortage we have, and suddenly lots of wells being dug, is there appetite for the board to put on a moratorium for well permits, during this time of crisis with the drought?"

Board chair Dan Gjerde asked County Counsel Christian Curtis if the county had legal authority to impose a well moratorium. His answer was "maybe." Supervisors McGourty and Ted Williams offered some comments on the complexities of imposing such a moratorium. Gjerde suggested the ad hoc water committee might look at that possibility.

"The issue really," Haschak responded, "is some of these cannabis grows popping up all over the place, certainly they aren't legal, they haven't been in the program, they're just showing up in Redwood Valley, Potter Valley, Little Lake Valley, Covelo – all over the county. They're just drilling wells, and so there's competition for that aquifer, and people are feeling like they're in this kinda arms race about how deep the well can go. And ... a lot of people who've had existing wells that have been good wells for a long time, their wells are going dry. So I think that's a consideration for the county."

Some of the other presentations were from Sean White, manager of City of Ukiah's water system, Janet Pauli, with an update on the Potter Valley project, Beth Solomon from the Russian River Flood Control District, Deborah Edelman from Mendocino County Resource Conservation District, and Sheriff Matt Kendall.

Mendocino County RCD is planning a 2021 Drought Preparedness Campaign to strengthen water conservation efforts, "to provide positive messaging about proactive steps the public can take to address these historic lows in rainfall and availability." Supervisors approved the campaign unanimously at Monday's meeting.

7. Community Development/Planning (3)

Develop a plan to encourage the construction of new housing and the preservation of old housing stock.

8. Public Safety

Maintain a public safety agency capable of maintaining a safe community utilizing up to date law enforcement tools and delivering emergency services to the businesses and citizens of Willits in a responsive and proactive manner.

9. Environment

Work towards Willits becoming an environmental model city by reducing the City's carbon footprint by 50% to promote greater energy independence from utility companies and to strengthen the City's resiliency and self-reliance.

10. Economic Development

Develop and implement economic development strategies for the City of Willits that will promote the development and maintenance of a strong business sector including retention and attraction, tourism, marketing, and revenue generation.

11. Public Engagement

Develop a program to increase public awareness of the City's efforts to maintain & improve the City.

12. Parks and Facilities

Increase public use of facilities over the next 3 years to foster civic pride, improve health, and support recreation efforts for greater involvement in local government, depending on financing.

The rest of
Increased From Page 1

"satellite imagery," and those who applied for Phase 1 permits who have become "non responsive" and the county has deemed are no longer making real efforts to fully make it through the permitting process.

The main actions approved were: "Encouraging denial of non-compliant Phase 1 cannabis cultivation applications; approving increased scope of work for existing outside counsel ... to assist with Phase 1 cannabis cultivation denials; obtaining satellite imagery subscription for cannabis program and code enforcement with budgetary request returning on consent [calendar]; and requiring Phase 1 cannabis permit and embossed receipt holders to demonstrate state provisional license or attest to non-cultivation within 45 days."

At the Monday meeting the supervisors also approved extending the "moratorium" on the original Phase 3 cannabis plan, delaying it until at least February 27, 2022. At their last meeting they had put a moratorium on Phase 3 for 45 days until May 6, 2021.

All these actions came a week before their April 19 meeting when the supervisors had been scheduled to vote on whether to expand outdoor permit sizes and other possible changes in a new ordinance for cannabis cultivation regulations in the county, titled "Chapter 22.18 - Commercial Cannabis Activity Land Use Development Ordinance." (Note: at the time this paper went to print, the April 19 Mendocino County BOS Agenda was not available.)

Fifth District Supervisor Ted Williams said at Monday's meeting that if applicants in Phase 1 are removed from the process due to non-compliance, they could potentially reapply for "Phase 3" cannabis applications.

However, at a March 19 planning commission meeting Planning & Building Assistant Director Julia Krog indicated that the county likely plans on replacing Phase 3 as originally written, and potentially adopting some form of the new Chapter 22.18 ordinance instead.

The original draft of the Chapter 22.18 ordinance contained the controversial expansion of outdoor cultivation to 10% of parcel size in many zones in the county.

The county planning commission ended up recommending a maximum of 5%, and it was anticipated that a draft would be coming before the BOS at their April 19 meeting.

On Monday, Deputy County Counsel Matthew Kiedrowski stated, "The primary concern is while the county is undergoing the review of a current process to replace Phase 3, it is urgent that it not begin Phase 3 at this point in time until that process is concluded."

He went on to say that an "ordinance adopting new regulations would terminate the moratorium" on Phase 3.

Despite all these unresolved issues involving the county's cannabis permitting program, the supervisors on Monday approved the expanded enforcement actions after hearing a presentation from Humboldt County Planning & Building Department Director John Ford about the strict enforcement measures they've been utilizing there, which he said had helped in reducing illegal cannabis operations.

"We are seeing a dramatic change in terms of the illegal cultivation activity going on," said Ford. "A lot of the big illegal grow sites are being done away with, and so we find what we're doing is successful."

As described by Ford, the enforcement measures include fines of up to \$10,000 per violation per day, which can often amount to \$20,000 to \$40,000 a day for those with non-permitted farms.

He said Humboldt County would commonly use satellite imagery to identify non-compliant farms and then send notices to the properties about impending fines that would be coming their way.

He did say that they would generally allow a 10-day period before taking "abatement" actions against a property owner and starting the fines, and sometimes longer periods of time would be given when deemed appropriate.

If total fines on a property reach up to \$900,000, Ford said the building department would generally go to the Humboldt Board of Supervisors and "ask for permission to basically issue a lien on the property."

Ford claimed that Humboldt County didn't start with strict enforcement as their main tool while trying to transition from an illegal to a legal cannabis industry.

"I would just say that when Humboldt County started going down this process of legalizing the cannabis industry, we were very much based upon doing things based upon incentive of legalization," said Ford, "allowing people to apply for

permits and to operate within that system. The thing that unfortunately we quickly found out is that not everyone would respond favorably or appropriately to that incentive. And so there also needed to be a fairly robust enforcement action. We did that by rewriting our code to give a better process."

Ford said that their "success rates" have increased recently in terms of getting people to either eradicate illegal grows or come into some sort of compliance before strict enforcement measures are used.

"We're having a success rate probably in the 70 to 80% range between people who can just clean up without any kind of fines and penalties and people entering into compliance agreements," he said. "In fact in 2020 ... of all the notices that we issued they were all resolved without fines and penalties. So actually we think that's an accomplishment to be able to work with people and get things done."

First District Supervisor Glenn McGourty seemed impressed by Ford's presentation.

"I'm a proponent of active code enforcement," said McGourty. "If we don't do something proactive here, then we're going to have a complete madhouse. And we already have Covelo which is a mess, and now we see Redwood Valley and Potter Valley kind of falling in the same category ... of people who just obviously have no intention of following the rules."

"And we have to be able to send a message loud and clear that this isn't OK," he continued. "And I think that Mendocino County's clear that we want to have a cannabis industry here, but we expect it to be a well-regulated and orderly cannabis industry that we can be kind of proud of in a way like any other agricultural product that we produce. Right now, no one can be proud of this, this is a mess. And we really have to do something about it because people are really really upset."

During public comments, Covelo Cannabis Advocacy Group director Monique Ramirez stated that first and foremost the county should put its efforts into having an efficient process for obtaining legal cannabis permits in the county.

"The solution to all of this is to have a functioning cannabis program, and unless we have that we're going to have so many problems," said Ramirez. "And people are not going to be able to even come forward. So as we deny people that have initiated the process ... and don't help them, they're just going to return to the illegal market, which further perpetuates the problem for making it even harder for code enforcement and law enforcement.... We need to look at why people are having such troubles being able to get in the programs."

Mendocino County's Cannabis Program Director Kristin Nevedal, who was hired in March, said that she approved of both the satellite imagery program, and of setting a strict timeline for those in the Phase 1 application process to respond to notices being sent out.

"A real-time satellite imagery system would give us not only the ability to process complaints, but also if we're going to move forward with requiring a provisional license of our active participants in the Phase 1 program," said Nevedal. "Or having them sign an affidavit verifying that they are not cultivating. A real-time satellite imagery program would also give us the tool to verify that affidavit that it's actually being followed through with. So I think that that's important."

Third District Supervisor John Haschak at one point suggested that the county wait to get their online "cannabis portal" set up to make the application process easier before beginning to set timelines for kicking people out of the Phase 1 process, but Nevedal argued that shouldn't really be necessary, since email and other modes of communication should be sufficient.

"The fact of the matter is that we've essentially trained the applicants into a situation of knowing we haven't done anything when no one responds to a 30-day notice," said Nevedal. "And I think it's time that we start to require those responses. And then have the ability to say, 'Listen if you're not going to respond and you're not going to return those materials, we're not in a position to process that permit anymore.'"

Williams said he supported transitioning to a more active form of enforcement, since the "complaint driven system" wasn't working well enough.

"I think the complaint driven system works well outside of cannabis," said Williams. "I don't know that we want to change it. I think cannabis is something different altogether, because this is not somebody building a granny unit and failing to tell the county. This is a commercial activity – it's a much larger scale. And there is an environmental impact from a lot of these projects at scale."

LET'S TALK TRANSPORTATION

The Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) is updating the region's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and Active Transportation Plan (ATP), and...

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

- WHAT TRANSPORTATION NEEDS SHOULD BE ADDRESSED?
- WHAT BARRIERS TO TRANSPORTATION DO YOU SEE?
- WHAT MOBILITY CHALLENGES DO YOU SEE?

Here are ways **YOU** can be involved in MCOG's Process:

- View the Virtual Presentation - Take our Online Survey -
- Visit our Interactive Website -

Use the QR code or click the link below:
<https://bit.ly/3bSij6u>

Questions or comments?
 Contact MCOG Staff at lellard@dbcteam.net or 707-234-3434

Your Input Matters!

www.mendocinocog.org

The Emerald City Museum and 420 Art Gallery

Showcasing:
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 Traveling Hemp Museum
 Cannabis Culture Art Gallery

Keynote Speakers for Opening Week: TBA

Opening Tuesday, 20 April 2021 from 12 to 5 p.m.
Exhibit open on weekends to the end of June from 1 to 5
Old Rexall Bldg at 90 South Main St, Willits

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What's New at KLLG Radio

By Earlene Gleisner, for KLLG

On Mondays at 4 pm and Thursdays at 5 pm, Willits Smooth Lounge is hosted by a persona "Ashton Greene" and his son, sometimes known as "Richy Rich Goldwater." It is easy listening with that kind of rock that is great for kicking back and opening up something fine from the vine.

A message from Michael Foley: "To the faithful audience of 'News 'n Views,' I am taking a brief break from the show to pursue the work on the farm. Look for 'News 'n Views' in a month or so. My best and thanks for listening!"

Kyle Neuer is new to Willits and has joined KLLG in response to our call for some engineering help. Having worked on another radio station for 15 years, he will be bringing on a new music program and assisting us with one of the engineering posts we have available.

More businesses are using our broadcasts to announce their reopenings and services through our Community Bulletin Board feature. Earlene Gleisner, a volunteer, will be doing the footwork to see how KLLG can help you with your advertising scheme.

We are still looking for volunteers with a good knowledge of Windows file structure and who are willing to learn how RadioDJ software works. Please consider contacting Jeff Shipp through our website, www.kllg.org. Through our site, you can also access our link for public service announcements, the donation button, underwriting schedule, as well as emailing us any of your suggestions.

The rest of Soccer | From Page 3

they are not currently utilizing because they have smaller numbers this year. We have three fields here where there is usually just one, but we'll take what we can get for this supplemental session. It took us two days to arrange the fields and measure and paint the lines," she said.

It is the hope of Rodriguez that their fall season can approach normalcy, where they are able to field the full complement of 300 to 320 players, with each team being sponsored by local businesses. Willits lost the chance to see the traditional parade of teams last year, a joyous event that brings up to a thousand people to the main soccer field by Roots of Motive Power.

"Here we are just starting the spring season, and already we're getting prepared for the fall season," Rodriguez explained. "I just put in an equipment order for that season. I'm working on the website, getting everything ready. I'm getting a lot of inquiries from parents who didn't know there was going to be a spring program. I reassure them that the fall season starts August 1 and it's right around the corner. The registration period will be from May 15 to June 30."

For those who would like to register their kids for the fall season, or for further information, please go to their website: <https://willitsyouthsoccer.com> or their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/willitsyouthsoccer.

Plant start giveaway at Commonwealth Garden, May 8, 9

The Frank R. Howard Foundation's Commonwealth Garden invites community members to participate in its plant start giveaway on May 8 and 9 from 9 am to 3 pm. Plants are limited to stock on hand. First come, first served. No holds. Commonwealth Garden is on Haehl Creek Drive, near the new hospital.

The rest of Pizza | From Page 10

business keep appearing. Well-curated pizzas are constantly being created by Swanton or people on staff. Besides their main menu, definitely check out the dry-erase board or fliers on the safety windows where you order pizza to see what's new.

Tuesday, April 13, Swanton and people from the city got together to begin work on the outdoor covered-seating area that will have picnic tables and occupy the two parking spaces in front of the pizzeria. This will be a first in Willits and Swanton said the expansion will look something like Patrona's in Ukiah.

Other changes in the near future include the additions of pasta with homemade, locally sourced ingredients – when they can – for the sauces and salad choices you can order with your pizza. There are plans to have foosball, shuffle board, and air hockey games. "They're good and solid and of a commercial grade," the owner said and added that they're additions to the retro look of the place. "Even the DVDs have become something from the past," Swanton laughed.

Take the time to browse the stacks when you're waiting for your pizza. They have an ever-growing collection of vinyl and still have lots of music CDs and movie DVDs on sale. They'll continue to rent DVDs.

Flying Dog Pizza and Vinyl is located at 65 South Main Street in Willits. You know you're there when you see the logo. Their hours are 11 am to 8 pm, Tuesday through Saturday and 12 pm to 7 pm Sunday. To order ahead for pick up, call 459-4747.

PORTRAITS FOR PETS

What a Catch!!

Reel in a customized fun time with HSIMC's Spring FUNdraiser!

STARTING APRIL 16th please submit a \$25 per pet donation and a photo of the animal loves in your life. From that photo a volunteer will create a rendering of your pet. More than one pet? Please be sure to donate \$25/per pet.

Human faces will not be drawn. Our volunteer artists are of all ages and abilities. Everyone who loves supporting animals is welcome. No promise of quality, but it sure makes for a fun time supporting the animals of HSIMC. Again, please no pictures of humans.

Donors will receive a digital photo of the art, not the physical art, for the \$25/pet donation.

Photo and art from Portraits for Pets 2020
 Photo credit: Hilda Kwan, Dana the puppy
 Artist: Jen Lyon

Deadline to submit photos is May 10th.
 For more information go to the EVENTS tab on our website:
mendohumanesociety.com
 Still have questions?
 Email: fundraising@hsimc.org