

A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits
Donations Accepted Edition No. 591 Thursday, May 8, 2025

Tuesday's Ridge Fire stopped quickly

Jennifer Poole
Editor & Reporter
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CAL FIRE Mendocino Unit and fellow fire responders made quick work of the Ridge Fire southeast of Willits Tuesday afternoon.

CAL FIRE MEU's initial report for the May 6 Ridge Fire, at 2:10 pm, reported an approximately 3 acre fire in the Ridgewood Road and Mariposa Creek Road area. Fire resources were already at scene.

At 2:28 pm, CAL FIRE MEU reported "hose around fire."

At 2:40 pm, CAL FIRE MEU reported that forward progress had been stopped at the now 5-acre Ridge Fire. Resources, including 2 engines 2 hand crews, 1 helicopter, 1 chief officer, and our local government cooperators resources, were set to remain at scene "to extinguish hotspots and strengthen perimeter control lines for approximately the next 3 hours."

Read the rest of Ridge Over on Page 11

WPD Hi-Lo Siren drill coming up May 28

Submitted by WPD

Spread the word: The Willits Police Department is set to conduct a Hi-Lo Siren Evacuation Drill on Wednesday, May 28. Do not evacuate, this is only a training.

As fire season is upon us, we at the City of Willits Police Department want to ensure that all residents are aware of the Hi-Lo Siren's distinct sound. Willits Police patrol cars are equipped with Hi-Lo Sirens which will only be activated in emergencies that require an immediate evacuation. "When you hear the Hi-L,o it's time to go!"

On Wednesday, May 28, at 3:30 pm Willits Police Department will conduct a Hi-Lo Siren Emergency Evacuation Drill in patrol cars driving City of Willits streets with sirens activated. DO NOT EVACUATE as this is only a drill. The drill will end by 3:40 pm. Please do not call 911 (unless you have an emergency) or police dispatch during the drill.

In the event of a real Hi-Lo Siren evacuation you will receive a Nixle Alert of what and where the danger is and directions of travel to evacuate. To receive Willits Police Nixle Alerts, text, your Zip code to 888777 or sign up online at nixle.com.

Additionally, we suggest you go to mendoready.org and sign up for Mendocino County-wide emergency alerts. Thank you.



Above, from left: Grant Fisher of Grant's Goodies offers tasty and sweet treats at the Willits Farmers Market. Denise Jessie, branch manager for the Willits and Laytonville libraries, hands out free books and activity packets from a mobile cart. Melissa Arana and helper Bayleigh sell meat and more at the Eastside Ranch booth. Below: Ben Wolff's booth, Soul Shaker Acres out of Potter Valley, offers greens, starts, dried flowers, and more.



Photos by Maureen Jennison

Back at the Park

Farmers Market is back in City Park after almost a decade away

It felt like the perfect summer day for the first outdoor market last Thursday when vendors were finally back at the ideal location along State Street on the north side of the Willits City Park after nine years.

Vendors offered prepared foods, veggies, greens, meat, eggs, drinks, starts, gifts, and more from their pop-up-topped booths, and the public came out for it, shopping, chatting, and listening to music during the 2.5-hour event.

"There are so many more people here," said Evelyn Fisher, mom and sales associate to son Grant, who runs the Grant's Goodies booth at the market. "The foot traffic is amazing, and it's so nice to be back out at the park."

Willits Farmers Market Manager, Michael Foley agreed. "What a lovely day to be back in the park!" he said. "Vendors and customers alike were all smiles, lots of families with children playing in the park. And we brought a bit of shade back to the old spot with our canopies over the sidewalk!"

The market will run at the park from 3 to 5:30 pm until the first Thursday in November when it will return to inside the Little Lake Grange.

– Maureen Jennison

At left, from top: The market sign now points shoppers towards the vendors located back in the City Park for the weekly Thursday afternoon markets. Ann Maglente and Debi McCarthy smile in the walkway for a quick photo. John Kvasnicka handed out some free mini scoop coupons to Scoops. Allegra Foley of Green Uprising Farm holds some of the tastiest spinach available. Reza Ghannadan of Reza's Breadery speaks with a customer at his bread booth. Kiki Burghart of The Electric Floral Shop enjoys the outdoor market with a refreshing drink.

Below: The south sidewalk on State Street was filled with vendors and shoppers for the first outdoor market. At bottom, left: Deborah Knoles of Moonflower Tea mixes up some creamer into a cool coffee drink. Carmel Zadik holds a basket of her baked goods at The Sweet Spot booth.



County approves voluntary employee buy-outs

Jennifer Poole
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The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors approved the adoption of the county's new "Voluntary Separation Incentive Program" Tuesday afternoon, via the consent calendar.

The purpose of offering separation incentives to eligible employees is, as per the agenda staff report: "The County of Mendocino is facing critical budget shortfalls for the Fiscal Year 2025/2026. The purpose of the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program is to allow employees to voluntarily resign, and prevent or reduce involuntary staff reductions," i.e., layoffs.

"The VSIP offers lump-sum, post-separation payments as an incentive for employees to voluntarily separate employment from the County," the staff report continues. "Eligible employees who voluntarily leave county employment afford the county the opportunity to be better poised to strategically plan future resources, realize

Read the rest of Buy-outs Over on Page 11

Wildfire Readiness Week is a call for action

Submitted by CAL FIRE

Sacramento, May 4 – California faces a year-round wildfire threat. Wildfire Preparedness Week 2025, observed May 4 through 10, serves as a vital call to action for all Californians to take steps now to prepare and reduce wildfire risk at home and in your community.

CAL FIRE and partners are intensifying their efforts to help communities prepare for the peak of the fire year, through collaboration, innovation, and public engagement.

This year's theme – "Building a Fire-Ready Future: Strengthening Our Defenses, Together" – underscores the collective responsibility of individuals, communities, and agencies to prepare for and defend against wildfire threats.

CAL FIRE continues to lead proactive wildfire mitigation through strategic fuel reduction, forest health initiatives, and an expanded grant program supporting private landowners, Fire Safe Councils, and Firewise Communities.

Read the rest of Action Over on Page 11

Art Center seeks your memories

We are preparing to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Willits Center for the Arts. Please send us information you might have on the history of this much loved local institution before it gets lost to time.

If you have any information about or documents or pictures related to the founding of the Willits Center for the Arts or the history of the building it now calls home, please email manager@willitscenterforthearts.org letting us know!

We're happy to hear about anything in relation to the WCA, but in particular we would love to have memories, stories, documents, or photos about:

- The history of the WIC building and the roles it has played in the community all the way back to when it was built in the 1920s;
- The grassroots community organizing that got the center started as an arts commission and then a 501(c)(3) ... the journey from an idea, to a community discussion, to a reality;
- The work on the building itself to turn it into the beautiful art center it is today; and
- Events or shows that happened there, artists you saw that stuck with you, the impact WCA had on your life or the community as a whole.

Please email manager@willitscenterforthearts.org with a sentence or two summarizing what you have to share and your contact information. We will follow up with you to get more details when the project starts later this year.

– WCA Board of Directors

Senior Center menu for the week

Willits Senior Center is serving lunch in its indoor dining room, Monday through Friday, from 11:45 am to 1 pm. Drive-through lunches are available from 12 to 12:45 pm, outside the Senior Center, 1501

Thursday, May 8: Chicken Bacon Ranch Wraps, Pickle, Chips

Friday, May 9: Pork Chops, Rice Pilaf, Veggies, Roll

Monday, May 12: Scalloped Potatoes w/Ham, Veggies, Roll

Tuesday, May 13: Meatloaf, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Veggies, Roll

Wednesday, May 14: Pasta Primavera (vegetarian), Garlic Bread

Thursday, May 15: Pulled Pork Sandwich, Cole Slaw, Pickle

Friday, May 16: Grilled Ham & Cheese Sandwich, Tomato Soup

Mother's Day Breakfast: Buffet breakfast feast from 9 to 11 am, Sunday, May 11, with Pancakes, Waffles, Biscuits & Gravy, Vegetarian Breakfast Casserole, Scrambled Eggs, Bacon, Sausage, Ham, Fresh Fruit Cups, Hot and Cold Beverages, and Fruit Syrups. Complimentary mimosa to all moms 21+. \$10 mothers; \$18 adults; \$10 children 6 to 12, children under 6 free. 1501 Baechtel Road.

Activities: Bingo every Friday night, 5 to 7 pm. Exercise class every weekday morning from 9 to 10 am.

Meals on Wheels: The Senior Center Meals on Wheels program delivers lunch Monday through Friday. To sign up call Joliana at 459-6826, who can help fill out the application form. Call 459-6826 the day before needed to schedule home meal delivery. Delivered throughout Willits.

Transportation for seniors: Call 459-5556 to schedule. Pick up and drop off for grocery shopping, banking, doctors' appointments. Senior Center Thrift Shop: 459-2176

The Senior Center is in need of volunteers to help with the many activities here at the center, including volunteer Meals on Wheels drivers. "Volunteers are one-third of our workforce, which allows us to offer many services to our members and community." To learn more about volunteering: 459-6826.

The Rules: LETTERS

Letters & Commentaries: Email letters to willitsweekly@gmail.com. Willits Weekly prints letters and commentaries about Willits and Third District issues, activities, events, and people. We print letters to the editor 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.

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. Deadline is end of day Monday for each Thursday edition. 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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Library to discontinue Hoopla and other online services

Submitted by Mendocino County Library

May 6 – Due to current and upcoming financial obligations, the Mendocino County Library has made the difficult decision to discontinue some online services, including Hoopla, Kanopy, Pronunciator, ProCiten, GrantFinder, and Kovels. We understand that this news will come as a disappointment to many who have enjoyed these digital services.

This decision follows a careful review of the Library's digital resources and the impact on patron needs versus budget constraints. Although expenses continue to increase, sales tax revenue is projected to decrease. Measure O provides a sales tax revenue of one-quarter cent (0.25%) with 60% of the revenue for operating expenses and 40% set aside for capital investments. The 60% for operating investments is a small increase over the previous Measure A funds of one-eighth percent (0.125%).

"Please know that this decision was not made lightly. It was deemed necessary to ensure that the Library continues to be a good steward of taxpayer funds and can maintain other essential services and resources for our community," said County Librarian Mellisa Hannum.

Patrons will no longer have access to digital content of the following services as of these dates:

Hoopla digital: July 1, 2025

Kanopy: July 1, 2025

Pronunciator: November 27, 2025

ProCiten: November 27, 2025-

GrantFinder: November 10, 2025

We encourage patrons to use the services that will continue to be provided including Libby, the Palace Project, and other digital resources. We appreciate your understanding and continued support. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to us.

For more information, please view www.mendolib.org or contact the Mendocino County Library at (707) 234-2873.

Caltrans District 1 Transportation Scholarship open to apply

The Caltrans District 1 Social Fund and the Caltrans Transportation Foundation are offering one \$2,250 scholarship to a student seeking a career in transportation.

This scholarship is competitive and based on the applicant's commitment to a career in transportation, academic record, and participation in extracurricular or community-related activities.

District 1 Social Fund Chair Cori Reed said: "There are so many careers you can pursue in the transportation field, from engineering to heavy equipment operation and construction. This scholarship is a great opportunity to kickstart your education."

High school seniors or college undergraduates who are from or are currently living in Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake or Mendocino counties are eligible to apply. For a complete list of qualifications and to apply, go to apply.mykaleidoscope.com/program/CaltransDistrict1-2025.

Applications are available online only and must be submitted by Thursday, June 12.

Visit dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-1/d1-popular-links/d1-scholarship for more information about the District 1 Scholarship Program, and go to the ctf.org to learn more about the CTF.

Have something to say?

Residents of Willits, Brooktrails, Laytonville and Covelo are welcome to send in a letter to the editor about local issues. Please email us: willitsweekly@gmail.com

REMEMBER: Deadline is end of day Monday for each week's Thursday edition.

Mendocino County students shine at state Science Fair as education funding faces new threats

By Michelle Hutchins, M.A., Area 3 Trustee, Mendocino County Board of Education

Earlier this month, 10 talented students from Mendocino County traveled to California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks to compete in the California State Science and Engineering Fair, joining over 850 of the most promising young scientists from across the state.

As a judge in the Junior Zoology division, I had the privilege of witnessing the depth, rigor, and creativity of student-led research firsthand. The fair showcased innovative projects across every scientific discipline, from renewable energy and health sciences to behavioral research and environmental solutions.

Our Mendocino County students brought forward a range of original and thought-provoking projects. I had the opportunity to interview five of the 10 students during the event, each of whom demonstrated an impressive command of their subject and a passion for problem-solving.

Three students from Mendocino County earned statewide recognition for their outstanding projects:

Jameson Matheson, a 7th grader from Baechtel Grove Middle School in Willits, earned 1st Place in the Microbiology division for his exceptional project work.

Toshiyoi Majima, 11th grade student at Developing Virtue Secondary Schools in Ukiah, placed 5th in the Biochemistry/Molecular Biology division.

Seona Slater, a 6th grader from Willits Charter School, received a sponsored award, the South Coast AQMD Air Quality Award, for her project titled, "Hydrogen: Fuel of the Future."

In addition to Mendocino County students, I interviewed students from Humboldt County and from a nearby high school located just across the street from the university. These conversations offered an important comparison and revealed both the common threads and distinct challenges faced by students across different regions.

One concerning reality that emerged at the fair was that despite the incredible talent on display, the California State Science and Engineering Fair was only able to send two students to the International Science and Engineering Fair, even though they are permitted to send up to 10.

Why? Funding limitations.

Meanwhile, larger county Offices of Education (such as San Bernardino and Riverside) have their own direct pipelines to the International science fair. They send students independently, bypassing the state fair entirely. That's not the case for rural counties like Mendocino, where the California state fair is the only pathway for our students to reach that next level.

This disparity highlights a deeper issue: the growing gap in access to elite academic opportunities based on geography and funding. When federal support is cut (or fails to reach rural communities), it limits not just what schools can offer, but what students can aspire to. In short, without consistent and equitable federal investment, brilliant young scientists from smaller counties are left competing for fewer slots, with fewer resources, and fewer chances to shine on the global stage.

While students are rising to new academic heights, school systems continue to face challenges. In early April, California and 12 other states filed a lawsuit against the Trump administration for abruptly cutting off access to hundreds of millions of dollars in pandemic relief funding for K-12 schools.

The lawsuit, filed by California Attorney General Rob Bonta, argues that the U.S. Department of Education violated the law by canceling previously approved extensions to spend COVID-era funds. These funds, originally set to expire in March 2026, were critical to supporting students with tutoring, mental health counseling, summer school, technology access, and after-school programming, especially in rural districts.

Read the rest of Hutchins | Over on page 4

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Below: Noyo Theater owners Jim Devine and Michelle Hutchins are trying to obtain the funds to build a performance stage in their largest theater.



Photos by Matthew Caine



At left: People stop by to see the food and craft vendors and especially Soul Circus with Robin Suzanne. Below: Kira and Cody Swan of Swan Woodworking brought several of their creations.



Commemorating an Icon

Noyo Theater celebrates 85th anniversary and raises funds for a live stage with mini street fair

May 4, 1940 was an auspicious date in the heyday of the movie business, at least in Willits. It was the date that saw the opening of Willits' beautiful deco-inspired movie theater, built by the Redwood Theater chain and later bought and renovated by Cinema West. Later, on June 8, 2012, the theater was purchased by Jeff and Lois Hoover, who ran the Noyo until 2024, updating the projection equipment with the latest digital machinery.

The venue was forced to close its doors in 2020 due to the COVID pandemic and reopened once the pandemic tapered off. They kept the theater alive by selling concessions out the door, but eventually, in 2024, the Noyo was sold to its present owners Jim Devine and Michelle Hutchins.

The first film that played at the Noyo was "Dark Command," starring John Wayne, Claire Trevor, Walter Pidgeon, Roy Rogers, and Gabby Hayes. The film depicted opposing pro-Union and pro-South forces in Kansas, and was partially shot in the Willits area, at Third Gate where the director, Preston Sturges, had a home, which was later purchased by the Hoovers. No one seemed to notice that Third Gate did not resemble any part of Kansas. From 1940 on, the Noyo has been an icon of the Willits downtown with its gracefully curved arches and beautiful interior.

In order for the theater to continue to exist, Jim Devine decided that it needed to expand its repertoire and bring in live entertainment, beginning with three very successful, sold-out comedy shows. But Devine wanted to create something better and more usable than having performances on the floor in the front of the large space. His plan is to build a stage that would be level to allow bands to be able to play and to be more visible to the audience. So, on the occasion of the 85th anniversary of the Noyo, Devine, Hutchins, and event planner Da Grand Pooba decided to throw a party to begin to raise the \$15,000 that would be needed for the project.

"We were talking about putting a party on," said Pooba, "and it dawned on me that because they have something down in Ukiah called 'The Lot' where they have events on a regular basis and because we've been doing downtown music for the Hometown Celebrations, that it would be a really neat thing to do, take this lot and once a month or so have an event down here.

"I spoke with Jim and Michelle," Pooba said, "and they thought it was a good idea and that's what started it. With one

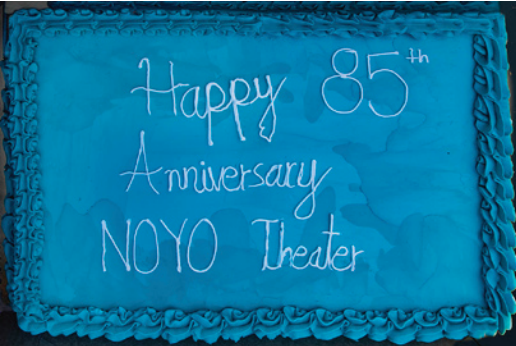
of our favorite bands in town being Soul Circus, we approached them. When they come off, Selector Jay, who does Redwood Soul Shakedown on KZYX, is coming and is going to do a meet and greet and do a playlist of his. So, we're going to have Motown and funk."

In addition to the anniversary of the Noyo, it was also Devine's birthday as well as informal commemorative May the Fourth be With You Star Wars Day. There were several vendors in the city lot, next to Flying Dog Pizza, including the Ministry of Divine Consciousness, Taste Buds, Sun Woodworking, Angel's Touch Apothecary, Shalee Hansen's Impressions Studio / Boudoir by Shalee, Pins by Aiyana and Brian (who created a Noyo Theater collectible pin), Katie B's Creations (freeze-dried confections), and Amber Slater's dye-sublimation printed tumblers and mugs.

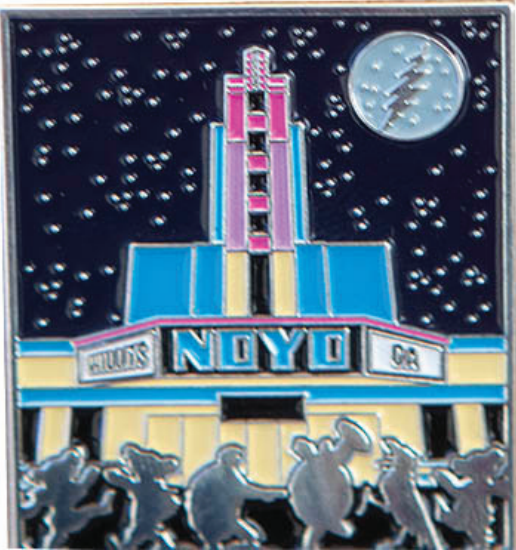
Hutchins' daughter, Bri Wiley, took charge of the silent auction, which included items donated by each of the vendors, with an eclectic variety of items, including a photo of the Cabrillo Lighthouse, car coasters, Turtle Island Tacos, a tour of the inner working of the Noyo, and two Nubian goats, named Nini and Coco.

"We can keep doing the comedy shows," said Devine. "The next thing I'd like to try is live music and see if that is a fit. Originally, Soul Circus was going to be our first band on the stage, and then, in the process of trying to imagine that, we found all the obstacles to make that happen. We decided to move them outside and figure out how to make it happen.

"In honor of my birthday, we are going to have a series of classic films," continued Devine. "One of my bucket-list movies to see on the big screen, and I haven't seen it in a long time, is the animated classic, 'Megamind.' All tickets will be the throwback price of \$6 in celebration of my 60th birthday. In tandem with that, another one of my favorite repertoire movies, a big one from my time in high school is 'Terminator,' with Arnold Schwarzenegger. All through the month of May is a short list of nostalgic movies. We'll have 'Babe in the Big City,' 'Goonies 40th Anniversary,' 'Batman Returns,' 'American Graffiti,' either 'Grease' or 'The Sound of Music.'"



At top: The cake, available for the attendees, proclaimed the 85th anniversary of the Noyo Theater. Above: Madeline, Layla and Kodi enjoyed their day out in the sun and played with the bubble machine and giant Jenga set. Below: Special 85th Anniversary Noyo pins were created by Aiyana and Brian, a father and daughter team from Willits.



Friday, May 9th:

National Native American Day

Tribal Members will receive \$15 Free Play.

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MOM

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Willits Weekly's
Puzzle Page
Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword

9x9 grid for Sudoku puzzle. Level: Beginner



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!

MOTHER'S DAY WORD SEARCH grid with letters for word search.

Word search categories: AFFECTION, AUNT, BREAK, BREAKFAST, CARING, DEDICATED, DESSERT, FANFARE, FOSTER, GATHERING, GRANDMOTHER, GREETING CARD, HONOR, HUGS, MATERNAL, MOM, PRESENTS, RELAXATION, REST, RESTAURANT, SISTER, SPA, VACATION, WOMAN

15x15 grid for crossword puzzle.

- CLUES ACROSS: 1. Two-person German submarine, 6. 60-minute intervals (abbr.), 9. Database management system, 13. Vertical position, 14. American jazz singer Irene, 15. Ancient Greek City, 16. Former Senate Majority Leader Harry, 17. Japanese seaport, 18. Self-immolation by fire ritual, 19. Assigns tasks, 21. Beloved type of cigar, 22. Discounts, 23. Cambodian communist leader Pot, 24. Important football position, 25. Kilometers per hour, 28. Lentil, 29. Extremely angry, 31. Yellow-flowered European plant, 33. American state, 36. Some are made by rabbits, 38. Express with a head movement, 39. Affair, 41. Cured, 44. Youth organization, 45. 18-year astronomical period, 46. Automobile, 48. Focus a shot, 49. The NFL's big game (abbr.), 51. Mouth, 52. Infections, 54. Curved pieces of a horse collar, 56. Shameless, 60. Assist in escaping, 61. Capuchin monkey genus, 62. Cold wind, 63. Retired Brazilian NBAer, 64. Tropical Old World tree, 65. Bulgarian city, 66. Speak indistinctly, 67. Soviet Socialist Republic, 68. Between-meal sustenance, 11. Some is 'heavy', 12. One who has been canonized, 14. Indicate times, 17. Greeting, 20. Broadway actor Josh, 21. Seashore, 23. Indicates before, 25. Electrical power unit, 26. Destitute, 27. Drags forcibly, 29. Impropriety, 30. Word forms, 32. Equal to 10 meters, 34. Neither, 35. Computer language, 37. Practice of aging film or TV characters (abbr.), 40. A woolen cap of Scottish origin, 42. A promise, 43. Challenges, 47. Official, 49. People living in Myanmar, 50. Notable tower, 52. Type of sword, 53. Vaccine developer, 55. Listing, 56. Summertime insects, 57. Concluding passage, 58. Guitarist Clapton, 59. Damp and musty, 61. Central nervous system, 65. Against

Ukiah man arrested after bomb goes off in RV

By Sgt. Jay Vanoven, for MCSO
On May 1, 2025 at approximately 12 pm, the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office was called to the 8600 block of North State Street in Redwood Valley to investigate a reported explosive device detonation.

Redwood Valley-Calpella Fire District personnel had responded to the area for a reported fire and discovered a small grass fire that had been extinguished by quick-acting community members.

Upon further inspection of the scene it was determined the source of the fire was an explosive device that had been ignited in an abandoned shopping cart. A battalion chief with the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority responded to assist, and determined the crime of arson had been committed.

Examination of the scene revealed a section of the shopping cart was destroyed and scattered on the ground, leaving an approximately 100-foot debris field. A section of the grass, approximately 8 feet in diameter, had burned before being extinguished by community members.

Fragments of the destructive device were located and believed to be similar to a recent incident investigated by the California Highway Patrol on Highway 222 (Talmage Road) in Ukiah on April 30, 2025. During the incident on April 30, an intact and non-detonated explosive device was located in a roadside ditch. Personnel from the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office Bomb Squad responded on April 30 and rendered the device safe.

Photographs of the detonated fragments from the May 1 incident were sent to Bomb Squad personnel, who confirmed the two devices were of similar type. Further investigation revealed that on May 1, 2025 a destructive device wrapped in several layers of packing tape and ignited with a

Parlin Forks inmate walks away, is apprehended

Submitted by CDCR
Fort Bragg – California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation apprehended the same day an incarcerated person who walked away from Parlin Fork Conservation Camp #6 in Mendocino County on Sunday, May 4, 2025.

According to the original press release, officials were alerted around 7:35 am that inmate Donovan R. Bacon, 33, out of San Bernardino County, was gone. An emergency count of the conservation camp was conducted immediately, confirming Bacon was missing.

At approximately 11:30 am, May 4, CDCR's Office of Correctional Safety Special Agents with the help of the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office apprehended Donovan R. Bacon at the Coyote Valley Casino in Redwood Valley, without incident.

Bacon has been rehoused at a prison, and his case will be referred to the Mendocino County District Attorney's Office for consideration of escape charges.

Bacon was most recently received from San Bernardino County on September 15, 2023. He was sentenced to six years for second-degree robbery with an enhancement for the personal use of a dangerous or deadly weapon. He has been housed at Parlin Fork Conservation Camp in Mendocino County since February 18, 2025.

Since 1977, 99 percent of the incarcerated people who have escaped or walked away from an adult institution, camp, in-state contract bed or Community Rehabilitative Program Placement have been apprehended.

The rest of Hutchins | From page 2

In total, California stands to lose around \$200 million. Many Mendocino County districts depend on these funds to address the academic and emotional impacts of the pandemic, needs that certainly haven't disappeared.

This year also marks 60 years since the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, which created Title I, the federal program that delivers targeted funding to schools serving students from low-income families. Title I has become a cornerstone of public education, helping ensure that every student, regardless of their ZIP code, has access to quality learning opportunities. In fiscal year 2024, Title I was funded at \$18.4 billion, distributed through formula grants.

Yet some lawmakers have proposed converting Title I into a block grant, allowing states more freedom in how the money is spent, and raising concerns among education advocates about accountability and equitable access. For smaller, rural counties like Mendocino, programs like Title I and pandemic recovery funding are not abstract, they are essential.

What Mendocino County's students demonstrated at the state Science Fair is that curiosity, critical thinking, and innovation are alive and well, even in small, rural communities. But we must continue to ensure that students have the support systems, funding, and opportunities they need to thrive. As we celebrate our young scientists' success, we must also fight to preserve the infrastructure that made their path possible to ensure that rural talent isn't left behind.

Michelle Hutchins has over 30 years of experience in public education, having served as county superintendent from 2018 to 2022. She currently serves on the Mendocino County Board of Education and works as a consultant to several county offices across the state, with a focus on supporting small and rural school districts. Hutchins also hosts a monthly radio program called "Inside Education: Where Policy Meets the Classroom," airing the fourth Thursday of each month at 7 pm on KZYX.

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Our P.O. BOX 1698 is always happy for envelopes! Mail us any amount direct!
See us out and about? At the Farmers Market? We are happy to take any cash donations!

Thursday, May 8

'A Bit and a Bite' at the Museum: Friends of the Mendocino County Museum presents light refreshments, history and conversation. Project Interpreter and Wildlife Biologist Marisela de Santa Anna shares her experience leading tours of the Willits Bypass Mitigation Lands, and authoring a wildlife blog. Thursday, May 8 at 12:30 pm. 400 East Commercial Street. More info: at www.mendocinocounty.gov/museum, museum@mendocinocounty.gov or 707-234-6365.

Willits Farmers Market: Join your neighbors on Thursdays, from 3 to 5:30 pm at the Willits Farmers Market at City Park, with vendors along State Street on the north end of the park. you the freshest produce available, local meat and eggs, hot food and cold from small, local businesses, many of them sourcing ingredients from local farms. Crafts, live music, and the new copy of Willits Weekly. The market honors EBT and WIC cards and matches benefits with Market Match, to double your food dollars.

Willits Senior Center Presents
A Very Special Mothers Day Breakfast!
Sunday, May 11th, 2025
8am—11am
One Complimentary Mimosa to all moms 21+
Buffet Style Menu
Pancakes, Waffles; Biscuits & Gravy; Vegetarian Breakfast Casserole; Scrambled Eggs; Bacon, Linked Sausage, Ham; Fresh Fruit Cups; Hot and Cold Beverages, Regular, Sugar Free, and Fruit Syrups
Prices
Mothers: \$10
Adults: \$18
Children 6 to 12: \$10
Children under 6: Free
1501 Baechtel Rd, WILLITS, CA 95490

Ham, Fresh Fruit Cups, Hot and Cold Beverages, and Fruit Syrups. Complimentary mimosa to all moms 21+. \$10 mothers; \$18 adults; \$10 children 6 to 12, children under 6 free. 1501 Baechtel Road. Gifts, including See's Candy, will be given away; breakfast will be prepared by, served by, and cleaned up by our male volunteers.

Friday, May 9

Democracy Vigil: Every Friday evening from 5 to 6 pm, at Babcock Park, South Main Street.

Fundraiser for Nuestra Alianza at Methodist Church: Support the cultural activities and social services provided by Nuestra Alianza. Enjoy a huge feast of Mexican food and a delightful silent auction, Friday, May 9, 5 to 8 pm, with a welcome from Nuestra Alianza and the church pastor, Jaime Fairchild; music from the Harmony Keepers: Kate Black, Anita Wagenet, and guest musician Liz Fairchild; speakers including Supervisor John Haschak, and from Nuestra Alianza, Dina Hutton, Sergio Perez, and Medie Jesena; and Mexican Ranchera music sung by Keily Beccera. Willits United Methodist Church, 286 School Street. The price of admission all goes toward donations, with a sliding scale of \$5 to \$50.

Art Talk at WCA: Willits Center for the Arts' Art Talk this month is on the National Gallery of Art, "A Living Monument to Art, History, and Innovation," located on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., one of the nation's preeminent cultural institutions. Talk by art historian Gary Martin on Friday, May 9, at 6:30 pm at the Art Center, 71 East Commercial Street. Free. Info: (707) 459-1726, or Gary Martin at 707-972-3326 or visit www.willitscenterforthearts.org.

"Serenity House" at WCT: this original play written and directed by Schuyler Marcier, set in a group home for individuals navigating addiction and mental health recovery. continues Friday May 9 at 7 pm, at Willits Community Theatre. Runs through May 18, with shows on Friday and Saturday at 7 pm and Sunday matinees at 2 pm.

Latchkey at Shanachie: "Mixing elements from countrified soul, 70s AM radio, and four-part vocal harmony, and putting the results through a punk rock filter, Latchkey presents an invigorating twist on the Northern California festival vibe." Friday, May 9, 8 pm, at Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street.

Saturday, May 10

"Serenity House" at WCT: this original play written and directed by Schuyler Marcier, set in a group home for individuals navigating addiction and mental health recovery. continues Saturday May 10 at 7 pm, at Willits Community Theatre. See Friday, May 9 listing for details and ticket info.

Ju Drum & Band at Shanachie: "Original Afrobeat-Reggae from the Heart of Nigeria to the Stages of Humboldt County." Ju Drum was raised with and taught performing and recording music professional since the age of 14." Saturday, May 10 at 8 pm, at Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street.

Sunday, May 11

Mother's Day Breakfast at Senior Center: Enjoy a buffet breakfast from 9 to 11 am, with Pancakes, Waffles, Biscuits & Gravy, Vegetarian Breakfast Casserole, Scrambled Eggs, Bacon, Sausage, Ham, Fresh Fruit Cups, Hot and Cold Beverages, Regular, Sugar Free, and Fruit Syrups. Mothers: \$10, Adults: \$18, Children 6 to 12: \$10, Children under 6: Free. 1501 Baechtel Rd, WILLITS, CA 95490

Ham, Fresh Fruit Cups, Hot and Cold Beverages, and Fruit Syrups. Complimentary mimosa to all moms 21+. \$10 mothers; \$18 adults; \$10 children 6 to 12, children under 6 free. 1501 Baechtel Road. Gifts, including See's Candy, will be given away; breakfast will be prepared by, served by, and cleaned up by our male volunteers.

"Serenity House" at WCT: this original play written and directed by Schuyler Marcier, set in a group home for individuals navigating addiction and mental health recovery. continues Sunday May 11 at 2 pm, at Willits Community Theatre. See Friday, May 9 listing for details and ticket info.

WILLITS CENTER FOR THE ARTS presents
~DUETS~
An Afternoon of Musical Collaboration
with Refreshments, Treats, & Libations
MOTHERS DAY May 11 ~ 4-6pm
Jazz-Classical-Original-Contemporary-Chinese
SPENCER BREWER & WENBO YIN
BEN RUEB & MARGIE RICE
BARNEY MCCLURE & ROSEANNE WETZEL
KATRINA HU, LITA LI, & HANNAH CHENG
TICKETS \$25 ONLINE - \$30 AT THE DOOR
Willits Center for the Arts, 71 Commercial St.
Tickets Online at willitscenterforthearts.org

DUETS at WCA: Celebrate Mother's Day with a musical world tour at the Willits Center for the Arts, with four "duets" from the region's finest musicians, who pair up on WCA's grand piano, violin, saxophone, vocals, and traditional Chinese instruments. Performers are Ben Rueb & Margie Rice, Barney McClure & Roseanne Wetzel, Spencer Brewer & Wenbo Yin, and trio Katrina Hu, Lita Li & Hannah Cheng. \$25 presale online at willitscenterforthearts.org and at the gallery desk; \$30 day of the show. Enjoy charcuterie and special pastries from Willits' own Craft House Baking and the Cheesecakeery, sparkling wine and other beverages. Doors open at 3:30 pm on Sunday, May 11, and music begins at 4 pm in the Great Room at the Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. Info: 707-459-1726.

Wednesday, May 14

'History Makers' Family Craft Program at the Museum: Wednesday, May 14, at the Mendocino County Museum from 2 to 4:30 pm. Flower Collage inspired by Low Gap Park. Program attendance is

What's Happening Around Town
www.visitwillits.com
299 East Commercial Street | Willits, CA | 707.459.7910

Sunday, May 18

FOWL Spring Book Sale: at the Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. New favorites? Old classics? Find them here! Closing day, Sunday, May 18, open hours are from 10 am to 3 pm, and all books are only \$3 a bag.

Leaf of Life at Shanachie: Leaf of Life is a gritty Kingston, Jamaica born roots reggae and dancehall artist. Self-taught songwriter, composer, producer and vocalist. Saturday, May 17 at 8 pm, at Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street.



Willits Gem & Mineral Society
May 19th 7-8:30pm
@The Willits Grange
SPECIAL PRESENTATION!
An Introduction to the Art of Lost Wax Jewelry Casting

Willits High School
Production of Disney
THE LITTLE MERMAID JR
Locations: Allen Garcia Auditorium
Dates and Times: May 16th at 7 pm, May 17th at 7 pm, May 18 at 2 pm
Music by Alan Menken, Lyrics by Howard Ashman and Glenn Slater, Book by Doug Wright, Based on the 1989 Disney Animated Film, Music Adapted and Arranged by David Weinstein, Music Director Daniel Cech

Send in your local community event!
willitsweekly@gmail.com

MAIN STREET
WILLITS
2025 MAIN STREET
43rd ANNUAL CAR & BIKE SHOW
SUNDAY * MAY 25TH
10AM - 3PM

Learn the "Aid in Dying/End of Life" law. Who can use it? What actually happens?
Learn how to leave a legacy instead of a mess
Initiate difficult conversations with family and friends
WILLITS Center for the Arts
71 E Commercial St.
FREE to the public.
Donations appreciated! Wheelchair accessible.

Grateful Gleaners PLANT SALE
* Saturday May 10th * 10 am to 3 pm *
Flowers, Fruits, Vegetables, Herbs, Pollinators, CA Natives and MORE!
Look for signs at the Willits Post Office, pointing to 130 Tuttle Lane



Above: "Green Wisdom" by Leslie Rich.

At right, top: Artist Esther Siegel tells Visual Jazz stories with appreciative art lovers. At right: "Shoefly" by Spencer Brewer. A detail from "Shoefly" by Spencer Brewer. Harpist Suni Robin added a bit of musical heaven to the Visual Jazz opening night.



Celebrating Annie Samson

A gathering to celebrate the life of Annie Samson, who died on March 20, will be held on Saturday, May 10 from 2 to 5 pm, in the Great Room at the Willits Center for the Arts.

Visual Jazz

WCA hosts artists reception for May assemblage exhibit

Spirits were high last Saturday evening at Willits Center for the Arts for the opening of the much-awaited Visual Jazz assemblage exhibit from artists Leslie Rich, Esther Siegel and Spencer Brewer.

Margi Gomez Guhde
Features Writer
willitsweekly@gmail.com

According to Miriam-Webster's first definition, the word assemblage means, "both a collection of persons or things: a gathering." Moving on to another definition given by Miriam Webster, assemblage refers to, "an artistic composition made from scraps, junk, and odds and ends (as of paper, cloth, wood, stone, or metal)." In the case of WCA's Visual Jazz exhibit, both definitions apply!

With the addition of live harp music from Ukiah harpist Suni Robin, the opening provided a visual and audio delight for Art Center regulars and new visitors alike.

Leslie Rich

Leslie Rich began working in assemblage about four years ago. "I love the process of 'finding' the materials and discovering how they 'want' to be put together," she said.

Although she has shown her paintings and other artworks throughout the years, Visual Jazz is Leslie's first showing of her assemblage pieces.

She notes that each of her creations is infused with personal meaning, continuing: "I'm grateful to have added assemblage to my art toolbox, and so fortunate to have wonderful mentors and creative

partners in Spencer and Esther. We have been friends for almost 40 years," she continued, "and we've been through thick and thin together.... Making and sharing art helps me survive these troubled times."

"I love seeing the beautiful exhibit of our work," Leslie said. "I especially appreciate interacting with friends and art lovers, and hearing their reactions to the various pieces. The opening is terrific!"

Esther Siegel

Esther Siegel describes herself as a "later in life" artist, who first worked with paper in the form of scrap-booking and card making. Once she discovered she could "draw and paint" with objects, she was hooked on assemblage. Esther compares assemblage with the chemistry of cooking and baking, another of her interests.

She loves the alchemy of combining objects in the studio to find their "new and perfect home." Esther works in stages, starting with a flurry of ideas and arrangements, often working on several pieces at once. "Inspiration comes from visual resources and just browsing through the myriad of 'stuff' in our barn art studio," she relates.

Her desire for harmony, love of horses, and interest in psychotherapy are some of her themes and motivators. She thinks of herself as a "glass-half-full person" who strives for humor, optimism, and lightness in her art.

Read the rest of **Jazz** Over on page 11

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Wednesday - Saturday 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday 12-4 p.m.

- Welcome Visitors
- Gift Shop Service
- Museum Support

<https://mendocinocounty.museumfriends.org/>

Below: Friends Spencer Brewer, Esther Siegel, and Leslie Rich at the Visual Jazz opening at the Art Center. At bottom: "A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words," by Spencer Brewer.



Sherwood School hosts Open House and Ribbon Cutting Celebration, May 9

Sherwood School invites families and community members to its Open House and Ribbon Cutting Celebration on Thursday, May 9, from 5 to 7:30 pm, as part of its student recruitment for the 2025/26 school year.

The event will include a ribbon cutting ceremony unveiling several exciting new additions to the school campus, including a covered pavilion, a basketball court, and a vibrant mural celebrating native plants and animals. The mural is a collaborative project between Sherwood students and local artist Danza Davis.

Guests are invited to tour classrooms, enjoy student work displays, and read Young Authors' books – original stories written and illustrated by students. An enchilada dinner fundraiser will also take place, with proceeds supporting future student programs and activities.

A special meet-and-greet for incoming Kindergarten families will begin at 4 pm, offering a chance to connect with the Kindergarten teacher and tour the classroom before the general Open House.

Sherwood School is a small, rural,

tuition-free public school located 10 miles up Sherwood Road and is part of the Willits Unified School District. Known for its strong community ties and multi-grade classrooms, the school emphasizes academic excellence, creativity, and student engagement.

For more information, contact Sherwood School at (707) 974-6769 or visit <https://www.willitsunified.com/o/sherwood>

– Annapurna Steffen, interim principal

Sherwood School Open House May 9th from 5:00–7:30 PM!

- Tour the classrooms & meet our staff
- Scholastic Book Fair
- Enchilada dinner
- Dessert auction
- Plant sale

Sherwood School is Now Enrolling for Kindergarten – 5th Grade!



Photos by Margi Gomez Guhde



Photos by Mathew Caine



About 50 concerned citizens came out with their signs in order to support each other in protesting the current administration.

Indivisible Willits

Activists gather at Babcock Park on May Day to protest against the current administration

They're mad as hell and they're not going to take it anymore (channeling Peter Finch in the 1976 film "Network"). In these politically divisive times, when the country is being governed by an administration that is breaking many of the normal protocols, there is an increasing number of citizens who see the current administration as an entity who is subverting the U.S. Constitution and the rights of individuals who may not fit into the administration's view of what it is to be an American.

They additionally see the fiscal actions as detrimental to a strong national and personal economy. Demonstrations against the people in power have been growing amidst the fears of recession, corruption, oligarchy and fascism. Locally, there have been gatherings at Babcock Park of the Willits chapter of Indivisible Mendocino, a group dedicated to voicing their concerns about the direction in which the country is headed.

Last week, there were two such gatherings, one as part of a national May Day demonstration, the other, locally based. Around 50 concerned Willits citizens amassed at the park on May 1, to be seen and heard with multi-colored signs expressing their anger at the actions of the administration.

The next day, Indivisible had one of their weekly vigils at the park, an event which they plan to create each week, on Fridays at 5 pm, until policies have changed in a manner which they believe is more in keeping with the values and laws of this country.

Each of the participants expressed their personal concerns, be it the U.S. Constitution, cuts in Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, or veterans services or the government's policies in regard to sending immigrants to South America, or suppressing the ability for people to vote, or a myriad of other grievances.

"We are going to stay here as long as it takes to get rid of this administration that is ruining America and trampling over our constitution," Madge Strong expressed her feelings and that of many of the other participants.

"There are so many grievances that it is hard to pinpoint one or two. I think

Read the rest of **Protest** Over on page 11

At left, top, from left: Linda Posner uses humor to get her point across. Kim Bancroft is concerned with DOGE's slashing of services that are needed by so many citizens. At left, from left: Mary Burns, Dayle and Michael Deer, and Linda Posner do their civic duty and express their feelings about the current administration. Fran Appling Gardner would like to see a more peaceful nation based on justice and truth. At left, below, from left: Kate Black, one of the organizers of the May Day demonstration, urges people on with her megaphone. Patrick Hart and Third District Supervisor John Haschak lend their support to the protesters to make their concerns heard. One protester channels Woody Guthrie's guitar to make a point about the perceived fascism of the administration. Below: Even veterans show up to support the cause of liberals and social justice.



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Info? 707-459-1905
www.agapebilechurch.com

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P.O. Box 489, Willits
Worship Service - 5:00 p.m.
Pastor Kris Strickland
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"What must we do to be saved?"
Acts 2:37
1095 S. Main St., Willits
(next to Super 8)
(707) 459-5023
Sunday Bible Study-10:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship-11:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening Service- 6-7:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study- 7-8:00 p.m.

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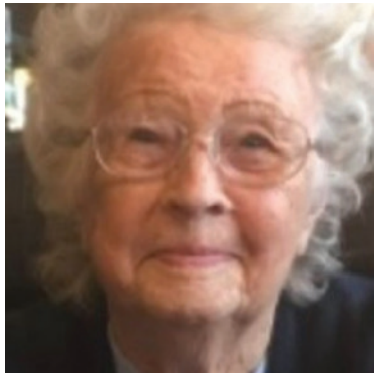
St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church
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Willits, CA 95490
Father Aaron Bandanadam
Mass times:
Wednesday-Friday 9:00 a.m.
Saturday-5:30 p.m.
Sunday-9:00 a.m. - English
10:30 a.m. - Spanish
Confessions on Saturday 4:45 - 5:15 p.m.
Or by appointment at 707-459-2252
<https://stanthonywillits.org/>
saintanthonywillits@gmail.com
We welcome All Walks of Faith

St. Francis Episcopal Church
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707-272-0177
Sunday Service - 10 a.m.
In-person and on Zoom
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ALL ARE WELCOME
The Rev. Betsy Bruneau

St. John Lutheran Church
Sunday Service 10:00 a.m.
(707) 459-2988
24 Mill Creek Drive
[Facebook.com/stjohnswillits](https://facebook.com/stjohnswillits)
ALL ARE WELCOME

Willits Seventh-Day Adventist Church
707-459-5714
Friendly, open worship
Saturdays
Bible Study - 9:30 a.m.
Worship Service - 10:45 a.m.
Zoom Transmission Available.
Wednesday
Prayer Meeting - 7:00 p.m.
399 W. Mendocino Ave.
All are welcome!

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Labyrinth and Peace Garden
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where all are welcome
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707-459-2855
wumc@outlook.com
www.willitsumc.org
Facebook: facebook willits umc
If you want to be included in this column please call:
April Tweddell
(707) 972-2475
april@willitsweekly.com



Happy Mother's Day - we love you mucho! Jimmie, Jerri & Terri and Happy 100th Birthday this year



Lois Bernard, Marie Bernard, Tiffany Dunlap, Sarina Parachini.



Anita Turcotte, who did an amazing job raising four of us and now helps with her grandchildren. She's a saint & the best mom around.



My wonderful Lilker/Schimmel family: Aaron, fiancé Lindsay, David, Lee and me Barbaralee.

Celebrating the Mothers

Don't Forget! Sunday, May 11 is Mother's Day!



Happy Mother's Day, Mom. We all love you so much and are blessed to have you. Love, Sarah and the whole crew.



Happy Mother's Day to the best Mama a girl could ask for. I love you Mom!! Love Suzen.



Happy Mother's day, Mom! Thank you for all that you do! Love you! - Colleen Pappadakis.



Happy Mother's Day to our mom and grandmother, Mae Sundstrom. Your family loves you dearly! We have been blessed!



Sheri & Ava Dockins: Happy Mother's Day mom! You're the smartest and strongest woman I know. I love you forever and always!



Happy Mother's Day to both my Moms. Thank you for always being there. I don't know what I would do without you. I am the Mother I am today because of you both. I love you.



Jennifer/Jenny: The best mom and fairy godmother. A blessing to us all.



Karen Thrillkill, you are loved and missed.



Luke, Clay, Sara, Lauren, Wyatt and Amy. Mom: you are the greatest Mother of all times. We love you with all our hearts. Happy Mother's Day!



Regan, Luke, Becky, Monroe and Patty. Becky you are a Super Mom! We love you beyond words.



Laura Wiecek and her daughter Alexis at Mazahar on a shopping spree.



Happy Mother's Day to Ginger Pohlsen from Christine Danforth - Jones

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The rest of Ridge From page 1

Watch Duty's initial report (watchduty.org) described the Ridge Fire as a "3 acre vegetation fire with a slow rate of spread moving upslope to the north in grass and transitioning into timber, per copter overhead. Potential for 5 acres."

The fire was visible from the Eden Valley cameras on UC Davis' AlertNet California network of live camera feeds. Visit <https://alertcalifornia.org/> to check out the views.

Escaped burn pile Friday

On Friday, May 2, Mendocino Action News on Facebook reported an escaped control burn pile fire in the 16500 block of Mariposa Creek Road. The fire was phoned in at 2:11 pm, and described as 1 acre, with a slow rate of speed in brush and timber.

At 2:28 pm, CAL FIRE described the fire as 1 acre in heavy brush, slope- and wind-driven, at a moderate rate of speed.

At 3 pm, fire resources were staged at the intersection of West/East/Tomki creeks, with creeks reported as passable.

At 3:09 pm, the landowner reported the fire was 50% contained, and incoming fire resources were reduced.

The rest of Protest From page 7

that what scares me the most is that Trump has in mind being dictator for life and trying to make it so he can have a third term, but I don't think there will even be an election in 2028, if he keeps going the way he's been going. I'm even worried that we can make it to the midterm elections in 2026.

"And, of course, they are subverting the vote," said Strong. "They're shipping people off to El Salvador and other places without any due process. That could happen to anybody. It's an outrageous complete subversion of what this country used to stand for."

As cars rolled by on busy Main Street, many honked in solidarity with the demonstrators, with very few negative acts, including single-finger salutes. "Indivisible is hosting this," said activist Debbie Boone-Harry. "I'm here because I think we have a lot of good messages to get out to save our democracy. I think the people power is very powerful."

"Indivisible is a national group but this is our local chapter, Willits Indivisible," explained Boone-Harry. "They help get us organized, whether we want to write postcards, some people want to do phone calls. They help us advertise these events. They just want to get all the like-minded people involved and give them some direction."

"The things that are most important to me are safeguarding our Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid. And just save our country. This is out of control. Doing things like this instead of just sitting at home. It feels like I'm doing something. It feels like I have a purpose, doing something to make things better," Boone-Harry said.

The rest of Jazz From page 6

Spencer Brewer

Spencer Brewer is a storyteller, crafting stories both through his musical compositions and his fantastical assemblage art sculptures. His "High Whimsy" sculptures made from unusual and vintage objects inspire viewers with a sense of delight, surprise and wonder.

Spencer is also a longtime musician and piano tuner, often working with a wide assortment of musical instruments. "Working on pianos, gramophones and pump organs offers me the opportunity to understand and appreciate the design and craftsmanship that went into these special creations from the 1800 and 1900s," he reflects. Many of Spencer's themed works incorporate the various inner parts from pianos, mechanical objects and instruments that few ever get to see.

"All of the materials in my sculptures are original parts that I re-purpose for new eyes," says Spencer. "They inspire me, and allow me to tell a new story."

Spencer says that going into the barn/ studio to pick out objects that speak to him and appeal to a new vision or idea, is a true blessing. "To create a new piece from our collection of old or vintage objects is a blast. To bring the collection to the Willits Center for the Arts, hang the show and then meet enthusiastic and interested folks at the opening ... well, it doesn't get much better. This is a 'WOW' experience for me."

Don't miss this fun and fantastical show at Willits Center for the Arts, which is open on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 11 am to 5 pm. The Visual Jazz exhibit will continue in both galleries at WCA through May 25.

WCA Art Talk: National Gallery of Art, May 9

Submitted by WCA

The Willits Center for the Arts' Art Talk this month is on the National Gallery of Art, "A Living Monument to Art, History, and Innovation," located on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., one of the nation's preeminent cultural institutions.

The free talk by art historian Gary Martin is set for Friday, May 9, at 6:30 pm at the Art Center, 71 East Commercial Street.

Since its founding in 1937, the National Gallery of Art has served as a beacon of free access to art and education, drawing millions of visitors each year to its world-renowned collections, exhibitions, and public programs.

The National Gallery is comprised of two architecturally significant buildings – the neoclassical West Building, designed by John Russell Pope, and the modernist East Building, designed by I. M. Pei – as well as the vibrant, 6.1-acre Sculpture Garden that unites the campus with an open-air celebration of modern and contemporary art.

Home to over 150,000 works of art, the Gallery's permanent collection spans from the Middle Ages to the present day, with particular strengths in Renaissance, Baroque, Impressionist, and 20th-century America art. Masterpieces by Leonardo da Vinci, Johannes Vermeer, Rembrandt van Rijn, Claude Monet, Georgia O'Keeffe, Jackson Pollock, and Mark Rothko exemplify the depth and range of the collection.

Noteworthy recent exhibitions and acquisitions underscore the Gallery's evolving mission to diversify and modernize its holdings. From spotlighting underrepresented voices to showcasing digital innovation in art conservation and research, the Gallery is poised at the intersection of tradition and transformation.

More info: (707) 459-1726, or Gary Martin at 707-972-3326, or visit www.willitscenterforthearts.org.

The rest of Action

From page 1

CAL FIRE Director and Fire Chief Joe Tyler said, "Building a fire-ready future means working together –by doing your part to protect your property through home hardening efforts, creating defensible space, and creating an emergency plan for your family, you are helping first responders protect lives, property, and natural resources."

This Wildfire Preparedness Week, Californians are urged to:

- Create defensible space, focus on Zone 0, the first five feet around your home.
- Harden structures against flying embers with ignition resistant building materials.
- Develop and practice a wildfire action plan so you are prepared when wildfire strikes.
- Stay informed with emergency alerts

– sign up today

- Pack a "go bag" and be ready to evacuate.

"Wildfire safety begins with being prepared," said State Fire Marshal Daniel Berlant. "Protecting our homes and communities takes all of us – neighbors, local groups, and state agencies – working side by side to reduce risk and save lives."

Help spread the word about Wildfire Preparedness!

To learn more about wildfire safety and preparedness, visit www.ReadyForWildfire.org. CAL FIRE encourages Californians to access the Ready for Wildfire web-based FirePLANNER that includes local alerts, checklists for preparedness, evacuation plans, and other kits. To download the free app, visit <https://plan.readyforwildfire.org/>

The rest of Buy-outs

From page 1

financial savings, and avoid involuntary staff reductions."

Incentive payments start at \$5,000 for an employee with at least 1 year of current employment, but less than 3 years. Those with at least 3 years but less than 5 years would receive \$8,000.

Employees with at least 5 years but fewer than 10 years employment, would receive \$10,000 plus \$1,000 for each full year of current service beyond 5 years, up to a maximum incentive of \$14,000.

Employees with 10 years or more of current service to the County of Mendocino would receive an incentive payment of \$15,000 plus \$1,000 for each full year of current service beyond 10 years for a maximum incentive of \$25,000.

The separation pay will be in exchange for signing the VSIP Resignation and Release Agreement.

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The Human Resources will begin accepting Voluntary Separation Incentive Program Resignation and Release Agreements beginning June 22, 2025. Resignations of those who accept the VSIP agreement will take place between July 10 and September 13, 2025.

Willits Post Office to participate in Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive Saturday, May 10

Posted by U.S. Post Office

Each year, letter carriers across the country head out on their routes on the second Saturday in May to collect donations of non-perishable food items to benefit local food pantries. Since launching in 1993, the National Association of Letter Carriers' annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive has grown into the nation's largest one-day food drive, helping to fill the shelves of food banks in cities and towns throughout the United States.

The need is great, but you can help. We invite you to join letter carriers and our partner organizations in the fight to end hunger in our communities by participating in the annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive.

Simply leave your donation of non-perishable food in a bag near your mailbox on the second Saturday in May, May 10 this year, and your letter carrier will do the rest.

If you have a post office box, or would like to bring your donation to the post office directly, stop by 315 South Main Street or call 707-459-5255 for more information.



Leave non-perishables out for your letter carrier on May 10 to participate.

ATW presents 'End of Life: Your Best Chapter,' May 15

Submitted by ATW

Avenues to Wellness presents, "End of Life: Your Best Chapter" by Cynthia Wall, LCSW, on Thursday, May 15, from 6 to 7 pm, at the Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. Free to the public. Chairlift available. Donations appreciated.

The last few pages in any book are always the most important; the plot comes together, characters forgive and are forgiven, and loose ends are neatly tied up. You can "make it so" in the final chapter of your life. Your legacy is the ultimate evidence of what was most important to you – not just paperwork! Conquering fears and handling materialistic and spiritual details will be the final gift you give to those you love. Peace of mind and time for fun will be your reward. This talk will include information about the "Aid in Dying/End of Life" law.

• Learn the "Aid in Dying/End of Life" law. Who can use it? What actually happens?



- Learn how to leave a legacy instead of a mess
- Initiate difficult conversations with family and friends

Cynthia Wall, LCSW is a medical social worker and psychotherapist with a matter-of-fact perspective on the reality of mortality. In 1978 she joined the Long Valley Health Center. She's had a private practice on the coast since 1985, where she has always been involved in end-of-life issues and supporting those who grieve. She has been living strong with Stage 4 cancer since 2019. She joyfully aided her husband in choosing the legal right to die on December 31, 2022.

Avenues to Wellness is a program of the Frank R. Howard Foundation. Visit: avenuestowellness.org for archives of previous talks. Email: spicetti@howardfoundation.org Call Suzanne at: (707) 456-9676 for more information.

Dance program for kids 3 to 8 open for registration

Submitted by Willits Community Theatre

Willits Community Theatre is thrilled to announce "Tutus and Toes," a joyful new dance mentorship program for children ages 3 to 8. Running on four consecutive Saturdays beginning May 24, classes are just \$50 for the full session.

Led by local artist and trained instructor Pearl Marill, with support from teen apprentices, the program offers movement-based fun in a supportive and energetic environment.

Classes take place at the Willits Charter School dance room Schedule: ages 3 to 5, 10 to 10:45 am; ages 6 to 8, 11 to 11:45 am. To register, email wctperformingartscenter@gmail.com for the form, or call (734) 255-6173.



So if you love books and the Library and can take the time – even just an hour or so – please consider volunteering. Thanks, it will be fun and enriching for the library!

Opening day of the sale, Thursday, May 15 from 5 to 7 pm, is for FOWL members only (can join FOWL at the sale!). Friday, May 16 and Saturday, May 17, the sale is open from 10 am to 5 pm. Sunday, May 18 open hours are from 10 am to 3 pm, and all books are only \$3 a bag.

To volunteer, please contact Olga by email at nolga@sbcglobal.net with "FOWL" in the subject line or call the Library at 707-459-5908 and leave a message with them. Someone will get back to you to welcome your help!

THIS SPELLS HELP FOR LOTS OF FAMILIES THIS YEAR!

FOOD

LETTER CARRIERS' FOOD DRIVE

SECOND SATURDAY IN MAY

PUT YOUR NON-PERISHABLE DONATION IN A BAG BY YOUR MAILBOX. WE'LL DELIVER IT TO A LOCAL FOOD BANK.

National Partners:

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