

Bell Fire contained at 43 acres

Jennifer Poole
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The 43-acre Bell Fire north of Laytonville was 100 percent contained as of Wednesday morning, CalFire announced in its July 20 update.

The Bell Fire, located about 6 miles up Bell Springs Road, south of Blue Rock Ranch, started at 4:36 pm on Sunday, July 17.

Initial reports were that the vegetation fire threatened multiple structures, and air resources were immediately dispatched. The fire grew to about 20 acres by 5 pm, with a

Read the rest of **Fire**
Over on page 4

COMMET raids illegal pot grows

By Lt. Andrew Porter, for MCSO

During the week of July 11 -15, 2022, the County of Mendocino Marijuana Enforcement Team, COMMET, served several search warrants on multiple illegal cannabis cultivation sites in Mendocino County.

According to MCSO's COMMET Weekly Enforcement Recap, sites included in last week's action were:

- 30000 block of Shimmins Ridge Road in Willits
- 50000 block of Barnes Lane in Covelo
- Area near Hargus Road and North Highway 101 in Laytonville
- 50000 block of North Highway 101 in Laytonville

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

No new COVID deaths in Willits

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On Friday, July 14, state of California COVID statistics reported 3 additional deaths attributed to COVID in Mendocino County, a 2.3% increase, bringing the number up to 131. Another additional Mendocino County death, death number 128, had been posted the week before.

But according to a July 20 press release from Mendocino County Public Health, those deaths, as well as death number 127, actually were spread out over May and June. None of the deaths were in Willits or the Third District area.

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

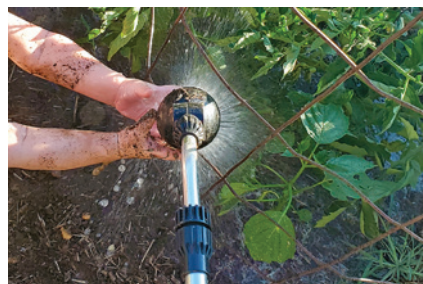


Photos by
Maureen
Jennison

How does your garden grow?

Though there is a distinct lack of silver bells and cockleshells in this garden, there is plenty of exciting things all growing in a row. At top, from left: Raspberries, tomatoes and lemon cucumbers are all getting readier and readier to pick. Above: Honeybees enjoy harvesting nectar from the very happy lavender. At right: A "mystery zucchini" donated by Mendocino College to the Commonwealth Garden's plant sale turns out to maybe be some sort of squash with tendrils and growing as a vine? (Does anyone know what this is?) The volunteer dill from a plant from over five years ago keeps making an appearance, too. Below, from left: The herb garden, including sage, thyme, rosemary and an already-to-seed basil. Zucchini flowers have done their job with the veggie growing behind. Little hands enjoy the mud and then the clean water from the hose during the garden's evening watering.

— Maureen Jennison



Happy Hydrangea

Ruth Gibson's hydrangea bushes are a sight to behold this year, as the deep purple and light blue blooms are mostly the size of dinner plates, bending the branches of the giant bushes outside her Willits home.

"I have had these hydrangea bushes since the mid-1990s," explained Gibson. "They were given to me by friends through the years and really seem to love where they are planted, because they get plenty of light but very little direct sun."



photos by
Maureen
Jennison

Gibson noted the bushes do love lots of water and do usually "grow beautifully and produce numerous blossoms ... unless I cut them back too far in the fall! Last year I was careful not to cut them back too far, thus many blossoms this year."

— Maureen Jennison



BOS sends water ordinance to planning commission

Forrest Glyer
Reporter
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Water issues were at the forefront of the July 12 Mendocino County Board of Supervisors meeting, and the board moved an ordinance forward to the planning commission to potentially restrict water hauling and extraction with a 4-1 vote.

The water hauling/extraction restriction ordinance has been talked about by the board for many months, and the draft

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

Library initiative a go for November ballot

Submitted by the Citizens Committee for the Library

All of the signatures supporting the Citizens Committee for the Library initiative have been counted, and the initiative has been certified to be on the November ballot as Measure O.

This is exciting news for the five libraries in Willits, Fort Bragg, Ukiah, Point Arena, and Covelo, the bookmobile, and a sixth library starting up in Laytonville. The county libraries receive 1/8 cent sales tax now, and the initiative asks for a 1/8 cent sales tax increase with all of

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

Employee health insurance a concern at Brooktrails board

Barbara O'Reardon
Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

At the start of the Brooktrails Township Board of Directors July 12 meeting last week, President Rick Williams noted that District Counsel Chris Neary was out sick and Director Tony Orth had an excused absence. He then asked if any directors had anything to report.

Director Tina Tyer O'Shea shared: "I have been invited to participate in a technical advisory group by the Mendocino Council of Governments, MCOG.

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

What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from our readers

Thank you

To the Editor:

Good news! The Mendocino County Library Initiative has made it onto the November ballot. Thanks to the overwhelming support in Willits and throughout the county, we gathered over 1,500 names here in Willits, with almost 4,500 names collected in the county, 1,000 more than we needed.

I want to thank shoppers and the stores we stood out in front of: Mariposa Market, Rite-Aid, the Farmers Market, Northspur Brewing Co., and parents and teachers in our local public and charter schools, Service Employees International Union members, and parents and staff at Imagination Station.

All of our Willits City Council members signed the petition, which calls for permanent funding for our whole Mendocino County library system, at a mere .025% (that's one quarter, 25 cents, for every \$100 you spend). And the \$ is earmarked for library use only.

Save the date: Initiative WhooHa at Barra Winery Saturday, September 10.

Melinda Clarke, Friends of the Willits Library, Citizens Committee for the Library, Willits

PEO Garage Sale, July 23

The Philanthropic Education Organization, PEO, has scheduled a Garage Sale for Saturday, July 23, from 8:30 am to noon at 63 Northbrook Way (across the street from Northbrook Health Care Center.)

The purpose of the sale is to raise funds for the scholarship program that the PEO provides for local young women graduating from high school.

Mendo Abortion Rights Collective meeting, July 22


Join us for the next meeting of the Mendocino County Community Organizing for Abortion Rights Collective, Friday, July 22, from 6 to 9 pm, at Ridgewood Ranch Community Center, 16200 Highway 101, Willits.

We're forming a collective for abortion advocacy and a doula project that can serve folks locally and afar. Volunteers, and community funding, will be essential for building this local network of support.

The meeting includes an indoors showing of "Ask for Jane," a true story about the Jane Collective, a Chicago clandestine abortion service pre-Rose from 1966-1973.

Donations are welcome.


– Submitted by the Mendo Abortion Rights Collective



The Rules: LETTERS

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

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



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Darcie Antle appointed CEO of Mendocino County

Posted by Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors Chair Ted Williams announced July 12 that the board has appointed Interim Chief Executive Officer Darcie Antle as the new CEO. The appointment will be pursuant to a four-year contract effective July 12, 2022.

Antle served as interim CEO for Mendocino County from March 20, 2022 to July 11, 2022. Previously, Antle served as the assistant CEO from May 30, 2021 to March 19, 2022. Antle is also currently the Mendocino County Disaster Recovery finance director and has created a fiscal unit within the Executive Office to support departments and divisions with financial reporting and budgeting.

Second District Supervisor Mo Mulheren stated: "Darcie is broadly supported across our community. She has the experience, dedication, and leadership skills to help build strong relationships internally and with our partnering agencies."

Third District Supervisor John Haschak stated: "Ms. Antle is a financial expert, open communicator, and dedicated to making Mendocino County a better place for all of us. She works well with people, is widely respected, and has the best interests of our county at heart."

Board Chair Williams stated: "Darcie loves Mendocino County and has demonstrated her dedication during challenging times. I'm thankful for her partnership and eagerness to rethink county operations. She's the right fit for chief executive today."

"I have lived in Mendocino County for over 30 years, CEO Antle said, regarding her appointment. "During these years I have gathered experiences and knowledge that will serve me well in my effort to make Mendocino County a better place for all county residents regardless of socio-economic status."

"My experience in education, health care, county finances and communications will allow me to serve Mendocino well as the CEO," she continued. "This is possible only through the direction of our board of supervisors and with the help of all departments and divisions working together."

"I pledge to always be open in communication, always dedicate my best efforts, and always put Mendocino County's welfare first. Mendocino County is my home."

Adventist and Blue Cross agree to 2-week contract extension

Submitted by Adventist Health Mendocino County

July 18 – Adventist Health in Mendocino County, including AH Howard Memorial, AH Mendocino Coast and AH Ukiah Valley, and Anthem Blue Cross of California have mutually agreed to a two-week extension of their contract, which was due to expire on July 18. The extension will give them time to reach a potential agreement. The new termination date is August 1, 2022.

"We are optimistic that we will make significant progress to negotiate a reasonable rate, allowing us to keep care local for our valued Anthem patients in the communities we serve," says Judson Howe, president for Adventist Health in Mendocino County.

Over the past five months, Adventist Health has been negotiating in good faith, and we were unable to reach an agreement. Anthem Blue Cross has been paying Adventist Health at substantially lower rates than other similar payers. This is not sustainable in the long term. We are proposing an increase to close the gap between what it is paid by Anthem and similar insurance companies.

Anthem Blue Cross has earned record profits, and they've recently raised members' premiums. Yet they continue to pay Adventist Health significantly less than other hospital systems. Anthem is one of Adventist Health's lowest-paying health plans, and we can't continue to care for their patients at the rates they are paying us.

Like health systems nationwide, Adventist Health has suffered financially during the multi-year COVID-19 pandemic because of a significant jump exceeding 15% in labor costs and substantially higher supply costs. We have continued to maintain our commitment to care for residents in each community in which we serve. Keeping care local and safe for those who need it most has been our number-one priority throughout this challenging time.

"It is our sincere hope that we reach an agreement with Anthem Blue Cross," said Howe. "We realize this can be a stressful time for Anthem members. As negotiations progress during this extension, we will continue to stand for our patients who deserve high-quality care close to home in our communities. We are committed to keeping you informed so we can work through this together as a community."

Anthem Blue Cross members with questions about receiving care at AH Howard Memorial, AH Mendocino Coast or AH Ukiah Valley may call 1-707-463-7600 or check www.adventisthealth.org/keepcarelocal.

Editor's Note: The statement below was posted by Adventist Health on Facebook on July 15.

An open letter to the community from Judson Howe, president for Adventist Health in Mendocino County

In our continued commitment to our community, we believe it is important to be transparent and walk together as a community, not only during the good times but also during the challenging times. Our ongoing negotiations with Anthem Blue Cross are one of those more challenging times for our local hospitals. Yet it is

during those challenging times that we are reminded that we truly are stronger together. That's why we remain committed to doing our part to reach a reasonable agreement that protects the sustainability of our hospitals and the quality of care we provide to our friends and neighbors every day.

As you know, just like many healthcare organizations and businesses nationwide, we have suffered financial losses during the pandemic while our labor and supply costs have gone up significantly. On the other hand, Anthem has enjoyed record profits (\$32 billion in 2021 alone), while increasing premiums for members, and continuing to pay our hospitals significantly less than other hospitals.

We know how much our community depends on us for care. Our priority is keeping health care local, by keeping our hospitals thriving, which in turn provides local jobs and keeps our community thriving. We rely on fair contracts with health insurance companies like Anthem, which allow us to make these vital investments in our people and facilities to help us ensure that we can serve our community now and for generations to come.

For now, the important thing to know is that nothing changes for you until after July 18 [updated deadline: August 1]. You can and should continue visiting our AH hospitals and clinics for your healthcare needs. If we cannot reach an agreement by [August 1, 2022], we will be considered out of network with Anthem.

However, patients who are currently undergoing treatment may be covered for a limited time through Continuity of Care benefit (even after August 1), which ensures that care is not delayed or disrupted if an agreement between a health plan and provider is terminated.

This benefit is a state law, and Anthem Blue Cross, like all health plans, must abide by the requirements. Reach out to your health plan to find out if you qualify for Continuity of Care services. For more information about Continuity of Care, please visit www.dmhcc.ca.gov/HealthCareinCalifornia/YourHealthCareRights/ContinuityofCare.aspx

We regret the stress that this process has caused our community. We have been in negotiations for months, and our intent was to complete this process without having to alarm our community. We hope that Anthem Blue Cross will recognize the critical importance of keeping quality care locally, provided by the people you know and trust. We hope you will stand with us in asking for what is fair for our patients and our community, who have deep, long-standing relationships with our healthcare team.

We are committed to keeping you informed and helping you navigate these challenging times. Please reach out to our team at any time if you have questions or concerns. You can also reach out to your provider, call our hotline at 855-479-5196, or visit our website at www.adventisthealth.org/blog/2022/june/anthem-blue-cross-negotiations-for-updates.

Thank you for your continued trust and support.



Above, from left: A worker on the road stripper helps guide the vehicle. In preparation, not only is the old pavement stripped, but so are several inches of dirt. The Chinese pistache trees will add color and much-needed shade to Blosser Lane. Below: These structures jutting out are designed to help slow the traffic near the school. Below, right: This road-stripping machine is making its first pass.



Road Work

Blosser Lane receives much-needed improvements, including new pavement, sidewalks, crosswalks, and trees

Sometimes progress is temporarily inconvenient but patience brings improvements and increased safety. The road closure of a major portion of Blosser Lane is temporary "between the intersection with Crest Drive and the railroad tracks, starting July 18 at 6 am and ending the evening of Tuesday, July 19," – later extended through July 20 – stated the communication from the Willits Department of Public Works.

Mathew Caine
Features Writer
mathew@willitsweekly.com

"This work consists of removing the top 17 inches of existing road surface, then placement of fabric and new base over the subgrade before paving," it continued.

Additionally, intermittent closures will occur through July 29 during the reconstruction, which will be performed by local contractor Bouthillier Construction, having won the nearly \$1,000,000 contract. Garman Construction is providing the trucks and SHN Engineering is consulting on the project along with the Willits Public Works Department.

"We're trying to fix this street," explained Jeremy Ronco, project manager with the Willits Public Works Department. "The pavement condition was pretty bad. This was a priority as it's a high-traffic street. It's been needing some improving for quite a while. I believe this was the number one or two priority road on the council priority list.

"Some of the others are West Mendocino, Baechtel, and others," he said. "We do about one per year. Aside from the pavement, we're adding sidewalk along the whole east side, enhanced crossings, traffic calming. There's going to be a center median, bulb outs, tons of signage. We did a little bit of storm drains."

The "traffic calming" is achieved with portions of the curb that jut out into the pavement, creating an obstacle that will hopefully, slow down the speeders who often drive too fast, especially from Highway 20 toward the south.

"Street trees are going to go in these boxed areas," said Ronco. "Chinese pistache. They're kind of the biggest trees we could plant as everything is right under the power line. We did take some irrigation across the road and we're hoping to plant some larger trees in the rain gardens on the west side. There's no shade on this street right now. We're trying to mingle the industrial and school uses of the street a little better."

The trees will be a welcome addition to the mostly business-oriented street. They are colorful, sturdy trees that can live 150 years and bloom a brilliant red, provide shade, and create a pleasant walking lane. Irrigation and timers have already been installed for easier maintenance.

With the new, extra-visible crosswalks to be installed in front of Blosser Lane Elementary School and with the traffic-calming constructions, the safety of the children should be greatly enhanced. According to Ronco, this is something that the school and the community have been requesting for quite some time.

The City of Willits and Bouthillier Construction are working to make the inconvenience to road users and the few businesses along the route as benign as possible, and the result should be a more pleasant, safe and convenient road, much improved for those taking their children to school or those on their way to the Sherwood Valley Casino.



Above, left: Project Manager Jeremy Ronco of the Willits Public Works Department is supervising. Above, right: The sidewalks are also being redone to make them safer for the kids going to school. At left: Part of the roadwork includes new curbs, traffic "calming" projections, sidewalks, and irrigation for the trees that will be planted. Below: Bouthillier Construction, a local company, received the contract to repave the road.



Photos by Mathew Caine





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Willits Weekly's
Puzzle Page

Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword

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9	2				3			1

PUZZLE
ANSWERS
ON
PAGE 9

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!

GREAT GARDEN WORD SEARCH

O	D	T	A	U	S	Y	G	Z	D	L	P	R	U	Y	B	T	E
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ANNUAL	DROUGHT	MULCH
CLAY	FERTILIZER	PERENNIAL
CLIMATE	FILLER	ROOTS
CLIMBING	HARDINESS	SHADE
COMPOST	HOSE	SOIL
CONTAINER	HOUSEPLANT	SUN
DAPPLIED	IRRIGATE	TOLERANCE
DECIDUOUS	MOUNDED	TRAILING

WILLITS POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICE LOG

July 10 to July 16

By Danya Davis, Willits Weekly

The officers of the Willits Police Department handled **80 incidents** in this 7 day reporting period.

Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

July 10

3:23 pm: Officers responded to a report of illegal camping in the 100 block of Madrone Street.

July 11

7:12 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 700 block of South Main Street.

July 12

10:09 pm: RISCH, Jennifer Adrienne (42) of Willits was contacted in the 100 block of North Main Street. She was arrested on misdemeanor charges pursuant to 11550 H&S (Under the Influence of a Controlled Substance) and 11364 H&S (Possession of Drug Paraphernalia).

July 13

3:07 am: ELLIOT, Johnathan Darrel (44) of Willits was contacted in the 800 block of South Main Street. He was arrested on misdemeanor charges pursuant to 11350 H&S (Possession of a Controlled Substance), 11364 H&S (Possession of Drug Paraphernalia), and failure to appear.

7:30 am: MACLEAN, Dainen Scott (26) of Willits was contacted in the 100 block of Mill Creek Drive. He was arrested on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (alcohol) and damaging a wireless communications device.

4:18 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

6:31 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 1200 block of South Main Street.

7:55 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 100 block of South Street and issued a warning.

July 14

9:00 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

1:01 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 1700 block of South Main Street.



Laura Bishop of Willits.

PC (Domestic Corporal Injury), on felony charges of domestic battery and robbery, and on misdemeanor charges of destroying or concealing documentary evidence.

8:15 pm: FRANK Jr., Erik James (28) of Willits and NORTON, Kevin Bobby (42) of Willits were contacted in the 200 block of South Main Street. They were both arrested pursuant to 647 (F) PC (Public Intoxication) and on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (alcohol).

11:23 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of East Mendocino Avenue.



Christopher Cauley of Willits.

Stolen Property), on felony charges of elder abuse, obstruction of justice injurious to public health, and vehicle theft with priors, and on misdemeanor charges of possession of drug paraphernalia.

7:25 pm: Officers initiated a vehicle theft investigation in the 100 block of West Valley Street

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	69							70						

CLUES ACROSS

- Eurasian shrubs
- Strikes and rebounds
- Group of advisers
- Modern necessity
- Top lawyer in the land
- Philadelphia university
- Of I
- Functions as a laser
- Basketball phenomenon Jeremy
- Famed island
- Parent-teacher groups
- Distributes
- Self-immolation by fire ritual
- Ad ___
- Circulation problem (abbr.)
- Brother or sister
- A famous 'Squad'
- Stage actor Anthony
- Violent seizure of property
- Saclike cavities
- Sound units
- Counts on
- Dad
- Woman (French)
- A digital tape recording of sound
- Polish Baltic peninsula

- Recipe measurement
- Requests out of dire need
- Precious stone weight unit
- The immaterial part of a person
- Anoint
- Golf score
- Supernatural
- Northwest Territories
- Can be made suitable
- A professor's helper
- Having a toothlike edge
- Got atop a horse
- Judged
- Static balance between opposing forces

- Famed designer Lauren
- Occupies
- Small island (British)
- Misuse of the sacred
- Covers with a thin sheet
- Most valuable player
- Title of respect
- Investigated discreetly
- Belonging to the bottom layer
- Black tropical American cuckoo
- Music genre
- Indicates one is in mourning
- Secured forever
- Bodily cavity
- A dog is one
- Chose to do something
- Annoy persistently
- Large hotel rooms
- Beg
- Docket
- Subway dwelling rodent
- Sources
- Mild Dutch cheese
- Spanish city
- Consumed
- BallplayerOs tool
- Midway between north and east
- Atomic #3

CLUES DOWN

- Flowing
- Computer department
- Lasts
- DiFranco and Samsonyan are two
- ___ de sac
- Merchant
- Hosts film festival
- State of agitation of fuss
- A way to praise
- Opaque gems
- McKinley is one
- Smallest interval in classical Western music

The rest of
Fire *From page 1*

moderate rate of spread in grass and oak woodlands.

CalFire Mendocino Unit reported in its 7 pm update that evening that the fire was 22 acres and 40% contained. Ground resources, including 7 engines, 1 water tender, 3 air crews, 2 bulldozers at 10 others at scene, plus helicopters, air attack planes, and aerial water tankers "have stopped forward progress" of the fire.

Air resources were released Sunday evening.

By CalFire's Monday morning update, the fire was 43 acres and 85 percent contained. And by 5 pm Monday, containment was up to 90%. "Resources remain at scene, and continue patrol, mop-up and fire suppression repair efforts," CalFire's Monday evening update reported.

No structures were destroyed, and no evacuation warnings or orders were issued, though Mendocino County Sheriff's Office issued a "situational awareness" warning about the area. The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

The Bell Fire was visible with the Black Oak camera at the Alert Wildfire network. You can see all the North Coast cameras at www.alertwildfire.org/region/northcoast/

Casey O'Neill of HappyDay Farms, two parcels away from where the fire started, has posted an account of fighting the fire with his neighbors, using fire hoses, a fire pump, sprinklers, and hand tools, before firefighting resources arrived.

"As we get a secure perimeter around the [neighbor's] home, I realize that the wind is pushing the fire hard towards our family compound, and my uncle and I jump into my truck. I race back to my place where I find the flames licking the end of my veggie tunnels and threatening the sheep pasture and pig barn."

After continuing to fight back panic as well as the growing fire, O'Neill writes:

"Resources are arriving; I see the tide turning, and a deep emotion of pride and gratitude overwhelms me. Our preparedness, our hours of training, our practice is winning the battle. I have kept my head, and we are fighting the fire. The CalFire chopper starts dropping bucket loads and we are gleefully soaked by falling water.

"The fire came right to us," O'Neill continues. "But for grace and luck, our farm, our livelihood, our lives would have burned. I feel all the feels, but we are OK and stronger for the effort. I am deeply grateful to CalFire for arriving with the cavalry to save the day as my strength and energy faded with the pounding adrenaline, smoke inhalation and heat."

To read O'Neill's full account, visit "Casey O'Neill" on Facebook and look for his July 17, 10:14 pm post.

As CalFire water tankers T90 and T91 were flying south over Willits after being released from the Bell Fire, just after 6 pm, reports of a possible new fire at Sherwood and Skyview roads (Third Gate) came in. The tankers circled the area, as other air and ground resources were on their way – but the fire was UTL – "unable to locate."

As per the scanner, both tankers were released, still fully loaded, and headed back to Ukiah at 6:23 pm, and the wildland fire dispatch was cancelled.



Far left: Salmon sizzling on the grill bodes well for mealtime!

At left: The bulletin board at the tribal office for the Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians is a hub of Native information.

Below, left: Pomo traditional male dancers dance the sacred dances – "ba: k'emanen."

Below, right: Happy Art enjoys showing and sharing her work at the Sherwood Big Time.



Gather, Dance, Share

Members of the Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians celebrate traditions at annual Big Time gathering

By Margi Gomez Guhde

Excitement is in the air on a glorious summer day in Pomo country. Members of the Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians greet family and friends from near and far for the 27th annual Big Time celebration. The joy of being together once again is palpable as smiles and hugs abound.

Formal activities begin at the sacred circle as Buffle Schmidt leads the invocation, welcoming everyone on this special day.

"Healing is what we want to bring back to our people by continuing this tradition of Big Time," she begins, going on to thank tribal staff, community members, and the many volunteers whose efforts contributed to bringing the community together once again.

As with so many other events in California and around the world, the Sherwood Big Time was canceled for the last two years due to the COVID pandemic. Many Native lives were lost to COVID during this time, and Schmidt asks the group gathered for a moment of silence in recognition of their lost family and community members. A hush falls on the crowd as heads bow, and people silently share the suffering that so many have experienced during this difficult period.

After the invocation, Pomo singers begin their age-old songs to the earthy sound of the traditional clapper-sticks. Invited by the traditional songs, the dancers file in slowly, first the men and then the women, entering the dancing circle backwards, with respect for the fire and the medicine.

Learning the traditional songs as a young child, Schmidt became a dancer later in life, and now leads the Sherwood Valley Pomo lady dancers.

"The Sacred Bear Dancers come down the hill and into the Sacred Circle around the fire," Schmidt explains. "Turkey feathers are now more plentiful. The male dancers mimic the animals indigenous to our area: the deer, the hummingbird, and more."

"Our primary colors are taken from the flicker bird: orange and black," Schmidt says. "The female Pomo dancers wear their long skirts in their favorite colors, some with headbands and feathered top knots on their heads and shells throughout their regalia, so that our ancestors hear us dancing in honor of them."

As the dancers leave the circle, they turn one full circle, leaving the circle dancing backwards again as traditional dictates.

Read the rest of
Big Time *Over on page 9*



At left: Hand-cut abalone by Kimba is an example of some of the jewelry offered by vendors at the Big Time.

Below: Lovely feathers are painted by Big Time vender Karen.

At bottom: Pomo traditional ladies dance with the traditional songs – "ma:ta k'emanen."

Photos by Margi Gomez Guhde



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Summer Eats | Asian Noodle Salad

Hot weather means cold food if at all possible for a refreshing lunch or dinner, and this quick and easy Asian noodle salad can be mixed together quickly with only one small pot of boiling water. Eat cold out of the fridge, or at room temperature, too. Vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free, if you're counting, but don't let that deter you. This is just plain tasty. Don't worry about the details. But FYI.

Ingredients:

- 2 squares ramen rice noodles
- 1 cup edamame beans, shelled
- 4 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon mirin
- 2 teaspoons sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon chili sesame oil
- Sprinkle of sesame seeds

Directions:

Boil water in small pot. If using frozen edamame beans, toss them in while the water starts to boil. Fish out the beans and shell them (if needed). Rinse in cold water and place in medium bowl. Boil ramen until soft, drain water, rinse in cold water, and add to edamame beans. Add all liquid ingredients to cooled beans and noodles, and mix until combined. Top with sprinkle of sesame seeds. Don't ruin it with green onions.

- Maureen Jennison

Events, exhibits and carnival rides signal the return of the Redwood Empire Summer Fair August 4 - 7

Submitted by the Redwood Empire Fair

The Redwood Empire Summer Fair returns to Ukiah's Redwood Empire Fairgrounds the first week of August with events and entertainment for the whole family.

Beginning the afternoon of Thursday, August 4 and running through Sunday, August 7, the fair will feature a traditional livestock auction and exhibits as well as live entertainment and a full carnival with rides and games for guests of all ages. A wide array of fair food will also be available throughout the weekend.

"The Redwood Empire Summer Fair is a local tradition 86 years in the making," said Jennifer Seward, fair CEO. "We have a spectacular lineup of entertainment and exhibits ranging from livestock shows to jugglers, exotic animals, pie- and corn-dog-eating contests, monster trucks, and so much more. We encourage the whole family to come out and enjoy all that the fair has to offer."

One of the exhibits that is expected to be a major attraction for the fair is "A Walk on the Wild Side" featuring a live tiger among other exotic animals and a dinosaur-discovery exhibit. The exhibit will run all four days of the fair. The grandstands will also be full of energy as monster trucks, mud bogs, truck and tractor pulls, jalopies and boat races are scheduled for various days of the fair.

Admission prices are \$9 for adults and \$7 for children 6 to 12 years of age. Seniors (aged 65 years and over) are \$7. Grandstand shows will be included in fair admission fees. Parking is \$10 and is cash-only.

Pre-sale carnival wristband tickets are available at Mendo Mill Ukiah, Ukiah Taco Bell, Raley's, Super Chavez Market, the Creative Workshop, and J.D. Redhouse in Willits. Pre-sale wristbands are \$30 each (price at the carnival is \$35) and are good for any one day. Pre-sale tickets will stop selling Thursday, August 4 at 2 pm.

Classes will be offered for all ages in quilting, floriculture, painting, baked goods, woodworking, and many other hobbies.

Gates will open for the Summer Fair at 3 pm on Thursday, August 4 and Friday, August 5 and at noon on August 6 and 7.



At left: The towering "Dinners" sign points the way to hot food at El Chicano Mexican Restaurant.

At right: Noyo Theatre's 1940 Art Deco marquee is one of the few old signs still actively in use in Willits.

Photos by Debbie Boone Harry



Signs of Yesteryear

Willits is a treasure-trove of landmark signs, some over a century old

By Debbie Boone Harry

In these days of slick computer graphics, many are discovering the vanishing charm of vintage signs. As much of the world rushes toward digital messaging, some are slowing down to appreciate the old-time signage that was once the shining glory in the heyday of booming businesses.

Many miss seeing the old Willits Rexall sign since the store closed in 2013. Fortunately, that sign found a new home at the Mendocino County Museum, along with other old, local icons.

Much like the classic Joni Mitchell song, "...you don't know what you got 'til it's gone," we usually don't think much about the old signs, until we miss seeing them.

Neon debuted in 1910 at the Paris Motor Show and was eagerly embraced in the U.S. By 1940, there were nearly 2,000 small sign shops in the country. The ravages of time and a shift toward new technology have taken a toll on vintage signs in the last several decades. Loss of the fading relics has prompted cities to preserve their remaining remnants of architectural history.

A following of enthusiasts and fans of all things "Mid-century Modern" has grown into a nationwide network of dedicated sign lovers. They're documenting and preserving surviving signs, while some enjoy "photo safari" road trips, capturing images of the retro signs "in the wild." They share their finds using hashtags such as: #signhunters and #signspotters.

Aside from Willits' prominent and well-known arch, our small town offers a rewarding assortment of old signs, making it a worthy destination for sign hunters.



The 101 Drive-In sign has home-town charm.



CITY OF WILLITS MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Your guide to running for City Council



ELECTION DATE:

The City of Willits will conduct a Municipal Election on Tuesday, November 8, 2022.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE FOR THE 2022 ELECTION:

- Two (2) City Council Members.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR OFFICE:

- U.S. Citizen.
- 18 years of age or older.
- Registered voter living in the City of Willits, within city limits.

The following information is intended to assist residents who may be interested in running for Willits City Council.

CANDIDATE FILING PERIOD

The filing period begins on July 18 and ends on August 12. If an incumbent does not file by August 12, the filing period will be extended to August 17 at 5:00pm, for candidates other than the incumbents. Official Nomination Papers and Campaign Filing information, will be available by appointment only with the City Clerk beginning July 18, 2022.

To schedule your appointment, please call the City Clerk at (707) 459-7113 or email dpedersen@cityofwillits.org.



- STEP 1: Contact the City Clerk for an appointment July 18 through August 12, 2022.
- STEP 2: Complete nomination papers and collect signatures; at least 20 but not more than 30, from Citizens living within City Limits.
- STEP 3: File nomination papers with the City Clerk, deadline August 12 (or extended to August 17).



In Loving Memory Derek Ronald Stamps

Derek Ronald Stamps was born January 12, 1971 in Santa Rosa, CA. He spent his early childhood in Colorado where he learned to love the mountains. Derek learned to ski at 6 years old and looked forward to ski trips with his family. He caught his first fish, approximately a 7 pound rainbow trout, at Nederlands Reservoir. It was so big it would not all fit in the pan to be cooked. Derek became an avid outdoor fan. He went hiking and camping with his family regularly in the Rocky Mountains.

Derek and his family moved to Willits, CA in 1980 where his father grew up. This way the family could be closer to extended families of grandparents, cousins, aunts and uncles in Mendocino and Lake Counties.

Derek started attending school in Willits at Baechtel Grove School where he became involved with Pop Warner football. He continued his love for sports during his high school years at Willits High School through JV and Varsity Football. Derek was a lifelong Denver Broncos Fan. Derek also became involved in BMX bike racing. He competed in local events around Mendocino and Lake Counties. Derek also found a love for motorcycles. His first motorcycle was a Suzuki 150. He enjoyed riding through the local mountain areas with his friends. Derek graduated from Willits High School in 1989.

During his early twenties, he explored different types of jobs. He worked for several companies including Davey Tree, Ukiah Construction, traveled to Las Vegas to work on cooling towers, and worked as a mechanic for various trucking companies in the Willits area. Derek ultimately settled on a career with small engine repair and generator service. Derek provided generator support for many of the local agricultural community.

One of his unique business model objectives was to provide service for off-grid remote customers that would otherwise not have service and repair support. He began his business out of the back of his pickup truck utilizing a storage unit for spare parts and repair. Eventually his business grew to repair motorcycles, off road vehicles, and generators in a 5000 sq ft shop.

In October 2021 Derek was diagnosed with stage 4 T-cell Lymphoma. He had not been feeling well for a few months. Ultimately, after a fierce but unsuccessful battle, Derek decided to spend his final days at home with his immediate family.

Derek was surrounded with love and support during his final hours of July 11, 2022 as his parents, sisters, brothers-in-law, nephews, and best friend Luke and best girl Sabrina gathered around him to share memories and precious time.

Derek is survived by his parents, Charles "Ron" Stamps & Joyce Stamps. His three sisters, Tanya (Greg) Musgrave, Michelle (Michael) McCaffrey, Alicia (Gage) Stamps-Haneir, his three nephews Devin, Owen, & Cedar, his aunts and numerous cousins.

There will be a celebration of life on Saturday, August 6 at the Willits City Park at 10:30 am. All Derek's friends and family are invited to attend. We encourage anyone who is interested in sharing more time with the family to join us at Derek's family residence following the celebration of life. The family welcomes a potluck style gathering of appetizers and snack food to share with others who are in attendance.



At far left: The Spring Grove Creamery sign peeks out from the trees (top).

The Al's Redwood Room sign is a downtown icon (bottom)

At left, center: The Hotel Van, built in 1924, is still marked by its sign from the late '40s.

At left: Carnegie Library, in service from 1915 to 1989, has the oldest sign in town (top).

The Masonic Temple, built in 1924, is aptly carved in stone (below).

Photos by Debbie Boone Harry

SPIRITUAL PATHWAYS

Agape Bible Church

290 S. Lenore Ave. Willits, CA 95490 Where love is first and the Bible is central. Sunday Services: 10:00 a.m. - Worship Adult Sunday School 9:00 a.m. Info? 707-459-1905 www.agapebiblechurch.com

Amazing Grace Assembly of God Church

803 Coast Street P.O. Box 489, Willits 707-303-5456 Morning Worship - 10:30 a.m. Pastor Burton Jernigan EVERYBODY IS WELCOME

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

265 Margie Drive Willits, CA 95490 ALL ARE WELCOME Sacrament Meeting Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

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Grace Community Church

Celebrating Life In Christ 25 Hazel Street, Willits Modified Worship Service 10 a.m. Other ministries suspended for now. For appointments call: (707) 459-3106

St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church

61 W. San Francisco Ave. Willits, CA 95490 Father Aaron Bandanadam Mass times: Confessions by appointment: 459-2252 Sunday Mass inside: 9:00 a.m. English 10:30 a.m. Spanish Covid Mass: 5:30 p.m. Covid guidelines apply. We welcome All Walks of Faith

St. Francis Episcopal Church

1 North Main Street, Willits Sunday Service - 10 a.m. In-person and on Zoom Call for information. ALL ARE WELCOME The Rev. Betsy Bruneau

St. John Lutheran Church

Church Service: Sunday 10:00 to 11:00 (707) 459-2988 24 Mill Creek Drive ALL ARE WELCOME

Willits Seventh-Day Adventist Church

707-459-5714 Friendly, open worship Saturdays Bible Study - 9:30 a.m. Worship Service - 10:45 a.m. Zoom Transmission Available. Wednesday Prayer Meeting - 6:00 p.m. 399 W. Mendocino Ave. All are welcome!

Willits United Methodist

A Christ centered, progressive church ALL ARE WELCOME 286 School St. (at Pine) Rev. Rosemary Landry, pastor Worship Celebration Sundays - 10:30 a.m. Children's Sunday School - 10:45 a.m. 459-2855 Facebook: www.facebook.com

If you want to be included in this column please call: April Tweddell (707) 972-2475 april@willitsweekly.com

Willits Community Theatre presents A 'Gateway to the Stage' Production Annie Jr. Directed by Tim Fischer and Robert Ford July 29 - August 7 Thursdays, Fridays, & Saturdays 7pm Sundays 2pm Willits High School 1431 S. Main Street Tickets available online wctperformingartscenter.org Tickets \$10 Vaccinations and masking are recommended but not required. The WCT is grateful to the COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF MENDOCINO COUNTY for its generous support

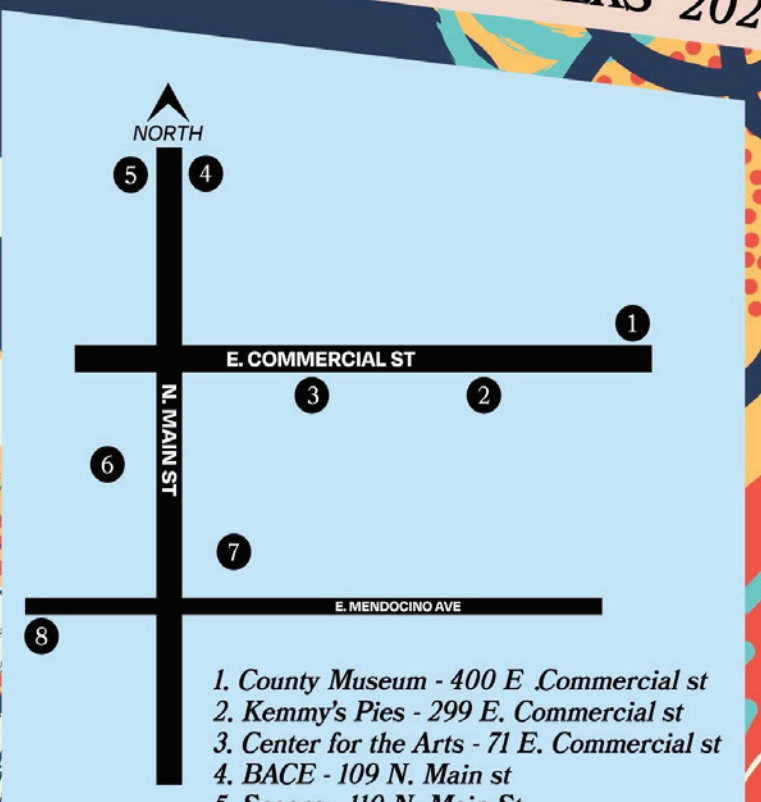
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2. Kemmy's Pies - 299 E. Commercial st

3. Center for the Arts - 71 E. Commercial st

4. BACE - 109 N. Main st

5. Scoops - 110 N. Main St

6. Shanachie Pub - 50 S. Main st

7. Art in the Plaza - 99 S. Main st

8. Re Evolution - 15 W Mendocino ave

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for more info go to willitscenterforthearts.org

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Festival in the Redwoods July 30 at Brooktrails Golf Course

What could be better than sitting under the shade of redwood trees on a summer day? Adding wine, beer, food, friends and music! All while helping Willits Rotary Club support scholarships for Willits graduates and the Willits Senior Center!

The public is cordially invited to attend the 1st annual Festival in the Redwoods and Golf Tournament at the Brooktrails Golf Course on Saturday, July 30.

The Brooktrails Golf Course Golf tournament tees off at 9 am, with an 8:30 am check-in. For tournament registration or golf questions, call Jeff Yokum at 707-391-8066.

The Festival starts at 11 am, featuring local beer and wine tasting, gourmet food tasting, door prizes and a raffle, birdwatching, live music by the Ed Reinhardt band, and walks in the redwoods through 4 pm.

The Silent Auction is on from 11 am to 3 pm, and then the Live Auction happens between 3 and 4 pm. Donated auction items include wonderful hotel stays, specialty wine, a redwood picnic table, massage, body sculpting, and so much more!

Food options, provided by local Willits food vendors and non-profit organizations, include BBQ, pork sliders, fruit kabobs, crab cakes, and desserts!

Festival entry tickets-are \$25 per person, and include a commemorative glass and 2 food/drink tickets. Event tickets are available at the gate, in advance at Willits Furniture or the Willits Senior Center, or by calling event co-chair Ann Alumbaugh, who can also answer any questions.



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For a complete list of current job openings and to apply:
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Celebration of Life for Barney St. Martin

A celebration of life for Barney St. Martin will be held on Saturday, August 6, 12:00 p.m. at the American Legion Post 174 at 191 N. Main Street in Willits.
Potluck luncheon to be served afterwards. If you would like to bring something, cold finger food like chicken or little sandwiches, salads or desserts would be appreciated. The rest will be provided. Hot food is discouraged.

The rest of Big Time

she says, "and the Pomo singers are done, each dancer makes four full circles in honor of the sacred circle and four directions."

Seeing the Pomo dancers of all ages, from mature adults to very small children, come together to present these sacred dances, it strikes an emotional chord in those watching, and a hush falls on the crowd. Schmidt, whose son leads the male dancers, feels especially moved. "It is beautiful," she says. "Good, strong medicine for the body, mind and spirit."

Once the dancers file out of the circle, the crowd disperses and begins to enjoy other aspects of the Big Time gathering. High spirits emanate at the vendor area, where there is a wide variety of Native arts on offer. Beautifully crafted basketry and jewelry, paintings on feathers, skulls and canvases, crafts such as soaps, herbal offerings, and Native designs printed on clothing, backpacks and blankets.

As salmon starts to sizzle on the grill and savory aromas waft over through the area, children run and laugh as they play on the swings and slides with siblings, cousins and friends. Their parents and grandparents reminisce about Big Times gone by, and make plans for future gatherings.

Marc Komer

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LEGAL NOTICES

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NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: EDNA ROSE KNIGHT, aka EDNA R. KNIGHT, aka EDNA KNIGHT
CASE NO. 22PR00102
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate or both of EDNA ROSE KNIGHT, aka EDNA R. KNIGHT, aka EDNA KNIGHT
A Petition for Probate has been filed by Patricia Hals and Robert S. Knight in the Superior Court of California, County of Mendocino.
The Petition for Probate requests that Patricia Hals and Robert S. Knight be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.
The Petition requests the decedent's will and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The will and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court.
The petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.
A hearing on the petition will be held in this court as follows: Date: August 4, 2022 at 2:00 p.m. in Dept.: TM of the Mendocino County Superior Court, located at 700 S Franklin St., Fort Bragg, CA 95437.
If you object to granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.
If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.
You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code Section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.
Attorney for Petitioner: Jennifer M. O'Brien, NEARY and O'BRIEN, 110 S Main St., Ste. C, Willits, CA 95490, Telephone: (707) 459-5551.
Publication Dates: July 14, 21, 28, 2022

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willitsweekly@gmail.com

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, July 21: Baked Chicken, Au Gratin Potato, Green Salad

Friday, July 22: Swedish Meatballs, Noodles, Veggie, Roll

Monday, July 25: Chicken Chow Mein with Veggies

Tuesday, July 26: Meatball Sub, Boneless BBQ Chicken Bites, Green Salad

Wednesday, July 27: Egg Salad Sandwich, Carrot Salad, Pickle

Thursday, July 28: Shrimp Scampi, Garlic Bread, Green Salad

Friday, July 29: Turkey & Stuffing w/Gravy, Cranberry Sauce, Veggie, Roll

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

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D E E M E D S T A S I S



Members of the cast and crew for the musical “Annie Jr.,” opening July 29 at Willits High School, pose for a photo at Willits Community Theatre’s 2022 Gate to the Stage Summer Camp. Photo by Mathew Caine

The musical “Annie Jr.” opens July 29 at Willits High School with a cast of 33 kids

By Steve Hellman, for WCT

The musical “Annie Jr.,” based on the classic rags-to-riches story of the young orphaned girl who finds happiness, opens at Willits High School on Friday, July 29. A production of Willits Community Theatre, the show will feature a cast of 33 children ages six to high school from WCT’s Gateway to the Stage Summer Camp.

The show is co-directed by Tim Fischer and Robert Ford, with choreography by Oz Montelongo Medina and vocal direction by TinaMarie Silveira.

The show is based on the 1977 Broadway musical, which features song and dance, and in turn, was based on the “Little Orphan Annie” comic that ran in publication from 1924 to 2010. Fischer says “Annie Jr.” is an intentionally truncated version for the kids, while maintaining the important essence of the story, and keeping the dancing and the familiar songs: “Tomorrow,” “It’s a Hard Knock Life,” and “I’ll Never Be Anything Without You.”

Fischer heralds the play for its recreation of the original story’s optimism, which struck an important note during the Great Depression of the 1930s. He says, “There’s certainly some resonance for our actors and our community after what we’ve gone through in our recent times.”

Fischer directed last year’s summer camp production of “Oz: The Musical” and he’s excited that this year some of the previous camp students are now an integral part of the direction and stage-management crew.

The show is also different from previous WCT summer camp productions in that the directors have cast understudies in some of the larger roles. The understudy night is Thursday, August 4, when a second line of actors will lead the performance.

Fischer says the importance of the understudy program goes directly to the goal of the academy, which is to foster growth in all the children who participate. He says, “Helping all the kids to see something in themselves they didn’t see before is our ultimate goal.”

Performances will run from July 29 through August 7, with shows on Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 7 pm, and Sunday matinees at 2 pm. Tickets for the shows are \$10 and available online at www.wctperformingartscenter.org or at the door.

Audience members will be seated in the Allen J. Garcia auditorium at Willits High School using the “festival seating” method, and those attending can sit wherever they like. Vaccinations against COVID-19 and the wearing of facial coverings are recommended, but not required.



Above, left: A diner enjoys a plate full of double pancakes and bacon at a past breakfast. Above, right: Wearing the approved beard guard, Mike Burgess expertly flips eggs for an over-easy customer. Below: A table filled with retired Redwood Community Services employees meets at the Grange breakfast: from left, Clare Friedlander, Becky Wilson, AJ Barret, Shauna Heiselt, Nori Dolan and Deborah Lovett.



Have a Happy, Healthy Summer

TIP: Schedule a well-child visit now so your kids are all set before school starts.





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The rest of **Water** From page 1

put forward at the meeting included regulations on the amount of water that could be withdrawn from wells, requirements for metering of wells, and hiring a “county hydrologist” to help assess how much is withdrawn.

The draft proposal would have the county hydrologist look at water extraction “to determine if an adverse impact has occurred” to neighboring properties.

“‘Adverse effect’ shall mean a measured or calculated drop in the maximum available water column at the source well or at a hydrologically contiguous well of more than 10 percent,” the ordinance states.

In a separate item at the July 12 meeting, the board discussed how to potentially fund water sustainability projects throughout the county.

This discussion in part stemmed from a decision at the June 21 meeting to remove any water funding from a 1/4 cent fire services tax measure headed to the ballot in November for county voters to decide.

Inland supervisors Maureen Mulheren and Glenn McGourty pushed hard to include water funding in the measure, but were thwarted by an intense campaign from coast Supervisor Dan Gjerde who was opposed to the water tax idea.

The heated debate over water funding continued into the July 12 meeting, when Gjerde asked that Mulheren step down from a water ad hoc committee she had been appointed to earlier in the day.

Mulheren responded by saying she felt “attacked” by Gjerde, and by withdrawing from the committee.

Mulheren had been selected to replace Third District Supervisor John Haschak on the drought ad hoc during an earlier item at the meeting, and Gjerde claimed that the makeup of Mulheren and McGourty would make it biased towards the areas in their inland districts around the Russian River watershed and neglect other areas.

“The entire District Two that Supervisor Mulheren is in is not facing any water shortages,” said Gjerde. “So it’s curious that we would choose to have an ad hoc where both supervisors are in one of the three watersheds, and one of the two is not facing any short term drought issues.”

“And I can’t help but wonder if it’s because I’ve been outspoken in the fact that some of the Russian River water districts are undercharging for their water, but they’re still looking to the county for assistance,” he added. “And I’m wondering if that’s the motive in keeping either myself or Supervisor Haschak off the drought ad hoc.”

Mulheren responded: “Supervisor Gjerde, your assumptions about my interest in water are incorrect. I am deeply interested in making our community have sustainable resources. If it’s going to make you drop the subject, I will yield the seat happily. Because the assumptions and the allegations that you are putting out in public are very upsetting to me, because that is not my goal or my intention.

“I would like to remove myself from the drought ad hoc,” she added, “and I will continue to work with any supervisor or any member of the public that would like my support.... I truly do feel attacked, and I would like to take that off the table. I would like for Supervisor Gjerde to not have that as his platform anymore.”

Despite support from Williams and McGourty for her staying on the ad hoc, Mulheren insisted, and asked that Haschak be placed back on the committee.

Haschak agreed to stay on the ad hoc, saying he supported the idea of having supervisors who represented different watersheds on the committee.

But a vote was delayed on the matter since the board wanted to first look into possibly consolidating two water-related committees into one, and perhaps switching from an ad hoc to a standing committee for water and drought issues.

In terms of funding big water projects in the county, nothing was actually voted on, but the board was in general agreement on moving aggressively with continuing to look for state grant money, continuing to develop a plan for creating a county water agency, and hiring a consultant as they have in the past to help with grants and other water-related issues.

At the June 21 BOS meeting, board chair Williams tried to strike a compromise between those supporting and opposed to a water tax by asking Mulheren and Gjerde to come together to discuss the possibility of finding other county funding for water projects.

They each submitted memos to the board and spoke at the July 12 meeting, and they clearly still had some major disagreements regarding the county’s role. Mulheren favored the county taking an active lead role in helping with crucial water projects, while Gjerde believed that the projects should mostly be funded by the money water districts make from customers, and from state grants.

In her memo Mulheren wrote: “I was asked to meet with Supervisor Gjerde and the Executive Office Fiscal Team to determine whether or not there were general fund dollars available to fund our water resource needs. We met on June 24,

2022. We were not able to agree on a sustainable funding source.”

Gjerde pointed out that the county had managed to secure around \$24 million in state grant funding for water projects over the last couple years, though he did acknowledge this likely wouldn’t continue in future years due to potential declines in the economy and other factors.

He also said that from what he saw there was still around \$1.2 million in PG&E settlement money that could be used for water projects, though Haschak pointed out that the plan laid out previously was for the county to backfill that spending with money to have for future crises.

In her memo, Mulheren said that while grant funding was helpful, it was not enough to meet the county’s water needs. She listed dozens of water projects and needs throughout the county which could use extra funding, including \$30 million for 20 specific projects.

“That is just one year’s worth of projects for which there was a limited time to gather information from every water district,” she said. “Without additional funding from our residents, the County of Mendocino simply does not have capacity to build out our water resources in a sustainable manner. If the water agency is able to be funded out of the general fund, that is very important and should happen, but it doesn’t meet the needs of our rural communities and the projects that they need to be supported either through direct grants or matching dollars.”

The development of the ordinance for regulating water hauling and extraction was helped along with input from a citizen advisory group that included long time Willits activist Ellen Drell.

“I was one of the members of the group that helped write this ordinance,” said Drell. “I think one of the primary purposes of this ordinance is to protect our groundwater resources, not to deplete them, which is such a temptation, and that has happened in so many places around the state. So I would agree with Supervisor Gjerde that we maybe need to look at substituting the word ‘seller’ for ‘extractor’ ... because that addresses the real purpose more fully.”

While the ordinance still needs to go through the planning commission and other phases before going into effect, here are some of the statements from the “draft ordinance” laid out on July 12:

“The purpose of this ordinance is to protect the county’s groundwater resources, avoid adverse effects to source wells and neighboring well owners, and limit environmental impacts of hauling water from private wells,” the ordinance reads.

“No person shall transport water to a commercial cannabis operation that does not have a state license or a state provisional license and either a county permit or an application in active review by the county cannabis department,” it continues.

“No person shall transport water from a water supplier to a separate parcel without first obtaining a Mendocino County Business License, to be renewed annually.”

The ordinance does attempt to carve out some exceptions for those who need extracted water for personal use.

“In order to preserve water availability for the essential needs of health and safety during a declared drought emergency, persons may sell or transport water from a private well if: the residence to which the water is transported is occupied; the amount of water delivered does not exceed 55 gallons per person per day; [and] the residence to which the water is transported is not served by a municipal or privately owned community water provider.”

Williams cast the lone dissenting vote on the ordinance, due to worries about how the county would fund the enforcement of it.

“I have a concern that we’re spending money that we don’t have, and I think that we’ve been doing this for a long time,” said Williams. “Now we’re in a position where there’s not a penny left. And if we send this to the planning commission and give the planning commission and the public the idea that we’re going to carry through with it – I think we’re going to be in for a surprise that there’s a large dollar amount associated with it. And we can no longer tell staff to go figure it out.”

Haschak pushed back against that argument, saying that the issue was too important to ignore, and that they needed to find a way to fund it as they moved it forward.

“We’ve often talked about the primary goal of the county or the state is to protect people and their safety, and this is a key element,” he said. “If we can’t protect the water of people, then we’re not doing our job.”

Gjerde also supported moving the ordinance forward, saying he was optimistic that state grant money could be found for the project.

“I would not be suggesting this if I thought we were going to need to use general fund dollars,” said Gjerde. “I think we have a state surplus of nearly \$100 billion, and the state is going to spend money on short-term projects with grants.”

“And I think the state is increasingly stepping up its review of the groundwater in California,” he added. “And this is right up that alley, so I think it’s highly likely we could find state funding to launch this program on a pilot basis – probably three years. And I think that’s not unrealistic at all that the state might be willing to fund that.”

The rest of **Brooktrails** From page 1

It’s to study transportation needs and solutions for the communities in our county that don’t have public transportation, including Brooktrails. There will be a public meeting to gather input in August and there will be more information shared at that time.”

Brooktrails General Manager Tamara Alaniz wanted to talk about employee benefits and a recent letter received from Adventist Health regarding the ongoing negotiations between Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield and Adventist Health.

“In my conversations with the JPIA [Joint Powers Insurance Authority] staff and our insurance advocates there,” said Alaniz, “it does appear that the letter was a political tactic, and it has caused a lot of people to be upset.

“What I want to tell you this evening,” she continued, “about what I know that is going on is this: Adventist Health runs all three hospitals in Mendocino County as well as all of the hospitals in Kern County. Both counties are at risk of losing provider coverage at Adventist Health through Anthem Blue Shield. All of our employees as well as thousands of others in our county are affected by this.

“Not to be inflammatory or to take a political stance,” said Alaniz, but “I would like to – because of the urgency with which this negotiation is going and the immediacy and localness of Adventist Health to this community – I would like to write a letter on behalf of our employees politely explaining the risk of losing provider coverage at Adventist Health through Anthem Blue Shield. I’m not looking to stir things up. I’m looking to educate the people who are sitting at the [negotiation] table.

Williams asked for clarification of the issues, and Alaniz said: “Basically Adventist Health would not accept

Anthem insurance. They would not be a provider for the insurance company that provides all of our employees insurance. Our employees would be forced to go to Lake and Humboldt county and that is very concerning. I would like Adventist Health to know that sending out that letter caused a great deal of concern.”

After some discussion, the board, as a whole, said they were in support of Alaniz writing the letter.

Alaniz completed her report, pointing out that the pump and pump house on Primrose Drive are on schedule and all installation work for the pump station will be completed by the end of the summer.

Supervisor John Haschak joined the meeting via Zoom and had a couple things to report.

“At the meeting on Tuesday, July 12,” he stated, “the board approved the ¼ cent tax that would go on the ballot for November. Ninety percent of it would be for fire districts, and 10 percent would be for fire preparedness, home hardening, chipper days, etc. to provide a boost for fire prevention. We also moved on the water extraction and hauling issue and sent it on to the Planning Commission for their comments, and we will see how it ends up.”

The board then approved the Accounts Payable in the amount of \$417,770.12.

Finally, the board had received the complete golf course management agreement in the meeting packet for the evening, and upon the recommendation of Alaniz, decided to have a special meeting prior to its regular meeting, set for Tuesday, July 26, beginning at 6 pm at the Brooktrails Golf Shop, to learn about particulars that the golf course management would like to address for the future operation of the golf course.

The rest of **Library** From page 1

the funds going to a special library account.

Citizens Committee member Carolyn Schneider says: “We had many people volunteering to sit outside stores and post offices and ask for signatures, and we got to see the huge appreciation for our libraries and the desire to maintain and sustain them.” Now the Citizens Committee is planning a fundraising campaign to inform everyone in Mendocino County about Measure O and asking for their vote.

The rest of **COMMET** From page 1

• 70000 block of Dobie Lane in Covelo

All locations where search warrants were served were cannabis cultivation sites without state or local permits to cultivate.

COMMET was provided assistance by the following agencies: Mendocino Major Crimes Narcotics Task Force; California Department of Justice CAMP Team; California Department of Fish and Wildlife; California Department of Cannabis Control; California State Parks Police; California Division of Water Rights; U.S. Forest Service; Lake County Sheriff’s Office; Butte County Sheriff’s Office; U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency; Federal Bureau of Investigation; and the Ukiah Police Department.

In all, 165,219 cannabis plants were eradicated, with 5,946 pounds of processed cannabis being seized.

There were 59 separate environmental crimes identified by Department of Fish and Wildlife environmental scientists who assisted in the investigations.

There were a total of 12 firearms seized, three of which were personally

manufactured firearms (ghost guns), and two were classified by the State of California as “assault weapons.”

There were people detained at various locations during the investigations into the cultivation sites, and several of them were from outside the United States. These included such countries as Mexico, Spain, Israel, France, and Argentina.

In addition to the search warrants, COMMET assisted the Round Valley Consolidated Indian Tribes with a cultivation site on tribal land where persons established an illegal cultivation site after having trespassed onto tribal lands. An additional 1,740 cannabis plants were eradicated at this cultivation site.

These cases are still under active investigation, and no further information is available for release at this time.

Anyone with information about operations of illegally cultivated marijuana coupled with environmental crimes are encouraged to the contact the Mendocino County Sheriff’s Office by calling 707-234-2100 or the WeTip anonymous crime reporting hotline at 800-782-7463.

The rest of **COVID** From page 1

From the press release:

#127: Male, 84 years old, from the greater Ukiah area.

#128: Male, 67 years old, from the North Coast area.

#129: Female, 89 years old, from the greater Ukiah area.

#130: Male, 89 years old, from the greater Ukiah area.

#131: Female, 69 years old, from the greater Ukiah area.

The press release did not report vaccination status.

“COVID-19 is still active across the

globe,” the press release continued, “but we do have the tools to decrease risk of a bad infection. Vaccines and boosters for everyone ages 5 and older, as well as masking and social distancing in crowded areas are the best tools for preventing COVID-19.

“If you get COVID, talk with your provider immediately about oral treatments to reduce the risk of serious infection and hospitalization. If you have questions about boosters or vaccines in general, speak with your doctor, or call Public Health at 707-472-2759.”



Photo
by Ree
Slocum

Willits' Edie Ceccarelli now the oldest person in California

Edie Ceccarelli, 114, of Willits is now acknowledged as the oldest person living in the state of California, as per records kept by the Gerontology Research Group.

Mila Mangold, who was a couple months older than Ceccarelli, sadly passed away earlier this month, on July 2. Mangold had been a longtime resident of Berkeley, but was born in Nebraska on November 15, 1907.

Ceccarelli was born in Willits on February 5, 1908 to Agostino and Maria Recagno, the first of seven children.

Ceccarelli enjoyed a birthday party and a drive-by birthday parade in her honor this last February 5, at the Holy Spirit Residential Care Home in the Haehl Creek subdivision in Willits, where she lives.

The Gerontology Research Group also ranks Ceccarelli as the second oldest person living in the United States, and the seventh oldest in the world.

At left: Edie Ceccarelli enjoyed her 114th birthday celebration earlier this year. In this photo, she smiles as she holds the California State Assembly Certificate of Recognition, that Assemblymember Jim Wood gave her at the party. Below: This historic photo taken in 1913 shows three of the Recagno children: Edie, Frank and Anette.

She is one of only 12 validated "supercentenarians" - those aged 110 or older - in the world, all 12 of them women.

Bessie Hendricks of Iowa is considered the oldest person in the United States: She was born November 7, 1907 in Carroll County, Iowa, about three months before Ceccarelli.

Willits Weekly's story by Ree Slocum about Edie Ceccarelli's birthday celebration this last February has interesting details about her "well-lived life," including photos, and can be found on Page 3 of the February 10, 2022 edition at http://willitsweekly.com/documents/WillitsWeekly_02102022_APages.pdf

- Jennifer Poole



Friendly Otis

Guess what? You still have a chance to make this amazing pup a part of your family! Otis has been growing up with us and we would love to see him find a home of his own. Otis came to us from Bones Pet Rescue where he survived a broken jaw. Barb and Ron took excellent care of him and he healed with no issue. Otis loves other dogs and even gets to kennel with friends here onsite. This good boy needs you as much as you need him!

The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino is located at 9700 Uva Drive in Redwood Valley. We are open Wednesday through Friday from 1 to 5 pm and Saturday and Sunday from 11 am to 3 pm. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays. You may also look at our available dogs and cats on our website: www.mendohumanesociety.com, our Facebook page, and on www.petfinder.com.



Otis

Snuggly Bailey

Meet Bailey! This girl is super sweet and loving! She is a people dog for sure, and would thrive most in a home where she will not be left alone for too long. Overall, Bailey is very well behaved, and her favorite activities include sleeping, sitting on the couch, and sniffing all the smells on walks! Her mellow nature is only marred by her occasional reactivity around other dogs.

Bailey has so much love to give! She is such a snuggle-bug once she feels comfortable with you. Her precious smile is guaranteed to bring so much joy to the lives of her humans! She will do a light warning nip if she doesn't want to be petted, so an adult-only home would be best for this love-bug. Come and meet this sweetie-pie today!

To learn more about Bailey or view other adoptable animals, visit www.milofoundation.org or the Milo Foundation Sanctuary Facebook page. The sanctuary is currently doing pet adoptions by appointment only due to COVID-19. Please complete a pet-adoption application before requesting an appointment. You can reach the Milo Foundation at 510-900-2275.



Bailey

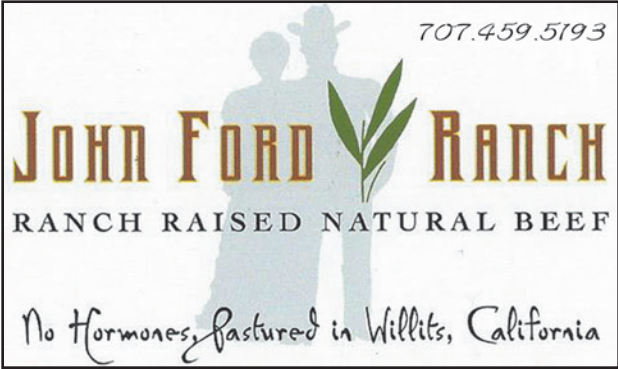


Rockette

Coy Rockette

Rockette is a shy young girl who can be a bit hissy when you first meet her. She will warm up with time, and she is worth the wait. Once out of her shell, she is playful with other cats and likes being petted. Due to her initial shyness, we are suggesting no young children in her new home.

The Mendocino County Animal Shelter, located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah, requires a reservation to view adoptable animals. Call 707-467-6453 to make an appointment to meet Rockette or our other canine and feline guests. Make sure to pre-fill out the adoption application available at www.mendoanimalshelter.com.



GO HAVE FUN!

Enjoy getting out and about this summer in Willits



The Willits Chamber of Commerce
encourages the community to get out and enjoy Willits' options:

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Skate Park | Skunk Train | Museum | Library | Noyo Theater
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