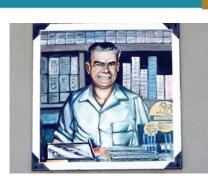
Willits Weekly | Edition 72 | August 11, 2022









# Portraits of our Past

Murals throughout town tell the history of Willits and of a growing art community during the 1990s

Many of us have seen the mural portraits of local folks, displayed on downtown buildings, each with black corner tabs, like snapshots in the scrapbook pages of Willits' history.

Debbie Boone Harry

Features Writer

But, few know much about

why they were created. This project was launched debbie@willitsweekly.com

by two local women, Jean Chavez and Mary Porter. They were inspired after learning of a small Canadian town that transformed itself into a "destination point" by encouraging a focus on cultural arts.

This movement was catching on as Willits now had a theater playhouse for local community productions, and the Cultural Arts Commission had begun renovation of the Women's Improvement Club building to house an art gallery, classroom space, and dance studios.

Joining with the Willits Revitalization Program – an eclectic group including the City of Willits, the Chamber of Commerce, artists and businesses - organized an impressive communityvolunteer effort to transform Willits into a destination for art lovers and tourists. Two hundred people took part in the project.

The first phase of the project involved the installation and painting of nine 5-foot-by-5-foot mural panels. This occurred over the weekend of August 27 and 28 in 1994.

Local artist Sue Ellen Parkinson painted some of the murals and she remembered doing preparation on the mural designs

At right, from top: Bob Alcott, Willits Fire Department veteran, plays a game of pool. Sue Ellen Parkinson painted this mural of children making crafts at Magic Mornings Preschool.

At right: Grandma Mavis sews a quilt in a painting found on the wall of City Hall. At far right: A painting of Don Coleman commemorates the local silent movie star of the 1930s.

Photos by Debbie Boone Harry

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before they were mounted. But artists did much of the work on the mounted panels as spectators strolled by, enjoying a festive atmosphere, with musicians entertaining the attendees.

The event finale, on Sunday, was a "Wine and Song Showcase" at the Willits Community Theatre, where artists celebrated and musicians performed. It was a city-wide event with shows at Tsunami Restaurant, Mendocino County Museum, and local galleries.

The subjects chosen for the murals were well-loved townsfolk and colorful characters of our community past. There are cowboy bronco busters, a silent movie star, longtime shop owners, a Sherwood Valley Rancheria family, and a fire chief veteran.

Some may recognize the sculpture featured in the mural of Mark M. Walker, on the wall of Al's Redwood Room. In 1988, at 96 years old, he declared, that in one week he became a folk artist, a philanthropist, and a bona fide public figure. He said, "Now, they tell me I'm a folk artist."

The portrait of another beloved local, Grandma Mavis, resides on the wall of the City Hall building. Kati Muhlhauser shared fond memories of her mother, Mavis, who moved to Willits in 1960. She was part of anything involved with kids. She was nominated by the police chief at a city council meeting as "Grandmother of Willits," and she was elected by a landslide.

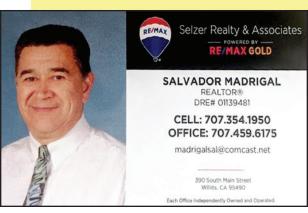
The walls of our small town have many stories to tell.



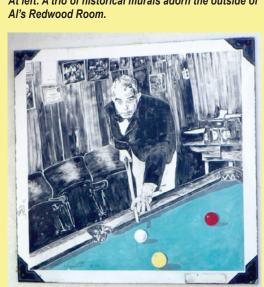


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#### Retirement program options for business owners

Happy dog days of summer, post-pandemic ... Here we are!

Truly, I've enjoyed reconnecting with neighbors and so appreciate being able to visit our



Nicholas Casagrande

neighborhood retailers. Businesses had to close or pivot during the pandemic months - many community retail strips will never be the same.

the personal touch cannot be matched by an impersonal big box store or click. More benefits of shopping local: You get the right item,

no shipping fees, no return hassle, in-person advice, you know what you're getting / no surprises, minimal carbon footprint, reduce packaging and transportation.

If you spend \$100, \$68 stays local. Wages, taxes stay local. With national chains, only \$48 stays in the community (per Fundera)

Retail corridors create the identity of our communities. A street filled with unique and vibrant shops energizes locals and excites visitors, and there are real economic benefits

Independent stores are originals reflecting the soul and personality of a community. Be a consumer in your own community!

My best,

Nick

This information is for general purposes only. Please consult a financial professional for your own situation Individual circumstances do

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Nicholas Casagrande, EA, is an accountant and a financial advisor. His firm. NC Financial Group, is a wealth-management firm serving individual clients as well as small-to-mediumsized businesses. Client work includes personal corporate planning, insurance, and real estate. NC Financial Group's Willits office is located at 675 South Main Street: contact 855-240-6606 or nicholas@ncfinancialgroup. com (taxes) or Nicholas. Casagrande@Ceterafs. com (investments) for more

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# A journey with friends

I was going to write a column about how credit ratings work, but I'm not in the mood. I'm sure Jennifer and Willits Weekly would be happy to have a real real estate column from me. One thing I learned from my long career is that real It is vital to our communities to shop local. Jobs are estate is more than business. Half of my job was being an untrained psychologist.

Thank goodness I've had a long and varied life with many experiences, many friends, many people I didn't like so much, but learned from. That's life's journey. It's also why one chooses a place to live – thus real estate.

I called an old friend that I used to work for in San Francisco nearly 50 years ago. Now in his early 80s and finally closing his business, he was in a plane on the runway getting ready to take off

for Italy. Richard is a dealer in Asian antiques. I bought a lot of things from him over the years, things I've enjoyed for most of my life and many I am now trying to find new homes for. Part of the clutter of a lifetime. Some pieces I can't let go of, not yet, so I continue to enjoy them. He taught me so much about how to appreciate the delicate beauty of Asian art. What a marvelous gift!

Half a lifetime ago Joe and I moved to Willits. We followed that dream to live in Mendocino County, to live



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Property complies with all 35 requirements and/or recommendations for fire safety. All 62 documents which are required to be

provided to buyer are attached to the contract versus providing them during the escrow period. Seller will provide copies of all relevant receipts for parts, materials, and labor, over these years. All 55 operating manuals exist in 3 large binders. Contact owner/developer/seller after reading the detailed information on this Internet site. Contact information is provided on that site.

in the country. We followed that same mysterious, clarion call that has enticed so many over the years. We had the experience of living in a small cabin in the woods - off the grid, an outhouse, running through the woods with the dogs in the fresh, clean air, a garden lush with John Jeavons' double-dug beds of lettuce, tomatoes, broccoli, strawberries and celery - life's real treasures.

I still remember what I think of as the happiest moment of my life. One snowy evening, sitting next to the woodstove

> and reading by kerosene lamps, it was so quiet that I could literally hear the snowflakes falling on the front porch. I looked up and Joe was on the other side of the small room, reading. On the floor between us, our three dogs curled around each other sleeping. Old Robin, our city cat, sleeping on Joe's lap and being used as a book-rest. I thought "this is the happiest moment of my life." I still think of it that way. Over the years friends have graced

my life. My severely disabled dear friend, Bill Barksdale Gregg Barsi, used to come by my office for a visit in his wheelchair. One day he

> asked if I'd like to go for a walk. That "walk" was a real eye opener. Gregg lived in his wheelchair and the sidewalks of Willits are a challenge for people with disabilities. Driveway dips are a particular hazard and Gregg fell into the street more than once needing help to right his chair and get back in it. Sometime the sidewalks disappeared altogether. Sometimes some idiot would yell



obscenities at him as they sped by in their car – Gregg was never able to drive in his all-too short lifetime.

remember with delight Dick and Maggie Graham's natural food store, Harvest Bounty. They became treasured friends. Dick was somehow able to make the most delicious pizza in a toaster oven! He's the one who got me hooked on spirulina, which I still use in my morning smoothies. The few times we were able to get away for a vacation over the years, Dick would stay at our house and care for the animals. I miss him and thank him every morning when I open the tin of jasmine green tea that I still keep my tea in – a gift from Dick.

Life just wouldn't be the same without our beloved friend Gail Richards. She's a collage artist and each month we receive a magnificent, humorous work from her. Her creativity and loving kindness seem without limit. After a recent surgery, large pots of the most delicious soups would appear on the front porch – sometimes a pie passed along from Gail's friend whom I consider a pie-genius.

What can I say about Emmy Good? I have to be careful here because we talked each other through the first two years of the pandemic. She and her husband Bill moved here in the 1970s from L.A. They too followed their dream to the redwoods. Emmy is still my yoga teacher in her 80s. A woman of seemingly inexhaustible energy, and some very funny, often risqué, stories. Also, a true friend.

I often have an impulse to pick up the phone to call my cherished friend Sally Miller Gearhart, but I can't because Sally moved on from this life a year or so ago. Could it be longer than that? Sally had great wisdom and compassion. Her love of animals and respect for the forest was unsurpassed. She started one of the nation's first women's studies classes at San Francisco State University. She marched hand-in-hand with Harvey Milk to fight for equal rights. She was a brilliant and inventive writer, had a delicious sense of humor. I still talk with her but in my imagination. Who's to say we're not having a

John Lazaro, Kerri Vau and Lee Persico gave me my start in the real estate business at Coldwell Banker Mendo Realty. They offer the best training. My friend Tara Moratti. with her seemingly endless energy and smarts took over as the broker of C.B.M.R. I watched her grow and learn

and become a brilliant real estate agent. Tara is a Willits COLUMN | How's the Market? hometown girl, one we can be proud of.

Summer

maintenance

before the

weather

turns

Summer is the perfect time to take on a

few home-maintenance projects, so before

the sunshine gives way to fall showers, here

If you see peeling, cracked or chipped

or sealing anything, some people rent a

power washer to remove dirt and old paint

with a power washer can be a great option.

However, if you've never used a power

washer, a word to the wise; a strong power

washer can blow holes in concrete. Read the

Another great summer project is cleaning

windows and screens. If you have a hole in

a screen, it's often easier to replace all the

screening mesh rather than patching it. Be

sure to align the little squares in the mesh

with the screen's frame edges. It's amazing

how noticeable it is when the mesh isn't

As you walk around the exterior of your

home, look for vegetation blocking vents

or surrounding any mechanical devices

like heating and air conditioning units. If air

flow is required for things to work properly,

vegetation can shorten the life of your

equipment and keep moisture from escaping

Keep bushes trimmed and remove weeds. In fact, you may as well trim tree limbs up

from the ground and away from your roof.

Fire season is right around the corner and

now is a great time to create a defensible

Moving to the interior, summer is a great

time to have your carpets and upholstery

cleaned. A hot summer day can dry carpets

and couches in a matter of hours. You can

If you haven't changed the heating and

air conditioning filter recently, put that on the

list, along with inspecting your fireplace and

chimney. If you see any cracks, schedule

the repair now before the chilly nights of fall

arrive and everyone starts requesting this

type of maintenance. Ideally, you should

have your chimney inspected annually.

also wash or air out area rugs.

as it should.

instructions and start slowly.

flakes. Cleaning your deck, patio, or siding

painting

exterior of your

home to protect the

siding underneath

Now's also a great

time to seal cracks

in the driveway

patio, and in any

valkways, and to

Before painting

wooden decking.

waterproof

consider

are some recommendations

Richard Selzer

What about Willits Weekly? If it weren't for Jennifer and Maureen, we wouldn't have a hometown paper! Their dedication and tenacity amaze me each week. We're one of the few small towns in the county with an independent small-town paper. That takes drive and dedication. My gratitude to everyone at Willits Weekly.

As I sit here typing and recovering, I can't leave out the people who made Adventist Health Howard Memorial Hospital happen! Also our fine new fire station. This little town has two of the finest such facilities in the county. This little town has a world-class hospital! A group effort by dedicated people who had a dream and pride of community to see to it that we had the best! Wow!

Somehow the Willits Center for the Arts and the Willits Community Theatre keep hanging on, bringing live entertainment and a showcase for our area's very fine artists. Gary Martin, Steve Marston, Mike A'Dair, and so many more dedicate their lives and thousands of hours to offering us art to enrich our lives. Lois and Jeff Hoover somehow have kept our cherished Noyo Theatre operating. They've made this vintage theater better and better, bringing us the latest in movies. Remarkable.

The Willits Food Bank, Willits Daily Bread, Willits Senior Center - all friends. All doing their service to our community. All loved - yes loved. There are many more people on this journey I'm taking, more to thank for their generosity and sharing their own journeys with me and so many others. This is community. These are some of the people that make life worth living. The old real estate saying "Location, location, location" has many elements not just a view.

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 and citizens and businesses. Read more of Barksdale's columns on his blog at www. bbarksdale.com.





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of is using bathroom fans when they shower. Too much moisture or humidity in a house can lead to all sorts of problems, including mold, mildew and bugs. To manage moisture, you can also check under the house. If there's moisture there in summer, it will only be worse in winter. To reduce humidity there, you can add vents and / or sub-area fans.

Finally, it's always wise to check hoses (like those connected to washers and dryers) and to make sure gas-fired appliances are properly vented to the outdoors.

Clearly, this is not an exhaustive list, but it's a start. The simple act of walking around your home looking for maintenance opportunities is sure to bring additional projects to light.

If you have questions about real estate or property management, contact me at 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 Roland's Bistro!) If you'd like to read previous articles, visit https://selzerrealty. com and click on "How's the Market?"

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



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