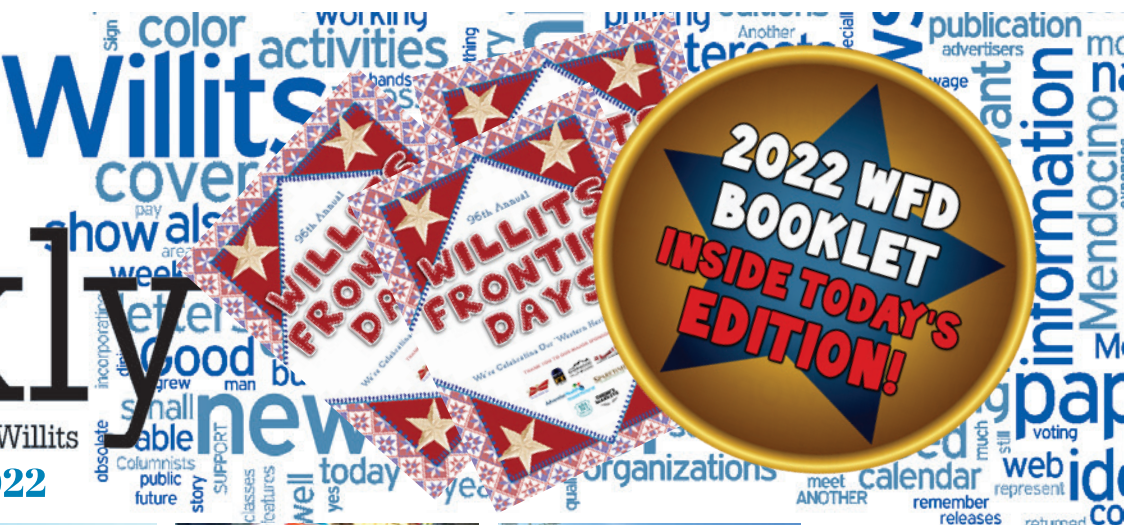


# Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

Online & Print

A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits  
Donations Accepted Edition No. 457 Thursday, June 23, 2022



## School board: Safety, security and passing the baton

Margi Gomez  
Reporter  
willitsweekly@gmail.com

Safety and security issues dominated the Willits Unified School District Board meeting on June 15. Facilities assessment consultant Ryan Hahn of Strategic School Consultants presented a series of eye-opening facilities analysis reports for Willits school buildings.

Schools assessed were: Brookside Elementary School, Blosser Lane Elementary School, Sherwood Elementary School, Baechtel Grove Middle School, Willits High School, and Sanhedrin High School.

Despite Hahn's very positive comments with regards to both maintenance staff and teaching staff, he reported that in nearly every Willits Unified School District school that was assessed many serious issues were found, including inoperative intrusion alarm systems, broken toilets and playground equipment, master key issues, "trip, slip, and fall" concerns, mold, exposed wires, open

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

## Still counting ballots

Jennifer Poole  
Editor & Reporter  
willitsweekly@gmail.com

Mendocino County Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder Katrina Bartolomie uploaded another election results update on Monday, June 20, although very roughly half the ballots from the June 7 election are still left to count.

"Because this ballot is so large, and we are short-staffed, this is taking more time than usual," Bartolomie noted in the email announcing the update.

This June 20 update reports that 9,776 ballots have been counted as of June 20. There are 52,602 registered voters in Mendocino County.

As of June 9, the Elections Office announced there were 17,602 vote by mail ballots countywide still to process and count, and 347 provisional / conditional ballots to review, process and count, plus an unannounced number of mail-in ballots postmarked by Election Day and received by June 14.

State law requires the county Voter Office certify

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



Above, from left: The BACA (Bikers Against Child Abuse) club had a booth at the 2022 Willits Frontier Days Hometown Celebration handing out stickers and balloons to kids of all ages. Moms Shawna, left, and Alison, right, smile with kiddos Daylee, left, and River and Alaska, right. Our Little Country Kitchen makes the most delicious jams and jellies. Payton Shull is running for Laytonville Jr Rodeo Sweetheart. Below: The crew from Smokin G's and Big D's BBQ including, from left: Danny Lewis, Jamie Bouthillier and Dani Retzloff were sold out of their popular tri-tip and chicken sandwiches in only two hours.



## Happening Hometown

Willits Frontier Days 2022 event season kicked off with jam-packed Hometown Celebration last Friday

With graduations finally completed, the time for Willits Frontier Days is upon us, and last Friday's Hometown Celebration was the first event to kick off the 2022 season. The streets were packed with attendees and vendor booths; shops and restaurants were happy to open their doors to customers; and music flowed from all corners of downtown.

This weekend, several other events will get people in the mood for next week's main events; Friday will be the

Truck and Tractor Pulls starting at 6 pm at the Jack Tharp Arena, and the following Street Dance featuring The Flat Busted Band at the rodeo grounds; Saturday will be the Sweetheart Judging at noon at the rodeo grounds and the Willits Frontier Days Juniors Barrels and Poles kick-off series event at 1 pm at the Jack Tharp Arena.

Sunday will be the Horse Show, starting at 8 am at the Jack

Read the rest of **Schedule**  
Over on page 7



Above: Some Hometown patrons were also showing their support for the Golden State Warriors, left, and enjoying a refreshing drink on the downtown benches, right. Below, left: Shop owners Lisa Kvasnicka from Scoops, left, and Simone NDoye (center) from Smokey's BBQ, right, were excited to see patrons enjoying meals and treats at their restaurants. At bottom: The parking lot next to Monkey Wrench Mens and Womens Wear was packed with vendors and event attendees.



Photos by Maureen Jennison

## BOS advances 1/4 cent sales tax measure for fire

Forrest Glyer  
Reporter  
willitsweekly@gmail.com

After a long and contentious debate, the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors directed county counsel to craft a sales tax measure for the November 2022 ballot which would add 1/4 cent per dollar to go entirely towards fire services in Mendocino County.

If passed by the supervisors next month and then by voters in November, the 1/4 cent sales tax could produce around \$4 million annually for local fire services.

It was a change of direction for the board, who previously were considering a 3/8 cent tax to put towards both fire and water services, as they try to make use of a 3/8 cent Measure B sales tax that is sunseting this year.

The new plan for the tax measure is to allocate 90% of the money towards local fire districts, and 10% towards fire preparedness efforts, with a 10-year time limit at which point it would need another public vote to continue.

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

## Brooktrails OKs garbage-rate increase

Barbara O'Reardon  
Reporter  
willitsweekly@gmail.com

Most significant at the recent Brooktrails Township meeting on June 14 was agenda item 2022-03, "Establishing Rates for Solid Waste of Willits." Solid Wastes of Willits President Jerry Ward appeared before the board and said, "The City of Willits did approve a small increase for the rates back in April and we wrote a letter to the Brooktrails board asking for an increase as well.

"With the public-hearing process, it's taken a little bit of time for us to bring this before you," Ward continued. "The most current fuel pricing was from August 2020 to August 2021. But, since August, with fuel prices increasing at such fast pace recently [by another \$2 per gallon], we're asking for an advance on the rate increase so that when we come in in October for the annual rate adjustment in January, we will use the fuel cost from February – not August – to get back on track."

Brooktrails resident

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

# What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from our readers

## Old Hospital to be demolished

To the Editor:

I have been asked many times, "What is going to happen to the Old Hospital?" We have not had an answer, because we've had it listed for sale for years and have had no interest at all, even though we have dropped the price to less than half the appraised value.

The vandalism and things that happen to a vacant building has taken its toll, and now we must do something. The overhead of taxes, maintenance, and security is becoming a financial burden.

The Willits Police Department or the Fire Department is called at least three times a week. Last week the Fire Department was called out and found a man in the attic lighting matches.

We have had an environmental assessment done and put out a proposal for bid for environmental remediation and demolition. The Howard Foundation Board received the bids last week and with a unanimous vote on a motion made by Mike Howard, decided that we have to move on.

It breaks my heart to do that, but with every passing year, the building becomes more uninhabitable. Our money could be so much better spent with philanthropic work than propping up a building that is rapidly deteriorating.

I have truly tried to find a good fit for someone to have a reason to buy the building and a Mental Health Facility would have been the perfect solution in so many ways, but it was not to be.

After the building is gone, we will still own the property and have control over what happens in that space. I am hoping that we can find something that will be a beloved asset for our community like the hospital has always been.

Margie Handley, president,  
Frank R. Howard Foundation

## Summer Art Walk on Saturday

To the Editor:

The First Willits Summer Art Walk will be this Saturday, June 25, from 5 to 8 pm. Many Willits businesses, including the Art Center, and the Mendocino County Museum, will be participating with displays of artwork.

A pop-up show at the museum will feature paintings by my students in the college class, "Watercolor for Older Adults." If you have wondered what the class is like, come and visit, we would love to share our experiences with you! Our classroom connects to the back of the museum, and there will be signs.

Please come to the Art Walk, visit the great new county museum exhibit, "Bear in Mind," and come to our classroom to see some of the beautiful watercolors we created last semester. The museum will be open from 5 to 7 pm.

Ann Magliante, Willits

## 'All Means All'

To the Editor:

The United Methodist Church has been in the news lately. You may have read that there is division within the greater worldwide United Methodist Church. Some churches are leaving the denomination and forming a new denomination or joining other more conservative denominations.

The source of this division is our position on LGBTQI+ marriage and ordination. Ordination is when someone

feels called by God to go into ministry and is affirmed by the Board of Ordained Ministry and the Bishop of their conference to serve all of God's people.

The Willits United Methodist Church (we're located across from the Grange on School Street) stands with our LGBTQI siblings. There is a sign in our front window that says "All Means All." We are a Reconciling Church. This means that we affirm all people as God created them.

We are a church that welcomes everyone; those who question their faith and are looking for answers and all who want to worship in a safe and welcoming environment.

We welcome you just as God has created you. We hope you might stop by and visit us at 10:30 Sunday mornings.

Pastor Rosemary Landry, Willits

## Goodbye to WCS

To the Editor:

The purpose of this letter to Willits Charter School families is to inform you that I will not be returning to WCS in the 2022-2023 school year. It has been a privilege being able to serve this community as the director of WCS for the last eight years, and as a charter school director for the past 17 years. I consider this to be a true highlight of my career.

I have enjoyed working with WCS families, faculty, staff, but mostly the students! As you may know my daughter is a senior and my son is an eighth-grader next year, and I want the opportunity to really be there for them as a parent and attend their graduations. I feel like I owe it to myself to spend some time taking care of myself as well. WCS deserves a director that can give 100% next year: continuing and expanding the vision that the founders of this program began.

Thanks to an incredibly dedicated board, talented instructors, and families that we cherish, Willits Charter School will continue to be not only a safe place for all students but a place that provides an enriching curriculum in a family-type atmosphere.

We have some incredibly talented applicants for the position of director, so WCS will be in very good hands. My own children, our founder's children, and our current faculty and staff's children have all thrived at WCS, but we do it not only for only our own children, but also for all of the children that inhabit the special place that is called Willits, California.

I will be at WCS for the next two weeks in the mornings to make sure summer school is running smoothly and to finalize grades, so please feel free to stop by and chat! We will keep you informed as to who the new director is as soon as they are hired.

I will be available for the new director next year as the school opens back up more and more, and hopefully WCS can return back to normal (post-COVID) – with the added benefit of the Sports and Performing Arts Center as well as new CTE programs for both middle and high school students! WCS looks forward to bringing back community events such as the Harvest Lunch as well!

Thank you for the opportunity to serve your students. I am not sure what my next adventure is (most likely in education somehow!), but I look forward to keeping in touch. I made a promise to our high school students to plan the camping trip, and I will show up for our summer school students for those trips to the pool.

I can't wait to see the many directions that Willits Charter School will go and thrive. The sky's the limit!

Jennifer Lockwood, director, WCS

## Celebration of Life for Wayne Bashore

A Celebration of Life will be held to honor our dear friend, Wayne Bashore. It will be on Sunday, June 26, 2022 at 12 noon. It will be held at the Scout Hut in the Rec Grove Park.

Anyone who wishes to show their respect and honor this great man is welcome to attend. For more info, contact Robin Lucier at 707-315-5402.

## Senior Center menu for the week

Willits Senior Center is serving lunch in its indoor dining room, and continues to serve drive-through and walk-up lunches, too. Lunch is available Monday through Friday, from 12 to 12:45 pm, inside and outside the Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. Price is \$7.

**Thursday, June 23:** Spaghetti w/Meat Sauce, Garlic Bread, Green Salad

**Friday, June 24:** Turkey w/Stuffing, Gravy, Veggie, Roll

**Monday, June 27:** Biscuit, Sausage Patty, Country Gravy, Scrambled Eggs, Hash Browns

**Tuesday, June 28:** Tuna Salad Sandwich, Chips, Pickle, Green Salad

**Wednesday, June 29:** Chicken Burrito, wet with Green Sauce, Green Salad

**Thursday, June 30:** Mini Pizzas, Buffalo Chicken Bites, Green Salad

**Friday, July 1:** Turkey Salad Sandwich, Pickle, Mac Salad

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

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

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

## Library committee turns in ballot petitions

**Submitted by the Citizens' Committee for the Library Initiative 2022**

The Citizens' Committee for the Library Initiative 2022 members Carolyn Schneider, Melinda Clarke, Michele Bisson Savoy, Wayne Menger, Michael Schaeffer, Barbara Blake and Victor Hoosac submitted the signed petitions to the County Clerk on Tuesday, June 14 last week.

The petition supports the renewal of Measure A for 1/8th of a cent sales tax and requests 1/8th of a cent sales tax from the sunseting Measure B, with 40% to be reserved for building improvements.

The local Friends of the Library groups were instrumental in gathering signatures to put the citizens' initiative on the ballot in November 2022. The Citizens' Committee for the Library Initiative 2022 is a countywide volunteer group formed for the purpose of building on the success of Measure A by passing a citizens' initiative in November to provide stable and permanent funding for all library branches and the Bookmobile.

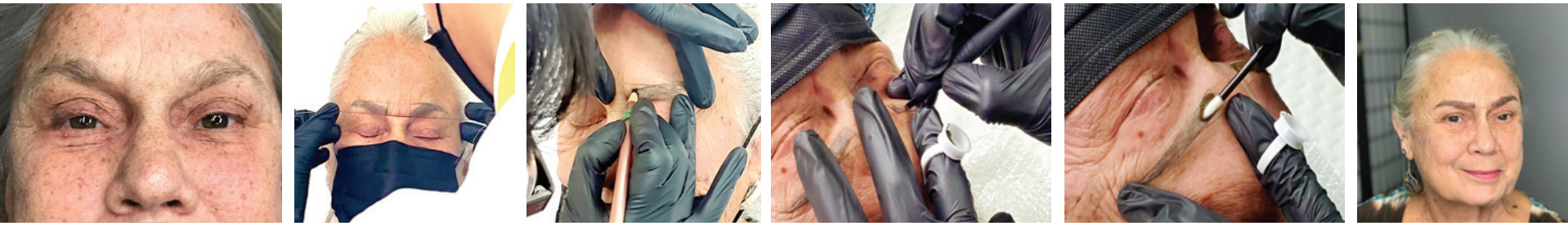
Signatures were gathered in Albion, Elk, Ft. Bragg, Gualala, Laytonville, Manchester, Pt. Arena, Redwood Valley, Round Valley, Ukiah, Westport and Willits.

A total of 4,700 signatures were submitted; 3,500 valid signatures are needed to qualify the ballot measure for the November 2022 ballot.

We want to continue and supplement the current services of Mendocino County library services and programs and also provide stable and secure funding for needed building improvements.

The language in the initiative states that the revenues will be deposited in a special fund that only the Library can access. This has worked very well in the 10 years since Measure A taxes have been collected. The Library Advisory Board, a volunteer board representing the five supervisorial districts and four cities, regularly reviews the Library budget to ensure that the funds are spent appropriately.

If people are interested in working toward passage of this measure, contact your local Friends of the Library group. Willits Friends of the Library can be reached at friendsofthewillitslibrary@gmail.com



At top, from left: A journey of Betty Banham's brows from before, to measuring, to penciling, to filling, to inking to finish.

Before and after photos courtesy of Hung Pham

Above: Hung "Mic" Pham, known as Mic the Brow Guy, offers the community professional microblading services at City Nails. Below, from left: Color matching is an important step for Mic and his clients. Dye goes in a little ink pot on a ring for easy application. The microblade has 18 needles at the end. Before and after showcases the gentle, natural effect of the microblading process. At bottom, left: Mic works away on client Betty Banham who received her first, and only other, brow treatment four years ago. At bottom, right: The microblading studio is set up on the back of the nail salon in a bright, clean and modern private room.



Photo courtesy of Hung Pham



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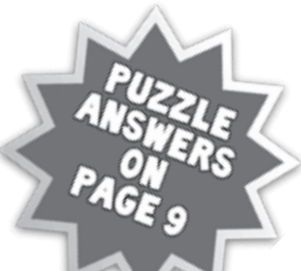
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Willits Weekly's  
Puzzle Page

Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword

	4		6	7		9	
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	2		3	5			7
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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!

SUMMER FUN WORD SEARCH

B	U	C	R	A	C	E	S	T	G	N	B	B	H	B	E	K	M	M	V
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AMUSEMENT	CORNDOG	MIDWAY	SEASIDE
ARCADE	COTTON	MINI-GOLF	SPARKLERS
AUCTION	CANDY	MUSIC	SUMMER
BALLOONS	FAIR	PARADE	SURFING
BAND	FERRIS	PARTY	SWIMMING
BARBECUE	FESTIVAL	PIES	TICKETS
BAZAAR	FIREWORKS	RACES	TOURIST
BOARDWALK	GAMES	RACETRACK	WHEEL
CARNIVAL	GO-CART	RIDES	
CIRCUS	MARINA	SALES	

WILLITS POLICE DEPARTMENT  
POLICE LOG

June 5 to June 11

By Danya Davis, Willits Weekly

Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

June 5

4:54 am: STILL, Aaron Michael (41) of Willits was contacted in the 100 block of Marcela Drive. He was arrested pursuant to 417 (A) (1) PC (Brandishing a Weapon), 422 PC (Criminal Threats), and on misdemeanor charges of receiving stolen property.

6:24 pm: Officers initiated a burglary investigation in the 300 block of Creekside Drive.

6:48 pm: Officers responded to a report of a suspicious vehicle in the 300 block of East Commercial Street.

June 6

8:25 am: LEDESMA, Steven Anthony (39) of Willits was contacted in the 200 block of South Main Street. He was arrested on misdemeanor charges of failure to appear.

7:17 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

June 7

11:37 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 1000 block of South Main Street.

June 8

12:58 pm: Officers initiated a fraud investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

3:44 pm: FAZENBAKER Jr., Norman Julius (40) of Fort Bragg was contacted in the 100 block of Madrone Street. He was arrested pursuant to 461 (B) PC (Burglary), 602 (M) PC (Trespassing), and on felony charges of arson.

3:52 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 1500 block of Baechtel Road.

7:19 pm: SCHULER, Jake Joseph (34) of

Ukiah was contacted near the intersection of Pineview Drive and Crest Drive. He was arrested on felony charges of possession of ammunition by a prohibited person and violation of parole, and on misdemeanor charges of driving with a suspended license.

8:37 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of Wood Street.

9:25 pm: GONZALEZALVAREZ, Rodolfo (26) of Willits was contacted near the intersection of East Oak Street and Central Street. He was arrested on misdemeanor charges of driving with a suspended license, violation of probation, and failure to appear.

June 9

1:51 am: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 200 block of South Main Street.

11:27 pm: SIMMONS, James Keith (32) of Laytonville was contacted in the 800 block of South Main Street. He was arrested on felony charges of violation of parole.

June 10

12:23 pm: Officers initiated a missing person investigation in the 1800 block of East Hill Road.

6:53 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 700 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

8:58 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of Sandy Avenue and issued a warning.

June 11

7:49 am: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 800 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

10:58 am: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 1700 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

6:10 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 100 block of Spruce Street and issued a warning.

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50				51					52	53	54	
55		56						57				
58								59				

CLUES ACROSS

- Half-conscious states
- Unnatural
- Deep regret
- Rogue
- Took without permission
- An alternative
- After B
- Partner to 'flowed'
- The best day of the week (abbr.)
- Helps you hear
- Egyptian river
- Lake \_\_\_, one of the Great
- Make free from bacteria
- Indigenous peoples of central Canada
- Sanctuaries in Greek temples
- Most unclothed
- NJ senator Booker
- Tibetan lake
- Desecrate something sacred
- John \_\_\_, English educator 1467-1519
- Obtains in return for labor
- Views

CLUES DOWN

- Draws over
- Recur
- Current unit
- Neither
- Certified Radio Operator (abbr.)
- Power of perception
- Peace
- Supplemented with difficulty
- The last section or part of anything
- Dorm worker
- Bones
- Rugged cliff
- Not quiet
- Body part
- Newt
- German city
- A way to save money
- NBC's Roker
- Dire Straits frontman
- Actress Lathan
- Most meager
- Poems
- Companions
- Make more concentrated
- Die
- Part of a winter hat
- Young men's club
- Bathrooms need it
- U.S. president
- American novelist
- Take into custody
- Hurts
- Type of gibbon
- American actor Lukas
- Partner to cheese
- Some are covert
- Political action committee
- To and \_\_\_
- Atomic #28

Fireworks are illegal in Mendocino County

Submitted by CalFire Mendocino Unit

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Mendocino Unit is reminding everyone that fireworks are illegal in Mendocino County.

Fourth of July is synonymous for sun, fun, barbecuing and fireworks. Two out of five fires on the Fourth of July are caused by fireworks, more than any other cause of fires. Fireworks are inherently dangerous, and children are at the greatest risk of injury.

CalFire Unit Chief Luke Kendall asks Mendocino residents to do their part to have a safe holiday by helping prevent wildfires and injuries caused by fireworks. The risk of starting a fire after years of drought and with the current dry conditions is extremely high.

CalFire is also reminding the public of the state's zero tolerance regarding the

use or sale of illegal fireworks. CalFire is working closely with local law enforcement and firefighting agencies to seize illegal fireworks and prosecute those found in possession of them.

Any person can be held liable for the firefighting costs as well as property-damage costs associated with the start of a wildfire. Often, these costs can be into the millions of dollars.

The safest way to enjoy fireworks is at professional fireworks shows. Check your local area for professional shows and do not risk your safety and the safety of others by using illegal and dangerous fireworks at home.

Have a fire-safe Fourth of July! One less spark means one less wildfire.

For more information about how you and your family can prepare for wildfire, visit [www.ReadyForWildfire.org](http://www.ReadyForWildfire.org).

Free online business workshops

Submitted by West Business Development Center

The West Business Development Center presents free Online Zoom Webinars on topics of interest to small business owners.

All West Center workshops and webinars are free. All workshops are one hour unless noted otherwise. Workshops in July 2022 include:

Wednesday, July 6, at 12 noon. "The Words that Sell: Content Writing Basics"

Do you get stuck for words when trying to describe your business or products? If the answer's yes, then join Amy Scharmann to learn how to communicate effectively without sacrificing creativity and your business's personality! <https://bit.ly/3xpnZzl>

Wednesday, July 6, at 4 pm (90 minutes). "Disaster Planning: Protect Your Business!"

Do you know what you would do in the event of a natural or man-made disaster?



Above, from left: Participants run past the finish line. The auction items are out for viewing prior to the bidding. CalFire and Andy Cash hang the American flag and the Jesse Pittman banner from the bypass for the participants to run under twice.

Far left: One hundred and seventy runners and walkers begin the race at the sound of the very loud air horn.

At left: A photo of Jesse Pittman sits on the memorial table.

Photos by Mathew Caine

Don't Run – Charge!

Jesse Pittman Memorial 5K Race held in Willits for the first time; 170 run and walk the Little Lake Valley course

When Terry and Ida Pittman lost their son, Jesse, to a helicopter accident in Afghanistan, a posting for which Jesse volunteered, they could have allowed themselves to be steeped in their grief, withdrawing into the abyss of the emptiness that often is felt by the survivors of such a tragedy.

They would never again hear his voice or view his handsome face or hug him to welcome him home. Instead, these two loving people, along with several of Jesse's SEAL teammates, CalFire members, and others decided to create a way to honor him. They brought other young, intelligent, determined people into their family, and grew a network of college-bound, service-oriented humans that emulated the values that their son was well known for.

To this end, the Jesse Pittman Foundation was conceived. The entity, formed in 2012, a year after Pittman's death, created the Jesse Pittman Memorial 5K Race in order to raise money for an annual scholarship to benefit a student with the qualities that Terry and Ida recognized in their own son.

The result was two-fold. The scholarship helped future leaders and community service people on their path to be the best at what they wanted to do. The other benefit was that the Pittmans were able to grow their extended family and welcome fine young people, with whom they would share a relationship in perpetuity.

"Jesse was kind of OCD. He focused on what he wanted to do," explained his mom. "He was always like that from the time he was a boy. He didn't like to be distracted and

wasn't into having a girlfriend or any of the regular school distractions. He focused on his job and became good at it.

"He became a 'breacher,' which is the guy who opens the door into the building that the SEALs are going into," she said. "You never know what to expect when you're the first one to enter."

He was so determined that he actually hired someone to train him to be a Navy SEAL before entering the service. He knew what he wanted and went for it.

Jesse's teammate and roommate at certain phases of his training and deployment, Barry Scott, who was part of the day's festivities and logistics, as well as master of ceremonies, explained the purpose of the event on Saturday, June 18.

"This whole program," said Scott, "is set up to find students in Mendocino County who remind us of Jesse, kids who fit into Jesse's cloth. What we're looking for are people who are hard workers, who have grit and determination, following a call to service."

"Jesse was a hard worker and someone who wanted to serve his country," he said. "He was also a fun-loving guy. He was the kind of guy who would make everybody laugh, so we want to find people who are hard workers but also fun to be around."

"The idea is, the Pittman family lost Jesse, but every year we select a new student to join the Pittman family by

Read the rest of **Pittman** Over on page 9



At left, top: Ida and Terry Pittman welcome scholarship recipient Grace Fairall into their extended family.

At left: A CalFire helicopter does a flyby at the end of the moment of silence to commemorate Jesse Pittman.

Above: Many of the participants were service members and CalFire crew members.

Wishing everyone a happy and safe Frontier Days!

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Mila is a sweet 2-year-old cat who is friendly, but takes a little time getting to know you. This beauty is playful and likes head scratches and pets.



Aria is a gem of a dog! She's good on-leash, attentive, sweet-natured, and great with other dogs! How's that for all the boxes ticked? Here's one little thing? Aria is not a fan of getting in vehicles, so she would need to learn or be a happy camper around her home and property.

Aria is a large, tan and black dog, possibly a Mastiff or similar breed, standing on a green lawn. The dog has a black face and chest, with tan fur on its body. It is looking directly at the camera with its mouth open, showing its teeth. The name "Aria" is written in a white, cursive font in the bottom left corner of the image.

*Frank*

COLUMN | AT THE MOVIES

Frank is a loving guy who just wants to give love and receive love. He would make a great running partner for anyone who likes to run. He is EXCELLENT with small children – even rowdy and rambunctious ones! He needs to be in a cat-free environment and would probably prefer to be the only dog in the home, however, he does tolerate being around another smaller dog. He would make an excellent guard dog too! Frank doesn't shed and his coat is non-allergenic. This guy just wants a home of his own and lots of love.

A photograph of a cowboy in a pink shirt and white cowboy hat riding a brown horse, herding a black steer in a rodeo arena. The cowboy is holding a lasso. In the background, several spectators are seated in bleachers.



*At left, from top: A CCPRA cowboy throws his rope. Danielle Barry carries the American flag. 2021 Sweetheart Claire Case Brackett, left and 2019/2020 Sweetheart Jaden Doak. Above: The meat crew goofs around at the BBQ.*



*From far left: A cowboy hangs on to a bucking bronco in the CCPRA Rodeo. The Truck and Tractor Pulls is a feast for gearheads. Madison Lawrence holds a trophy from the Horse Show. Claire Case Brackett models during the Sweetheart judging last year. The Vaqueros Mexicanos of Willits always have beautiful horses in the parade.*

***At left: The Sherwood Valley Casino jeep pulled a trailer in last year's parade.***

***At left, below: A Junior Rodeo rider stops after daubing her steer.***

*Photos by Maureen Jennison*

From page 1

Tharp Arena with the Sweetheart horsemanship judging taking place during the show around 10 am and the National Anthem Contest to follow at noon.

On Wednesday, the much-anticipated carnival opens in the old ball fields. Carnival wristbands are now available at J.D. Redhouse for \$30 presale (until June 28 or until they run out) or \$40 at the carnival gates. Info: 707-459-1214.

Next weekend, it's the main events, including the crowning of the 2022 Sweetheart at the celebratory dinner on Friday, July 1; then Saturday's Junior Rodeo will be starting at 1 pm at the Jack Tharp Arena.

Sunday starts with the Lions Cowboy Breakfast at 7 am, the CCPRA rodeo at 7 pm, and the Western Dance featuring the Lance Michael Cornwell Band after.

Festivities will conclude on Monday, July 4, but it's a full day indeed. First off is the Horseshoe contest at 10 am, then the parade down Main Street at 11 am, the Country Music Rodeola at the Rec Grove at noon, the beef barbecue at the Rec Grove at noon, and the second half of the CCPRA rodeo at 4 pm.

Tickets are available to all the paid events from the 2022 Sweetheart Contestant, Danielle Barry, or available at the door.

See complete schedule and Danielle's poster below.



**Above:** Horseshoe tossing at the Rec Grove. **At right:** Mutton bustin' in the Junior Rodeo. **At far right:** Around the ring at the Horse Show.



## Submitted by Kim Bancroft

For Keith Rutledge of Sherwood Firewise Communities, a man who takes care of his Spring Creek neighbors like a Papa Bear, from rides to town in a snowstorm to digging out a stuck car to keeping us fire safe. We appreciate all you do!



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More info: [www.WillitsFrontierDays.com](http://www.WillitsFrontierDays.com)

**Masks Optional**

**WILLITS SUMMER ART WALKS 2022**

**Map of Downtown Willits:**

- Streets:** Main St (vertical), Commercial St (horizontal), Mendocino Ave (horizontal).
- Locations:**
  - County Museum - 400 E Commercial st
  - Kemmy's Pies - 299 E Commercial st
  - Center for the Arts - 71 E Commercial st
  - BACE - 109 N. Main st
  - Scoops - 110 N. Main St
  - Shanachie Pub - 50 S. Main st
  - Art in the Plaza - 99 S. Main st
  - Re Evolution - 15 W Mendocino ave

**Last Saturdays 4pm to 8pm June - October**

*for more info go to [willitscenterforthearts.org](http://willitscenterforthearts.org)*



# Danielle Barry

2022 Willits Frontier Days

## Sweetheart Contestant

### 2022 Schedule of Events

<b>FRIDAY, JUNE 17</b> <b>HOMETOWN CELEBRATION</b> Main Street Downtown Willits 5 to 9 pm	<b>WFO JRS. BARRELS &amp; POLES</b> Kick off event series 1 pm   Jack Tharp Arena	<b>SATURDAY, JULY 2</b> <b>JUNIOR RODEO</b> Jack Tharp Arena 1 pm Adult: \$10, Child (2 and under): free	<b>MONDAY, JULY 4</b> <b>HORSESHOE CONTEST</b> Rec Grove Park 10 am <b>PARADE</b> "Western Heritage" Main Street
<b>FRIDAY, JUNE 24</b> <b>TRUCK &amp; TRACTOR PULLS</b> Jack Tharp Arena 6 pm Adult: \$30, Child (3+): \$10 <b>STREET DANCE</b> Featuring The Flat Bored Band Following rodeo   Free	<b>SUNDAY, JUNE 26</b> <b>HORSESHOW</b> Jack Tharp Arena 8 am <b>SWEETHEART JUDGING</b> Horseshoing During Horse Show   Jack Tharp Arena <b>NATIONAL ANTHEM</b> Rodeo Grounds   Noon	<b>SUNDAY, JULY 3</b> <b>LIONS COWBOY BREAKFAST</b> Rec Grove Park 7 am Adult: \$12, Child \$8 <b>CCPRA PROFESSIONAL RODEO</b> 7 pm   Jack Tharp Arena Box: \$25, Adult: \$20, Child (3+): \$10 <b>WESTERN DANCE</b> featuring Lance Michael Cornwell Band   Following rodeo   Free	<b>TUESDAY, JULY 5</b> <b>COUNTRY MUSIC RODEOLA</b> Rec Grove Park   Noon <b>BEEF BARBECUE</b> Rec Grove Park   Noon Adult: \$20 & Child/Senior: \$12 <b>CCPRA PROFESSIONAL RODEO</b> Jack Tharp Arena 4 pm Box: \$25, Adult: \$20, Child (3+): \$10
<b>SATURDAY, JUNE 25</b> <b>SWEETHEART JUDGING</b> Appearance & Pose Noon   Rodeo Grounds	<b>WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29</b> <b>CARNIVAL OPENING</b> <b>FRIDAY, JULY 1</b> <b>SWEETHEART CROWNED</b>		









## Call for Tickets 707-272-1340

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OBITUARY |

## Patty Richardson

Patricia Mary Richardson, 73, aka "Gramma Sunshine," a resident of Willits, California, peacefully passed away in her home on June 14, 2022. She was surrounded by loved ones while she graduated from her body to a better place.

She is survived by her two daughters LeAnn Adkisson and her husband, Alan, and Charlene Slavec; her only two grandchildren; Meagan and Andrué Slavec, and her siblings: Virginia Leis, Leah Lajoie, and David Lajoie.

Patty moved from Sacramento to Willits in 2003, where she retired from driving 18-wheeler trucks; and dedicated her time to many things in the community: Donating countless hours to the Willits Senior Center and driving the senior shuttle; a foster grandparent at the elementary school; and she was part of the "Red Hats" ladies club.

She also worked for IHSS and enjoyed helping others whenever she could.

She had a love for butterflies and wind chimes. She had many kids who called her "Mom" even though not biological – she still loved each and every one of them as if they were her own. She never sugar-coated the truth. And that is what I think she was known best for. Her simple, yet straight to the point kind of respect.

Come celebrate her life with us. Memorial services are being held on June 25, 2022 at 4 pm at Grace Community Church, 25 Hazel Street in Willits. Potluck luncheon to follow.



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DRINK & FOOD PROCEEDS GO TO THE BAND

## Palmer Runberg plays Brooktrails Golf Course July 2

Palmer Anthony Runberg will be playing a free show at Brooktrails Golf course on Saturday, July 2. Born and raised in Willits, Palmer's music has over a million spins on Spotify, iTunes and Apple Music.

All food and drink sales will go to the band, so bring your chair, your appetite, and your thirst for great country music and an evening of fun for all ages.

Festival seating show starts at 6 pm, after the all-day golf tournament.

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Registered Nurse

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Senior Program Manager – Nursing

Senior Public Health Nurse

Social Worker Assistance I/II

Social Worker I/II/III/IV A-D

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and to apply:

[www.governmentjobs.com/careers/  
mendocinoca](http://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/mendocinoca)

EOE

The rest of

**Pittman**

From page 5

becoming the scholarship recipient, and the deal we basically make with the students is that they continue to be part of the family, report back to Ida [Pittman] on how they're doing in school," Scott continued. "The community and family they have grows. They continue to come back and help out with the races. It's kind of a circle that continues on and on."

Sonoma Sheriff's Deputy Andy Cash, this year's race director, explained the route of the amiable 5K run and walk: "We're going to do two laps. We're going to go eastbound on Commercial Street, southbound on Bray Road, west on Valley Road, and north on Lenore."

One hundred and seventy registrants participated on the street. Some ran with determination. Some ambled along, enjoying the comradery of like-minded friends, the beautiful surroundings of Little Lake Valley, the cool morning air. The route took all under the bypass where Andy Cash and CalFire had hung a huge American flag and a banner which embodied Pittman's personality and world view.

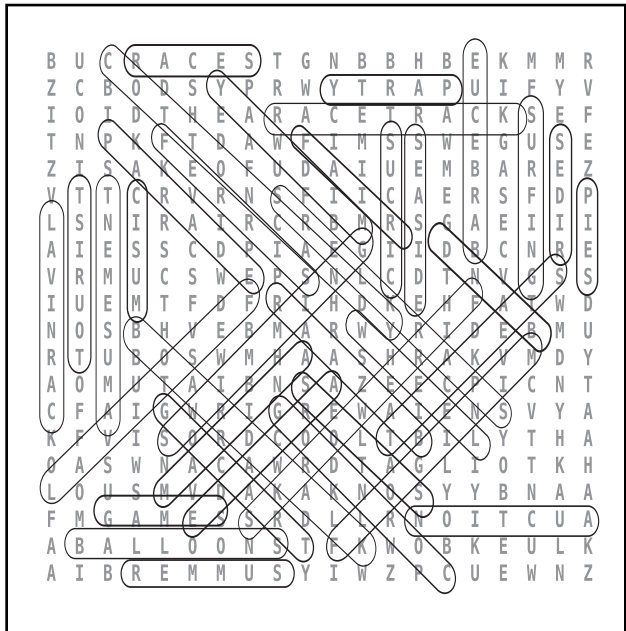
Dogs and babies were very much in evidence on the route. Entire families did the run together, laughing with determination to complete the two laps that made up the race. After the main event, the young kids ran a 1K in a show of cuteness and resolve.

This year's scholarship winner was a bright, attractive and personable young woman, named Grace Fairall, a Ukiah High School Graduate who plans to do two years at Mendocino College prior to transferring to a four-year school to complete her Bachelor of Science in Nursing. She will be a welcome addition to the ever-growing Pittman family of future leaders and community assets.

"This year we've had a complete outpouring and show of support from the community in order to pull this event off," declared Scott. "This is the first time we're doing the race here in Willits [previous races were held at Lake Mendocino] and we couldn't have done it without this team."

It is evident that with this annual event, as well as the bypass bridge named in his honor, that all of the qualities that embodied this young man and his name will not soon be forgotten. Jesse's legacy and focus can be summed up in his determined motto, "Don't run – Charge!"

Prior to this year, the Pittman Foundation has given scholarships to 15 youths, raised \$139,000, and run 10 races. For more information or to make a contribution, visit: [www.jessepittman.org](http://www.jessepittman.org) or <https://communityfound.org/fund/jesse-pittman-scholarship-fund>.



## LEGAL NOTICES

WW388

### Fictitious Business Name Statement

2022-F0316

The following LLC is doing business as Shamrock Artisan Goat Cheese, 24225 Reynolds Highway, Willits CA 95490.

Registered owner: Summer Breeze Ranch, LLC, 24225 Reynolds Highway, Willits CA 95490.

This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on n/a.

FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on June 15, 2022.

/s/ Ana Cox, manager

Publication dates:

June 23, 30, July 7, 14, 2022

### Willits Weekly

**can run your legal notices including fictitious business name statements, foreclosure notices, storage unit auctions, and more. Contact us for more information at willitsweekly@gmail.com**

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### Jesse Pittman

## Memorial 5K Race Winners

**Women's Race Winners:**

**Overall with a time of 21:38:** Rochelle Miller

**12 and under:** Harper Olson, Alana Treskon, Emily Pero

**13 to 19:** Sadie Jones, Payton O'Ferrall, Brooke Jones

**20 to 29:** Rochelle Miller, Hailey Bonx, Taylor Campbell

**30 to 39:** Cassandra Grillary, Rebecca King, Lindy Topolinski

**40 to 49:** Sandra Cruz-Wilson, Colleen O'Ferrall-Jones, Melissa Tolfoya

**50 to 59:** Holly Enzler, Sheri Jensen, Christa Gerig

**60 to 69:** Elizabeth Norman, Carol Jadiker, Ourlie Jordan

**70+:** Shirley Campbell, Ginny Cholez, Polly Ann Johnston

### Men's Race Winners:

**Overall with a time of 17:41:** Paul Achee

**12 and under:** Eli McNerlin, Nicholas Espinoza, Graham Olson

**13 to 19:** Rowen, Travis O'Ferrall, Jackson O'Ferrall

**20 to 29:** Jordan Lamarr, Arturo Gonzales, Jose Vasquez

**30 to 39:** Paul Achee, Elliott Hartley, Nick Giusto

**40 to 49:** Mark Johnson, Kai Kaahaaina, Leonard Sanders

**50 to 59:** Clark Miller, Nick Sandall, Ronnie Desotto

**60 to 69:** Steven Olson, Kenny Mace, John Haschak

**70 +:** Gerry Burney, Teron Chan



*A special plaque was created and donated by MetalFX.*

*Photo by Mathew Caine*

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

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### Help Wanted

North Coast Opportunities Inc.: Recruiting for Mendocino County: This is a new and exciting opportunity to build on NCO's rich history of promoting access to healthy food across Lake and Mendocino Counties. The Project Manager for food policy and promotion will work across existing programs to strengthen local food security. Successful applicants will be strong collaborators who are passionate about equity and community engagement. Bilingual, Bicultural community members are strongly encouraged to apply. \$31.51 - \$38.00 DOQ, 40 hrs /week.

### Help Wanted

Agape Bible Church invites the community to a Parking Lot Sale, with a Hot Dog Stand, Saturday, July 2, from 9 am to 3 pm, at 290 South Lenore Avenue, Willits.

### Help Wanted

Baechtel Creek Medical Clinic is looking for a Nurse Practitioner or Physician Assistant to join our team. Please email your resume or CV to baechtelcreekclinic@gmail.com or drop off in person at 1245 S. Main Street, Willits.

### John Ford Ranch Beef

John Ford Ranch still has the 50 lb. Rancher's Choice Box for \$325.00 and the 25 lb. Hamburger Box for \$150.00. Please contact Debbie Arkelian @ 459-5049.

### Parking Lot Sale

Agape Bible Church invites the community to a Parking Lot Sale, with a Hot Dog Stand, Saturday, July 2, from 9 am to 3 pm, at 290 South Lenore Avenue, Willits.

### RV/Trailer Space for Rent

Space for RV's and Trailers \$425 per month, includes water & garbage. Close to Safeway in Willits. Call Tony (707) 972-4696. See at <http://www.oakvine.net/tip>

### Yard Sale

Yard sale this Saturday, June 25, 10 am to 4 pm. Furniture, vintage clothing, tools, artist's supplies, household items. 24891 Goose Place, Willits.

The rest of

**Microblade**

From page 3

Sessions take 2 to 3 hours and have strict instructions for preparation and aftercare to ensure best results.

First off, clients start with a consult and then have a trial with a make-up application. Microblading is not ideal for every skin type or condition, and Pham has an extensive checklist to ensure clients meet the criteria for ideal results.

String is used to mark measurements made by rulers and alignment of the brows to other features of the face. Sometimes they start off too symmetrical and Pham adjusts manually to make sure they look right. "We want to make sure the brows are sisters, not twins!" laughed Pham.

Once things are set and ready, Pham applies some numbing agent and mixes up the perfect shade from his wide selection of colors from five companies.

The non-electric microblade pen features 18 needles on the end, and Pham gently and carefully draws in individual hairs by scratching the skin's surface to give the most natural visual affect.

A second pass of ink is applied to soak into the skin further and complete the look.

Pham has been offering this service to the community for over four years and has many certifications under his belt to help instill confidence in his clients including: Bloodborne Pathogen Certificate; Microblading Certificate from Master Melle, PMU Artist, Connecticut; Ombre Certificate from Sis & Sis, Ngoc, Ombre Brow Trainer LA; Color Theory Certificate from Tina Davis, 20+ years experience PMU Artist, Toronto, Canada; and Male Microblading Electronic Certificate from the Perfect Frame, Louis Vuitton Guide Approve business, LA.

To schedule with Pham, or to learn more, contact him at 707-456-0342 or stop by City Nails located in the Evergreen Shopping Center at 1726 South Main Street in Willits.

More before and after images and examples of his work can also be seen on Pham's instagram @michebrowguy.

T	R	A	N	C	E	S				E	E	R	I	E
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Photos by Mathew Caine for WCT



At left: Garrett Moore, as an understudy to Ilana Pegan, appears as the wife cuckolded by her husband, Jeff Shipp, in his affair with Liz Dellett. Above: The full cast includes Adam Moore as a hapless officemate; Meg Gardner as a vengeful best friend; Garrett Moore as the understudy to Ilana Pegan, the cuckolded wife; Jeff Shipp as the straying husband; and Liz Dellett as the naughty hottie.

## The Black Comedy “You’ve Got Hate Mail” Opens June 24 at Willits Community Theatre

By Steve Hellman, for WCT

Take a group of young adults thoroughly engaged in torrid promiscuities and salacious dishonesties through their email exchanges and the result is unpredictable fun. The three-day black-comedy frolic begins Friday, June 24 at Willits Community Theatre with the opening of “You’ve Got Hate Mail” by Billy Van Zandt and Jane Milmore.

Directed by Garrett Moore, this off-Broadway hit makes fun of common human foibles as much as it does the unavoidable and consternating presence of the internet in our lives.

Moore says, “It’s about five people stirring the pot through their emails, with illicit affairs, running around behind each other’s backs, accidentally sending the emails to the wrong people, and impersonating one another – it’s controlled chaos.”

Moore says the attraction of the play lies in the content and delivery. “The subject matter is dangerous, but the

substance is so funny – it’s just good, dirty satire.”

About the unusual format of action conveyed through emails read aloud between the characters, he adds, “Their questionable behavior is on full display, as the mistakes are made and vows are bent.”

In a nutshell, high-powered attorney Richard has found himself in the midst of a hot affair with Wanda, the high-octane hottie with quite the sex drive – in words at least. Meanwhile, Richard’s wife, Stephanie, comes off as loving and trusting, but not for long.

For spice, add in Stephanie’s friend Peg, an officemate of Richard’s, who strives at every turn to destroy him for his cheating ways with the naughty hottie. Things

heat up quickly and for ultimate comic effect, stir in George, the officemate with a string of dismal love failures, and all the attraction goes awry in one fashion or another.

Starring in the production are a trio of WCT regulars and two newcomers, with Jeff Shipp as Richard, Liz Dellett as Wanda, Ilana Pegan as Stephanie, and WCT first-timers Meg Gardner as Peg and Adam Moore as George. Shows are Friday, June 24 at 7:30 pm; Saturday, June 25 at 7:30 pm; and Sunday, June 26 at 2 pm.

Tickets are \$15 and available online at: [www.wctperformingartscenter.org](http://www.wctperformingartscenter.org). “You’ve Got Hate Mail” contains adult language and themes.



## Ken Smith April 2, 1951- June 14, 2022

Kenneth Ogden Smith III was born on April 2, 1951 and passed away on June 14, 2022. He was the son of Claudia and Kenneth (Bige) Smith, brother of Mark and Margaret who all preceded him in passing. He is survived by his wife, Rose Smith, and children Seth Smith and Brandi Stahl.

Ken was a lifelong resident of Willits and an heir to the Wheeler family which had roots in timberland businesses going back to the 1860s. Shortly after WWII Ken’s parents came to the area to contribute to the building of the mill in Wolf Creek which resulted in a generation of families dedicated to the conservation and management of the timber resources of Mendocino County. The Wolf Creek families maintain a unique and special connection even today.

As an outstanding student of WHS, Ken went on to the University of California at Berkeley and majored in English. His interest in books and a lifelong learner made for an interesting contrast to the typical logger. Combining his natural abilities and experience in all aspects related to forestry made him a sought-after expert especially in stream restoration.

Ken began his career at the Willits News as a photographer and especially enjoyed the artistic expressions he was able to bring out through creative options in the darkroom way before digital. He soon purchased his oasis about 8 miles out Sherwood Road where he raised sheep and nurtured his homestead into the pride of the county.

After years as a chocker setter for Desmond Ford, Ken teamed with Gene Roediger and Walter Smith and operated their own logging company for many years. Ken finished his career restoring streams alongside Christopher Blencowe and JJ Brunner.

In 1996 Ken met Rose who coaxed him from a rather hermitic lifestyle into exploring the world. They traveled extensively, Ken always on the lookout for sawmills or any pertinent landscapes which revealed the history of the area. Their devotion to each other and their combined family were evident to all. Rose brought style as well to Ken’s life. From the rebuilding of the “cabin” into a craftsman’s showcase, and a wardrobe which occasionally included signatures other than Carhart.

Ken was a charter member of the Roots of Motive Power and spent many a weekend either tromping in the backcountry in search of another “find” or helping restore the original equipment which is the foundation of a now world-class working exhibit of early machines in the county.

Ken will always be remembered as a kind individual who went out of his way to remind his less enlightened friends of the complexities of individuals. He loved old things over new and treated all living things with reverence.

A celebration of his life will be held on June 25th from 2-5 pm at Bruce Burton’s barn, 350 Sherwood Rd., Willits.



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The rest of **Tax** | From page 1

It’s planned to be a general fund tax measure only requiring over 50% voter approval to pass, and is expected to be brought back to the supervisors on July 12 for a board vote.

Supervisors Maureen Mulheren and Dan Gjerde are also planning to meet before that July 12 meeting to try and find money in the county budget to fund the county’s crucial water projects.

The dispute over the water topic got heated at times, with Fourth District Supervisor Gjerde calling the water tax idea “the most absurd proposal ever to befall the people of Mendocino County,” while First District Supervisor Glenn McGourty said he felt “a little betrayed about our water situation” at the end of the meeting, when water was not included in the sales tax plan.

Three of the five supervisors were supportive of having water funding in the tax measure, but Gjerde was adamantly opposed to the proposal and had already launched a public campaign against it.

Third District Supervisor John Haschak was also opposed, and he and Gjerde had submitted a memo prior to the meeting stating their opposition.

“I think what I’ve heard and I think Supervisor Haschak has heard repeatedly is the public does not want to see a forever tax that just goes into the general fund, that’s non-binding with no guarantees,” Gjerde said at the meeting.

Early on Haschak put forward a motion, with Gjerde seconding, for a 1/8 cent sales tax for just the fire districts, but that was eventually defeated with a 3-2 vote.

Haschak and Gjerde both felt that the spending ideas for the water tax revenue were too vague, saying they were “shifting on the fly and shrouded in ambiguity” in their memo.

Haschak also felt they should take into account the financial burden on residents in these difficult times.

“I think that we all want to confront the challenges that we have in the county,” he said. “At the same time, we are in a very difficult economic situation for the county. I think people are feeling the pinch from inflation and all the other factors. And a regressive tax of 3/8 [cents] is not the way to go at this point.”

Gjerde did not hold back in his comments at the meeting, calling the water tax “ridiculous” and “offensive,” and saying that “if it’s attached to a sales tax that goes on the ballot, it’s going down and it deserves to go down in big defeat.”

Gjerde claimed that the Mendocino County Inland Water & Power Commission came up with the water tax idea, and that they have been spending money on polling and political consultants.

He also said that IWPC’s focus on the Potter Valley Water Project meant that much of the county would not benefit from a water sales tax.

“The history of the water tax comes directly from the [IWPC],” said Gjerde. “It has never been intended to help out all corners of Mendocino County. I hope the people who are coming here to speak in favor of a fire tax, address the board and ask the board not to tie a weight around their neck by adding this horrendous, outrageous water tax to what could be a united board of supervisors behind a fire safety tax.”

Mulheren and First District Supervisor McGourty were both staunchly in support of keeping water funding in the sales tax plan, and pushed back on some of the claims from Gjerde.

Mulheren had proposed the 3/8 cent sales tax plan with 60% of the funds going towards fire and 40% to water projects, and she said the way it was structured would ensure the whole county was included.

As she laid out in a memo, the water tax plan would include forming a “Water Technical Advisory Group” which would include eight representatives from various cities and districts. This group would have “oversight of funds” for water projects, and would then give a work plan to the county to be approved by the board each year.

“This work plan should include projects from every area of the county on an annual basis,” she said.

Mulheren also came up with a plan for distributing the fire money after consulting with the county fire chiefs association, where 40% would be distributed evenly to the districts, and 60% based on per capita.

“I’m not sure why it’s being disregarded that I brought this plan forward and that there isn’t any conversation about how to make it stronger,” she said at the meeting.

In her memo, Mulheren talked about some of the projects a county water tax could be spent on.

“It is true that the Potter Valley Project and that ag resource is an imminent water resource concern,” she said. “It’s been known for some decades that it’s likely time to raise Coyote Dam in a way that Mendocino County can retain more of that water resource. But I believe there are other water resource projects throughout the county, including the need for improvements to the water system and storage in [the town of]

Mendocino, storage and desalination in Fort Bragg, storage and needed studies in the North County, especially in Laytonville and Covelo, and storage capacity and groundwater studies in Willits,” she said.

“There is truly a water resource need throughout the county, especially as we go in to year three of the drought,” Mulheren added. “We know that we lack housing in Mendocino County, we can’t add additional housing without water.”

McGourty, who is on the drought ad hoc committee, called the water issue “the biggest existential threat facing Mendocino County.”

He said that water tax money could be put towards a new county water agency, grant writing, and upgrading infrastructure around the county.

“We’re working with technology that’s over 100 years old,” said McGourty. “And to me that’s probably the biggest reason why I moved this forward.”

He also said it was important to get “a place at the table” in the Potter Valley Water Project and other big negotiations coming up, which would require significant legal fees.

“All this is going to happen in the next two years,” he said. “So while it would be nice to take the time to have a really carefully laid-out plan that would come to a vote in 2024, I’m just afraid we’re going to be too late. The emergency is now, it’s not in the future.”

Still, Gjerde pushed back, saying that the money made from water customers, especially agricultural customers, should be enough for these types of projects, and that certain districts were charging several times below the state average for water.

“If they simply went to the state average ... for their wholesale irrigation water,” he said, “two entities by themselves could produce well over \$1 million a year. ... But instead they want to ask everybody in Mendocino County to pay an extra sales tax to bail them out because they don’t want their own customers to pay the going rate.”

While board Chair Ted Williams also was supportive of the water tax idea, he felt there was little chance of it passing with a supervisor campaigning fiercely against it, and he thought the fire tax was too important to increase its risk of failing.

“I go to fire calls still, and I look at people who are wondering if they’ll survive or will their family member survive,” said Williams, who has served as a volunteer fire fighter. “Can they get to definitive care quick enough? It’s one of the most important things we do in this county, or in some cases maybe we don’t do.”

“We don’t fund it, and the model of just expecting people to show up for free and train for free, it’s not going to work, it’s not sustainable,” he continued. “We have fire telling us that, they’ve been telling us for years. ... So if I had to choose between a combined water and fire with one supervisor actively campaigning to make it fail or just fire, I would probably choose fire at this point because at least we check off one critical problem.”

During public comments, many who work in fire districts around the county spoke who agreed that there was a big need for more funding, and most were in favor of the original 3/8 cent tax rather than the 1/8 cent proposal.

“I wanted to make Supervisors Gjerde and Haschak acutely aware that we are in the 11th hour of a crisis here on the south coast,” said Kevin Callahan, treasurer for the South Coast Fire Protection District. “Supervisor Mulheren had an opportunity to do a lot of collaborative work with all of the agencies to come up with a concise and comprehensive plan to address something that is in our forefront right now. The South Coast Fire Protection District is running on fumes at times. We’ve had to take out loans in order to keep responding.

“Our insurance has gone up over 240% in the last year,” he continued. “Our fuel prices as you well know are through the roof. Our crews are aging, our apparatus and infrastructure is aging as are a lot of the volunteer fire departments. And if we don’t do something now, we’re going to pay a price later, and not much later – very soon.”

The countywide Citizens’ Committee for the Library Initiative 2022 and local Friends of the Library groups have just submitted signatures for a potential November 2022 sales tax measure of their own. A few of their supporters spoke during public comments, saying they would consider supporting a county tax measure if it was kept at 1/4 cent or less. That way, with the sunseting Measure B tax, the overall sales tax rate would not rise even if both measures succeeded.

Eventually Gjerde did suggest compromising with the 1/4 cent fire tax, noting that the 90% the fire districts would receive amounts to about the same they would have received in getting 60% of a 3/8 cent tax in the original plan.

Despite the rough discussion, Williams was hopeful that the supervisors would vote in a unified front eventually.

“I imagine the fire tax would have support if the two supervisors are able to bring back a water plan by the 12th,” he said.

The rest of **Increase** | From page 1

Frank Sanderson stepped up to the podium and asked if there were any alternatives to the weekly trash pickup that SWOW could offer.

“We do offer the typical household with a 35-gallon cart a once-a-week pickup,” answered Ward. “There’s the option to have pickup two times per month or once per month with individual customers having larger carts. Also, if people would do a better job recycling, they could get their garbage pickup down to twice or once per month. And, there’s the option to haul their own trash to the SWOW site. There are approximately 200 residents that haul their own trash.”

Roger Patereau of Brooktrails came before the board for a final time and Brooktrails Board President Rick Williams, after checking into all of the aspects of the Patereau household’s water bill, found that all charges were correct, current and up-to-date. Patereau understood that he’d received a forgiveness of half of the 85,000 gallons of water usage and that he was responsible for 42,500 gallons of water usage which cost him \$191.71. He was satisfied with the final outcome, and Williams thanked

The rest of **Baton** | From page 1

crawl spaces that in some cases showed visible signs of rodent infestation, lack of a secure entry point for most campuses, and more.

Hahn noted that the worst problems were noted at Willits High School. He explained that in many cases, when funding was provided for specific projects and large capital repairs, satisfactory maintenance had been performed. However he pointed to a discernible lack of day-to-day maintenance, along with poor communication between administration and maintenance departments.

Hahn recommended more training and reorganization for the maintenance departments, and prioritization of immediate repairs wherever safety and security are involved. All work reports and photographs will be provided to WUSD for eventual use towards a planned Master Facilities plan..

The board then engaged in a general discussion of end-of-school year topics. Most had attended several district school graduations, and salutary remarks were directed at students, teachers, administrators and community members, with many emphasizing the hard work and dedication that made these graduations possible. Superintendent Joe Aldridge gave particular appreciation for the support that he received throughout the 2021-2022 term.

Public comments were requested. Neighbors of Brookside School presented a complaint about a recently and quickly erected building at Brookside Elementary, explaining that it impeded the viewshed from their house and that they considered it an eyesore. They were assured that the complaint would be reviewed and responded to as soon as possible.

Assistant football coach Bryan Mann presented Superintendent Aldridge with a large photograph featuring a Willits Wolverine team number, in recognition of Aldridge’s support for student athletics. A resounding show of gratitude for outgoing Aldridge followed, as well as a big welcome to incoming Superintendent Mark Beebe, whose employment officially begins on July 1, 2022.

Both gentlemen took an opportunity to thank all present, with Aldridge noting everyone’s hard work and assistance during his term.

The board then worked down the

The rest of **Ballots** | From page 1

the June 7 primary election by July 7, 2022.

As of the June 20 update, in the race for Mendocino County Superintendent of Schools, challenger Nicole Glentzer has increased her lead, receiving 4,725 votes (54.91% of the ballots counted so far), with incumbent Michelle Hutchins receiving 3,880 votes (45.09% of ballots counted so far).

Current results in the Third District haven’t changed much in this latest update, with Supervisor John Haschak receiving 1,331 votes, or 72.81% of

him for his perseverance in working the water bill out.

General Manager Tamara Alaniz reported: “The Willits Area Cyclists and the Green Belt Committee have created a beautiful new kiosk sign complete with a map and helpful information. Anyone who would like to check out the sign can see it at the Parcourse.”

Sanderson then addressed the board again and spoke of his great concern regarding the aging tan oaks that are so numerous in the greenbelt and that can produce a threat to property owners as the trees age, decay and fall. Alaniz said that Brooktrails staff can check into individual situations and assess what can be done to alleviate concerns for homeowners.

The board then voted unanimously to approve the Accounts Payable in the amount of \$98,250.65. The board also voted to approve agenda item 2022-03 in support of the SWOW rate increase.

There were some minor concerns regarding the annual audit that was up for discussion. The board determined that pertinent questions about the audit should be formulated and brought to the next meeting, scheduled for Tuesday, June 28, 2022.

list of administrative agenda items. Some of these had been carried over from last month, and elicited some discussion. All were approved, in most cases unanimously.

Board President Robert Chavez led a discussion expressing concern regarding safety and security concerns which have been so much in the news of late. Chavez pointed in particular to the importance of all schools having working address systems and alarm systems, suggesting that the Master Facilities plan should be assembled as soon as possible to this end. He also indicated the necessity of exploring alternative sources of funding to address prioritized issues in order to make students and staff as safe as possible as soon as possible.

A report on the budget for the 2022-23 school year was then presented, with discussion following. Changes expected for the 2022-23 school year were noted, including an increase in enrollment of 10%, with that enrollment gradually flattening through 2025, along with a related budget increase.

A moderate approach will be taken, taking into account the coming changes in enrollment and the possibility of a recession, in which case reserves may have to be tapped. The combination of high inflation, coupled with a possible recession, will also impact contract negotiations, salaries and benefits.

Increases in state funding for additional instructional time and for the associated free meals and related food services will impact future budgets as a result of expanded Pre-K and summer programs, along with expanded funding. A countywide Pre-K plan is being formulated, and the Willits district will use that plan to inform future policy.

The issue of appropriate staffing for language acquisition and reading levels was raised. Further discussion was deemed to be needed, and this topic will likely be taken up at the next school board meeting.

Trimesters will be adopted once again for the coming school year, with future discussion regarding a potential change to this annual policy.

The June 15 meeting ended with a resounding show of gratitude for outgoing Supervisor Aldridge and a heartfelt welcome to incoming Superintendent Beebe. The meeting was adjourned at 9 pm.

1,828 Third District ballots counted so far. Challenger Clay Romero has received 497 votes, or 27.19%.

Mendocino County Sheriff Matt Kendall has received 6,663 votes as of the June 20 update, that’s 88.84% of ballots counted, with write-in candidate Trent James receiving 837 votes, or 11.16%.

Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder Bartolomie, Auditor-Controller / Treasurer-Tax Collector Chamise Cubbison, and District Attorney David Eyster were all reelected unopposed.



# Giants Among Us

Willits may have the most redwoods of any town in Mendocino County

By Debbie Boone Harry

Many know the City of Willits has been dubbed, "Gateway to the Redwoods," but few realize our small town is also home to numerous venerable giants. Along Main Street and all around our city and neighborhoods, these magnificent trees tower skyward, offering views of grand beauty in every direction.

Vintage homes host groves of stately redwoods within their picket fences. Huge behemoths dwarf houses and

rise up through patio decks.

City parks, offices and medical centers serve our community beneath the towering, ancient trees.

Just north of the city limits, next to busy Highway 101, a lone redwood sentinel, among the oaks, keeps watch over the Little Lake wetlands.

Willits is known as the Gateway to the Redwoods, but the city may deserve the honor of being the home of the most redwoods of all the towns in Mendocino County.



Above, from left: A giant redwood rising up through a Main Street patio deck. Three redwood friends crowded together. Beautiful redwoods in the front yard. Two giants straddle a Willits driveway.

At far left: A Main Street redwood with the Willits Frontier Days lamppost signs.

At left: A lone redwood sentinel keeping watch over the wetlands.

Photos by Debbie Boone Harry

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