

What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from readers

Happy at Willits Elementary Charter School

To the Editor:

Dear Willits citizens: My name is Silmarien A. Parker. I am 9 years old and go to Willits Elementary Charter School. After about three months of going to WECS, I am already turning in eight-paragraph essays and writing my own sheet music!

I was not asked to do this by my fourth-grade teacher, Mrs. B. I did it independently! I may have learned some from other schools, but not enough to write music and so many paragraphs of writing. I even learned how to play the ukulele. I have to admit I have never been more welcome at any other school! Sincerely,

Silmarien Parker, Willits

No to ranching subsidy

To the Editor:

As the former owner of a successful business in Mendocino County, I never received so much as a thin dime of public subsidy from the county; indeed, I had to pay many county fees just to open my doors. Now don't get me wrong, I'm not complaining; this is the way it should be in a free market economy.

Yet, there is one industry in our county that seems to think that it is entitled to a public subsidy, and that is the ranching industry. Currently Mendocino County has a contract with the USDA Wildlife Services for \$142,356 to kill wild animals that are just trying to earn a living in their natural habitats which have been overrun by ranchers and their livestock. In 2012 alone, 459 wild animals were killed, including 126 coyotes, 25 bears, six bobcats and five mountain lions.

In essence, for the benefit of a few private ranchers, the public is being fleeced to pay for the slaughter of wild animals that belong to the public trust. This is wrong on both economic and ecologic grounds. There are much more effective and less costly – non-lethal – predator control methods that ranchers could use to protect their livestock, so, in effect, most of these wild animals are being killed needlessly.

The county's contract with Wildlife Services is coming up for renewal, and the ranchers – those icons of rugged individualism – are whining loudly demanding the continuation of their public subsidy. I urge everyone who cares about wildlife to contact your county supervisor and ask that they terminate the Wildlife Services contract (<http://www.co.mendocino.ca.us/cgi-bin/feedback>). Just say NO to killing our wildlife for welfare ranchers.

Jon Spitz, Laytonville

Thanks from Healthy Family Fair

To the Editor:

Our community is amazing! This last Sunday we had a great turnout for the Healthy Family Fair at Recreation Grove Park. Avenues to Wellness joined with the Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital to offer the fair after the semi-annual WHAT walk. This free fair offered blood sugar testing, delicious food samples prepared by HMM Executive Chef Kyle Evans, and lots of opportunities to move your body and have fun with your neighbors.

Numerous people from the community volunteered assistance for various tasks, and North Coast Opportunities sponsored most of the cost of the event. Keith Johnson generously provided most of the setup and heavy lifting. We want to give a big thanks to the local AmeriCorps volunteers who helped to make this day a resounding success, with their fun circuit of fitness games for kids.

The Rules: **LETTERS**

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

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

Willits Weekly
A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

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Little Lake Clinic presented dental health information by their always-delightful Tooth Fairy, Zumba, Qi Gong, and a bounce house borrowed from Yokum's Body Shop provided enjoyable ways to spend the afternoon.

Free vegetable starts from Commonwealth Garden were available to delighted fair attendees. Cal Fresh offered information and incentives for healthy eating. The Mendocino County Animal Control came with two adorable pups looking for a home. And, we at Avenues to Wellness are already looking forward to next year's fair.

Doreen Blumenfeld, Avenues to Wellness

Emandal Chorale says thanks

To the Editor:

To the people of Willits and beyond: "It was so much fun," said many of the members of the Emandal Chorale of our 20th Anniversary Celebration. Our audience seemed to express the same thought when we joined together after the "Concert of Peace" presented at the Little Lake Grange on May 16.

We are also saying, "Thanks so much." It took the hands and skills of many to allow us to sing the songs we love to sing. If you are in town for the Willits Hometown Celebration, we will be on stage, June 25. If you wish to join us, our practices will begin again August 6. We will place an announcement in this newspaper with details.

Thanks for helping us make a wonderful memory.

Earlene Gleisner,
member of Emandal Chorale

Goodbye, Paul Lambert

To the Editor:

I read Paul Lambert's long pompous farewell in last week's issue. It is good news that "family matters call me and my wife back to Southern California." Oh dear, really, "Paul"?

My memory of "Paul" will be his KZYX programic simpler, "What's your first name and where are you from?," as though these were essential information for human expression and he had the privilege to know.

I recall his playing an extremely heavy devil's advocate in the freeway controversy, openly broadcasting, though supposedly a journalist, that he could not understand why people here continued to protest (i.e., object to an unnecessary intrusion upon our beautiful little valley, including poisonous and invasive measures in perpetuity).

Caltrans owns a quarter of the valley. Does anyone think they just want to fit in? Lambert won't care either way. He is gone and leaves his verbal refuse behind.

His farewell advice to us, again via the simpler delivery, is "try tolerance and working together." Tolerance means nothing to power. The governmental bodies were conditioned, intimidated and deceived by the Caltrans approach, and reversing course was never considered for reasons of pride. Enter unofficial citizenry.

The extensive measured efforts we in the freeway study group attempted were dismissed as "discussion on issues previously considered." In other words, fulfill a shell of formalist democracy and then proceed with said devastation.

I think what Lambert is really orating is: "Be nice, like I

am." To which I must reply, thank God fake-liberals have no power, but only citizens willing to place themselves in jeopardy against institutional force, so that their convictions cannot be ignored. We all remember when Willits was under near military occupation.

That the initial stages of the Caltrans invasion have proceeded despite citizen action is no indication of honor. The meager pro-bypass contingent was no more than identifying with daddy, no honor in that. The state monolith has no human honor or morality, no honor there. Nor really the passive citizens who think obeisance is superior adult behavior. The authorities always define social success and stature for us as politely going along with their interests and desires. (Sound familiar?)

Protesting wrong is honorable in a free society. Nor does conformity to superior institutional force achieve justice or any other kind of honorable conclusion – Lambert's pallid cliches about "tolerance" notwithstanding.

As far as the KZYX problems, at least he is improving matters by getting out. No organization with paid and beleaguered staff trying to fit volunteers into their scheme is going to escape conflict. The conflict can be resolved – if there is a shared will. Preachments from departing twits make no difference.

Goodbye Paul Lambert, and please get lost on the way.

William Ray, Willits

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'You Show Me Yours and I'll Show You Mine'

Photographers Ree Slocum and David Weitzman to open June show at WCA

The walls of the Willits Center for the Arts were being hung with prints showcasing the work of local photographers Ree Slocum and David Weitzman

Monday, as the two prepared for the opening of their show "You Show Me Yours and I'll Show You Mine" this Saturday from 4 to 7 pm.

The two decided to hold the event together to not only show and educate the public about film photography, but also to offset each other's strengths, making for a visually dynamic, nostalgic and informative show.

The artists said many "little treasures" surfaced from their archives – while each was going through their own works to decide which images to print and prepare for the show – that they are excited to share with the public.

Weitzman's images mainly focus on his travels, including images from Greece, Morocco, Prague, London, France, Mexico, Nepal, Bali and China. Some California and Mendocino images are also included, but all images are shot with a variety of films and cameras he owned over the years.

Weitzman started shooting at just age 10, and one of his earliest works, titled "Still Life," is an image of a bowl of fruit that he plans to hang with his Artist Statement at the Willits Center for the Arts. Weitzman remembered shooting with a Brownie Reflex camera in his younger years, then being very excited when he received his first new 35mm camera around the age of 13.

His love of photography was fueled by his elementary school teacher, Mrs. Koningsberg of Eugene Field Elementary in Chicago, who would photograph her travels, and then showcase those images to the class during the school year. This model was one that Weitzman himself would adapt over his years as a high school teacher in Oakland and middle school teacher in Covelo.

"I was really lucky to have such great teachers," reminisced Weitzman. "They were great models, and I

At top, from left: David Weitzman and Ree Slocum hang and select works with tools of the trade at the Center for the Arts. Above: Artists Ree and David.



Above: Ree Slocum reminisces about her earliest print hanging at the show, "Castle," she shot in 1971.

At right: David Weitzman holds his earliest print hanging at the show, "Still Life," which he shot when he was starting his photography career. Far right: The poster announcing the show was positioned by Ree and David on Monday to hang in the main hall.

Photos by Maureen Moore

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Sudoku

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

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!

Crossword Puzzle

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10				
11					12						13	14	15	
16					17				18					
19				20	21			22	23				24	
25						26				27				
28						29				30				
				31	32					33				
34	35	36	37							38				
39						40	41	42						
43					44						45	46	47	48
49					50					51	52			
53					54					55				
56		57					58				59			
60					61	62						63		
					64									65

CLUES ACROSS

- Dried hemp leaves
- Prefix for wrong
- Student furniture piece
- Semitic fertility god
- Back talk
- Lost brightness
- Reconnaissance (Brit. military)
- A narrative song
- Men who cannot lose face
- Bastard wing
- 55121 MN
- Young sheep
- Fashioned
- Short fight
- Large payroll service Co.
- Fantasy video game

CLUES DOWN

- Separated
- 32-card game
- Guides a vehicle
- A brief run of luck
- Baby bed
- Manuscript gaps
- Overdose
- Yes in Spanish
- Dog-___: shabby & worn
- Mark with an asterisk
- Potato state
- Cereal giant
- Lawn, sedge & cereal
- Tin
- ___, denotes past
- Interpret written words
- Blind spot or ___ lutea
- 39th state
- Dessert topping
- Eyelashes
- Touchdown
- 2nd largest Spanish river
- Made poisonous
- Favorite old shade trees
- Table linen
- A measured portion of medicine
- Jelly-like colloid
- Speed of sound
- Initials of "Jezebel" actress
- Not wet
- Supervises flying
- In the year of Our Lord
- Stood for election
- A state of equilibrium
- His magic lamp
- Small sugar cube
- Bachelor of Laws
- Pa's partner
- Wyatt ___, OK Corral
- Device that makes 2 pieces compatible
- NBC's parent Co.
- Japanese apricot
- Concrete leveling guide
- Adobe dweller
- Warning devices
- Having many branches
- 50 ___ Vesh, "Star Wars"
- Doc
- Carrier's invention
- German for Vienna
- Contrary water movement
- Roman 55
- Out of print
- Of I



Above: The "Toyota flower cart" in full bloom.

Roses in the garden included, at left, from top: Sheila's Perfume, Raubritter, Dinky, and Charlotte.

Below: From left: Chloe Nunez with Christa Nunez, public relations, and Hearthstone Village board members Lynn Meadows, Emily Frey, and Juanita-Joy Riddell.

Photos by Carrie Shattuck

Among the roses

The second annual Red Rose Ridge garden tour took place last Saturday, hosted by Michael and Pamela Temple. This was a fundraising event for the Hearthstone Village, a Mendocino County non-profit organization that helps children in Mexico and Haiti.

The garden south of Willits was buzzing with visitors enjoying the westward view of the mountains and the thousands of roses and other flowers.

There are many graveled pathways that meander around the hillside garden, drawing you into beautiful secluded sitting areas and giving you a different panoramic view of the mountains at every turn. The distant trickling sound of water, from a fountain, pulls you farther into the garden as you follow the sound and look for which pathway will lead you there.

From the lower northern part of the garden, you could hear the sound of a harmonica and guitar being played from the deck above. Several painters were creating masterpieces, and delicious refreshments were served. Members of the board of directors of Hearthstone Village were greeting guests and answering questions about their organization.

When the earthquake disaster struck Haiti in January 2010, 60 volunteers, mostly nurses and doctors from Ukiah Valley Medical Center, went to Haiti to assist the people. While there, the group discovered an orphanage for girls, Reveil Matinal, in Port au Prince, which opened in 2005 and was being operated by Charluce and Jay Jaboin, Haitians from New York.

Hearthstone Village – which started by building a medical clinic in El Cardonal in Mexico – teamed up

Read the rest of **Roses** | Over on Page 6



Questions? Comments?
willitsweekly@gmail.com

Spring Fair 2015

Redwood Empire Fairgrounds holds Spring Fair this weekend

Fair season is already upon us, and the Redwood Empire Fair is kicking off June with its Spring Fair event, held this weekend at the Ukiah Fairgrounds.

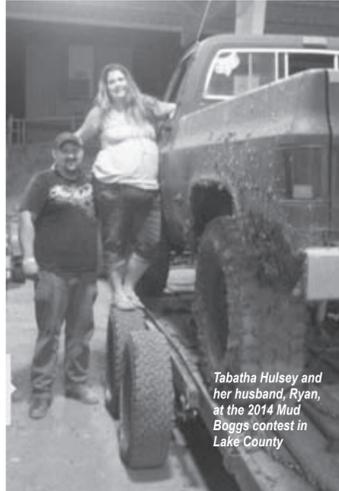
The carnival will be in full swing with rides and games for kids of all ages. Presale wristbands are available for \$22, and Monster Truck tickets are also available now: \$15 for children 3 to 11 years old and \$18 for adults 13 and over.

The popular events Mud Bogs, Monster Trucks, Boat Races and Mini Stocks will be happening during the fair at the Ukiah Speedway track. Tickets for these events are \$17 for children 3 to 11 years old and \$20 for adults 12 and over.

Musical entertainers, including Fat Chance Truckin' Band, Double Standyrd and Banda Pacifica, will also be rocking audiences through the weekend.

Willits residents can go down and cheer on many of our own Mud Boggers who enter the event, including Tabatha Hulseley who is in her second year of Mud Boggin' and loves every minute of it.

"It's really exciting and super fun to do," said Hulseley. "You basically race side-by-side through a huge pit of mud against the driver next to you. I've always had it on my bucket list to get a Chevy and do something with it, and when my friend encouraged me to enter, I did and I've been hooked ever since!"



Tabatha Hulseley and her husband, Ryan, at the 2014 Mud Bogs contest in Lake County

Hulseley will be competing in the Stock class, making sure to stay within the 33" tire limit to keep her out of the Modified division with her 1977 Chevy truck. A Super Modified division is also open to those who qualify.

Hulseley will compete for the full season, encompassing five races total between the Ukiah and Lakeport Speedway tracks. The next event will be in Lake County in June, then back to Ukiah in August and so on.

"I just want to say 'Go Willits!' to the rest of the Willits drivers, and I hope that everyone has a safe and fun time at the event!" said Hulseley.

For more information: 462-FAIR or www.RedwoodEmpireFair.com.

— Maureen Moore

It's time for another round of Willits Weekly's 'Phrase Find'

Match the phrases below to their specific advertisement in this edition for a chance at a prize!

Every month, a random week – or multiple weeks – will be chosen for Willits Weekly to run our Phrase Find contest. The contest will feature five phrases that can each be found in an ad in the current edition. Each phrase will match only one advertisement. The first person to EMAIL the correct answers to willitsweekly@gmail.com will win a prize.

For this week's prize, you can win

TWO FREE TICKETS TO THE WILLITS HORSEMEN'S BBQ

Answers will only count as correct if they include the COMPLETE NAME OF THE BUSINESS, as shown on the ad where the phrase is found. Winners will be replied to via email and will receive instructions on how to get their prize at that time. Winners will also be publicly announced in the next round of Phrase Find. Phrase Find will be run on random weeks at random intervals, so make sure to check often to see if the current edition contains the contest. Phrases will only be pulled from regular display advertisements: not from classifieds, news stories, letters to the editor, Calendar or other editorial content.

- Who has a "\$45 ALL SUMMER" special?
- Who has an account "@twitter:"?
- Which business does "Scott Lebo" own?
- Whose phone number is "(6696)"?
- Who will "guarantee you're protected"?

Willits Weekly's Phrase Find – June 4, 2015
EMAIL answers to willitsweekly@gmail.com

Previous Contest Winner:
Candy Enos

REDWOOD EMPIRE SPRING FAIR
June 5 - 7, 2015

FREE Gate excluding Grandstand Shows

Pre Sale Monster Truck Tickets
Available at all Mendo Mill Stores in Lake & Mendocino Counties & Ukiah Grocery Outlet

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- Fri 7 PM • Monster Trucks, Boat Races & Super TT
- 6 PM • Fat Chance Truckin' Band
- Sat 7 PM • Monster Trucks & Mud Bogs
- 6 PM • Double Standyrd
- Sun 5 PM • Bombers, Jammers & Mini Stocks Dirt Nationals
- 5 PM • Banda Pacifica & Others



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(3D) 3:30 & 8:30pm
Mon/Wed/Thurs: (2D) 5:00, (3D) 7:30pm
Tightwad Tues: (2D) 5:00 & 7:30pm

PITCH PERFECT 2
(PG13) 1 hr 55 mins
Fri: 5:45 & 8:15pm
Sat/Sun: 12:45, 3:15, 5:45 & 8:15pm
Mon-Thurs: 4:45 & 7:15pm

SPY
(R) 2 hrs
Fri: 5:30 & 8:00pm
Sat/Sun: 12:30, 3:00, 5:30 & 8:00pm
Mon-Thurs: 4:30 & 7:00pm

Willits Horsemen's Rodeo & BARBECUE
June 6 & 7
Saturday: 9 am: Gymkhana
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Furry Friends Hoping for a Home
Smart Sun
Sun is a 1-year-old male mixed breed dog. He weighs 43 pounds. Sun is very smart and loves toys. During his evaluation, his ball rolled under the couch and for a few minutes he got sidetracked with another toy, but when we asked him to "find the ball," he searched the whole room and sure enough he found it! Sun is very vocal in the kennel and is sure to let everyone know he is there and ready for walks, play time, cuddles or company! Training should be easy with this smart, happy-go-lucky guy. He'll do great in any loving home, but definitely needs an active lifestyle!
The Ukiah Animal Shelter is located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah, and our adoption hours are Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm and Wednesday from 10 am to 6 pm. We have many wonderful dogs and cats, awaiting their forever homes here. To view photos and bios of more of our wonderful adoptable animals, please visit our website: www.mendocinopets.com or visit our shelter during shelter hours. More info about adoptions: 467-6453.
Photo by Rod Coats



Artists Polly Palecek and Patsy Chadwick work in the garden, accompanied by Susan Feichtmeier, a member of the Friends of Vintage Roses, and Pamela Temple, garden owner.
Photo by Carrie Shattuck

OBITUARY
Henry 'Bud' Crews
Henry R. "Bud" Crews passed away in Ukiah on May 18, 2015 at the age of 94. A resident of Willits for 50 years, he had been in the logging industry as an equipment operator and mechanic for 40 years. Bud was a World War II Army veteran, April 1942 to December 1945, having served in the 254th Engineer Combat Battalion – Battle of the Bulge 1945. He served in Central Europe – Normandy, France. He was a member of the Willits American Legion Post 174 for 22 years, including serving with the War Honor Guard for several years.
Bud is survived by his sister, Gertrude Yochun; nephew, Chuck (Marie) Foley; nieces Linda (Len) Valasek and Pat (Ed) Jablonowski; and many more nieces, nephews and cousins.
Graveside services with military honors will take place at 1 pm, at the Willits Cemetery on Friday, June 12, 2015.
Arrangements under the care and direction of Anker-Lucier Mortuary.

The rest of **Roses** | From Page 5

with the couple to help with the orphanage. There are now 27 girls ranging in age from 3 to 15 at Reveil Matinal, which is still run by the Jaboins.

Many of the girls at the orphanage actually have family, but their families are unable to support their children. Many were starving or malnourished, with emotional and health problems: Some Haitian girls with nowhere to go end up "in the woods," forced into slavery and the sex trade.

Today, girls at the orphanage are prospering, healthy, and receiving an education that includes three to four languages (Creole, French, English and Spanish), as well as math, technology, and the arts.

The board of Hearthstone Village sends a volunteer team once a month to Haiti with suitcases loaded with supplies; shipments have included pajamas, solar lights and vitamins. Volunteers – who pay their own travel expenses – include college students, artists and dance teams who stay at the residence and mentor the girls, helping them with technology, art or tasks as simple as organizing their life or taking them to the beach (some have never been), teaching them nutrition, showing them how to help others in their community, and preparing them for the outside world.

The board recently bought land to build a new, bigger orphanage that will have three buildings: a residence, a school and a medical clinic. The board members want the orphanage to be self-reliant, with a garden, a well, fruit trees, chickens and goats, as well as offering classes in tailoring, cosmetology, cuisine, music, tech, dance and the arts.

The girls are home-schooled by a Haitian teacher from K-6 grades. After sixth grade the girls enter middle school, most of them in private schools, which cost around \$1,500 per year per girl, plus supplies and uniforms. Hearthstone Village helps to secure "education sponsors" in Mendocino County; currently 14 middle-school girls are being sponsored.

An ambitious goal of the board, in the next year, is to create a student exchange program for the entire school year. The Haitian girls will need reliable homes so that they can experience the world outside of Haiti and gain the knowledge needed to succeed as adults, whether they stay in Haiti or go elsewhere. This will also help to reduce crowding at the orphanage.

If you're interested in being a volunteer or would like to donate to Hearthstone Village, please visit www.hearthstonevillageukiah.org or send donations to P.O. Box 933, Ukiah, CA 95482.

You Show Me Yours and I'll Show You Mine
from negative to print
35mm film photography by
Ree Slocum & David Weitzman
Artists' reception
Saturday, June 6, 4-7
June 6-28, 2015
Willits Center for the Arts
71 E. Commercial St., Willits

Studio Joy
THE Place for ZUMBA and Group Fitness in Willits
Studio Joy has 1400 square feet of dance floor AND A/C!
Lots of room to dance and work it!
Melissa Wilson has been with Studio Joy since almost the beginning and has been teaching Zumba® at the studio for almost 2 years. When R.I.P.P.E.D.™ came to Studio Joy, Melissa dove right in and is now instructing on Tuesday nights and team teaching with Krystle on Thursday nights.
Studio Joy welcomes Krystle Coffman to our teaching team! Starting June 10, Krystle will be leading the Wednesday night R.I.P.P.E.D.™ class. Krystle's passion for fitness and health along with her kind spirit is a perfect fit for R.I.P.P.E.D.™!
NEW IN JUNE!
Saturday \$5 drop in 9:00 am Zumba®! Zumba® returns to Wednesday nights at 5:30 pm!
We are now offering R.I.P.P.E.D.™ Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights at 6:30.
See our webpage for our full schedule: www.studiojoywillits.com
STUDENT SPECIALS FOR JUNE:
• Come try Kerri's 6:30 am Insanity™ class on Tuesday or Thursday mornings for FREE. This offer is for both new and existing students.
• Zumba® ONLY monthly pass \$75. All access studio pass \$85.
• New Student and Welcome Back! special: 5 Class Card for \$35!
• We are currently offering Zumba®, Zumba Gold®, R.I.P.P.E.D.™, Insanity™, and Flow Strengthen and Stretch!
• Whether you are a new student or a regular, have a FREE CLASS with Kerri at 6:30 AM Insanity™!
Wellness Program participant with employees of Mendocino County, Howard Hospital and Mariposa Market.
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Mendocino College
North County Center / Willits
Most classes begin: Monday, June 15
College and Career Success
1000 CCS 100 Career Planning Success TTh 12:30-4:35pm Ramming, Tanya NCC 8020 (06/29/15 to 07/16/15)
1190 CCS 119 Orientation to College TTh 5:30-9:20pm Ramming, Tanya NCC 8010 (07/20/15 to 07/30/15)
Computer Science
0201 CSC 201 Computer Applications MW 8:30am-2:20pm Beale, Edward NCC 8010 (06/15/15 to 07/23/15)
English
0010 ENG 10 Basic Reading & Writing TWTh 12:30-3:50pm Schuman, Edwin NCC 8030 (06/15/15 to 07/23/15)
0800 ENG 80 Academic Reading & Writing MTW 5:30-9:05pm Cechin, Jaime NCC 8020 (06/15/15 to 07/23/15)
0200 ENG 200 Reading and Composition MW 5:30-9:20pm Hallman, Steven NCC 8030 (06/15/15 to 07/23/15)
History
0222 HST 222 Native American History TTh 8:00-11:50am Silva, Logan NCC 8010 (06/15/15 to 07/23/15)
Mathematics
0292 MTH 11 Basic Mathematics TTh 8:00-11:50am Dominguez, Diana NCC 8030 (06/15/15 to 07/23/15)
7700 MTH 77 Geometry TTh 8:00-11:50am Ries, Richard NCC 8020 (06/15/15 to 07/23/15)
Real Estate
6200 RLS 62 Real Estate Appraisal SSu 8:00-5:50pm Gonzalez, Ignacio NCC 8030 (06/06/15 to 06/20/15)
Speech
2100 SPE 210 Interpersonal Communication MW 8:00-11:50am Ramming, Tanya NCC 8020 (06/15/15 to 07/23/15)
REGISTER NOW!
372 East Commercial Street - Willits - 459-6224
More complete information available on WebAdvisor at www.mendocino.edu

COLJMN | Resendez Reads!
Detectives with an appetite ... for crime!
This month I finished the last entry in a very enjoyable mystery series by the British author **Iain Pears**. I tried to make these books last, but there are only seven of them! The collection is known as the Jonathan Argyll series. The first title is "The Raphael Affair," published in 1991, and it ends with "The Immaculate Deception" (2000). Author Pears has a background as an art historian, a journalist and a novelist; you may have read his bestseller novel "The Instance of the Fingerpost."
The first book introduces us to the main characters of the series. First we meet General Bottando, the chief of the Italian National Art Theft Squad, housed in Rome and charged with recovering stolen art treasures. He's a wily administrator, well-versed in the complex paths of departmental power struggles. Next we meet Flavia di Stefano, his young colleague, who ends up doing most of the legwork in their investigations. Independent and hard-working, she functions as a police officer but without a badge.
Lastly, we encounter Jonathan Argyll himself, a graduate student and art scholar on holiday in Rome and quite taken with all things Italian. This trio will have many adventures in Italy and in England involving murder and art mayhem – crooked dealers, thieves and forgers. The investigations are fueled by countless cups of espresso and interrupted by hearty cafe lunches

Iain Pears
The Case of the Love Commandos
Tarquin Hall

COLDWELL BANKER MENDO REALTY INC. PRESENTS
Homes For Dogs Project
Our Realtors...Helping You Find a Home, and Helping Shelter Dogs Find a Family
Meet Tara - 707.367.0389
My Family and I adopted our dog, Lucky from the Humane Society in 2013. She was surrendered to the Pound and the Humane Society took her in and fostered her until we were lucky enough to find her. She reminded me of the Luck Dragon Falcor on the Never Ending Story. She came home with us and never left. I recently had a home where a family was evicted after losing their home to foreclosure and they pulled out over 9 dogs that they could not care for. I was Heart Broken! The only thing I felt I could do was donate my entire check from the sale of the home to the Humane Society. Whether you have room in your home or your heart for a furry family member please remember The Humane Society of Inland Mendocino County.
To adopt, or learn more information about "Milo", please contact the Human Society of Inland Mendocino County
707.485.0123
The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County

Chloe is 1yr old female spayed, good with dogs, people, kids. No cats. Loves to play fetch. Eager to please. Chloe walks well on lead and has good manners for one so young. She's very calm and loving and would make wonderful family pet.
Randy Cantua
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2015 Willits Frontier Days Sweetheart Candidates
Dalli Fonsen, 20 Contact: 530-790-5421 df713@yahoo.com
Caitlyn Forrester, 16 Contact: 707-972-7803 Facebook "Caitlyn Forrester 4 Sweetheart"
Thais Reed, 18 Contact: 707-354-0784 thaisreed@gmail.com
Willits Frontier Days events run from: **June 25 to July 5**
Get your tickets early and see you at the Fourth!

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Join Willits Weekly in Celebration of Our Grads & Dads!
June 11 & June 18 Editions
Run a full color ad in both editions with one copy change allowed. Choose your size!
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Call today to get included!
Contact: Rachel Belvin
Willits Weekly Ad Representative
707-367-9319
rachel@willitsweekly.com
Willits Weekly - your community paper!

Thursday, June 4

Free Creative Writing Class: "Discover the writer within and have free fun!" Free creative writing class, 1:30 to 2:30 pm, the first and third Thursdays of every month, June 4 and June 18 coming up, at Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. All supplies are provided. Writing mentor: Susan Bertsch; info: 972-6422.

Friday, June 5

Shanachie Pub: The Great Spirit Band: "Based in the San Francisco Bay Area, Great Spirit combines poetic lyricism with equal parts folk-rock, bluegrass and funk to form a genre uniquely its own." 9 pm. \$5 cover. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Saturday, June 6

66th annual Willits Horseman's Beef Barbecue & Rodeo: Willits Horseman's Association presents this annual free-to-watch event, June 6 and 7, featuring Gymkhana on Saturday, starting at 9 am. On Sunday: Jackpot Team Roping (sign-up at 8:30 am, starts at 9 am) and Rodeo, with Rodeo Grand Entry at 1:30 pm. Also on Sunday: Beef Barbecue, starting at 11:30 am; tickets \$13 for adults and \$5 for children. At the "new" rodeo arena off East Commercial Street. Info on Gymkhana: Kathryn, 707-489-6565; general info, Rodeo or Roping: Robbie, 707-489-0476 & Jim 707-354-1624.

WCA Artists Reception: The June show at the Willits Center for the Arts, "You Show Me Yours and I'll Show You Mine: From Negative to Print," featuring 35 mm film photography by Ree Slocum and David Weitzman, opens today with

an artists' reception from 4 to 8 pm. 71 East Commercial Street. Runs through June 28. Gallery hours: Thursdays and Fridays from 4 to 7 pm, and Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 3 pm. Info: Ree Slocum at 972-2163 or reeslocum@gmail.com. See article on page 3 for more details.

Shanachie Pub: Max's Midnight Kitchen, string band from Portland: "time-honored folk, bluegrass and country themes with a healthy dose of surrealism and humor." 9 pm. \$5 cover. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Sunday, June 7

66th annual Willits Horseman's Beef Barbecue & Rodeo: June 6 and 7; Sunday's events include: Jackpot Team Roping (sign-up at 8:30 am, starts at 9 am) and Rodeo, with Rodeo Grand Entry at 1:30 pm. Also on Sunday: Beef Barbecue, starting at 11:30 am; tickets \$13 for adults and \$5 for children. At the "new" rodeo arena off East Commercial Street. Info on Gymkhana: Kathryn, 707-489-6565; general info, Rodeo or Roping: Robbie, 707-489-0476 & Jim 707-354-1624.

17th annual Willits Rotary Phoenix Hospice Golf Tournament: "Enjoy a day on the greens under the redwoods." Willits Rotary is sponsoring a golf tournament to benefit Phoenix Hospice." Brooktrails Golf Course, 24860 Birch Street. 8 am check-in; 9 am shotgun start. Donations: \$65 per player;

What's Happening Around Town

\$45 for Brooktrails Golf Course members. Includes Barbecue, Green Fees, Silent Auction, \$10,000 cash for hole-in-one on Hole #9, and additional hole-in-one prizes. To RSVP: Tammy Long: 480-993-5755 or 456-3244, or Tammy.Long@ah.org.

Sunday Bingo: Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. Doors open at 10:30 am; snack bar opens at 11 am; bingo buy-in \$10. 459-6826.

All-Church BBQ and Singpiration: 1 to 4 pm at Rec Grove, East Commercial Street. All are welcome! BBQ is 1 to 2:30 pm: "Bring meat (or veggie) to BBQ, beverage and table service for your group and, if possible, a potluck dish (salad, dessert, etc.) to share." Singpiration follows, from 2:30 to 4 pm.

Monday, June 8

Ice Cream Social: at the Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. This month's entertainment is Kat Avery, specializing in renditions of Patsy Cline and Elvis Presley. Pie, ice cream & coffee. Members \$1; non-members \$1.50. Questions: 459-6826.

Tuesday, June 9

Tightwad Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre: All 2D movies that are in their second week are \$5 on Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre for all ages, all showings. This week's movies "San Andreas" and "Pitch Perfect 2" Showtimes, visit: www.noyotheatre.com. 57 East Commercial Street. 459-6696.

Healthier Living: Live Your Best Life Now. A free series of workshops, presented by Avenues to Wellness, on "Chronic Pain Self Management." Starts June 9, then every Tuesday for six weeks, 5:30 to 8 pm. Pre-registration required. 11 Oaks Conference Room (corner of Hwy. 101 & Walnut). Learn: Tips to better manage your health; strategies to reduce pain, fatigue, stress, anxiety, and sleep loss; communication skills to work better with doctors, family and friends; goal-setting and problem solving; healthy eating and physical activity; and ways to maintain independence. Info or to register, call Judy Dunbar at 707-841-7657 or Jeannette Wilson at 707-376-5971.



pm for \$15, and some Sunday matinees at 2 pm for \$10. Advance tickets for all regular shows are available in person at Mazahar, 38 South Main Street; phone at brownpapertickets.com; or by phone 24/7 at 1-800-838-3006. Tickets will also available at the door until sold out. See article elsewhere in Calendar for more details.

Shanachie Pub: Comedy Night with Ambria and Friends and music from 454. 9 pm. No cover. 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Saturday, June 13

Brooktrails Picnic: All residents of Brooktrails welcome! Hosted by the Brooktrails Property Owners Association. Saturday, June 13, 4 to 8 pm at the Ohl Redwood Grove, Clover Road and Birch Street. "Bring something to grill, a side dish or dessert to share. Bring your choice of beverages. Lawn games encouraged!!" Visit http://brooktrailspoa.org/ for more information on the Brooktrails Property Owners Association.

"Kill Me, Deadly": Special annual WCT Gala performance. 8 pm. Willits Community Theatre. See Friday, June 12 listing for details about the play.

Shanachie Pub: Sissy Brown with Abraham and the Old Gods, "bare bones

country." 50 South Main Street, behind Adam's Restaurant. Info: 459-9194.

Sunday, June 14

Senior Center Pancake Breakfast: at the Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. 8 to 11 am. Pancakes, eggs, and your choice of sausage, ham, or bacon. Adults \$7, Members \$6, Kids \$5. Questions: 459-6826.



Adventist Christian School Golf Tournament: the 8th annual fundraising Golf Tournament for Adventist Christian School is set for Sunday, June 14 at the Brooktrails Golf Course. "Best Ball Scramble" format; registration 8:30 to 9:30 am; "shotgun" start at 10 am. Prizes and BBQ lunch (vegetarian option) included in \$50 entry fee. \$30 for golf club members; \$5 for lunch for non-players. "Mulligans" available for purchase. Everyone is welcome to attend. Call 707-954-0649 or 459-6761 for information and sign up. See article elsewhere in Calendar for details.

Frankie J in Concert: 7 pm at the Willits Community Theatre, as part of its "Neighborhood Lighting: Local Musical Talent at WCT" series. Frankie J will perform solo on the piano for the first half of the show; during the second half, he will be joined by his band, The Frankie

J Orchestra, to play selections from his new album, "Songs of Love," including "A Woman's Touch," "Everything Is Gonna Be Alright," "The Day I Become a Man," and "Ella." Tickets are \$10; available online at brownpapertickets.com, by phone at 1-800-838-3006, or in person at Mazahar, 38 South Main. See article elsewhere on Calendar page for more details.

Frankie J in Concert Sunday, June 14

Frankie J will be performing at the Willits Community Theatre on Sunday, June 14, at 7 pm, as part of WCT's "Neighborhood Lighting: Local Musical Talent" series.

A resident of Willits for the past 15 years, Frankie is known as a piano man with a ton of soul. He plays rhythm and blues, blues, jazz, soul, gospel, rock 'n' roll, and even classical. He's been influenced by such greats as Ray Charles, Little Richard, Nat King Cole, Otis Redding, Earth, Wind and Fire, Fats Domino, Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, Sly and the Family Stone, Sam Cooke and Duke Ellington.

Frankie J has shared the stage with The Four Tops, Songs of Champlin, Redd Fox, Joe Louis Walker, and he was musical director for Tammi Terrell at her performance at Basin Street West in San Francisco. He and his band have toured the western United States and have also done the USO overseas tour, performing music in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan.

Locally he's played at the Coyote Valley Casino in Redwood Valley, Sho-Ka-Wah Casino in Hopland, and at the



Frankie J

Gardens needed for tour in August

WELL (Willits Economic Localization) has sponsored a farm or garden tour almost every year for the past 10 years. This year we're planning a walking tour of central Westside gardens in early August (probably August 1). We're soliciting gardens now.

Do you (or friends in town) have an organic garden – with edible as well as ornamental plants – you'd like to show off? Please let us know!

We hope to feature gardens that minimize water use through drought-tolerant plantings, permaculture features such as swales, or use of grey water and/or water catchment. Any food-growing gardens in the walking area (west of Main Street from roughly Laurel to West Commercial) are welcome. The tour will end at the Brookside School Garden, with lunch and music.

If you know of suitable gardens, please contact Madge at 459-1493 or mstrong@willitsonline.com.

— Madge Strong

Grateful Dead 50th Anniversary Party

Senior Center roof benefit Saturday, June 20

A benefit for the Senior Center's "A Roof Over Our Heads" fundraising campaign. At Willits Community Center, 6 to 11 pm, with live music by "Totally Dead." \$20 advance; \$30 at the door; \$10 for youth 11-15; kids under 10 free. Tickets available at The Headroom, Harrah Senior Center, Main Street Music, & Shanachie Pub. Beer & Wine. Live & Silent Auction. Chicken Dinner: \$10.

Little Lake Firefighters Association Open House and Fundraiser

Thursday, June 25

"Hello, Willits! Our 89th annual Firefighters Association open house and fundraiser is set for Thursday, June 25. Three departments' apparatus will be on display. There will be door prizes donated by local businesses that we will raffie off every hour. You have to be present to win the door prizes! We will also have tacos by Emilio Flores (from El Mexicano).

"Our main raffle prizes will be raffied off at 8:45 pm (redwood picnic table; two \$500 gift certificates to Sparetime Supply; one \$500 gift certificate to Les Schwab Tire of Willits; Barrel BBQ Smoker donated by John Thomen and Fred Berry; two oil changes at Auto Mart Auto Repair. These raffle tickets are \$10 each – you don't need to be present to win these raffle prizes.

"Additionally we are raffing off a .300 Weatherby Magnum from Coast To Coast Hardware of Willits. These tickets are one for \$5 or six for \$20.

"All tickets can be purchased at the Firehouse or from an association member."

Hometown Celebration calls for local talent

This year for the Local First Hometown Celebration, set for Thursday, June 25, in addition to the street performers at various locations, there will be a central performance space available for short presentations from local talent. All are welcome to sign up for "Center Stage Local" to give a short (five to 15 minutes) performance. Sing, dance, drum, do a skit, a poem, juggle, ride a unicycle, tell a story or a joke. What would you like to share?

This is an opportunity to show what you are doing in classes and individually, with your friends or family. This will be a showcase, along with the participating booths, stores and businesses, to see what's available in Willits.

The Hometown Celebration is a kick-off for Willits Frontier Days, a festival in recognition of skills and talents in our multifaceted community. Come and share in the expanding tradition. To schedule a slot for the Hometown Celebration Center Stage, give our entertainment coordinator a call at 459-5926. Or email ateasthill@gmail.com. There is no audition. We do need to assign time slots, and space is limited by the time available. This is an exciting addition to Our Hometown Celebration!

— Submitted by Local First

Adventist Christian School

Golf Tournament, June 14

Adventist Christian School has offered Christian education to children of Willits in grades 1-8 for more than 50 years. While it is a small school, offering personalized education, many individuals in the valley have benefited from this type of education. Small classes, special interests, and an accredited program with a certified teacher appeal to many families wanting something better for their child.

A family does not have to be members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to attend the school. In fact, most of the children currently attending the school are not from church members' families. All students from the Willits community are welcome.

Adventist Christian School is having their 8th Annual Fundraising Golf Tournament on Sunday, June 14, at the Brooktrails Golf Course to benefit any student who wishes to attend our school. The format will be the popular Best Ball Scramble. Registration is set for 8:30 to 9:30 am, followed by a "shotgun" start at 10 am. Prizes will be awarded to the winners at the end of the tournament. There is the opportunity to win money at designated proxy holes, along with a renowned barbecue lunch with all the fixings, both regular hamburgers and vegetarian, included in the entry fee of \$50. Brooktrails Golf Club members pay \$30. Lunch for non-players is \$5. "Mulligans" will be available for purchase.

Charlie Bird initiated this fundraiser, that has been a favorite and fun tournament over the years. Everyone is welcome to attend. Call 707-954-0649 or 459-6761 for information and sign up.

— Georgine Hultz, principal

'Kill Me, Deadly' opens June 12 at WCT

"Kill Me, Deadly," a hilarious spoof of film-noir crime capers, opens at the Willits Community Theatre on Friday, June 12. Written by Los Angeles playwright Bill Robens, the play follows the erstwhile antics of Hollywood gunshoe Charlie Nickels in 1947 as he seeks to solve a murder with far too many suspects and complications.

The action is madcap, the humorous repartee non-stop, and the audience may well figure out the true identity of the killer well ahead of the confident and clueless Nickels, who cannot succeed without the apt advice of his resourceful secretary, Ida. Toss in a femme fatale named Mona who steals the private detective's affections, and the outcome becomes doubtful.

Co-directing the production are Damian Sebouhian and Lee Stipe. Sebouhian last directed the 2014 WCT farcical hit, "Flaming Idiots." Stipe previously appeared as the bombastic Teddy Brewster in the WCT production of "Arsenic and Old Lace." Stipe co-directs and also steps into the starring role of Nickels with the perfect comedic mix of detached confidence and hapless resolve. WCT veteran Gloriann Lucero plays the wise-talking, invaluable secretary who has all the angles figured – that is, until Nickels falls helplessly for the sketchy mystery woman played by another WCT veteran, Gretchen Andersen.

After the murder of highly millionaire Lady Clairmont, the suspects include the dowager's feisty Guatemalan gardener, her uppity butler, her wacky son, her spoiled daughter, and the historician damsel-in-distress who is about as helpless as Attila the Hun. Also appearing in the production are Prana Roberts, Kathy de Bane, Shy Silverstein, Joe Dowling, Kevin Clay, Pete Winslow, Aaron Leudemann, Garrett Vincent, Dan Ramsey, Jeremy Herschman, and BarbaraLee Schimmel-Likier.

"Kill Me, Deadly" runs from June 12 through June 28, with shows on Thursday at 7 pm for \$10, Friday and Saturday at 8 pm for \$15, and some Sunday matinees at 2 pm for \$10.

An annual Gala Event for WCT donors will be held on Saturday, June 13, with tickets available through the WCT office at 707-459-0895. The Howard Memorial Hospital Ladies Auxiliary will sponsor a benefit performance of the show on the "First Thursday," June 18 at 7 pm. For benefit tickets, contact Dianne Menzies at 707-354-1809.

Advance tickets for all regular shows are available in person at Mazahar, 38 South Main Street; online at brownpapertickets.com; or by phone 24/7 at 1-800-838-3006. Tickets will also available at the door until sold out. The WCT playhouse is located at 37 West Van Lane (behind Shanachie Pub).

— Steve Hellman, for WCT

Advertisement for 5K Run / 5K Walk Lake Mendocino, Ukiah, Calif. Includes details about the Fourth Annual Jesse Pittman Fund 5K Run & Walk, registration information, and a photo of a runner.

Parducci Winery in Ukiah. He's also performed at Spencer Brewer's Professional Pianist Concert, and played weekly at the Brooktrails Lodge from 2012 to 2014.

Former Willits resident and musician Susan Stewart has this to say of Frankie: "He is the complete, old school, total soul example of traditional rhythm and blues music. He has been there. He has done it all. He is the master of the kind of music that shaped the music you hear today. He is not to be missed."

For this concert, Mr. J will be performing solo for the first half of the show. During the second half, he will be joined by his band, The Frankie J Orchestra, and together, they will regale the audience with selections from his new album, "Songs of Love," including "A Woman's Touch," "Everything Is Gonna Be Alright," "The Day I Become a Man," and "Ella."

Tickets for this power-packed performance are only \$10 and are available online at brownpapertickets.com, by phone at 1-800-838-3006, or in person at Mazahar, 38 South Main.

— Mike A'Dair, for the "Neighborhood Lighting: Local Musical Talent" series.

Redwood Run

June 12 through June 14

Motorcycles will start rumbling through town on Thursday, June 11 – that's the day the onsite Redwood Run ticket office opens – for the Redwood Run's destination, Riverview Ranch in Piercy. "The best Old School Biker Party on the West Coast," featuring live music all weekend, bike & people games, wet T-shirt contest, vendors, food & full bars, on-site camping and hot showers. For details and tickets: visit www.redwoodrun.com.

COLUMN 1 | At the Movies



'San Andreas'

The Story: A series of massive earthquakes (9.4 and above on the Richter scale) devastate California. Ray (Dwayne Johnson), a helicopter rescue pilot, flies about the state in order to rescue his intelligent and survival-positive, college-age daughter from ... well ... falling things, shaking things, sinking things ... general post-quake environmental

chaos.

My Thoughts: I was prepared not to like this flick, as in: "Oh great, how creative, another disaster movie. How original!" I could feel a snark-a-ton of negative comments rising from my guts before the flick even started.

But stop the presses! For the first time in my life, I was at least 90 percent wrong! This is a darn good movie. A classic cliff-hanger, crunch your popcorn and irritate the guy sitting behind you thriller.

Sure, the characters and relationships are Hollywood clichés, but that did not stop me from caring about them. Sure, Ray is courageous, strong and resourceful; sure, his daughter (Alexandra Daddario) is quick-witted, brave, beautiful (of course she's beautiful); and sure, her mother/his wife (Carla Gugino) is lovely, tough and willing to go through Hell to save their daughter ... and she and her husband Ray do go through a California hillscape odyssey to save her.

All-in-all, a good looking family of the brave ... with appropriately stirring music. That's something I like to see.

Parents: Noisy, confusing disasters presented with realistic, CGI effects. Really scary stuff on screen, but the good guys triumph over adversity. So, hooray for courage. Caveat: this flick could lead to some nightmares; but that reaction is not limited to children.

Note: When I told friends I was going to the Noyo to watch Los Angeles be destroyed, they all laughed. But, let me hasten to add: it was not a nasty laugh. It was more of a low-grade, wink-wink, elbow-ebow, knowing nod at each other "yeah LA had it coming" kind of chuckle. I wonder, if the story were about the destruction of a different American city, such as Indianapolis or Minneapolis-St. Paul, would the reaction be the same? I think there's something about the destruction of Los Angeles which warms the hearts of Americans.

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

Advertisement for Summer Camp 2015 Willits Kids Club, June 15 - August 14. Lists activities like Arts & Crafts, Sports, Games, Swimming, Cooking, Gardening and provides contact information.



Above: Dressed-up students gathered for a large group photo.

Photo provided by Blosser Lane Elementary School

Right: Principal Chavez poses with a photo of Clint Eastwood.

Far right: Some of those who dressed up, including from left, in back: Cole Moyle, Mr. Chavez, and Mrs. Runberg. In front, Ashlynn Dudley, Unity O'Neil Riddle, Jessica Holland, Jacob Kubin, Ariel Herz-O'Brien, Miranda Swearingin, and Elena Arkelian.

Photos by Maureen Moore



Mr. Chavez Day

Blosser Lane Elementary School students honor principal with dress-up day



Principal Robert Chavez wasn't the only one walking the halls in a suit and tie last Friday, as dozens of students and staff at Blosser Lane Elementary School surprised their principal with a dress-up day in his honor.

Ties, jackets and slacks were seen all over the playground on third, fourth and fifth-grade students and even some of the teachers donned shirts wearing Chavez's favorite actor, Clint Eastwood to get in the spirit of "Dress Like the Principal Day."

This will be the last year Chavez will be the principal of Blosser Lane Elementary, as he will be moving to take the same position at Willits High School in the fall. Staff and students said they will miss him greatly and, since there were only three Fridays left until the end of the school year, they wanted to celebrate in style and show their love for Chavez before he left.

—Maureen Moore



Students enjoy their lunches at Local Food Day, including, from left: Lili, Amanda, Aleen, Isabella, Adrianna, Karina and Kailani.

Below: Sierra works the sample station at the beginning of the lunch, offering kale salad samples.

Photos by Maureen Moore



Local Food Day

Baechtel Grove enjoys new lunch options Monday through Farm to School project

Adventurous Baechtel Grove Middle Schoolers had a chance to expand their palates Monday when the cafeteria offered some healthy – and tasty – options to the students for Local Food Day.

A kale salad, complete with the leafy greens, sliced strawberries and feta cheese, was available, along with chard tacos. Students enjoyed dancing to music that was played during lunch to ensure a good time for all. The kids helped design the menu, with the assistance of Willits Unified's Food Service Director Christy Wisdom, who visited the classrooms preceding the Local Food Day event to help the kids with planning the dishes.

Above, from left: Some of the students who helped with Local Food Day, from left: Jacob, Callie, Sierra, Gio and Jonathan, pose with Farm to School Project Manager Megan Watson, center.

Photo by Todd Jennison

Treasure makes a taco at the taco bar.

Megan Watson offers a kale salad sample.

Left: Christian, Karina and Aleen fill up their plates at the serving station.

Photos by Maureen Moore

Read the rest of BGMS | Over on Page 11

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AS2466ST (08-13)

NM

The rest of Daily Bread | From Page 1

a dining hall and a commercial kitchen is not something in the price range we can afford," he said. Willits Daily Bread was paying \$600 a month rent, including utilities, for use of the church hall.

Savage said – because Daily Bread was not selling food, but giving it away – a commercial kitchen was not totally required.

"Yes, we don't need a commercial kitchen in one sense," Glassey said, "but to get out as many meals as we do – 40 or 50 meals a day – we have to have a lot of space, and we want to make sure we're hygienic, and having a commercial kitchen, with easily cleanable surfaces, high-output ovens, and that kind of thing" is pretty much necessary.

Glassey said he had talked to the most likely possibilities already: "I'm going to be meeting with the ministerial board," he said, "but other than the Catholic Church, which has its own hall, there aren't any other churches in town with adequate kitchens. I looked at four or five around town."

Another possibility Savage had mentioned was giving out sandwiches during the week: there's a Saturday Brown Bag lunch program, where churches and other groups take turns making and giving out sandwiches to anybody who wants lunch at Bud Snider Park on Saturdays.

Glassey said he had talked to City Manager Adrienne Moore about that possibility, but "it's not a good long-term prospect," he said. "It could be a bridge thing: if we had someplace out there we could remodel, that would be one thing, but long-term: It just doesn't work."

Giving out sandwiches also doesn't fulfill one important part of the Willits Daily Bread purpose, Glassey said: "We are really targeted to serve people in Willits, the elderly, kids and the working

poor, and as we do that, we don't want to just serve meals in the park. We are trying to form community. We want people to get out of the house and come down and get a nutritious meal and be able to visit."

The program does deal with "a population of homeless and mentally ill," Glassey said, both local and transient. "They're a small part, but a noisy part, so that makes them more visible, but the people who come in and need a meal, who just want to be a part of the community.... They're a majority of what we see."

Glassey said in 2014 Willits Daily Bread served 10,342 meals, an average of 51 meals per evening over 201 serving days. Of those meals, 1,779 were served to children, 2,265 were served to seniors, and 6,298 were served to those aged 18 to 60. These numbers represent an increase of 960 meals over 2013 numbers, Glassey said; volunteer hours in the kitchen in 2014 added up to 2,329 hours.

The church's Kathy Neff, who was director of Willits Daily Bread for eight years herself, said many problems the church saw came down to lack of supervision of those who came to eat, and cleaning and maintenance issues in the hall, the kitchen and the bathrooms. In April, police were called to break up a fight between two women, and just weeks after that, church members had to clean up before a planned visit by the Santa Rosa bishop.

"That's the issue here," she said. "You have to have stewardship for the buildings, the facilities, the surroundings, the neighborhood: Everybody has to be happy, as well as the program itself, for Daily Bread to be successful."



The rest of BGMS | From Page 10

The produce for the foods was sourced through the Mendo/Lake Food Hub and provided by Covelo Organics. Students had spent weeks leading up to the event learning about modern food production and advertising, and also took a field trip to the Brookside School Farm, where they met and spoke with farm manager Amanda Senseman. They also met with Sarah Bodnar, marketing consultant with Mendocino's Social Media Sisters, who helped the students create a marketing campaign for the event.

A contest was held among the students, and the slogan "Eat Apples – Go Bananas" was selected as the winner. Posters were made featuring the slogan to help promote the event to the other students.

"Local Food Day is healthy for kids and healthy for the community," said Megan Watson, the North Coast Opportunities Farm to School project manager who was onsite during the Local Food Day event. "School lunch is available for all students regardless of their family's income. Through farm to school programs and events like Local Food Day, we're ensuring access to healthy delicious food for all kids."

NCO's Farm to School project runs through 2015 and is funded by a grant from USDA's Farm to School program. The project allows several districts and schools to participate in field trips to farms, classroom visits by farmers, and special local food events.

—Maureen Moore

The rest of Tax | From Page 1

County, Inc. ought to become that governing body, and that the assessment on hospitality income ought to be increased from the current 1 percent to 2 percent.

That assessment – the Transient Occupancy Tax, often called the "bed tax" – is paid directly by the hospitality customer, and passed right through to the BID.

The idea of having a BID at all is meeting with some current opposition, as on May 19, the board of supervisors acknowledged that 28 hospitality owners in Fort Bragg and two owners in Point Arena had filed letters of protest against reauthorizing the BID for 2015-16. This fiscal year's reauthorization is for the BID in its current structure, with five participating bodies and a 1 percent assessment.

The five participating bodies are the county board of supervisors, the Business Improvement District Advisory Board, and the boards of directors of the Mendocino County Lodging Association, the Mendocino County Promotional Alliance, and Visit Mendocino County.

Denny Shah, owner of the Super 8 Motel in Willits, said the 2 percent assessment was too high and that the BID isn't doing enough for motels and inns in the inland part of the county.

"I think the hotel owners over there in Fort Bragg, because most of the tourism dollars are spent there, I think that they think they can control how those dollars are spent. Now, if that extra percent is going to be spent inland, that's alright. But if it's going to be spent over on the coast, that doesn't do anything for us here in Willits."

"We are going to have a freeway bypass here in another two or three years," Shah said. "Sixty percent of our business is from people coming through on Highway 101. When the bypass comes, we are going to need something to bring them in to Willits, to make them want to stop. So I think, if that extra 1 percent does that, OK: but if not, I won't support it."

Jan Rodriguez, owner and operator of the Baechtel Creek Inn, is an inside player of the tourism industry in this county. She has been a board member of the Mendocino County Lodging Association, the Mendocino County Promotional Alliance, and of Visit Mendocino County.

Rodriguez said she supports renewing the BID for the next fiscal year, and she also supports the changes proposed by the ad hoc committee.

"I've been on all three boards for the past three years," Rodriguez said. "We've grown to a point where it's really cumbersome. You know, there is no one entity that governs things. Instead, you have three boards that have to meet, that have to approve stuff. If one body changes something, then the other two boards have to meet again, to approve the change."

"So we do need to have one governing body. And I think yes, Scott Schneider and Visit Mendocino County, they have done a good job for us. I was on the board of the MCLA when we hired Scott as a part-time promoter, and from that he has gone on to build this really marvelous organization. Have there been growing pains? Yes. But compare that with what has gone on in some other places."

"For example," Rodriguez continued, "the wine commission has gone through I don't know how many CEOs, and they've all had these huge salaries and they haven't done anything. With Scott, if you look at the TOT [Transient Occupancy Tax], it has risen. And even in the bad economy, we didn't go down that much. So a lot of what he and Visit Mendocino County is doing, is working."

"The nay-sayers, they don't take the time to understand the issues. Like for example, right now our tourism budget is \$600,000. You know what they are paying in Lake County? Five million. And they are paying multiple millions in Humboldt and in Sonoma. So our budget is really small and, let's face it, tourism is our only industry now. I mean, except for the other economy that no one talks about. So, yes, I think the BID is a good thing, and we need it. If it were to go away, we would lose a lot of jobs in tourism," Rodriguez said.



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Seabiscuit's legacy highlighted

in Mendocino Film Festival program

The Willits part of the Mendocino Film Festival – the Seabiscuit Legacy Film Series – was a huge success this year for happy festival attendees and for festival organizers.

Jenny Senter
Features Writer

The day's program was divided between Ridgewood Ranch, home of Seabiscuit, a few miles south of Willits, and the historic Noyo Theatre in downtown Willits. Ranch activities included tours, screenings and discussion of three short films, and a 1940s-style reception hosted by the Willits Rotary Club. The Noyo hosted a 4 pm screening of a new documentary about another "underdog" horse, "Harry & Snowman," as the festival finale. (Breaking news: "Harry & Snowman," which was screened over the coast as well, was voted the No. 2 film of the 2015 festival.)

Attendees had a positive response to all the activities and films offered.

"This is the Year of the 'Biscuit!," said Jacqueline Cooper, president of the Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation and co-host of the Ridgewood Ranch event. "In March we celebrated the 75th anniversary of Seabiscuit's history-making win at Santa Anita Park, and the opening of the brand-new Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital is scheduled later this year. The Noyo Theatre, where the hometown premiere of the movie, 'Seabiscuit,' took place, also celebrates their 75th anniversary this year. This is Seabiscuit's legacy. You could say it is a trifecta of events to benefit our great community."

Michael Fox, executive director of the Mendocino Film Festival and a horse enthusiast himself, said he was very pleased with the film festival overall this year, and

particularly pleased with the turnout for the Seabiscuit Legacy Film Series in Willits. Having packed houses at Film Fest events is important, he said, because it shows the film industry that Mendocino County can offer successful film festivals, which should attract more film producers in the future.

Fox wanted to thank the Willits community for supporting the festival and offering his crew and the film producers and guests such great hospitality. He said he looks forward to bringing the festival back to "the great community" of Willits next year.

Noyo Theatre owners Jeff and Lois Hoover were ecstatic with their role as sponsors in hosting "Harry & Snowman."

This is the third year the Noyo has been a part of a Mendocino Film Festival program

Read the rest of **Seabiscuit** | Over on Page 13

Above, left: A 1938 Buick adds to the retro atmosphere at the Howard House.

Above, right, top: Erin Holzhauser of the T.R.A.I.L. program, Alison Glassey, and retired Col. Michael Howard during the Q&A.

Above, right, bottom: Robin, a rescue horse with the T.R.A.I.L. program, Erin Holzhauser, and Nick Howard, great-grandson of Charles S. Howard.

Below, center: Mendo Film Festival's Michael Fox, Karin Reid Offield, executive producer of "Harry & Snowman," and Chris Vance.

Below: Waiting to get in to "Harry & Snowman" at the Noyo Theatre.

Photos by Jenny Senter



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Community Hu Song

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Farm to School Coordinator: Certified teacher preferred, but not required. The position will begin Summer 2015. Stipend Position: \$3,000.

Health Tech/Secretary Registrar: 6 hours per day, 5 days per week. Salary Range: \$11.26-15.57/hour. Applications Deadline: May 29, 2015.

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All application positions are open until filled, unless otherwise noted. Please call 707-984-6414 for more info. EOE

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Willits Chiropractic Clinic: Looking for front office 4 days a week, 2 to 6 pm, with some Friday mornings. Please come into office 9 am to 12 to apply.

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More of **FCS** | From Page 1 concern" that because of the current state of affairs in Family and Children's Services, "a disaster is waiting to happen."

The grand jury began its investigation after receiving complaints about "the performance of Family and Children's Services in protecting the children of Mendocino County from abuse and neglect."

While the agency (formerly Child Protective Services) is required by law to provide timely and appropriate services to children at risk, the complaints alleged those "services are not provided in a timely manner, or not provided at all, due to staff shortages and management decisions."

To prepare the report, grand jury investigators collected data from multiple databases, including the Child Protective Services California Management System and the California Child Welfare Indices Project, as well as board of supervisors' minutes, county organization charts, management report of employee retention records, and department budgets. More than 15 interviews were conducted with staff, management, and present and former Health and Human Services employees.

Family and Children's Services is the county name for the state and federal mandated Child Protective Services program, which provides services to children who may be at risk of abuse or neglect.

It's a complicated system.

FCS receives reports of potential child abuse or neglect, called referrals, both from mandatory reporters – such as law enforcement, medical professionals, or educators – and from concerned persons by letter, "walk-ins," or telephone calls to the agency's hotline (463-7992).

The person receiving the referral either fills in a form or passes the call to an on-duty screener, who evaluates the information and decides what action should be taken: an immediate investigation (within 24 hours), a 10-day response (investigate within 10 days), or "evaluate out" (dismiss as no action is required)

The screener passes the form to the on-duty supervisor, who either verifies

Read the rest of **FCS** | Over on Page 15



Above: A guest enjoys Rotarian Ann Alumbaugh's refreshments. At bottom: Karin Reid Offield, executive producer of "Harry & Snowman," and special guest Chris Vance relax at the Noyo before the movie starts.

The rest of **Seabiscuit** | From Page 12

in Willits, and the turnout this year was much better than last year, they said.

The morning tours of Ridgewood Ranch – focusing on Seabiscuit, his owner Charles S. Howard, and his jockey Red Pollard – were led by Tracy Livingston, chair of the Seabiscuit Foundation's board of directors, and Ron Moorhead. Stops on the tour included the Howard House, the Stud Barn and the Mare Barn, with information given about the history of the ranch, from the first residents, the Northern Pomo, on through to the current landowners, Christ's Church of the Golden Rule. The two tour groups were also entertained with stories about local legend and stage robber Black Bart.

Livingston also pointed to the support and involvement of the Willits Rotary, the Willits Chamber of Commerce, Frank R. Howard Hospital, and the Mendocino County Museum in the ongoing preservation of the history of the ranch and the heritage of Seabiscuit for future generations.

Retired Col. Michael Howard, official Howard Family historian, was part of the panel discussion after the noon showing of films at the ranch. One of the short films, "Riding My Way Back," tells the story of veteran Staff Sergeant Aaron Heliker, who returned from five tours of duty in Afghanistan suffering from PTSD and traumatic brain injury. This movie, which has won numerous awards at several film festivals, touched many in the audience.

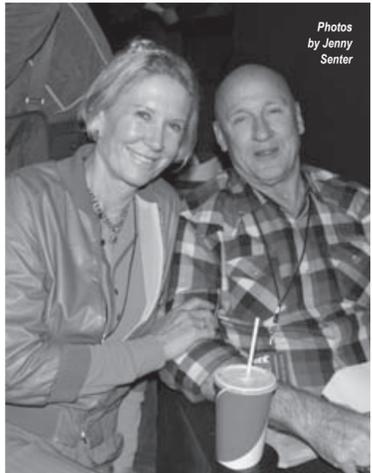
All these local connections, Orenstein said: "Seabiscuit, T.R.A.I.L., Howard Hospital ... combine to enable the tradition and legacy of Seabiscuit to live on. In some ways, this spirit also defines Willits, a town that has fallen on hard times and is fighting its way back, using Seabiscuit as inspiration."

Col. Howard, who served two tours in Iraq, noted how moved he was to hear that Ridgewood Ranch's T.R.A.I.L. riding program – one of the beneficiaries of the day's proceeds – will be helping veterans as part of the Seabiscuit legacy of helping those in need of healing. Howard also said that "Margie Handley is my hero for continuing Seabiscuit's legacy" with her work as president of the Howard Foundation board of directors and as a tireless promoter of the new hospital.

Visitors enjoyed the reception, organized by Willits Rotarian Ann Alumbaugh, while listening to the Dorian May Trio on the patio of the Howard House. Wine was provided by BARRA of Mendocino as part of their partnership with the Mendocino Film Festival.

Ron Orenstein, vice mayor of Willits, commented on the "many points of connection" between the day's activities focused on the Seabiscuit legacy, the "story about one horse and three men who were each damaged in some way, who came together to form a great team, and in the process, provided the mutual support that allowed them all to heal."

All these local connections, Orenstein said: "Seabiscuit, T.R.A.I.L., Howard Hospital ... combine to enable the tradition and legacy of Seabiscuit to live on. In some ways, this spirit also defines Willits, a town that has fallen on hard times and is fighting its way back, using Seabiscuit as inspiration."



Photos by Jenny Senter



Above: Holly Madrigal, Betty Meinecke, and April Tweddell start the walk out right, smiling and laughing with each other in front of J.D. Redhouse.

At right, from top: Local Boy Scouts volunteer at the 6,000 step mark. Volunteers from Energize Willits worked the 3,000 step mark, including, from left: Rachel Cash, Megan Hall, and Erin Fitzpatrick.

A family strolls along together for the 10,000 steps. Patty Bruder and Alan Falleri smile as they cross the 4,000 mark.

Photos by Deleigh Hermes

Willits Walk for Health

Taking 10,000 steps for fun, fitness and community

The 18th Willits Walk for Health and Fitness walk took place last weekend, on a beautiful sunny day for the walkers, runners, and cyclists. The participants started at 10 am on Sunday at J.D. Redhouse and continued on to a 10,000 step walk throughout Willits, totaling about five miles.

"I wanted to get adults and kids healthy, that was the impetus behind it. We wanted to bring the community together by walking through downtown, the neighborhoods of the east side, and north and south of the railroad tracks," said Jed Diamond, creator of this walk. He is also a part of WHAT (Willits Healthy Action Team), who all played a part in creating the Willits Walk for Health and Fitness in 2008. Since then, the walk has happened every May and October.

Jed Diamond has a PhD in social work and international health. He wrote the book, "MenAlive: Stop Killer Stress with Simple Healing Energy Tools," which focuses on men's health and the women who love them.

With Diamond's history in health issues – and his desire to create a healthy body for all – he created this walk for health and keeping the community together.

The slogan "EAT LOCAL, SHOP LOCAL, BE LOCAL" was on the back of every map of the walk route handed out at the walk. Local shops in town sponsor the walk, as well. This year, the walk ended at the Healthy Family Fair at the Rec Grove, which featured more healthy and fun activities for the whole family.

Let's keep it local, and come out and show support for the next Willits WHAT walk in October.



The rest of Williamson

Mendocino County, some 465,181 acres were included in 662 Williamson Act contracts as of December 2014.

During fiscal year 2014-15, the discount reduced collectable real property tax revenues by over \$1.3 million, according to County Assessor Susan Ranochak.

The board of supervisors recently reduced the time period for Williamson Act contract discounts from 10 to nine years, resulting in a savings to the county of about \$450,000 in fiscal year 2014-15. That \$450,000 is an increase of tax assessments on real property formerly protected under the act.

According to Title 22 of the Mendocino County Code, a Williamson Act landowner must file a "Reporting Statement to Maintain Agricultural Preserve Eligibility" every two years. The county agricultural commissioner sends out reporting statements to landowners by registered mail.

However, the most recent mailing occurred in 2009, according to Agricultural Commissioner Chuck Morse.

Failure to fill out and file a reporting statement with the county "constitutes a breach of ... contract." In that case, the county may "seek a court order requiring negligent landowners to comply with the contract, or terminate the contract and have the county assessor value the property ... pursuant to Proposition 13, and tax it as if it were not subject to an "enforceable restriction."

The county also may sue the landowner for "a sum equal to 25 percent of the property's fair market value without the enforceable restriction."

Before any action can be taken, however, the county must mail negligent landowners a non-renewal form after

Of the nearly 4,482,000 acres of land in

the board of supervisors approves a list of non-filers.

The grand jury report claims that following the 2009 reporting statement mailing, many Williamson Act participants failed to return their forms within the required 30-day period. To add insult to injury, "there was significant noncompliance in failing to respond to the reports in any manner."

As a result of the 2009 mailing, the grand jury says, more than 50,000 acres were removed from Williamson Act contracts.

The tax benefit for non-renewed properties is gradually phased out over a nine-year period. The immediate opt-out fee, according to the grand jury report, is an estimated \$3,258. This would bypass the nine-year phase-out of the property tax benefit.

However, this has occurred only once since 1999.

There are three types of Williamson Act properties: Type 1: Prime Agricultural Land (row crops or one animal unit per acre and income of \$200 per acre); Type 2: Range Land (one animal unit per 40 acres); Type 3: Preservation property (recreation and open space or forestry, 100-acre minimum)

In 2014, the Resource Lands Protection Committee – composed of the county assessor, agricultural commissioner and representatives from the Planning and Building Department and county counsel – began writing policies and procedures to replace the current ordinance. The proposed measure would require landowners to provide proof of revenue.

The committee will meet with residents in Willits, Round Valley, Potter Valley, Hopland, Boonville, Fort Bragg, and Point Arena to receive feedback regarding the measure.

The committee's proposed policies and procedures must

be approved by the board of supervisors following a public hearing. To send out new reporting statements for 2015-16, the board must approve the changes before September 1.

The grand jury is recommending the county enforce sanctions for failure to file the reporting statement, and is urging supervisors to take action on the proposed policy and procedures changes in time for the reporting statements to be mailed.

About the grand jury

The Mendocino County grand jury is a citizen organization established by California law to review and investigate government of a county and its cities. A civil grand jury has two functions: 1. Acting in a public "watchdog" capacity by reviewing and reporting on the affairs of local agencies and government; and 2. Investigating formal complaints from citizens against public officials and local government for misconduct in office.

Responses are required by the agencies and officials investigated, within 60 days for elected officials, and 90 days for all others. Responses are posted on the grand jury reports page as they come in.

Grand jury investigations are strictly confidential. Information about becoming a member of the 2013/2015 grand jury, and an application form, is available here: www.mendocino.courts.ca.gov/grandjury.html. A form to file a complaint to be considered by the grand jury is available here: www.co.mendocino.ca.us/grandjury/pdf/complaintform.pdf.

Please address any inquiries to the grand jury foreperson, Finley B. Williams, who is the grand jury's sole spokesperson: P.O. Box 939, Ukiah, CA 95482-0939 or 707-463-4320 or grandjury@co.mendocino.ca.us.

The rest of FCS

the screener's decision or overrides it.

The supervisor assigns the referral to a social worker to contact and interview the child and the child's caregivers.

Emergency response performance is measured by three criteria: percentage of on-time immediate (24-hour) responses, percentage of on-time 10-day responses, or percentage of on-time 30-day closures. The more important of these criteria are the immediate responses and the on-time 10-day responses, the report states. Thirty-day closures are a measure of completion of action goals.

The statewide Child Welfare Services California Management System database tracks county-by-county performance. Data is entered by the social worker staff of the individual counties as each case moves forward.

Mendocino County has one of the worst performance records in the state for the first two criteria.

According to the grand jury report, FCS has a specific policy requiring that data for each case contact be entered within two weeks. However, management does not follow this specific policy due to staff shortages. "The actual data entry by FCS into the Management System may be delayed an additional one week to one month beyond the receipt of data because of staff shortages," according to the report.

In October 2014, the statistics for FCS from Management System data were: immediate responses, 100 percent on time; and 10-day responses, 86 percent on time.

In November 2014, FCS instituted intermittent overtime sessions to bring reporting up to date. Upper management approved the sessions and overtime pay. The resulting statistics showed immediate responses were 93 percent on time, and 10-day responses were 83 percent on time.

By December 2014 that number had dropped. Only 71 percent of immediate responses were on time; only 75 percent of 10-day responses.

For the fourth quarter 2014, the agency was 88 percent on time for immediate referrals, and 80 percent on time for 10-day referrals.

The amount of paperwork involved is staggering. State law requires case workers to file up to 12 different types of reports with the courts, the grand jury report notes. Many reports have mandated time limits for submittal, and some require extensive background investigations. Each report is specific to an individual case and requires writing on specific issues of that case. In addition, some reports must be filed multiple times.

Case workers also are required to make periodic visits to the children under their care. Mendocino County FCS averages between 85 percent and 90 percent of visits on time, compared to a state average of between 80 percent and 85 percent, the grand jury report found. In that respect, Mendocino County FCS is performing above the state average.

FCS employees fall into four main classifications: clerical staff, Social Worker Assistants I, II, and III (paraprofessional level staff of FCS); Social Workers I, II, III, IV, and V (the professional staff of FCS); Supervisors I and II, who directly supervise the social workers, social worker assistants and clerical staff; and management, which is responsible for managing supervisors.

More than one-third of the allocated social worker positions are unfilled, the grand jury report found. Many that are filled employ workers "without the necessary educational

or experience requirements." "Interviewees, management and staff, all acknowledged this problem," the report adds.

Lack of staff has translated into work overload and a significant number of late or unscreened referrals, the report states, which may not be processed within the guidelines FCS uses.

"Lack of educated, experienced staff can translate into more time to complete a task and increases work for supervisors. For example, the time expended for preparation of court reports and accompanying new hires on investigations, whether immediate or 10-day response, can increase."

And the grand jury report found FCS's workload is growing. The average annual number of referrals to Family and Children's Services has increased by more than 12 percent in the last six years.

Currently, case workers are each handling between 30 and 40 mixed emergency response referrals and continuation cases. Best practices recommends caseloads for FCS social workers of between 17 and 20 mixed cases, the report states.

The state has established educational requirements for FCS professional staff and supervisors: a minimum of 50 percent of the professional social worker staff should have a master's degree in social work (MSW); all are required to have a bachelor's degree in social sciences; all professional social worker supervisors are required to have an MSW.

But as of mid-February 2015, the grand jury found those requirements were not being met: there were 24 filled professional social worker (non-supervisor) positions in FCS, but not all 24 held bachelor's degrees; less than 50 percent of the professional staff had master's degrees; and not all of the nine professional social worker supervisor positions held MSWs.

"FCS staffing did not meet the required ratio of at least 50 percent MSWs for non-supervisory staff in 2013 or 2014," the grand jury alleges.

Many of the county's social workers assigned to emergency response referrals hold only an associate of arts degree, instead of the bachelor's degree that is the legal requirement for emergency response workers.

Emergency response workers also are required to have one-year of experience before they can investigate a referral by themselves. "However, many of the agency's emergency response workers are new hires, without field experience," the report notes. "This entails much closer monitoring by senior staff, thus placing an added burden on supervisors."

And while the state does provide for training and experience to be certified as educational equivalency, there are no county FCS employees at any level with such certification, the report found.

The state allows a county to request a deferral from these staffing requirements each year. The request must be accompanied by a plan for a county to come into compliance, and document the results of the previous year's efforts.

Such a request was made in April 2007, but no plan was ever filed with the state, according to the grand jury report. Another request for deferral was made by letter in January 2015.

An exodus of experienced staff began in 2011 after base salaries were cut by 10 percent, the report claims. That cut was followed by a reorganization of FCS in 2013, which "caused controversy among staff and supervisors and also significantly depressed morale."

Testimony presented to the grand jury termed the level of morale as "almost malignant."

Staff losses between 2011 and 2014 represent a loss of about 300 years of experience with the county, the report claims. "This represents a loss both of institutional and individual case knowledge."

The 2013 reorganization combined the employees' investigative duties with court reporting duties. The expansion of duties combined with staff shortages "has negatively impacted the morale, particularly the morale of experienced employees," interviewees told grand jury investigators. "Many employees expressed concern about the changes and a number of experienced employees left."

Affected individuals were not given prior notice or allowed prior input to management decisions affecting assignment of personnel, the report alleges, and "there is no apparent mechanism or effort to explain to staff what staffing changes are planned, or why."

Interviewees expressed concern over the negative impact on morale of staff changes occurring "suddenly" and without consultation. Staff felt excluded from the decision-making process.

In response to the loss of experience, the report states, management has increased core training and advanced educational opportunities for staff moving into higher positions: "Many interviewees praised management for providing additional training opportunities."

Upper management expressed concern that staffing issues in Mendocino County may be related in part to the "general living conditions, living environment, and compensation issues": salary differential and benefits, the lack of a four-year university, inaccessibility to a major airport, a low housing inventory, high home prices, and poor shopping opportunities.

"Many management, staff, complainants, and past employees" believe low salary levels contributed to the inability of the county to hire and retain social workers, according to the grand jury report. Specifically mentioned was a perceived compensation differential between Mendocino and surrounding counties.

A grand jury survey found entry-level salaries for social workers in Mendocino County were higher than in adjacent Humboldt and Lake counties. But starting salaries for these counties and Mendocino County were more than 20 percent lower than in Marin, Napa and Sonoma counties. When the pay differentials are considered for the level of SW II through SW IV, this pay differential is even more pronounced, the grand jury report claims.

Multiple interviewees also cited benefits as being lower in Mendocino County than in the neighboring counties.

It's another complex issue, the grand jury investigation found.

"Mendocino County," the report says, "is the only county of the neighboring counties that has a county-managed system, the rest contract with CalPERS for retirement fund management."

Under the California Public Employees' Pension Reform Act of 2013, the counties can only pay up to 50 percent of any new employee's retirement benefit. The counties cannot subsidize new employees' contributions.

That's the same way pension funds are handled in Mendocino County, the report observes, concluding "the perception of a difference in the benefits offered to new employees is not supported by the evidence."

All interviewees, especially management,

expressed concern many new employees would receive their training, paid for by the county, and then depart (referred to as "train-and-trot" by several of the interviewees). Upon review, the grand jury found that for the five-year period since 2010, some 25 percent of county social workers left within two years of being hired.

Morale has been a continuing concern, according to the report. "Every interviewee, except for very top management, stated morale was poor, although some believe morale is improving."

When asked why morale was so poor, every interviewee listed among the factors the perception that management has recouped its 10 percent pay cut, while staff had not. Several interviewees stated they considered the recent raises given upper county management "a slap in the face."

However, Health and Human Services management has not regained its lost pay. Instead that 10 percent pay cut has been made permanent, the grand jury says.

In an attempt to address client access concerns, a proposal was made by users of FCS services to restore the agency's current four-day work week to five days.

During discussion of returning to a five-day work week during a board of supervisors meeting, there was anecdotal evidence offered that, because of the 10 percent pay cut, some staff have taken second jobs.

Other factors affecting morale include: loss of collegiality, loss of the leadership team consultation, abrupt personnel changes, lack of adequate staff, lack of adequate equipment, lack of respect for experience and dedication, and fear of retribution.

While there is a policy and procedure in Social Services calling for "respectful communication," former staff said they did not believe management followed this policy. The grand jury reviewed confidential documentation "establishing a lack of respectful communication," the report said. Interviewees also stated a lack of respect is present in communications with management during the normal work day, which has added to morale problems.

The grand jury also discovered documentary evidence of management statements or actions that could be considered retaliatory in nature, noting "a lack of response from higher management when issues of retaliation were brought to their attention."

"Staff continues to fear retaliation if they are forthcoming with issues of concern," the report alleges, a fear made "evident in the difficulty the grand jury had in getting employees to appear as witnesses."

Management interviewees did not mention whether there is an outreach effort to recruit social workers, the report notes, and the problem "was compounded by the failure to post ads for social workers. The county website showed no mention of openings for social workers under 'employment opportunities' when the grand jury reviewed for postings. Also, no link or reference to the State Merit System services website was found."

In fact, there were no postings or advertising for social workers for the three months prior to January 11 of this year, the report claims. As of January 11, there were postings and ads to fill positions in FCS. As of January 12, there were also postings on the State Merit System Services website for positions in FCS.

These positions were to be open for two weeks. However, as of February 15, the social worker positions listed for Mendocino County were to remain open until filled, the report states. "Whether this recruiting has been successful is not clear."

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Trio of Trios

Benefit concert raises \$850 for Food Bank

Above, from left: Twining Time (Will Cutlip, Anita Blu, John Wagenet); Just Enough (Clancy Rash, Helen Falandes, Kate Black); and Chanterelle (Helen Falandes, Diane Smalley, Madge Strong). Photos by Kathryn Sterngold

The second annual Trio of Trios event was a great success, with a standing-room-only crowd enjoying the May 23 concert at the Willits Methodist Church.

The event was organized by Clancy Rash as a fundraiser for Willits Community Services and Food Bank, where Rash is also a board member. He noted the food bank will put the \$850 to good use in the general fund, where monies frequently are used to help replace equipment and keep up with ongoing costs associated with running the program.

Filling the bill were the groups Chanterelle (Madge Strong, Diane Smalley and Helen Falandes), Just Enough (Kate Black, Clancy Rash and Helen Falandes) and Twining Time (John Wagenet, Anita Blu and William Cutlip).

After the concert's conclusion, everyone enjoyed a party with refreshments, including drinks and desserts, many of which were brought by volunteers. Anita Blu was the sound engineer, as well, and she said the event ran flawlessly and was very successful.

"We're really hoping to make this an annual event," Blu said. "We would do it as a fundraiser for different groups, and maybe even next year we might have a Quartet of Trios!"

Rash also expressed his appreciation to community members who came out in support of the event to help out the food bank.

— Maureen Moore

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 WILLITS FARMERS MARKET --- THURSDAYS FROM 3 TO 6 PM

Each Thursday from 3 to 6 pm, vendors line the north side of City Park with tables and boxes, offering tasty treats and fresh foods during the Willits Farmers Market.

It's always a good idea to get to market early for the best selection of fruits and veggies: Cherries, strawberries, lettuce, chard and other greens, beets and herbs are all available now. Eggs, cheese, fish and meats are also out on stands and ready to become a delicious meal at your house.

Ready-to-eat treats are also available, including breads, pastries, cookies, muffins and pies, and lunches of gourmet hot dogs and Venezuelan fare can make for an easy dinner.

Shopping for gifts (for yourself or a friend!) is easy, too, with artisan soaps, knitted hats and gloves, spices, oils and vinegars, and jewelry on offer. Or why not get ready for gardening season, or prep your cutlery for summer cooking, and bring your "edgy" items to get professionally sharpened by Keith Rosen. Garden starts are available, too.

As summer progresses, more and more produce will become available, but there are plenty of reasons to come now and enjoy all the goods the spring farmers market has to offer.



Above left: The Farmers Market Band.
 Above: Lettuce and herbs.
 Left: Fresh-baked bagels.

Photos by Maureen Moore

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