

CAL FIRE lifts county burn ban

Posted by CAL FIRE MEU

Mendocino County – The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Mendocino Unit is lifting the suspension of residential outdoor burn permits. This suspension was lifted on Monday, October 13, 2025, at 8 am.

CAL FIRE Mendocino Unit Chief Brandon Gunn is formally cancelling the burn permit suspension and advises that those possessing current and valid agriculture and residential burn permits can now resume burning on permissible burn days. Agriculture burns must be inspected by CAL FIRE prior to burning until the end of the peak fire season. Inspections may be required for burns other than agriculture burns.

Burn Permits are available online from CAL FIRE at <https://burnpermit.fire.ca.gov>.

IMPORTANT: CALFIRE Burn Permits are only for residents who live in the State Responsibility Area (SRA) or where CAL FIRE has jurisdictional authority. It is the responsibility of the landowner to check with local fire agencies to determine any additional permits that might be required and if there are

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Former Covelo fire chief reported killed in vehicle vs. pedestrian crash

Jennifer Poole
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The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office and the California Highway Patrol, Garberville (Laytonville Resident Post), both sent press releases on Monday announcing a vehicle vs. pedestrian crash on Sunday, October 12, resulting in the death of the male pedestrian.

Although the agencies did not release the pedestrian's name on Monday, pending notification of next of kin, multiple outlets, including local agencies and residents on Facebook, have reported and confirmed that the pedestrian was Bill Baker, former longtime Covelo fire chief.

"Bill Baker dedicated his life to service," the Covelo American Legion Post 759 posted Tuesday. "As a brave fire chief, firefighter, member of Martin Haydon Post 759 American Legion for over 20 consecutive years and proud Vietnam veteran, he stood on the front lines, at home and

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Above, from left: Inspirational messages and images were painted onto rocks to support those going through cancer. Cancer Resource Centers' Executive Director Anya Jindrich stands with CRC Bilingual Patient Navigator Mauricio Alvarez, both of whom spoke at the Cancer Awareness event. Adventist Health Ukiah Valley's Marketing and Communications Manager Cici Winiger addressed the crowd and introduced speakers. Delicious treats and beautiful flowers helped set the pink-theme for the event. Below: Infusion nurse Jeanna Cerino writes a name on a ribbon and adds it to the others named in memory or inspiration, on the Breast Cancer Tribute Wall.



Below, from left: Gals pose together at the photo booth wearing all the pink-themed fun, including, from left: Adrianna, Ria, Amy Warmerdam, and Isabel. Amy Warmerdam and Shirley Oliver share a smile in the courtyard before the event begins. Sandy Smith and Leigh Austin fill goody bags at the swag table. Attendees smile together for a quick group photo. The oncology team poses together for a photo in the photo booth.

Amy Warmerdam and Shirley Oliver share a smile in the courtyard before the event begins.

Sandy Smith and Leigh Austin fill goody bags at the swag table. Attendees smile together for a quick group photo.

The oncology team poses together for a photo in the photo booth.

Photos by Maureen Jennison

October Awareness

It's breast cancer awareness month, time to book that mammogram!

We've talked a lot about breast cancer lately here on the pages of Willits Weekly (I know, I know), but October is another great excuse to bring it to the forefront of everyone's mind as, yes, mammograms and early detection can save lives. October is breast cancer awareness month, which makes it the perfect time to stop procrastinating, pick up the phone and get scheduled to be screened – and screening mammograms do NOT need a doctor's referral beforehand – patients can just call direct themselves, and be scheduled.

Adventist Heath's Ukiah Valley campus held an event last week to bring awareness, to share stories, resources and support to those facing cancer and those recovering, and in memory of those who have passed. The event included a moving testimony from featured speaker Shirley Oliver; information from oncologist Dr. Hengbing Wang; mental health information from Behavioral Health Program Manager Mimi Ellis; screening

and support information from Director of Diagnostic Imaging Honalee Newman and Breast Health Navigator Kira Parisi; information on the Cancer Resource Centers from Anya Jindrich and Mauricio Alvarez, and AHUV's Marketing and Communications Manager Cici Winiger decorated, organized and emceed the event.

All three local campuses; Adventist Health Howard Memorial, Adventist Health Ukiah Valley, and Adventist Health Mendocino Coast can help book and schedule patients to be seen for a mammogram and can help answer any questions one may have. Reach Howard Hospital, located at 1 Marcela Drive in Willits at (707) 459-6801; reach Ukiah Valley, located at 275 Hospital Drive, Ukiah at (707) 462-3111; and reach Mendocino Coast, located at 700 River Drive, Fort Bragg at (707) 961-1234. More info: www.adventisthealth.org/services/cancer-oncology/breast-care/

– Maureen Jennison



At far left: Testimonial Speaker Shirley Oliver listens to oncologist Dr. Hengbing Wang as he speaks to the gathered crowd.

At left: AH attendees included Holly Sears, Sara Patten, and Amanda Watkins.

WCC approves zoning changes for future expansion of Sanhedrin log deck

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Willits City Council members voted 3 to 0 to approve zoning amendments to the Willits General Plan requested by Sanhedrin Timber Company, LLC. Councilmember Gerry Gonzalez was absent, and Councilmember Bruce Burton recused himself from the vote, as his Willits Redwood Co. does business with Sanhedrin.

Sanhedrin Timber
Read the rest of **Zoning**
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Incarcerated firefighters to see 'historic' pay increase in laws Newsom signed

By Cayla Mihalovich, CalMatters

This story was originally published by CalMatters. Sign up for their newsletters <https://calmatters.org/subscribe-to-calmatters/>

October 14 – Hundreds of California's incarcerated firefighters will see an increase in pay, a new death benefit, and a faster path to expungement of their criminal records under

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

WUSD superintendent reports some admin changes

Submitted by WUSD Superintendent John A. Baker

In our ongoing effort to strengthen our schools and cultivate a positive, expert-driven culture, the Willits Unified School District has made an organizational change that will benefit our students, staff, and community. These changes are grounded in our shared commitment to building schools that are collaborative, well-led, and focused on student success.

I am pleased to announce that Shane Topolinski, an experienced and dedicated school leader, will serve as the Principal of Baechtel Grove Middle School. Topolinski brings years of

Read the rest of **WUSD**
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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 8:30 a.m.
Info? 707-459-1905
www.agapebiblechurch.com

Amazing Grace Assembly of God Church
803 Coast Street
P.O. Box 489, Willits
Worship Service - 5:00 p.m.
Pastor Kris Strickland
EVERYBODY IS WELCOME

Church of Christ
"What must we do to be saved?"
Acts 2:37
1095 S. Main St., Willits
(next to Super 8)
(707) 459-5023
Sunday Bible Study-10:00 a.m.
Sunday Worship-11:00 a.m.
Sunday Evening Service-
6-7:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study-
7-8:00 p.m.

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.

Eckankar: The Path of Spiritual Freedom
•A University for Soul
•Spiritual Living Courses
•Spiritual Discussions
•ECK Light & Sound Services
More information?
Call 530-224-8703
www.eckankar.org

Grace Community Church
Celebrating Life In Christ
25 Hazel Street, Willits
Worship Service
10 a.m.
For appointments call:
(707) 459-3106

St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church
61 W. San Francisco Ave.
Willits, CA 95490
Father Aaron Bandannadam
Mass times:
Wednesday-Friday 9:00 a.m.
Saturday-5:30 p.m.
Sunday-9:00 a.m. - English
10:30 a.m. - Spanish
Confessions on Saturday
4:45 - 5:15 p.m.
Or by appointment at
707-459-2252
https://santhonywillits.org/
sainthonywillits@gmail.com
We welcome All Walks of Faith

St. Francis Episcopal Church
1 North Main Street, Willits
707-272-0177
Sunday Service - 10 a.m.
In-person and on Zoom
Call for information.
ALL ARE WELCOME
The Rev. Betsy Bruneau

St. John Lutheran Church
Sunday Service
10:00 a.m.
(707) 459-2988
24 Mill Creek Drive
Facebook.com/stjohnswillits
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 - 7:00 p.m.
399 W. Mendocino Ave.
All are welcome!

Willits United Methodist Church
Labyrinth and Peace Garden
A place to find comfort
where all are welcome
Pastor Jaime Rogers-Fairchild
Sunday Worship at 10:30 am
286 School St. (at Pine)
707-459-2855
wumc@outlook.com
www.willitsumc.org
Facebook: facebook/willitsumc

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



Thursday, October 16

Willits Farmers Market: Thursdays from 3 to 5:30 pm at City Park with vendors along State Street for the freshest produce available, local meat, farm fresh eggs, hot and cold food from local businesses, along with crafts, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more. The market honors EBT and WIC cards and matches benefits to double your dollars.

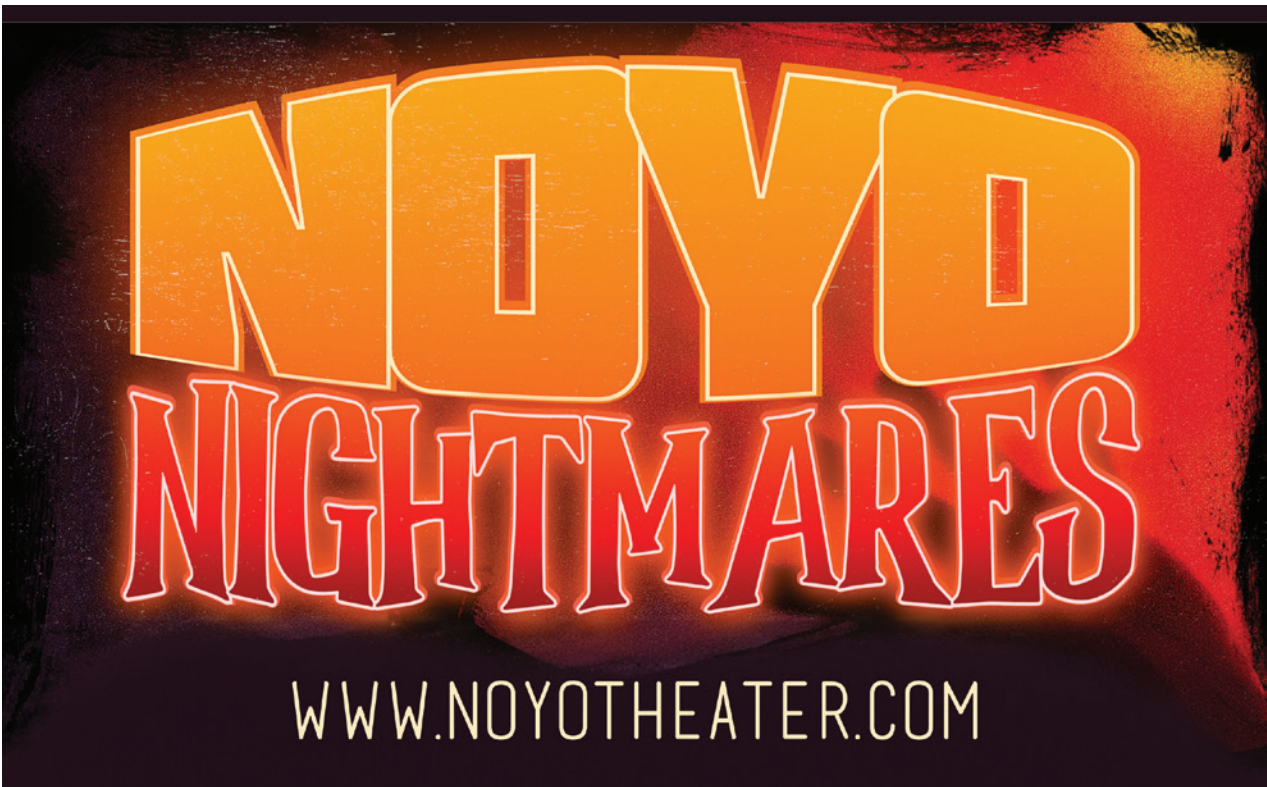
F.O.W.L. Book Sale at the Library: Books for \$1 to \$3 and children's books starting at 25 cents! Thursday, October 16 from 5 to 7 pm is open only to Friends of the Willits Library members, so join at the sale, which continues October 17 and 18 from 10 am to 5 pm and on Sunday, October 19 from 10 am to 3 pm when you can fill a bag for \$3.

Fall Sisterhood Event at Amazing Grace Assembly: 'Abide in Audacious Love' at this women's gathering featuring lunch, prizes, a Dooney & Bourke bag raffle and more for a donation of \$5, Thursday, October 16 at 11:30 am at the Amazing Grace Assembly, 803 Coast Street, Willits.

Creative Writers Workshop at the Library: Share your fictional works in a supportive environment, receive feedback and discuss publishing. This free event is open to ages 13 and up. Paper and pencils provided and Chromebooks available for check-out with valid library card. Thursday, October 16, from 4:30 to 6 pm.

Noyo Nightmares Horror Film Festival, October 17 thru 31

Nightly until Halloween the Noyo Theater will show cult and classic horror favorites including 'The Lost Boys', 'Bride of Frankenstein' (1938), 'Killer Knowns from Outer Space', 'The Exorcist', 'The Occult', 'Poltergeist', 'The Re-Animator' and 'The Toxic Avenger' (2025), or binge watch all of them on Showcase Weekend, October 24, 25 and 26. On October 24 meet Paul Haley, 'Chubby' from Killer Klowns, enjoy Q & A with Peter Hyoguchi, director of 'The Occult' on October 25 and on Halloween there will be a special screening of 'Wrecker' followed by a Q & A with director Brian Brooks. More info and specific showtimes: noyoteater.com.



Meet the Brooktrails Fire Chief: Meet Fire Chief Jeff Donaldson, enjoy free pizza, a Q & A discussion and an overview of the Sherwood Firewise Planned Activities for 2026 on Thursday, October 16 beginning at 5:30 pm at the Brooktrails Community Center, 24850 Birch Street.

Avenues to Wellness presentation October at WCA: Melinda Clarke, LMFT, presents: 'Taking Care of Ourselves and Others with Civility and Compassion.' Free to the public, though donations appreciated. Thursday, October 16 from 6 to 7 pm at Willits Center for the Arts.

Friday, October 17

F.O.W.L. Book Sale at the Library: Friday, October 17 from 10 am to 5 pm at the Willits Library. See Oct 16 listing for more info.

'Spooktacular' S.T.E.M. Science at the Library: Open to kids aged 9 to 14, Friday, October 17 from 3:30 to 5 pm at the Willits Branch Library. This week's project: Bubbling Cauldrons!

Book Lovers Discussion Group at the Library: Come talk about books, authors, and genres at this monthly discussion group on Friday, October 17 from noon to 1 pm at the Willits Branch Library.

Food Not Bombs in Rec Grove Park: Food Not Bombs Willits presents a free meal, zines and supplies every first and third Fridays around 5 pm. Everyone is welcome. Join us at the picnic tables.

Line Dancing & DJ Juice at The Munchery: A country night with line dancing lessons beginning at 7:30 pm on Friday, October 17 at The Munchery, 1797 South Main Street, Willits. \$5 cover.

Singer-Songwriter Night at Shanachie: Featuring Luna Worldcast and Hunter Cory at 8 pm and Warren Pash and Ezra Meredith at 10 pm, Friday, October 17 at Shanachie Pub.

Saturday, October 18

F.O.W.L. Book Sale at the Library: Saturday, October 18 from 10 am to 5 pm at the Willits Branch Library. See Oct 16 listing for more info.

No Kings II March at Babcock Park: As part of this nationwide peaceful demonstration, we will meet on Saturday, October 18 at 10 am at Babcock Park and march to Bud Snider Park. Shuttles will be available for those who don't wish to walk.



Four Shillings Short Concert at Round Valley Library: A free family-friendly event, 'Around the World in 30 Instruments' is a blend of music, culture and storytelling. Saturday, October 18 from 2 to 3 pm at the Round Valley Library, 23925 Howard Street, Covelo.

The Cult of Ours at Shanachie: Saturday, October 18 at 8 pm at Shanachie Pub, Willits.

Sunday, October 19

F.O.W.L. Book Sale at the Library: Sunday, October 19 from 10 am to 3 pm, fill a bag for \$3 at the Willits Branch Library. See Oct 16 listing for more info.

Stone Stories at WCT: Theatrical readings that will explore the lives and legacies of those interred in the Little Lake and Laytonville cemeteries, October 19 from 2 to 3:30 pm at the Willits Community Theatre. Free to attend, donations accepted.



Mendocino Group Sierra Club Quarterly Meeting: All are welcome to an in-person meeting on Sunday, October 19 from noon to 2:30 pm at the Willits Environmental Center, 630 South Main Street. More info: Robin Leler 707-459-0155.

Monday, October 20

Gem and Mineral Society Monthly Meeting: Featuring a special presentation on fluorescent minerals from around the world. The correct date for this meeting is Monday, October 20 from 7 to 8:30 pm at the Little Lake Grange.

Wednesday, October 22

Willits Stamp Club at the Library: Bring your collection and enjoy time perusing stamps. All are welcome. Refreshments served. October 22 from 5 to 6:30 pm at the Willits Branch Library. Info: talsofam@pacific.net.

History Makers Family Programs at the Museum: Make Fall crafts every Wednesday in October from 2 to 4:30 pm. This week: Night Creatures!

Thursday, October 23

Willits Farmers Market: Join your neighbors on Thursdays from 3 to 5:30 pm at City Park, for the freshest produce available, local meat, tasty treats, crafts, the new edition of the Willits Weekly and much more. See Oct 16 listing for more details.

Trivia Night at The Munchery: 'Spooky' Trivia on Thursday, October 23 at 6 pm at The Munchery, 1797 South Main Street, Willits.

Friday, October 24

'Spooktacular' S.T.E.M. Science at the Library: Open to kids aged 9 to 14, this week's project is Pumpkin Powers! Friday, October 24 from 3:30 to 5 pm at the Willits Library.

Haunted House at Willits Charter School: This fundraising event with the theme 'Alice in Horrorland' is \$10 for adults, \$5 for kids and \$15 for families and will be held Friday, October 24 and Saturday, October 25 from 7 to 9 pm at the Willits Charter School.

Costume Party Skate Night at Harwood Hall: Dress up and roller skate for only \$1 from 6 to 8 pm on Friday, October 24. Harwood Hall, 44400 Willis Avenue, Laytonville.

Frankie & the Lost Souls at Shanachie: Friday, October 24 at 8 pm at Shanachie Pub.

Saturday, October 25

Harvest Festival at Ridgewood Ranch: Featuring a Pumpkin Patch, Corn Maze, Hay Rides, Local Artists, Farmers Market and a farm-to-table gourmet lunch on Saturday, October 25 from 11 am to 4 pm, rain or shine at Ridgewood Ranch. Cost is \$5 and costumes are encouraged!

Halloween Party at The Munchery: Family-friendly fun including a costume contest and Open Mic starting at 6 pm on Saturday, October 25 at the Munchery, 1797 South Main Street.

Haunted House at Willits Charter School: Saturday, October 25 from 7 to 9 pm. See Oct 24 listing for more info.

Blue Luke at Shanachie: Saturday, October 25 at 8 pm at Shanachie Pub.

Sunday, October 26

Grange Pancake Breakfast: All you can eat "scratch" pancakes (sourdough, wholegrain, Hank's famous buttermilk, or gluten-free) plus organic, local farm-fresh scrambled eggs, Beeler's Quality bacon, real butter, juice and organic coffee or tea for only \$12! (\$11 for Seniors, \$5 for kids under 10). Extra sides of organic fruit, Amish organic maple syrup, fresh fruit syrup or bacon for a small additional fee. October 26 from 8 to 11 am, Little Lake Grange.

Death Cafe at Inner Earth Tea: A safe space to discuss death and dying. Sunday, October 26 from 1 to 3 pm at Inner Earth Tea House, 40 East San Francisco Avenue. Donation-based.

Song Circle at Inner Earth Tea: Bring your songs to share and sing together on Sunday, October 26 from 4 to 6 pm. Donation-based, all skill levels welcome. Inner Earth Tea House.



COLUMN | AT THE MOVIES

'Tron Ares'

The Story: Science fiction, high action (but no blood), with music score by Nine Inch Nails band leader Trent Reznor, occasional comedic nostalgia for "TRON" and the '80s and Depeche Mode-the then new-wave rock ensemble.

Dude, no make that Duuude!!! This flick's a Visual Explosion from frame one. Kind and good computer game designer and master-coder Eve Kim (Greta Lee) is looking for the "permanence code" which is a program that will take any person, place, or thing created in the Digital Realm and make it



Dan Essman
Columnist

real-and-solid in The Real World! OMG!!! Obviously, anyone who possesses the "permanence code" will, more or less, Rule The World! And that is reason enough for the ruthless smirking power-hungry corporate evil guy Julian Dillinger (Evan Peters) to hunt down poor decent Eve, and then do bad things to her. GACK!!! That's pretty much the story, not counting the curious existence of Ares the digital super soldier (entirely too-handsome, even-with-a-beard Jared Leto). The rest is flashy graphics and mayhem.

My Thoughts: I very much liked the movie for its imagery. Special shout-out to beautiful Gillian "X-Files" Anderson who plays evil Dillinger's Mama, and tries to warn him about the dangers of being evil. Let her spot-on warnings be a moral



message to us all not to be power-hungry SOB's. Especially film reviewers. Parents: "Digital realm? Permanence Code?" This flick is much too confusing and abstract for children.

Willitsian Daniel Essman prefers his reality attenuated by the wisdom of the imagination.

TOWN-WIDE ONGOING EVENTS

Willits Tennis Club: Meets every Monday and Wednesday from 9 to 11 am at the Willits High School Tennis Courts. All levels welcome. More info: 707-484-3385.

Drop-In Life Drawing Group at WCA: Every Thursday from 1 to 4 pm at Willits Center for the Arts. Cost is based on sliding scale. More info: Margaret 707-459-9251.

Brown Bag Lunch Program: Saturdays at 1 pm, sack lunches are served by local churches, community organizations, and families at Bud Snider City Park on East Commercial. Come at 1 pm to be assured a lunch!

Willits Indivisible Democracy Vigil: Every Friday from 5 to 6 pm at Babcock Park on South Main Street. More info: "Willits Indivisible" on Facebook.

Lunch to Live Music at Brickhouse Coffee: every Wednesday from noon to 2 pm featuring various artists. Corner of Main and Commercial Streets, Willits.

Pickleball: Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays at 5 pm and Saturdays at 9 am at the Willits High School tennis courts. Free to play and all levels welcome.

Tibetan Buddhist Meditation Group: Meets every Monday at 6 pm at the Muse in Willits, 30 East San Francisco Street. More info: 707-354-1866.

Willits Drum Circle: Every second and fourth Friday at 7 pm, at St. Francis of the Redwoods on the corner of Main and Commercial Streets. Info: Bill Bruneau: 459-3390.

Literacy Volunteers of Willits: We teach adults to read! Free personal tutoring at the library.

Call or email to make an appointment: LiteracyWillits@gmail.com or 707-456-7729.

Mobile Showers Available in Willits: Mobile shower is in Willits every Monday and Tuesday from 2:30 to 4:30 pm, behind St. Francis Church at the corner of Main and Commercial Streets. Toiletries, towels and washcloths provided. Those with disabilities may need to bring a helper. Sack dinners are served from 4:30 to 5:30 by Willits Daily Bread.

Inland Valley Women's Chorus: Every Thursday (except holidays) from 6 to 7:30 pm to sing songs of peace, joy, social justice and healing. No audition or experience required. Carpooling available from Willits. Holy Trinity Church, Mary & Martha Room, 640 South Orchard Avenue, Ukiah. More info: Madge Strong, 707-459-1493.

Shanachie Pub Ongoing Events

Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street

Saturday Sessions at Shanachie: Every 2nd and 4th Saturday from 3 to 6 pm, Tommy G will host an open jam at Shanachie Pub. Bring any instrument and explore your creativity!

Bluegrass String Jam: An official jam for the California Bluegrass Association, every 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month starting at 3 pm, with all Bluegrass musicians welcome!

Wednesday Open Mic Night: Every Wednesday— Enter your name in the lottery from 3 to 7 pm to choose your 20-minute time slot, with performances beginning at 7:20.

Ongoing Events at the Willits Library

Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. Info: www.mendolibrary.org or 459-5908.

Open hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 10 am to 7 pm; Friday, 10 am to 6 pm; Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm; Closed Sunday and Monday.

Penny University Coffee Klatch: Wednesdays, 11 am to 1 pm, in the Willits Library meeting room to discuss various topics while enjoying a "cup of joe."

LEGO Club: Tuesdays from 4 to 6:30 pm. "Bring your imagination and start building."

Tech Help: Saturdays from 11 am to noon, come get computer help and your technical questions answered!

Spinning and Knitting: Saturdays at the library; from 1 to 4:30 pm. All skill levels welcome! Spinning, 1 to 2 pm; Knitting, 2 to 4:30 pm.

Story and Playtime: Fridays from 11 am to noon, bring the kids for a story followed by play time in the Children's Area.



Above: The cross country ladies prepare for their meet. At right: Quarterback Corey Rocky receives the snap to make a play. Below, left: D Fainer makes his way to the end of the cross country meet. Below, right: Rickey Ramirez runs in the American flag at the homecoming game.

Photos by Ava Dockins-Kline



COMMUNITY SPORTS ROUNDUP

Wolverines girls golf team beats Lower Lake, cross country finishes second at NCL 1 League, JV and varsity football take multiple wins

Ladies golf wins its first competition away from home

The Willits High School Girls Golf Team secured a victory over Lower Lake High School at the beautiful Buckingham Golf Course in Kelseyville. This was the first time the ladies competed away from their home course in Brooktrails. There were some challenges adjusting to the longer holes, but the Wolverines persevered to finish on top.

“Our team was led by standout golfer Sofia Vacarro, who turned out the team’s best score,” said Head Coach Juliana Aguilar. “Other key players contributing to the win were Vada Morgan, Brodey Lamprich, Susana Navarro and Gracie Crook. I’m incredibly proud of these young women and all they’ve accomplished in our very first season. They’ve laid the foundation for something special. I look forward to what the future holds for the WHS Girls Golf program.”

Cross country finishes strong with standout runners

The boys and girls Willits Cross Country Teams competed against the full NCL 1 League on October 8 at the stunning Par Course nestled in the hills of Brooktrails. This was a perfect day for running, and the boys team made great strides, finishing second out of eight schools, behind Fort Bragg. Unfortunately the girls had an incomplete team and did not receive a score. But this will not put out their fire for developing this sport and future competitions.

Senior standout Cole Lane finished first out of 46 runners, continuing his undefeated streak of the 2025 season. His time of 16:23 tied for 14th place on the WHS all-time list for the Brooktrails Par Course which dates back over 35 years. Freshman Cassius Lane, Cole’s brother, ran a time of 19:32 and narrowly missed a spot on the WHS all time freshman list.

Junior Darli Suarez and senior D Fainer each had their best race of the season, finishing eighth and ninth respectively. This was the first time either runner had cracked the top 10 in a league race. Sophomore Frida Friend had a great performance and finished eighth out of 23 runners, with a time of 25:56, her first time finishing the top 10.

“I was very happy with the outcome of the race,” said Head Coach Kenny Smith. “The team is training hard and getting faster each week. The varsity boys are on Fort Bragg’s heels and still on the hunt for a league title.

Even though the girls weren’t able to compete as a team, I was impressed by their times. Every one of them is new to cross country and they are quickly developing into good runners.”

Willits football in it for the wins

Wolverines Football won the last time they faced off with Lower Lake, and things went their way for both JV and varsity this time, too. JV had their most outstanding victory of the season against the Trojans, despite a setback of injuries, with a dominating score of 50-26!

“We came into the Lower Lake game pretty beat up, and had some starters on the sideline with injuries,” said Head Coach Reece Christiansen. “We had to call on some players to step up and play some positions they weren’t used to playing. It was a very physical game and we suffered even more injuries. At halftime, we called on our players to come together and play with heart and finish strong. They responded better than we could have hoped and put together an amazing second-half, bringing home a win. We were very proud of all of them, their toughness, and readiness to fill whatever spots needed to be filled.”

Varsity took the dub in a riveting head-to-head game against the Trojans. The Wolverines came back after their halftime prayer and pep talk with the coaches full of fire and ready to take the lead. A big part of the win was from the chemistry between QB Corey Rockey and Ryan Carter, and Ricky Britton with some stellar passes and touchdowns. Strong tackles and runs by Donald Glenn, Porter Garman and Rickey Ramirez.

Wolverines varsity swept Clearlake this last Friday on our home turf for homecoming with a resounding 36-7 victory! This makes two wins in a row for varsity. While the Cardinals running game was the biggest threat, the Wolverines stayed in control. The win came in part to a big defensive effort. They were not letting the Cardinals go far, and were chasing their QB down thoroughly. Defensive standouts were Zane Marshall, Donald Glenn, Pancrazio Bertolino, Grady Cooley and Kolt Davis. On offense, Rockey threw blazes and was not let down with passes caught by Carter, Britton and Ramirez, as well as great runs and touchdowns by Garman and Isaac Silva.

Congratulations to your success and wins in your games and tournaments WHS Wolverines! Your community continues to admire you for all of your hard work, while displaying athleticism and maintaining good grades. We are so proud of you. Let’s GO Wolverines!

The rest of WUSD | From page 1

experience as a successful principal and a strong reputation for building inclusive, high-functioning school cultures. His leadership style emphasizes collaboration, instructional excellence, and consistent support for both teachers and students. Under his direction, we are confident that Baechtel Grove will continue to grow as a place where students are supported, staff are valued, and the community is engaged.

We are deeply grateful to Lorenzo Sandoval for his leadership as Interim Principal over the past five weeks. During that time, Sandoval provided stability and dedication to the Baechtel community, ensuring the school remained focused on learning and student wellbeing. As he continues his journey as Vice Principal at Baechtel Grove Middle School, Lorenzo Sandoval will work closely with Principal Topolinski to strengthen academic programs, improve student support systems, and foster positive school climate initiatives that align with the district’s vision.

The rest of Zoning | From page 1

Company had requested approval of a General Plan Amendment and Zone Change for two parcels totaling approximately 19.05 acres at 23701 North Highway 101, the old Quail Meadows Campground property.

The purpose of the proposed c is to facilitate the future expansion of the existing Sanhedrin Timber log yard operations, currently located on an adjacent parcel .

Lastweek’sapprovedrequestamendedthe General Plan designation from Commercial General to Industrial General; rezoned the same lands from Community Commercial and Heavy Commercial to Heavy Industrial; and established an approximately 2.2-acre frontage parcel along North Main Street for commercial uses through an administrative boundary line adjustment (BLA not before council for approval at this hearing).

Community Development Director Dusty Duley made a presentation on the proposed zoning changes, including on the “pretty hefty” agenda packet accompanying the item, most of which was the environmental review document required by the California Environmental Quality Act, that was prepared by LACO Associates.

Key issues with a future log deck expansion outlined in the staff report include:

- Fire Protection and Safety - Fire risk from log storage requires robust suppression. The applicant proposes on-site ponds, hydrants, and a Bark Management Plan coordinated with Little Lake Fire District.

- Water Supply - The log yard would operate primarily on independent wells and recirculating ponds, preserving the City’s limited municipal water capacity.

- Biological Resources - Wetlands, riparian habitat, and sensitive species are present; mitigation requires surveys, buffers, and agency permitting.

- Noise - Potential impacts on Willits High School and nearby residences. Mitigation requires limited construction hours, mufflers, and future noise assessments for industrial operations

During his presentation, Duley mentioned several previous projects for the property the city had worked on with several different applicants – none of which ended up being

The rest of Lifted | From page 1

any additional burning restrictions for their area.

You must have possession of a signed permit while you are conducting a burn. If you lose your permit or it expires, you will need to obtain another permit before you start burning.

Safe residential pile burning of forest residue by landowners is a crucial tool in reducing fire hazards. State, Federal, and Local land management and fire agencies will also be utilizing this same window of opportunity to conduct prescribed burns aimed at improving forest health and resiliency on private and public lands.

Before you burn, call Mendocino County Air Management District at (707) 463-4391 to confirm that you have all the required burn permits and to ensure it is a permissive burn day. Burning can only be done on permissive burn days and is prohibited on non-burn days.

For additional information on how to create Defensible Space, on how you and your family can prepare for wildfires, as well as tips to prevent wildfires, visit <https://ReadyForWildfire.org>

Editor’s Note: Last year, CAL FIRE lifted the burn ban on November 1, 2024.

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laws Gov. Gavin Newsom signed on Monday

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a set of bills meant to recognize incarcerated firefighters, including a historic measure to raise their pay to meet the federal minimum wage during active fires.

The wage increase, funded through the state budget, follows years of advocacy to improve pay and working conditions for incarcerated labor. That effort took on a new urgency after hundreds of incarcerated firefighters were deployed to battle deadly wildfires that hit Los Angeles in January.

State lawmakers this year introduced a seven-bill “Firefighting to Freedom” package to protect incarcerated firefighters and support job opportunities upon their reentry. Five of those bills were signed into law Monday, marking the most comprehensive changes to incarcerated firefighting in the state’s history.

Incarcerated firefighters previously earned between \$5.80 and \$10.24 per day, according to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. During active emergencies, CAL FIRE pays them an additional \$1 per hour. Now, they will earn \$7.25 per hour when they’re on a fire.

Assemblymember Isaac Bryan, a Democrat from Culver City who authored the bill, said Californians should feel proud about the sense of moral clarity that crossed party lines.

“This is a historic and momentous day,” said Bryan. “The governor signing the bill is an incredibly powerful reminder that all labor is dignified and anybody who is willing to put their lives on the line deserves our gratitude.”

Bryan initially set out to raise wages for incarcerated firefighters to \$19 per hour, but settled on the federal minimum wage after budget negotiations. The bill was opposed by the California State Sheriffs’ Association over concerns of its potential fiscal impact on counties, which administer jails and could also face pressure to increase pay for incarcerated labor.

It received bipartisan support from nearly two dozen lawmakers.

“A number of years ago, when I worked for CAL FIRE, you have never seen men work harder than with these crews,” said Assemblymember Heath Flora at a legislative hearing in September. Flora is a Republican from Ripon who co-authored the bill. “There is not a system – there is not a program – better than the fire camps with CAL FIRE and the state of California.”

Bryan introduced the bill after voters last year rejected a ballot measure that would have ended forced labor in prisons and jails. It would have amended the state’s constitution to repeal language that allows involuntary servitude as a form of criminal punishment, making work assignments voluntary.

California’s incarcerated firefighters have long provided critical support to state, local and federal government agencies in responding to various emergencies, including wildfires and floods. They’re voluntary assignments.

Over 1,800 incarcerated firefighters live year-round in minimum-security conservation camps, also known as “fire

camps,” located across 25 counties in California, according to the corrections department. Those numbers have dwindled in recent years due to a declining prison population.

Two of the proposals did not pass, including one that would have required CAL FIRE to create more opportunities for incarcerated firefighters to secure firefighting jobs upon their release. The proposal, Assembly Bill 1380, did not reach Newsom.

That was disappointing to Royal Ramey, a formerly incarcerated firefighter who co-founded the nonprofit organization Forestry and Fire Recruitment Program, which sponsored the measure. But he said the other five bills signed by Newsom are “huge progress.”

“For me, transitioning from fire camp into a career was one of the hardest challenges of my life, and I know too many people who never got that chance,” said Ramey. “With these laws, we can change that story.”

The package of bills Newsom signed included:

- Assembly Bill 247: Requires incarcerated firefighters be paid \$7.25 per hour while actively fighting a fire.

- Assembly Bill 799: Requires the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation pay a death benefit of \$50,000 for the death of an incarcerated firefighter.

- Assembly Bill 812: Requires the corrections department to create regulations around referring incarcerated firefighters for resentencing.

- Assembly Bill 952: Requires the corrections department to establish and expand the Youth Offender Program Camp Pilot Program as a permanent program.

- Senate Bill 245: Streamlines and expedites the expungement process for formerly incarcerated firefighters.

“It’s incredibly heartening to see that the Legislature has taken the issue of protecting incarcerated firefighters seriously,” said Taina Angeli Vargas, executive director of the nonprofit organization Initiate Justice Action, which co-sponsored most of the bills. “It’s about time that the state of California began to treat them with more respect and dignity.”

Assemblymember Sade Elhawary, a Democrat from Los Angeles who authored the law to establish and expand the youth pilot program, said it’s an opportunity for the 13 other states that have incarcerated firefighters to “follow in the footsteps of California.”

“I hope this is the beginning of what will be a national movement to elevate the rights and opportunities for incarcerated firefighters,” she said. “All of these folks deserve more love and support.”

Cayla Mihalovich is a California Local News fellow. CalMatters is a nonpartisan and nonprofit news organization bringing Californians stories that probe, explain and explore solutions to quality of life issues while holding our leaders accountable. We are the only journalism outlet dedicated to covering America’s biggest state, 39 million Californians and the world’s fifth-largest economy.

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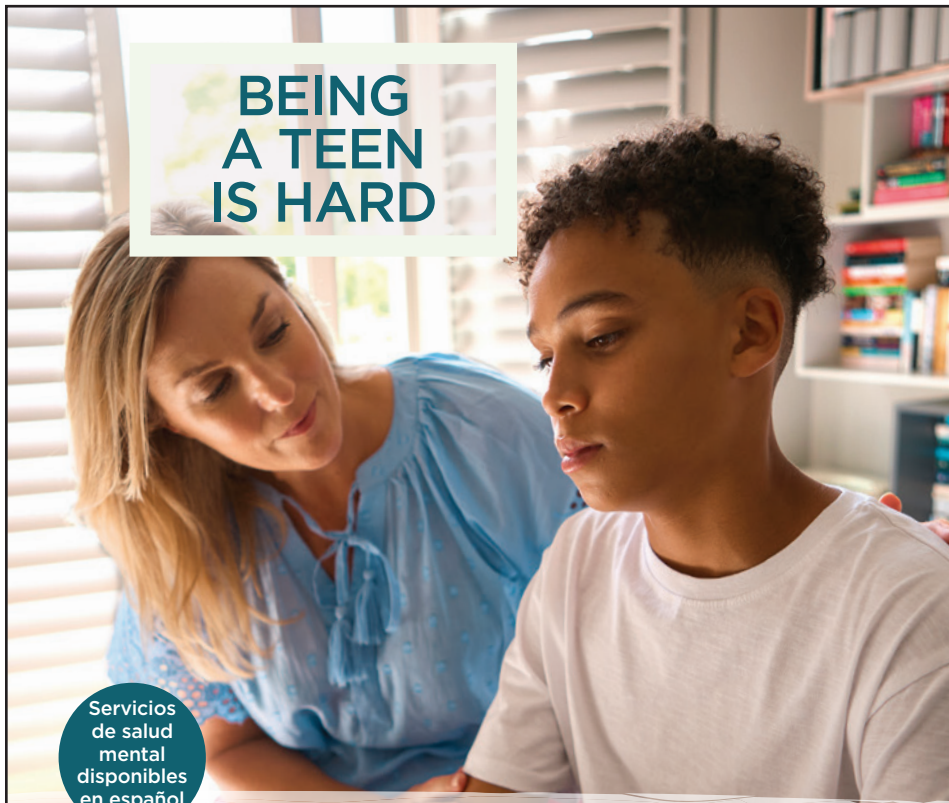
abroad, driven by a deep commitment to help and protect others. His courage, compassion, and unwavering sense of duty touched countless lives. Bill didn’t just serve; he inspired people. His legacy will live on in the hearts of all those he helped, those he loved, and the community he made safer and stronger. We will be honoring his life by bringing our flags to half mast today.”

The CHP press release reported: “A witness account placed the pedestrian within the traffic lanes of SR-162. The pedestrian was reportedly in the southbound lane when a 2019 Toyota 4Runner, driven by Sandra Yocselin Acosta Deloera (20-year-old resident of Covelo), struck the pedestrian, and for reasons still under investigation, failed to stop at the crash scene.”

The CHP PR continued: “At approximately 2148 hours, the Humboldt Communications Center was contacted by a family member of Acosta Deloera to report the crash. CHP units, assisted by the Mendocino County Sheriff’s Office, responded to the driver’s residence where Acosta Deloera was interviewed and the involved vehicle was located.

According to the synopsis of the incident provided in the MCSO press release: “On October 12, 2025 at about 8 pm, Mendocino County Sheriff’s Office deputies overheard radio transmissions of a traffic incident involving a vehicle and pedestrian near the intersection of Highway 162 and Fairbanks Road in Covelo.

Have something to say? Residents of Willits, Brooktrails, Laytonville and Covelo are welcome to send in a letter to the editor about local issues. Please email us: willitsweekly@gmail.com REMEMBER: Deadline is end of day Monday for each week’s Thursday edition.



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Library

Fall Book Sale

October 16th - 19th

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**Willits Branch Library
Conference Room**

Thur Oct 16th 5 pm to 7 pm
FOWL members only

Fri Oct 17th 10 am to 5pm
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Sun Oct 19th 10 am to 3 pm

Sunday all books only \$3 a bag!

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Above: The winning Ranch Rodeo team, Two Tall & One Round, including from left: Blair Beeson, Dan Moore and Kevin Gregorio, hold their buckles. The day started early with pancakes on the grill and a lovely sunrise. Lisa Arkelian won the Breakaway event and holds her buckle and check. At right: Kyle Starkey tied for first place in the Bronc Riding event and holds his buckle and check. Below, from left: Cowboys and cowgirls work in the arena to complete classes in groups of three. Buck Whitley tries his hand in the bronc riding, and barrels out of the chute. Jimmy Hoaglin won the Bull Riding event and holds his check and buckle. Not pictured: The GRIT and GRACE team who won the women's division and included members Lisa Arkelian, Ashley Persico and Nicol Kunka.

Ranch Rodeo

Annual Willits Frontier Days event showcases to crowd a slightly different set of cowboy skills, combined with barbecue cookoff

It was a day of fun for the cowboys, cowgirls, chefs and spectators during the annual Mary Burgess Memorial Willits Frontier Days Ranch Rodeo, held at the grounds last Saturday. While similar in ways to the regular rodeos held there, the Ranch Rodeo asks competitors to do some different tasks, and also, to work in teams of three.

This year, 13 self-named teams competed including: Two Tall & One Round; Flying BR; GRIT and GRACE; S-B Livestock; JF's A Team; J2 Livestock; Straight Off the Rez; 2 Whites and a Rez Kid; M Lazy A Ranch; Tia's Pink Pony Club; Dusty Diamonds; The 3 Amigos; and Shining Little R. The teams competed in each of the four events: Calf Branding, Ranch Doctoring, Team Sorting, and Trailer Loading. Each event gets scored – highest total score at the end of the rodeo wins. First place went to Two Tall & One Round; second place to Flying BR; and third place tied between GRIT and GRACE and S-B Livestock.

Some individual events were also held, and winners included: Breakaway: Lisa Arkelian; Ranch Bronc: Justin Brady and Kyle Starkey tied; and Bull Riding: Jimmy Hoaglin. Another special team event, Open Branding, was won by Team RKB.

There was also a barbecue cookoff with People's and Judges' Choice awards given out. Winners included: Brooktrails Fire Department for Judges' Choice Ribs; Spanky's BBQ for Judges' Choice Beans; and Little Like Fire Department Burnt Endz for Judges' Choice Bread. Brooktrails Fire Department also took People's Choice Ribs, and Saucy Little Porkers "smoked" the rest of the People's Choice awards, taking home the win for Beans, Bread, and Best Decorated Table.

"Thank you so much to everyone who came and participated," said Willits Frontier Days Vice President Marcy Barry. "We all had a great time!"

– Maureen Jennison



Adventist Health Howard Memorial has earned **FIVE STARS** for quality healthcare from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.



At Adventist Health Howard Memorial, quality healthcare and patient safety are our top priorities. We are proud to receive the highest rating possible from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and be among an elite group of only 14% of hospitals nationwide with five stars. CMS assigns star ratings based on a hospital's performance in safety, patient experience and outcomes.

For communities across Northern California in some of our most rural areas, we offer excellent primary and specialty care in our Redwood Medical Clinic and 24-hour emergency care at our state-of-the-art hospital in Willits. So wherever you live in Northern California, there's an expert team ready to serve you and your family with compassionate, personalized and award-winning care.

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