Willits Weekly | Edition 83 | July 13, 2023

REALESTATE SECTION





Fabulous flowers

Budget-friendly ways to freshen up your home's exterior

As any homeowner knows, renovation projects tend to cost a lot of money. The average cost of a home renovation is difficult to gauge, as such endeavors run the gamut from complex projects like a kitchen overhaul to simpler ones like painting a room inside a home. Indeed, the National Association of the Remodeling Industry notes that scope is what drives the cost of a renovation project.

Though there might not be an 'average cost' of a renovation project, homeowners can expect to spend thousands of dollars on projects that are not very small in scale. Navigating such an expense at a time when inflation remains high might be difficult for some homeowners looking to maintain the appearance of their home exteriors. However, there are many budget-friendly ways homeowners can tend to the exterior of their properties.

Power washing: Power washing won't break the bank but it can revive the look of a home. Power washing removes dirt and grime from the siding of a home and a power washing can be used to clean porches, walkways and patios as well. Hardware chains or locally owned hardware stores typically rent power washers, but homeowners who don't want to do it themselves can hire a professional for a few hundred dollars, if not less. Power washing after winter can be a good idea, as the elements can take a toll on a home's exterior. A good power washing before spring and summer entertaining season can thus give a home a fresh, clean look without breaking the bank.

Straw flowers, above, and zinnias, at right, are bright pretty additions to your home or garden.

> Photos by Maureen Jennison





Furnished front porch: A furnished front porch can serve as a welcome sign to neighbors and provide a great place to relax with a morning cup of coffee and a good book. Homeowners with a small porch won't need to bust their budgets to upgrade their front porch furnishings. Some small chairs with bright cushions, a small table and a rug underfoot can revamp an entryway at low cost.

Window box installation: Installing window box planters is another cost-effective way to brighten up a homeÕs exterior. Homeowners can hang window boxes outside windows on the front of their homes and then fill them with brightly colored flowers to add an inviting pop of color to their home exteriors. The experts at Better Homes & Gardens urge homeowners to take weight into consideration before buying window planters. Keep in mind that soil and developed plants can be heavy, so look for a sturdy box as well as one that has drainage holes.

Replace hardware: Another simple way to freshen up a stale exterior is to replace hardware. Door knobs, knockers, house numbers, and even the mailbox can appear dated after a while. Replacing these items is inexpensive and quick but can have a profound impact on how the exterior of a home appears to residents and visitors.

Exterior renovations need not break the bank. Various simple and inexpensive tweaks can quickly revitalize the exterior of a home.



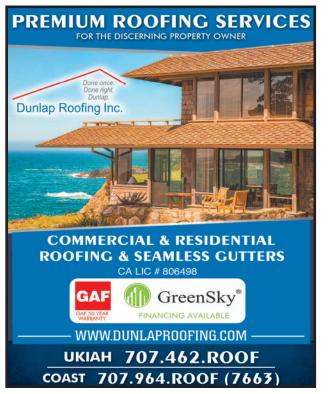
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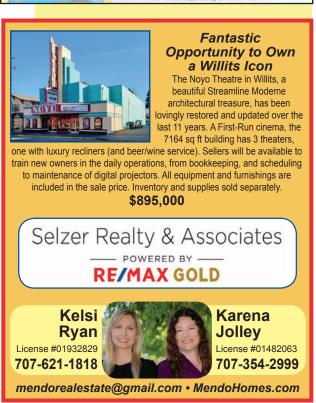












Graphic courtesy of United Policyholders

"I could give all to Time except - except what I myself have held. But why declare

the things forbidden that while the Customs slept I have crossed to Safety with? For I am There

and what I would not part with I have kept."

Robert Frost

I recall with fondness first moving to Willits. Well, the forest

outside of town actually. I was thinking in a kind of wistful "days gone by" way of that little cabin in the woods we first lived in half a lifetime ago. No electricity, no indoor toilet, Kerosene lamps, a woodstove as our only heat, the sweet summer air as the redwood forest that surrounded us heated up. The house was so quiet that I can remember hearing the snowflakes falling on the plastic sheeting covering our front porch as we sat reading with the dogs curled up between us.

A dream finally achieved. When I was a kid growing up in a small town next to the Columbia River, we would often vacation on Mt. Hood at my aunt and uncle's cabin. My uncle would wind the | Bill Barksdale pendulum clock over the fireplace first thing every | Columnist time we first arrived. Long ago I bought an antique pendulum clock so I could hear that reassuring steady ticking that hypnotically soothed the time away.

We lived in our little Willits cabin for 10 years! I can hardly

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the solitude of that place. I wish I could recapture that peace at times, but time is that elusive thing that passes quickly into memories. It's all a part of me. Experiences become a part of one somehow. Change, change, change

I lived my first 20 "adult years" in New York City and San Francisco. From sleepy small-town Oregon to the biggest of congested cities. I had never seen a homeless person. Never had to literally run for my life being chased by a gang. Never had

the world's great original works of art – of all kinds - available to me every day. I have no desire to live in a big city anymore, but am grateful that I did. I've spent nearly half of my long life here in Willits and

Ironically, I worked harder and longer hours after moving here than I ever did in a big city. wondered how my education in so many areas of interest would come together – or if they would ever come together in a meaningful way. Trained to be a professional actor, I also had strong interests and lots of classes in business and eventually business law. Art and music, too. It all came together in my "later in life" career as a real estate agent.

Acting taught me how to listen to others, how to empathize better and respond authentically. A good actor's most important skill is to learn to listen. A good agent has to learn to put their self into someone else's life, to understand what they are really saying and wanting. People, I learned, often believe it. Seems like a lifetime ago or only yesterday. There don't know how to describe what they really want. The agent

has to listen and understand how to best be of service.

"Oh, you sell houses" people would often say to me, but that's not correct. I sold a service. I was a helper to guide others as they made one of the most important decisions of their lives – buying or selling a house to become a home - or moving on to a new experience. My dad once told me, "You don't sell a house. You sell a home." That was such a wise and insightful piece of advice.

As much as the building and land, there is the community - the place. Willits is my home. I had my big-city experience. Much of it good and even wonderful. I would not part with those experiences. Don't want to go back in time either. Each experience is a part of what makes a person whole. Some of the lessons are difficult. That's a lesson I have learned – with more to come no doubt. Some were wonderful and easier to appreciate.

Mr. Frost says in his poetic way: "But why declare the things forbidden that while the Customs slept I have crossed to Safety with?" Some people and organizations try to tell us that we are somehow not good enough if they

are moments when I think of the simplicity of those years and consider aspects of our lives "forbidden." Some purposely hurt others, not a good thing. Other aspects of our lives are just – us / me. We are, after all, each unique, different. What a boring world it would be if we were all the same – not to mention where would the inventiveness and discoveries of science, art and living itself be without diversity?

> "Custom" is sometimes overrated. Customs can become stale and even toxic. One size does not fit all. Often "custom" is an excuse for pushy pigs to tell others how to live their lives. We are creative beings for a reason. Creativity and individuality is what makes the world go round.

> There is much about myself which I have learned from the experience of living that I would not part with. I'm grateful to be me. Other times not happy, so I learn how to do "it" differently. We live and learn. Different points of view can make us all richer.

> It's kind of like cleaning house. Some ways of behaving served me well for a time, but perhaps not so much now, so I change. Keep what's working well and dump what's not. Same thing with "stuff." I'm learning to keep going through the stuff I've collected over the years and finding some of it no longer relevant to my life. Not always easy to let go of but once I do, I feel lighter. I'm sure my relatives will be glad not to have to dump my accumulations when I'm gone.

> Moving is a great time to let go of the old collections. There are people who can use what I / we no longer find useful. Clutter and "needed" are two different things. An ongoing process. One doesn't even have to move to lighten the load.

> Living in the cabin for 10 years taught me to live simply – to discover what I needed, and what I didn't. How many of us have packed too much for a trip? I'm learning to pack a lot lighter when traveling. I never check a bag when flying, just take what I can carry on. Hikers and campers learn quickly, especially if they're carrying their stuff.

> Life is a process of sorting and lightening the load – both physically and mentally / emotionally. Letting go is essential often to moving on. As a real estate agent, I saw over and over again the burden of collecting too much. Nature is constantly letting go and recycling. A tree for instance drops its leaves when the time comes and those leaves become the compost that feeds and protects its roots and conserves the water needed for life.

> Emotional letting go is often a challenging process. We tend to collect emotional garbage and are often encouraged to do so through intimidation and fear to serve someone else's wants. Sometimes it's "poverty mentality," thinking that holding on to what no longer serves us is somehow necessary, when in reality it's just a heavy burden. Reevaluating, letting go, changing - life

"What I would not part with," "what I have held" are often the happy memories even when a loved one is no longer here; those memories can become gratitude. Places I've been, experiences I've had – sometimes even difficult ones – I find I'm grateful for often. Some memories are scars and wounds that changed us. "Learning lessons" my friend Evelyn Krenz called them. It's how one becomes "me." I keep trying to become a better me, a me I feel good about. That's a lifelong process - it's called "living"

Bill Barksdale was inducted into the 2016 Realtor® Hall of Fame, and served as Chair of the County of Mendocino

Assessment Appeals Board settling property tax disputes between the County Assessor & citizens and businesses. DRE# 01106662, Coldwell Banker Mendo Realty Inc. Read more of Bill's columns on his blog at www.bbarksdale.com. /0/-489-2232

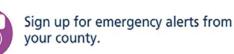


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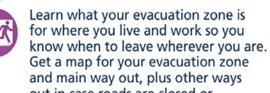
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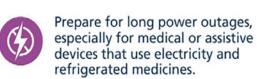




Learn what your evacuation zone is



out in case roads are closed or conditions change. Plan rides to get loved ones to safety. Decide where you will meet to find each other. Keep enough gas in your



vehicle to evacuate.

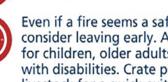
Keep phones, devices, and backup batteries charged. Have a battery-powered radio for emergency updates.

Have a Go Bag packed and other items ready to grab, especially things for babies, older adults, and any pets.

If possible, make plans to stay with friends or family should you have

Pay attention to an Evacuation Warning. This means there is a serious threat. Get ready or go now if people or animals need time.

Stay alert and keep informed by checking reliable sources of information.



Even if a fire seems a safe distance away, consider leaving early. Allow extra time for children, older adults, and people with disabilities. Crate pets and load livestock for a quick exit.

When there is smoke, stay indoors as



Go to safety immediately when officials say you must leave. An Evacuation Order means you must leave - your life is in danger.

Check with neighbors to ask for, or offer, a ride.

Dial 2-1-1 if you need to find exit routes and safe shelter. Know that public disaster shelters are free and no one can ask you for ID. But some may better serve people with disabilities or pets.

If trapped by fire, call 9-1-1 and give your location. Turn on lights at home to help rescuers find you or headlights and emergency flashers if in your car. Be aware conditions may mean that help may not come quickly or may not come at all if it is impossible to reach you.

Get first aid quickly for anyone with injuries. Help children and older adults get to safety.





Stay out of fire zones until officials say it is safe to return. If you can't go home, dial 2-1-1 to find free and safe shelter.



Stay away from burned areas for your health and safety. If it rains, watch for mudslides in burn areas.



Beware of falling trees and damaged structures. Watch for hidden embers in trees and structures and for "hot spots" on the ground. If you can return home, carefully check anywhere in and around your home that was exposed to embers.



Don't go near ash and debris from structures that have burned. It can include toxic and hazardous materials.



Sign right-of-entry papers for your local government so cleanup crews can remove debris from your property.



Visit UP's new WRAP Resource Center to learn what This "Tip of the Month" column is courtesy of United

you can do and how to access help in your county (https:// Policyholders, a non-profit 501(c)(3) whose mission is to

uphelp.org/preparedness/wrap-resource-center/wrap- be a trustworthy and useful information resource and a

mendocino-county). "WRAP" stands for Wildfire Risk respected voice for consumers of all types of insurance in

Reduction & Asset Protection – our initiative aimed at all 50 states. To learn more, visit www.uphelp.org.

Visit an available local assistance center to get help and recovery services. All

Wildfire season is here – get prepared!

Posted by United Policyholders

Summertime and the living is easy ... except that wildfire season's starting, and Farmers Insurance just announced they're limiting new home policies they will issue in California. This follows news earlier this year that State Farm and Allstate aren't selling new policies for California

UP has been busier than ever getting useful tips out to residents of wildfire-vulnerable regions on reducing risk, being prepared, and keeping assets insured. The new normal for many households is having to shop and pay more attention (and money) for property insurance. UP is staying on top of the challenging marketplace and offering new guidance to help homeowners make do.

We are tapping leading experts for our free shopping help webinars, speaking up for consumers in the media (including the NY Times, Wall Street Journal and Washington Post), coordinating with the CA Department of Insurance to brief agents and brokers, and participating in community events to give people the straight scoop and up-do-date guidance.

Every resident of a brush-heavy suburban or rural area should be pro-actively reducing wildfire risk and participating in community risk reduction efforts. This is critical to getting the insurance situation under control.

Chana Eisenstein, DVM Celina Borucki-Gibson, DVM "Dr. BG" East Hill Veterinary Clinic

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More than **50 years** of experience in

real estate, property management,

regional home insurance crisis and getting insurers to reward mitigation through discounts, renewals, and new policy sales. We're grateful to the Governor's **COLDWELL BANKER** Office of Emergency Services for helping fund

this resource, and to the Rose Foundation for helping us reach vulnerable populations. Now is the time to pitch

helping property owners

deal with California's

in. Your community should strive to be Firewise and have a Fire Safe Council. You and your neighbors need to be in a preparedness state of mind. Let's do this!



arden and plenty of room fo RV parking too. PRESENTED AT: \$239,000 This well built 3 bedroom 2.5 lovingly cared for. Hardwood and bamboo flooring, vaulted ceilings, pantry and sunken

acuzzi tub. Attached 2 car garage offers easy access to PRESENTED AT: \$425,000 352+/- acres, two cabins cur rently in use and two bonus structures that are incomple

Main cabin features a guest

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Nicely converted I bedroom

bath shipping container home with solar and lots of storage

on 2.28 acres close to town End of road privacy, flat parce

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story home. Framed archway

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itchen, living-room, dining area, ne bedroom and one full bath Il located downstairs 2 car

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RESENTED AT: \$374.500

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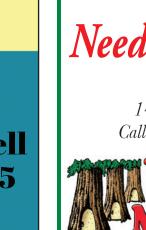
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COLUMN | How's the Market?

How to reduce the stress of home buying

While it can be exciting to buy a home, it can also be stressful. For most people, this is the single biggest purchase they will ever make. The only way to completely eliminate stress is to skip the buying

process altogether, but if you are committed, here are some tips to make the experience go more smoothly.

Prepare your finances

Most of us cannot buy a home without a loan, so step one on the home-buying journey is to make sure your credit is in good shape. To see where you stand, you can check your credit score at www.creditkarma.com. The

information on Credit Karma is not exactly what a lender will see, but it's close. Credit Karma also gives sound advice on how to improve your score, with tips like paying off any credit card balances you can, assuring all bill payments are on time, and removing

any inaccurate derogatory remarks on your credit report.

Just because you can qualify for a loan, doesn't mean you should borrow the

maximum available. Qualifying for a loan isn't the same as being able to afford it. It's wise to consider all the costs associated with home ownership.

addition to monthly mortgage payments, you'll need to pay property taxes, homeowner's insurance, and any maintenance or repairs that pop up (and they will). You will also be on the hook for utilities, water bills, internet, and other expenses a landlord may have

been paying when you were a renter. Make sure you are comfortable with all of this.

Once you decide on the price range you can manage, you'll need to save enough cash for the down payment and closing costs. If you're buying a house that needs immediate repairs or remodeling, you'll need cash for that as well.

Gather documentation

To get a loan, you'll need to assure lenders that you'll pay it back, and that means providing plenty of documentation. To minimize stress, don't wait to gather all the documents that demonstrate how much you have and how much you owe. Lenders will ask for copies of your tax returns, paystubs, car payments, credit card bills, alimony / child support, and more.

Note: only verifiable income can help you get a loan. Making money on the side by helping your brother-in-law on the weekends may allow you to save some cash, but it won't help you qualify for a loan (unless your brother-in-law provides you with 1099 tax form).

Communicate openly with your real estate agent

To find a house in your price range that meets your needs, your real estate agent will need to understand the features you want versus the features you must have. If you're not clear, spend some time making a list. Once you have that list, don't keep it

may stand firm on the number of bedrooms. On the other hand, you may have a first choice for a school, but be OK with your second choice, too. This type of information may open up a whole new neighborhood for your real estate agent to consider.

Delegate

Buying a home should include several detailed inspections. I highly recommend hiring experts so you know what you're getting into. Do not assume you can walk around a property with a flashlight and identify problems, even if you are pretty handy when it comes to home repair.

Hire people who can identify issues and recommend necessary remedial work before you close escrow, including pest and fungus, septic, well, roof, and home inspections. Not only will a professional do it in less time, but they are more likely to catch things you'll overlook, such as the polarity of a plug or sponginess around the toilet concealing dry rot.

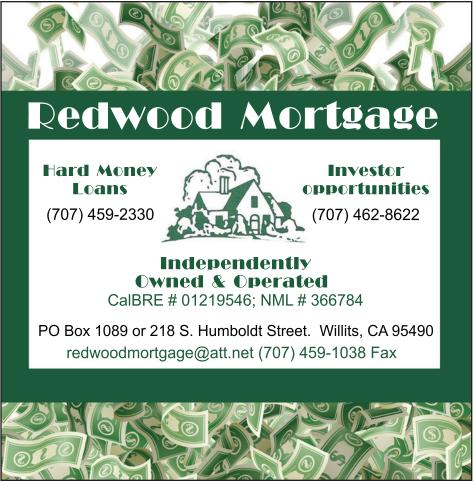
Keep the big picture in mind

Because so many factors influence the decision to buy a house, do not be surprised when you are forced to choose between two desired features. You may need to give up a short commute for a bigger property. Do you want 50 acres on Sherwood Road

and a longer drive to work or a house in town with no commute? Consider what matters most and go with that.

If you have questions about real estate or property management, contact me rselzer@selzerrealty. com. If you have ideas for this column, let me know. (If I use your suggestion in a column, I'll send you a \$25 gift card to Loose Caboose!) If you'd like to read previous articles, visit https://selzerrealtv.com and click on "How's the Market?"

Richard Selzer is a real estate broker who has been in the business for more than 45 years.



Richard Selzer

Columnist





203+/- Acres Park Like Property in Branscomb

Many building sites, with paved road access. Power and phone is on the property. Also beautiful redwood trees, fir and oaks roughout the parcel. There i 3/4 of a mile of the Eel River running through the

middle of this property. Approximately 96 acres of the land is level. There is an old rustic barn/shop with power. Possible subdivision of 37+/- acres with RR5 zoning. \$980,000



22+/- Acres Beautiful Level Land Located 15 minutes west of Laytonville, with good access off of the Branscomb Road. There are meadows with lovely building home sites, redwood trees, power through the property and borders the Eel River. Multiple use zoning \$250,000





Stunningly Beautiful Home and Country **Property**

This is a +/- 2,100 sq. ft. 3 bedroom, 2 bath custom home and a +/- 528 sq. ft. custom cottage on 5.15 +/- acres minutes from the heart of downtown Willits. Quality custom detail throughout these lovely homes. There is hickory flooring, granite counters in the kitchen and master bath, custom cabinets, stainless appliances, gorgeous landscaping for entertaining and a 1,200 sq. ft. metal shop. There are many, many more great amenities. This property is a must see. \$989,000



3.3+/- Level Acres

Great opportunity for a commercial business or investment property. There is a 1,700+/- sq. ft. office building with 4 separate offices and 2,646+/- storage attached. The metal shop is 4,608+/-sq. ft. with drive thru bays and roll up doors. Approximately 3 acres are paved. There is a new septic system and city water.
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For information or an appointment to view please call:

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15713 Hearst Willits Rd. - \$695,000 • 2 Bedrooms

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