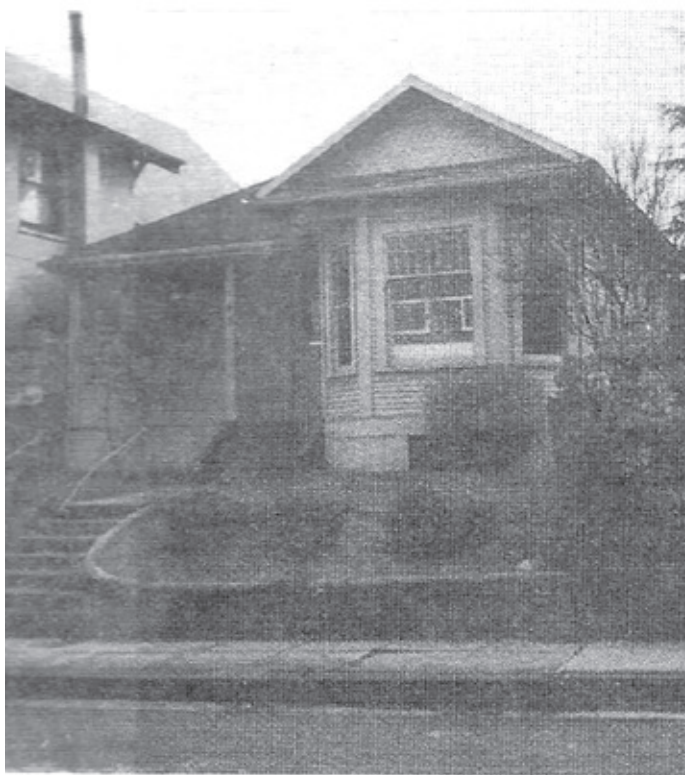


# REAL ESTATE SECTION



Photo by  
Matthew  
Jennison

## Now and Then 145 Wood Street built in 1906



In September 1885, the First Baptist Church of Willits was dedicated on land that was donated to the church by Hiram Willits. As such, the Baptist Church is one of the oldest organized churches forming in 1878 and the Methodist Church in 1859. In 1906, the Baptist Church had grown in attendance and determined to build a parsonage. Prior to that time the Baptist preachers had found it necessary to supply their own residences. In July 1906, the church began to raise money for the new building and in September the Reverend D. J. Weddle led the construction crew in erecting the house.

The one story rectangular wooden building appears to be much the same as when it was built in 1906. It features an offset gable roof over a north facing bay to the west of the main entrance that is set into a small enclosed veranda porch that is recessed beside the bay projection. The house is covered in shiplapped boards. The roof has a boxed cornice with a sloped soffit and frieze.

Reprinted with permission from the 1988 book "The Architectural Heritage of Willits," by Nelson A. Streib and Susan Pritchard, commissioned by the City of Willits.

Call for ad space:

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# Agreements

One of the interesting things about my work as a real estate agent is that the people I serve are almost always making an important change in their lives. A big part of my job is to help them through these changes.

They are starting a new job or career, retirement, someone has died or is going die soon, divorce, mental or physical decline, a new baby, taking care of a friend or relative, tenants have to let strangers look through their home which is about to be sold, or a client may be very ill and/or needing to downsize. There are so many things that spur change, and those changes are usually accompanied by agreements.

Part of my job is to help people come to agreement.

Back in the mid 1980s I helped to manage hospice facilities for AIDS patients. The agreement there was that I and others would be there with the people we cared for, to provide a safe place to live right up through their death. I also helped people begin to deal with their grief as their loved ones died.

In my job as a real estate agent I help people come to agreement. We call it "a meeting of the minds." An interesting phrase because it implies give and take, accepting change and other people's needs as well as your own.

As an agent I help people reduce their agreements and changes to writing. Sales agreements are contracts, agreements to do and not do specific things. How the change will happen and who does what is spelled out in the written agreement.

Part of this agreement is how people will deal with things when they don't agree – when they have disputes. Mediation, arbitration and even lawsuits are part of the process at times. Most often, common sense prevails, and parties come to agreement without these outside processes.

I deal most often with purchase agreements and listing agreements, having to do usually with homes and land also known as real estate, as opposed to personal property. Real estate is commonly understood to be the land and that which is attached to it, normally buildings, but can also mean crops, water, roadways and easements. There's another aspect to real estate called "the bundle of rights," which are the legal aspects of ownership of real property.

Real estate law is a specialized area in the practice of law. Some attorneys specialize only in real estate issues, while other attorneys know very little, if anything, about real estate law and its related issues.

One issue that comes up from time to time is when people made agreements years ago to buy land or a home together, but didn't put – in writing – the legal details about how those verbal agreements would work.

I've heard clients say that "making it legal" implied lack of trust, therefore they didn't "put it in writing." But you know, it's not a lack of trust, it's just making things clear for yourself and each other. Good business avoids problems and hurt feelings years later. People change. That's unavoidable. Sometimes the real estate has to be sold because those partners are moving in different directions with their lives.

In California, which often leads the way in laws that other states later recognize as practical, all real estate sales must be in writing. Oral or verbal real estate agreements are not considered binding – normally. I say "normally," because sometimes a court of law can make decisions that can force legal remedies on unwritten real estate matters, things such as prescriptive rights.

I'm not qualified to provide legal advice, so if you need help with legal issues please consult a qualified professional.

Tragically, there are situations where one person's name was put on the deed leaving another deserving party off. A deed is legal proof of who the owner(s) is/are. There may be an unmarried partner or others who contributed and are entitled to a share of the property, but their name wasn't put in a written agreement. I know of cases where an unmarried partner was thrown out of their own home by distant relatives just because the detail of putting the partner in a will or trust or deed as the inheritor of the house was forgotten.

Always prepare a will or trust if you own real estate. Also consider a written partnership agreement of some kind to clarify the agreement further, signed by all affected parties. It's so important.

Putting in writing who owns the property and in what legal manner, sometimes called "vesting," is essential. How the real estate will be handled in the event of the owner's severe disability or death is essential to be reduced to writing so there is no doubt to a judge or government official who the successor owner is. If you don't put it in writing now, a judge or legal convention will decide, and their decision may not be what you intend.

There's so much to be said about agreements that applies to virtually every aspect of social interaction. In the United States we often call it "The Rule of Law." No one is above the law, we like to say. When the law is unfair or unjust, it needs to be changed.

When someone violates the law, there are supposed to be consequences and legal remedies. Ethics – doing the right thing – we can rightly assume is the basis of fair and just law and law enforcement. Agreements. Something to think about.

Bill Barksdale was a 2016 inductee into the Realtor® Hall of Fame. He is an agent at Coldwell Banker Mendo Realty Inc. He can be reached at 707-489-2232 or bark@pacific.net.



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Your own private retreat. Nestled in amongst the redwoods, this 3 bedroom, 2 bath custom home offers respite from the hustle & bustle. **\$250,000**

Noyo River Frontage! Approx 3 acres of paradise. House has wood floors, 6 skylights, comfy claw-foot tub, spacious great room overlooking river gorge. **\$295,000**

Rare find! One of the few homes in this desirable subdivision with this 4 bedroom, 2 bath, ranch-style floor plan. Lovingly cared for, the kitchen was remodeled one year ago with elegant cabinetry, quartz counters. **\$365,000**

Beautiful, cozy, move-in ready home, spacious rooms, skylights, central heat & lovely propane stove heaters. Granny unit 2 car garage and garden area. **\$326,000**

Magnificent Tudor style home exudes charm & comfort. Hardwood floors through most of home. 3 BR's + home office/den could be 4th BR wired for internet. **\$390,000**

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MLS: 21925835

Offered at: **\$149,000**

Fixer-upper, 2-bedroom, 2-bath, 1,000-square-foot, single-family home on a large 0.45-acre lot. This home is in need of remodeling – bring your tool belt!

Listed by: **Andy Wiese (Lic: 01433414) 707-391-3393**

Agent of: **Andy Wiese Real Estate (Lic: 01433414)**



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**2.9 +/- Acres**  
With a charming English style cottage home. Custom, well built, 2,100 sq. ft. featuring hardwood floors, tile, large kitchen, fireplace and many other lovely amenities. There is a very nice fully equipped apartment above the garage. Close to town! **\$449,000**

**Delightful Move-in Ready Home**  
3 bedroom, 2 bath, 1,500 sq. ft. newly remodeled. There are vaulted ceilings, new carpeting, laminate flooring, paint inside and out, a new 30 year roof. A new dishwasher, stove and microwave will be installed soon. It is clean and ready for your personal touch. **\$272,900**

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mary.mueller@exprealty.com  
marylouwho.net

## Free ‘New Home Buyers Workshop’ at the Willits Library

A free "New Home Buyers Workshop" will be offered by Willits real estate agent Mary Mueller at the Willits Library on Tuesday, October 29. The class, set for 5:45 to 7 pm, will cover "everything from dreaming about home buying, to getting the keys to your own home." Willits Library is at 390 East Commercial Street.

"I am offering this class at no cost in hopes of serving my community," Mueller says. "My dream is to offer the class that I wish I could have taken, before buying my own home. You will leave with your own personalized action plan and a better understanding of the home buying process. Hope to see you there!"

For more information, contact Mueller at 831-915-2114 or mary.mueller@exprealty.com.

## Willits Library Fall Book Sale

October 18 - 20

Sponsored by Friends of the Willits Library (FOWL)

when: **Friday, 10 am - 6 pm**  
**Saturday, 10 am - 4 pm**  
**Sunday, 10 am - 3 pm**  
**(\$5 a grocery-sized bag day!)**

where: **Willits Branch Library**  
**390 E. Commercial St.**  
**Willits**

bring: **your book bag**

**Rollo the Reading Rooster is crowing about the Fall Book Sale.**

**Sunday • Sept. 15, 2019 • 1-4 pm**  
— BOTH HOUSES —

**1376 Tuck Road • Willits**  
3 bedroom, 2 bath.  
**\$289,900**  
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72 Mill Creek Dr., Willits  
Look what we have! Almost brand new construction located in a sweet established neighborhood on the westside of Willits. Everything is brand new except the framing and foundation! Welcome to this turnkey beauty! This home features several upgrades that are worth taking a peek. Stainless steel appliances, solid surface counters, generous master suite and mini-split heating/cooling system  
**\$380,000**

229 Bonnie Lane, Willits  
Located on the southside of Willits for that easy commute to Ukiah sits this lovingly cared for 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom home with ample off-street parking for cars and RVs.  
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## Pets: We can't live without them, but our buyers can

Most of us wouldn't trade our pets for anything, but when it comes to selling your home, why limit your audience to pet lovers? I would never suggest trying to hide the fact that you have pets, but I would recommend you follow a few tips on minimizing the negative effects pets can have on your home.

Starting with the outdoors, be sure to remove any landmines that will leave a bad odor on the bottom of a potential buyer's shoe. If your dog has torn up the landscaping, repair it, and see if Fido can stay with friends when a Realtor wants to show your property.

As you move indoors, before you invite Realtors to bring potential buyers to the house, consider addressing the following problems:



Richard Selzer  
Columnist

- Fix door jambs (if the wood is damaged, replace it)
- Replace window treatments (stained, scratched curtains do not impress people)
- Repair, replace or remove furniture (as a rule, you should remove about a third of your furniture when you put your house on the market – if you have pets, remove the third that the pet(s) use the most)
- Repair or replace flooring (stained carpet and scratched wood floors should be repaired; odors sometimes require the carpet and the carpet pad to be replaced)

I once knew someone with so many dogs that the carpet, carpet pad, subfloor and much of the sheetrock had to be replaced before the home would sell. Clearly, you don't want to take on extra expenses when selling your house, but to maximize the amount of money you will get out of the sale, you may need to do some repair work.

Again, do not try to hide the fact that you have pets, simply minimize the negative impacts. If you do not disclose that pets live in the house and potential buyers find out before the sale closes, you could lose the sale. If a buyer finds out about your pets after the escrow closes because of odors or needed repairs, you, the seller, could be on the hook for expensive repairs. So, do not conceal defects; fix them.

I've mostly been referring to dogs and cats when I've said "pets," but some people have slightly more unusual pets, like birds, snakes and rodents. If you have friends willing to keep your pets while you're trying to sell your house (or at least when it's scheduled to be shown), it's probably best. A Realtor I know showed a house that had a safe, fully enclosed terrarium for their pet snake. When the potential buyers entered the room with the snake, that was it. The wife turned on her heel and left. She didn't even want to see the rest of the house. It's possible the house wasn't right for other reasons, but the snake clearly didn't help.

If you cannot move your pets out of the house while it's being shown, at least be sure to clean the cages, empty litter boxes, open windows (if weather permits), and put dogs and cats in their crate if they're crate-trained, or outside safely confined.

If you have questions about real estate or property management, contact me at rselzer@selzerrealty.com or visit www.realtyworldselzer.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 Bakery!) If you'd like to read previous articles, visit my blog at www.realtyworldselzer.com/mendocino-county-real-estate-blog.

Dick Selzer is a real estate broker who has been in the business for more than 40 years.



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**Call for ad space: April Tweddell 707-972-2475**  
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**Willits Furniture Center**  
1978

A decade after its inception, store owner Michael Smith (son of the original owner, Ottis Smith) moved the Willits Furniture Center to its current location adding more than double the square footage. People from all over Mendocino County arrived for their Grand Opening, excited to see the brand new showroom. "We sold a lot of mattresses, sofas, and recliners back then," recalled Smith. "And on delivery, we made sure



Hands of a child infected with Smallpox

Smallpox, a deadly virus, was eradicated! Smith's independent company predates this pivotal event and others which will be highlighted during October.

**Currently, Willits Furniture Center is having an Anniversary Sale from now until Saturday, Nov. 2nd with reduced prices from 10% to 50% off! They're open Mon. - Fri from 10 - 6 and Sat. from 11 - 5.**

Still located at 775 Central Ave, Willits (707) 459-4224

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Presented by: Christopher Martin

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**Offered at \$273,000**



# Valuing a business

Neighbors, friends: For many of my clients, I do their personal taxes as well as their business taxes. I work closely with clients when they are considering buying a business or selling their business.

One must come up with a fair value for the business whether buying or selling; no one wants to pay too much or receive too little. You may have a good business that provides a good living to you, your employees, *but* if no one wants to buy that business, there is no value.

Every business has its strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats. To do a proper evaluation

– for your peace of mind – these are things that must be researched and considered:

- ♦ Background information on the company and management
- ♦ Economic and competitive environment
- ♦ Historical and projected financial statements
- ♦ Assets-vs.-loans ratio
- ♦ Diverse sources of customers, stable/growing customer base, high percentage of repeat customers
- ♦ New sales drivers
- ♦ Established vendors and suppliers with strong contracts
- ♦ A strong brand



Nicholas Casagrande  
Columnist



- ♦ No liabilities, such as legal concerns or trademark infringement problems
  - ♦ Strong market position, with potential for growth
  - ♦ Low debt-to-profit ratio
  - ♦ A strong set of business practices and written processes or systems that allow the buyer to replicate the successes of the company
  - ♦ *Last but not least* – a few years of filed tax returns – very helpful in deciding to acquire, merge or expand. Lots of good information in these.
- Seems like a daunting list ... but if the business you want to value is yours, you know, and have, a lot of this stuff, and – if you are looking to buy a business – you want this level of detail.


Working together, we can determine a solid value – it would be time very well spent.

As always, please call me to talk through – I look forward to strategizing with you!

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-medium-sized businesses. Client work includes personal and corporate taxes, investment 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](mailto:nicholas@ncfinancialgroup.com) (taxes) or [Nicholas.Casagrande@Ceterafs.com](mailto:Nicholas.Casagrande@Ceterafs.com) (investments) for more information. This information is for general purposes only. Please consult a financial professional for your own situation. Individual circumstances do vary.

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