

Donations Accepted Edition No. 377

Thursday, October 29, 2020

Joanne Moore
Reporter
joanne@willitsweekly.com

That's a takeaway from the fire district's October board of directors meeting.

Read the rest of
Challenges
Over on Page 11

Mike A'Dair
Reporter
mike@willitsweekly.com

According to Health and Human Services Senior Program Manager Megan Van Sant, the 56-unit former motel will soon be converted into housing for homeless people, veterans, seniors, small families, people at high risk of contracting COVID-19, and people at high risk of suffering from mental illness.

Read the rest of
Housing
Over on Page 11

**Submitted by CHP,
Garberville**

There was an adult male in the front passenger seat and an adult female in the rear seat. For reasons still under investigation, the female drove the Toyota off the east roadway edge of Howard Street, through a wood fence prior to colliding with a tree.

Read the rest of
Crash
Over on Page 11



Don't get scared: Halloween is this Saturday, October 31
& Election Day is Tuesday, November 3!

The Mendocino County Elections Office has announced special Saturday hours this pre-Election Day weekend, from 9 am to 3 pm on Halloween, October 31, to offer help to voters. The office is located at the county Administration Center, 501 Low Gap Road, room 1020, in Ukiah.

"We will be answering your phone calls, issuing ballots, accepting your voted ballots, and allowing voters to vote in our office," said Mendocino County Registrar of Voters Katrina Bartolomie.

Because the Admin Center is closed on the weekends, Bartolomie asks those who come by on Saturday to call the voter office after arriving, 707-234-6819, so staffers can come let you in.

Drop your mail-in ballot off early at the official ballot box outside Willits City Hall, or bring your mail-in ballot to the polls on Election Day, November 3, at Willits City Hall, 111 East Commercial Street, or Brooktrails Community Center, 24850 Birch Street.

– *Maureen Jennison*



Above, left: Judy Morgan, Don Rowe and Charlie Shuman of the American Red Cross are prepared with plenty of reading materials. Above, right: The FEMA trailer will remain in Willits through Thursday, October 29, 8 am to 5 pm, to assist people with losses from the Oak Fire.

Local Assistance Center event in Willits
hosts county, state and federal agencies offering aid
and advice for those affected by fire or COVID-19

This year has been particularly difficult on the residents of Willits and surrounding areas. The Oak Fire devastated those living in its path and caused hundreds to be uprooted for at least four days in September. The smoke and ash affected everyone, especially those with asthma or other respiratory complications.

Mathew Caine
Features Writer
mathew@willitsweekly.com

Loss and obstacles have permeated the life that residents of the Little Lake Valley have become used to for many years.

Those with catastrophic losses from the fires and those who have been markedly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic sometimes feel helpless. However, they are not without help from those whose job and passion it is to offer them assistance and hopefully put them on the path to recovery.

As evidenced by Mendocino County's Local Assistance Center event on Monday, October 26, in the parking lot of the Willits Library, there are many county, state and federal entities with the mandate of helping those who have suffered losses or are having trouble coping with the new roadblocks to a contented, peaceful and healthy life. This was a gathering of about a dozen of these agencies, offering assistance and advice.

Included among the participants was the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which brought one

of their trailers that will be in residence in Willits through Thursday, October 29, 8 am to 5 pm. Jim Thacker, FEMA division supervisor, who is acting as Mendocino County's point-of-contact, stated: "One thing we're looking at is uninsured losses. People can also call FEMA at our toll-free number, 1-800-621-3362, or you can actually register online, www.fema.gov.

"We have a place on the site," continued Thacker, "where you can track the progress of your case. It's a good program for the things that you've lost, your home, etc. There's a whole shopping list. The best thing to do is call and go over in detail all the things that would pertain to the case. We're always open to coming back if the state requests it."

Thacker was impressed by the gathering of agencies. "I see the county has brought a lot of different departments," he said, "that would help with the folks as well. Actually, this is one of the better setups I've seen in my career. You've got all of the joint forces together. It's like a one-stop shop."

The Local Assistance Center was set up under the guidance of the Mendocino County Disaster Recovery Team, an entity which was created after the 2017 fires. “We also have the pandemic and now the two fires, the Oak and the August Complex,” commented Darcie Antle, deputy CEO and Disaster Recovery director for the County of Mendocino.

Read the rest of **Assistance** | *Over on Page 13*

Mike A'Dair
Reporter
mike@willitsweekly.com

Counties in the “purple” tier, where Mendocino County was categorized until Tuesday, have a “widespread” occurrence of COVID-19, according to the tier system. Under the red tier, the COVID numbers are considered improved, but still “substantial.”

Read the rest of
Woo-hoo! Red!
Over on Page 10

Mike A'Dair
Reporter
mike@willitsweekly.com

The country's cannabis ad hoc committee's negotiations with the California Department of Food and Agriculture appear to have entered a crucial phase. According to Third District Supervisor John Haschak, the negotiations have gotten tough. Both sides have taken a firm position, and both sides remain well separated from reaching agreement.

In addition, one of the ad hoc's members, Fifth District Supervisor Ted

Read the rest of
Deadlock
Over on Page 10

**Submitted by the
Assessor-County Clerk-
Recorder's Office**

This election is the kind of election we have never seen before. Polling places will not be what we are used to.

Voters who plan to vote at the polls this year, should bring their mail (vote-by-mail) ballot and envelope with them. If you arrive at the polls without your vote-by-mail ballot and envelope, you will have to vote provisionally, which requires filling out additional forms and placing the ballot in a "Special Pink" (provisional) envelope that is processed

Read the rest of
Election
Over on Page 11

Fire Department Drive-Thru Trunk or Treat Halloween Events

Who: Both Brooktrails Fire Department and Little Lake Fire Protection District have been approved by the City of Willits and Brooktrails Community Services District to hold a Drive-Thru Trunk or Treat Halloween Event while taking the necessary COVID-19 precautions.

What: Fire Department hosted Drive-Thru Trunk or Treat Event (COVID-19 Edition)

When: Halloween, 31st of October, from 5 to 8 pm (or when out of candy)

Where: Brooktrails Fire Department Drive-Thru will be held at 24860 Birch Street. Vehicles will enter from Birch Street and Sherwood Road and exit Brooktrails Drive and Sherwood Road. Little Lake Fire Protection District Drive-Thru will be held at 1575 Baechtel Road. Vehicles will enter from Baechtel Road and East Hill Road and exit Baechtel Road and Main Street.

Why: With COVID-19 and the recent wildfires so close to home, everyone's lives have been thrown into exhausting turmoil with daily social distancing, kids doing classes through Zoom, and the cancellation of many holidays, birthdays, and other social gatherings. Many members within both Fire Departments feel that it is necessary and within the best interest of the mental, emotional and social health of the community's children to host this modified Halloween Trunk or Treat Event.

How: Any candy donated to or purchased by the Fire Departments must remain in their original bags from the store. Firefighters will sanitize the bags prior to opening the bags. The candy will be evenly distributed into candy bags that the fire departments have purchased. Vehicles will be directed to a lane to receive the Trunk or Treat bags by firefighters. Everyone must remain in their vehicles and, when pulling up to the candy table, inform the firefighter of how many children are in the vehicle, receive their bags of candy, and enjoy the decorations that others may have put out.

– Brooktrails and Little Lake Fire Departments



Above, left: This witch seems friendly enough. Should we trust her?

Above, right: A creepy ghost near Brookside School.

At right: A haunted graveyard at Mendocino and School streets.

Photos by Mathew Caine



Halloween Around Town

Thanks to all for the fun and ghoulish decorations to celebrate the season

Halloween may be on life-support this season due to the rigorous measures necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic, but it is not yet dead. In addition to the smattering of merchants who will be offering safe socially distanced Halloween events and specials, there are residential residents who refuse to give up on the joy and fun of the holiday.

Mathew Caine
Features Writer
mathew@willitsweekly.com

These intrepid homeowners and renters have erected colorful displays dedicated to the spirit of All Hallows Eve, to the joy and wonderment of the youngsters who pass by – whether or not they will be trick or treating this year.

There are All Hallows Eve displays to be found in the area near Brookside School, near the Sherwood Casino, and in other locations around the city. It might be time for an automobile treasure hunt to scope out these lighted and colorful odes to the pure fun that is the traditional Halloween.



Trunk or Treat at Sparetime

Trunk or Treat at Sparetime Garden Center! On Halloween, Saturday, October 31, it'll be goin' on until the candy is gone or 6 pm! Bring your kiddo for a fun, safe, trick or treat drive-through. Pull into Sparetime Garden Center parking lot and get your treat bag.

News from Noyo

Movie theater will open – soon – with Mendocino County finally moving into red tier

The smell of popcorn started wafting from the double doors of the Noyo Theatre, but was just a tease of things to come, alas. Owners Jeff and Lois Hoover, above, were inside, popping bags of popcorn for the upcoming movie night for Howard Memorial Hospital, who were hosting a drive-in event.

"We're so excited to be moved into the red tier, however," said Lois. "We hope to be open soon and see the community back in our theater as soon as we get set." Part of that process will include hiring new employees – keep an eye on the Noyo Theatre Facebook page for opening info and job offerings.

– Maureen Jennison

Adorable Scooby

Oh Scoobs: You are adorable, and we really enjoyed spending time with you during your evaluation. Scooby, a "Heinz 57" mixed-breed male, is 4 years old and weighs 68 pounds. He is quite a character, with the cutest, funniest facial expressions. Scooby is friendly with people and more interested in playing with people than toys. We noticed he understands the command, "Sit," and he did, but only when he wanted!

Scooby was a little too interested in the cats around the shelter so, a home with no cats will be important. Scooby has heartworm, which will be treated, but he will need 30 days of limited activity following treatment.

To see the Mendocino County Animal Shelter's canine and feline guests, and for information about our services, programs, events, and updates about COVID-19 and the shelter, located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah, visit: www.mendoanimalshelter.com. For information about adoptions please call 707-467-6453.



VENDOR DEMOS COSTUMES FOOD VENDORS

We're planning to have a fun, COVID-friendly and mask-wearing

HAPPY HALLOWEED

on Friday, October 30 & Saturday, October 31

HIMALAYA STIMZY HEAVY HITTERS SWEET WATER FARMS RAW GARDEN KANHA

SUNDIALED

Party starts a 1pm on Friday at 2601 N State Street in Ukiah

public health MENDOCINO COUNTY

HALLOWEEN MASK SAFETY

Do: Wear a cloth mask that covers your mouth and nose

Don't: Wear a costume mask instead of a cloth mask

Don't: Wear a costume mask over a cloth mask

public health MENDOCINO COUNTY

SEGURIDAD DE LA MASCARILLA EN EL DÍA DE LAS BRUJAS

Sí: Use una mascarilla de tela que cubra su boca y nariz.

No: Use una máscara de disfraz en lugar de una mascarilla de tela.

No: Use una máscara de disfraz sobre una mascarilla de tela.

'The Glittered Graveyard'

Submitted by Glitter My World

The Glitter My World studio on East Valley Street in Willits usually puts on a small but elaborate display in the front yard of our studio. This year with COVID, we realized that so many kids were going to miss out on the Halloween experience.

This made us extremely sad, so we started thinking about how we could create a safe Halloween experience. We decided to go big and open up the entire studio lot and create a one-way walk-through experience for the kids (and for all ages).

This year we will be taking families through a tour of "The Glittered Graveyard."

It is a free event, and all are welcome as long as families are willing to socially distance. The event will be in compliance with the 2020 COVID rules of a one-way socially distanced, non-touch event. At the end of the walkthrough, there will be individual bags of candy hanging that can be picked up and taken home.

The studio is located at 132 East Valley Street in Willits. The event will start at 6 pm and end around 8. We will run the walkthrough for two nights to keep the crowds down. You can join us on either October 30 or 31. The exit will be onto the street behind the lot, Tuttle Lane (for pickups).

Want to help out with the event? Contact us at info@glittermyworld.com.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 31

All Covid Precautions will be taken

Halloween Trick or Treat & Virtual Costume Contest

1708 S. Main St. Willits

First Come First Serve. For children 1 and over. Child MUST be present to pick up!

Starting at 5pm

We will pass out 100 Fun Sized Pizza kits

Virtual Costume Contest on our Facebook Page starting at 5pm. Take pictures and be ready to post. Look for status to post your enteries. Find Slam Dunk Pizza Wilits on Facebook

Masks required for pick up

Come get your October Rewards & enter to win...

3X ENTRIES ON TUESDAYS
200 POINTS = 3 ENTRY TICKETS



ONE UGLY MUDDER

2020 Jeep Gladiator Giveaway*

Earn Entries Daily for Weekend Drawings
Oct 1 – December 26

200 points = 1 entry ticket

WEEKEND DRAWINGS
Sat & Sun
5PM – 10PM

Two winners each hour will receive **\$100 Free Play** and an entry into the Grand Prize drawing on December 26.

* Jeep provided by Thurston Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram and customized by DC Customs.

SENIOR THURSDAYS NOON – 5PM

It's Super Seniors Day and guests age 55+ who earn 75 points that day will receive **\$15 in Free Play** and a **50% Off** meal coupon to the Creekside Café.

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The rest of **WCA** From Page 5

Willits Photo Club for years. After he and Mimi visited the club's shows for many years, he, and then she, decided to join.

"The Willits Photo Club," said Jack, "is pretty professional and has good ideas. Sometimes I see something someone has done and ask how they did it. Sometimes they ask me how I get so close to wildlife and I say, 'Well I really don't need to be that close because I've got a big long lens.'" he laughed.

Mimi started her love for photography when she took a photography class in college and enjoyed a series of photos she'd made at the Greyhound station near where she lived. She put photography and other art on hold for many years in order to teach and mother her children. Later she used her photography as sketches of textures, rocks, leaves, sand and water for her ceramic art. At some point it occurred to her that some of those photos could "stand on their own" as part of her artistic expressions.

Both Booths are also a part of the Ukiah Photo Club, which Jack started around four years ago.

In this 20th celebration for the Willits Photo Club, the husband-and-wife duo are expressing their love of photography in their very unique and different ways. Mimi is showing black-and-white work that was a themed challenge in the Ukiah Photo Club last month. "Black and white seems to work really well with vintage-type photos and some geology and textures. It was fun to do something different," she disclosed. Look for her photos of gnarled bristle-cone pines, rusty vehicles, and rustic wood in the WCA show.

On the other hand, Jack, who specializes in "anything nature," is showing new photos of birds and other wildlife. Some were photographed at their son's home in Washington, others in California's Modoc County, or near the Booths' home outside of Ukiah.

Don't miss the Willits Photo Club show. It promises to bedazzle and delight with a shout of encouragement to other creative photo buffs.

The WCA is open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 11 am to 5 pm. Masks and social-distancing protocols are required. The Photo Club show will be up this Friday, October 30 through Sunday, November 22. A visit to the show can be a bright spot in your weekend.

For further information about the Willits Photo Club, check their Facebook page or email Bruce Haanstra: bruceh@pacific.net. The group meets every month and is meeting via Zoom during the pandemic.

To find out more about the WCA or volunteering, visit their website: www.willitscenterforthearts.org, their Facebook page "Willits Center for the Arts," or call 459-1726.

OBITUARY |

John Borgna

John Mario Borgna, age 90, passed-away peacefully on Monday, October 5, 2020, at his home in Willits, after a long struggle with leukemia. John was born February 19, 1930 in Fort Bragg, to John and Giovanna Borgna. He spent four years of active service in the US Army.

John had a passion for the outdoors, animals and boxing. He spent many years working with different groups in California to educate the public about the importance of wolves in the environment. He had a keen ability to connect with animals, from mountain lions, wolves, to goats, he loved them all! As a young man John enjoyed the sport of boxing and competed into his early adult years. Later in life he was an avid fan, watching as many matches as he could.

You could often find John on his boat in the Fort Bragg harbor, enjoying the sunshine, working on his boat, and fishing. He could captivate a room full of family, friends and strangers with his tales from the sea, bringing much delight to all who imbibed.

He took great pride in his family and loved to spend time with his precious grandchildren. He is survived by his beloved wife of 58 years, Beverly; sons, Johnny, daughter-in-law Dalys, Gino, Marco and Dante, daughter-in-law Kim; nine grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

John's zest for life and adventure will be missed. A celebration of life will be planned in the future.

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LEGAL NOTICES

<p>WW292</p> <p>Fictitious Business Name Statement</p> <p>2020-F0523</p> <p>The following company is doing business as Mphotographress, 21300 Locust Street, Willits, CA 95490 / mailing address: P.O. Box 43, Willits, CA 95490.</p> <p>Registered owner: Maureen Cristin Jennison, 21300 Locust Street, Willits, CA 95490.</p> <p>This business is conducted by an individual.</p> <p>The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above in 2012.</p> <p>FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on October 20, 2020.</p> <p>/s/ Maureen Jennison</p> <p>Publication dates: 10/22, 10/29, 11/05 and 11/12/2020</p>	<p>WW291</p> <p>Fictitious Business Name Statement</p> <p>2020-F0492</p> <p>The following company is doing business as Calahoula Cafe - Bubbling Well Therapeutics - QUEENPIN Acupressure, 80 South Street, Willits, CA 95490.</p> <p>Registered owner: Sally Ann Pringle, 80 South Street, Willits, CA 95490.</p> <p>This business is conducted by an individual.</p> <p>The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on September 21, 2020.</p> <p>FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on September 30, 2020.</p> <p>/s/ Sally Pringle</p> <p>Publication dates: 10/22, 10/29, 11/05 and 11/12/2020</p>
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Current Job Openings:

Deputy Public Defender I
Deputy Sheriff-Coroner I
Director of Cultural Services
Inmate Services Coordinator
Licensed Vocational Nurse
Nutritionist – Part-Time
Planning Technician II
Planner II/III
Public Health Nurse
Registered Nurse
Senior Program Specialist
Senior Public Health Nurse
Staff Assistant III

For a complete list of current job openings and to apply:
www.mendocinocounty.org/government/human-resources
EOE



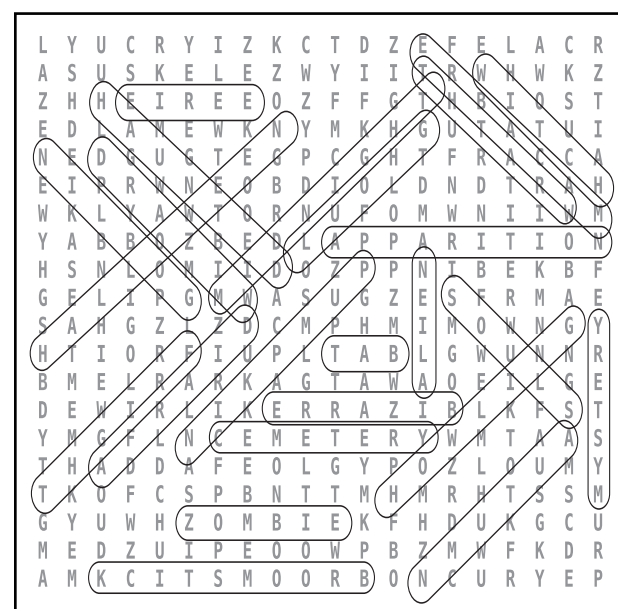
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104 W. Mendocino Ave., Willits, CA
Email: cmccuskey.paralegal@gmail.com

I am not an attorney. I cannot give you legal advice or represent you in court.
Mendocino County Registration No. LDA-14, Expires 10/01/2021



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6	5	3	7	9	2	4	1	8
5	1	7	4	8	3	9	2	6
8	6	9	1	2	5	3	7	4
3	2	4	9	7	6	8	5	1

CLASSIFIEDS

Computer Help

Need help with your computer? PC, Macintosh, Android and IOS devices. Repairs, configuration and tutoring. \$50/hr. Call Liam 459-2470 or email uicearbhail@gmail.com

Help Wanted

Part-time position in Willits nonprofit business. Applicant must have current California driver's license, be able to lift 50 pounds, drug and alcohol free, must be tolerant and compassionate. Please call 459-3333

Cottage for Sale

In town, a 2-bedroom cottage for sale. \$178,000. Call 459-9228.

Firewood For Sale

Firewood for sale. 1 true cord of 16 inch dry firewood, \$200 and up. Will deliver. Call: 459-2868.

Now open: My Nails Salon

Acrylic • Mani/Pedi • Gel Nails • Waxing 20% Senior Discounts 1472 South Main Street Open: Mon-Sat. 9:30-7 • Sun. 10-5 Nina or Mike: 707-841-3007

For Sale

Queen "Puffy" mattress - 6 months old. Perfect condition. Rated #1 for comfort in 2020. \$500.00 Call: 707-841-0073.

Freezer Empty? We can help!

Due to health concerns in Mendocino County, John Ford Ranch will be taking meat box orders (not individual package orders) for pick-up: Rancher's Choice Box - 50 pounds: steaks, roasts, and ground beef. Still \$325 (\$6.50 per pound). Hamburger Box: 25 pound box of hamburger in 1 or 1.5 pound packages: \$150. Natural ranch-raised grass fed beef, no hormones or antibiotics. Call 459-5193 to arrange pick-up. Leave a message, and we'll call back.

RV/Trailer Space for Rent

Space for RV's and Trailers \$425 per month, includes water & garbage. Close to Safeway in Willits. Call Tony (707) 510-5895. See at "http://www.oakvine.net/tip"

Stay Safe

I'll be back to help you with your Alterations and Sewing Needs when it is safe to do so. Barbara the Seamstress

Gift Bazaar

Methodist Church Gift Bazaar, Saturday, November 7, 9am-2pm, 21551 Poplar Ave. All proceeds will be used to adopt a family at Christmas. Masks and social distancing will be in place.

Wanted: Meals on Wheels Volunteer Drivers

As demand for home-delivered meals has increased due to concerns about the spread of COVID-19, the Willits Senior Center is looking for another Meals on Wheels volunteer driver and a substitute driver: the job takes about 3.5 hours to complete. If you're interested in joining the team, call Deb Holcomb at 459-6826.

Help Wanted

Willits USD is hiring Maintenance Substitutes \$17.66 / hour, 40 hours per week for up to 4 weeks. Call Laura Sleeper @ 459-5314 or email HR@willitsunified.com for an application.

Ads are just \$10 for 30 words for 2 weeks!

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H	A	L	M	S		R	A	P		T	S	A	R
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Williams, has come to the conclusion that the county does not need to bend further to meet state mandates. In a sense, that leaves the other member of the ad hoc, Third District Supervisor John Haschak, with the full weight of negotiating a solution to the county's cannabis imbroglio, virtually alone.

The problem is at least two-fold. At a most fundamental level, the problem has to do with ensuring that environmental protections are included in the county's approach to its cannabis cultivation ordinance, and that those protections reach the level of protection that is required by CEQA, the California Environmental Quality Act.

The problem is that the state requires a site-specific environmental review while the county's regulatory system does not. The county's ordinance contains a long list of guidelines which, if properly monitored and enforced, protects the environment: light limits, noise limits, visual impacts, no tree removal, and required compliance with state regulatory guidelines on water use and habitat protection, to name just a few of the protections included in the document.

But those guidelines are not site-specific, and the state's regulations require that specificity, which brings us to the second aspect of the imbroglio.

Beginning in the summer of 2019, staff from the county's Planning and Building Services department and the County Counsel's Office held meetings with representatives from CDFA and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to try to find a way to work around the impasse.

The Fish and Wildlife problem was different than the CDFA problem. It centered on the need for each permit application to address sensitive species. According to Supervisor Haschak, negotiations in 2019 did not go well and were discontinued by late fall of that year.

By early 2020, Second District Supervisor John McCowen had had discussions with the county's Planning and Building staff, and together they had concluded the best way out of the impasse would be to scuttle the county's cultivation ordinance and to draft a new one that would require each county cannabis permit applicant to go through the county's use permit process. County staff told CDFA that the county was going to write a new ordinance, and negotiations on creating a work-around for the present ordinance ended.

McCowen tried to bring this proposal to the board and board Chair Haschak attempted to derail or block McCowen's effort. McCowen used his deep familiarity with board rules to force Haschak to let him speak; Haschak relented; discussions were scheduled, then postponed, and rescheduled; finally a full airing of the question was held on June 4. On that date, the board directed Haschak and Williams to re-start the conversations with CDFA and CDFW.

According to both Haschak and Williams, the dialog with CDFW went well. In order to meet the sensitive species protocols required by CDFW, the county will hire an as yet undetermined number of retired CDFW inspectors, who will assess the parcels and complete the paperwork required by the agency. According to Haschak, the county has set aside \$160,000 for that work.

In the ongoing negotiations with CDFA, a solution was found: an improvised document called Appendix G. Theoretically, each holder of a county cultivation permit and each person who was growing legally by dint of holding an embossed receipt from either the county's Agriculture Department or Planning and Building Services, would have

of suspicious activity in the 700 block of South Main Street.

4:57 am: Officers responded to a report of a suspicious person in the 800 block of South Main Street.

8:46 am: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject near the intersection of Barbara Lane and Railroad Avenue and issued a warning.

9:24 am: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 1000 block of South Main Street.

9:35 am: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 700 block of South Main Street.

October 23

9:55 am: Officers initiated a burglary investigation in the 1400 block of South Main Street.

11:16 am: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 400 block of East Commercial Street.

12:55 pm: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 400 block of East Commercial Street.

4:56 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 200 block

of South Humboldt Street.

6:04 pm: Officers responded to a report of a suspicious vehicle in the 200 block of North Lenore Avenue.

8:23 pm: Officers responded to a report of illegal camping in the 100 block of South Main Street.

October 24

2:11 am: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 200 block of School Street.

3:54 am: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 1700 block of South Main Street.

10:39 am: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 1700 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

11:11 am: Officers responded to a report of illegal camping in the 100 block of East Oak Street.

11:34 am: Officers responded to a report of a suspicious person in the 1000 block of South Main Street.

9:04 pm: Officers responded to a report of a suspicious person in the 300 block of North Main Street.

to fill out a simple check list, draw a few maps, and get their state license. But the problem is, filling out the document was not as easy as state regulators thought.

Haschak said recently that veteran county planner Jesse Davis spent about 30 hours providing Appendix G answers for two county permits, permits that staff had selected for relative ease in meeting Appendix G requirements.

On the plus side, the two permits that Davis did the responses for were approved for a state annual license by CDFA. But on the negative side, the time that Davis took to complete the Appendix G work on two relatively simple permits, raises a host of questions. What would it take to meet Appendix G on permits which are for parcels that have considerable environmental complexity?

If Davis took 15 hours to do the Appendix G work on one permit, it's an open question as to what it would take for staff to do the work on the approximately 1,154 county permits and permit applications that are in need of state licenses.

Recently, county Cannabis Unit staff presented a document to the supervisors that calculated the number of staff that would have to be hired to meet the need.

The calculations showed that if it took 20 hours per file, it would take 17,640 hours over the next 10 months to do the work required to answer to Appendix G questions and to do the paperwork for the 882 permit applications that are currently waiting for both a county permit and a state license. Meeting that need would require the county to hire 12 new planners.

If it takes an average of 30 hours per file to meet the Appendix G requirements, it will take 26,460 hours of work over a 10-month period and the county would have to hire 17 planners.

"We're setting up a meeting with CDFA to tell them, we don't have the resources to do this," Haschak said. "And from previous conversations we've had with them, CDFA is telling us, they don't have the staff to truth those, and that this is something that the county needs to do for the state."

Haschak added that he has set up meetings with state Assemblyman Jim Wood and with state Senator Mike McGuire in order to enlist their help in negotiating with CDFA.

The other member of the county's ad hoc committee, Supervisor Williams, has come to the conclusion that Haschak's efforts are not needed.

"I think the county made an error when it decided to become an auxiliary of the state and to act as a go-between between the cultivators and the state. We shouldn't have done that.

As of October 28, some businesses in this county can re-open, and some of those that are already partially open can open in a more normal, less restrictive way.

Because the weekly average daily count of new cases in this county has dropped below seven cases for two consecutive weeks, restaurants may now open indoors. Face masks are still required for both guests and patrons (except while eating), and socially distanced tables are required. Restaurant capacity is limited to 25 percent of capacity or 100 people, whichever is less.

Gyms may now open indoors, with modifications including masking and socially distanced machines and guests. Capacity is limited to 10 percent of full capacity.

Places of worship may open indoors at 25 percent capacity or 100 people, whichever is less. Use of facial coverings is required, as is social distancing between household units. However, according to a Mendocino County press release dated October 27, because "singing and group recitation dramatically increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission, singing and chanting activities must be discontinued at indoor services, and congregants engaging in group recitation should wear facial coverings at all times."

Capacity for retail stores has been elevated to 50 percent of capacity. Facial covering and social distancing rules are still in place for retail outlets.

Skilled nursing facilities may now have limited indoor visits to nursing home residents. Nursing facility employees and guests must wear masks.

According to the county press release, "Red Tier (or Level 2) counties that maintain Tier 2 data for at least two consecutive weeks may re-open school to classroom-based learning, with modifications. For Mendocino County, that could be as early as November 12."

Mendocino County must spend at least 21 days in the red tier and meet the orange tier requirements for two consecutive weeks before advancing to the next, less restrictive tier, the moderate tier, which is symbolized by the color orange.

The press release goes on to warn, "Most notably, Mendocino County may have to tighten back up and move back to a more restrictive tier if we experience a rise in cases. To help continue the progressive re-opening process, the public is encouraged to wear a mask, social distance, practice frequent handwashing, stay home when sick and avoid gatherings."

"We've made a lot of progress to move into the red tier and further reopen our economy," says Mendocino County CEO Carmel Angelo. "Thank you to our residents for doing their part to slow the spread of COVID-19. If we continue to be proactive and follow the guidance from Public Health, we can continue to reduce transmission and gradually reopen."

"I am thankful, and cautiously optimistic that the state is allowing us to re-open further," says Health Officer Dr. Andy Coren. "While this is good news, we cannot allow this to make us believe we are in the clear. Many regions in the country have been experiencing recent spikes in COVID-19, so we all must individually maintain protective measures against this virus."

Personal care services can reopen indoors

In other recent COVID news, last week the California Department of Public Health revised part of the guidance for

"The state has tried to sucker Mendocino County in to doing its work for them," Williams said. "But it's their work. This isn't our CEQA problem. CEQA is met in the county document. The CEQA requirements that the state has can only be met in a site-specific document, which is fine, but that is between the cultivator and the state.

"You've seen the staff analysis from the Cannabis Unit. It's going to take 35,000 hours of work to process those permits. We're talking about hiring 20 or 25 new planners. Now, we can't find that many planners here in this county. We have a hard time even finding four or five. So what are we going to do? Go out of county? It's ridiculous. There's no way we can pull it off, hiring that many people."

Williams' position was given legal support by the opinion of County Counsel Christian Curtis who on September 22 told the board of supervisors that the county was not legally required to help the state with the state's cannabis process.

"The state either needs to acknowledge that the county is the lead agency and then rely on the CEQA that was done there [i.e., in the county's cultivation ordinance] or, if the state believes there was an error, or that the environmental review needs to be done on a site-specific basis, it's really something that needs to be done by the state. It's not something that the county is required to do for the state," Curtis said.

But on the other hand, while Williams believes that the county shouldn't have to help the state do its job, he is not prepared to abandon the county's 1,154 legally enrolled growers.

"I think we can go with a use permit process for Phase 3," Williams said. "But for Phase 1 we are probably going to have to stick to the current ordinance. We have too many people who are too far down that road for us to switch."

Which means the county can't do the required work, and the state won't do the required work. Which means that the required work either can be waived by the state, which could determine that the county's process is sufficient after all, or the state could declare that it still needs its site-specific documentation and that individual growers have to provide it.

"My concern on that is time is wasting," Williams said. "This is something if we are going to make that determination, we need to do it quickly. Because for 1,000 people to hire consultants is not going to be easy. The deadline is January 1, 2022 and people are going to have to get started soon if they are going to make that deadline."

Haschak said he and Williams will be meeting with Assemblyman Wood on October 29 and with State Senator McGuire on November 12.

industries to allow personal care services to reopen indoor operations.

Businesses that are able to take advantage of this allowance include skincare and beauty parlors (also known as esthetician services), nail salons, body art services, including tattoo parlors and piercing shops, massage services, including those massage parlors that are offered "in a non-healthcare setting," and electrology services.

A press release dated October 23 goes on to state, "before re-opening, all industries and businesses must complete the self-certification process."

The October 23 press release contains some sentiments from Public Health Officer Coren. "No employee should ever come to work sick, and the public is urged still to stay home if sick. Together we want to continue moving towards mitigating this pandemic while supporting our local economy."

Case count

Since March 19, Mendocino County has confirmed 1,142 cases of COVID-19. Of those, 1,077 people have been released from isolation. As of Tuesday evening, the county had 44 active cases of the disease, which was down from 67 the week before. Of those 44 active cases, 40 are being kept in isolation and four are in the hospital. No one from this county is being kept in an ICU, either in this county or out of this county. Twenty-one Mendoneseians have died from COVID-19.

The current average daily count of new cases, as calculated by the county, is 6.86. According to the state's system of calculation, which is slightly different than the county's, the average daily count is 6.9. Either way, the average daily count is barely below the purple threshold of seven cases.

The average rate at which tests come back positive, according to the county, is 3.78 per 100 tests administered. The state calculates our positivity rate at 2.9 percent. Either way, we are within the orange tier, which is the tier that is lower, or less restrictive, than the red tier.

The state's Department of Public Health has determined that when the results of those two types of assessments come down in different tiers, as happened this week and as has happened frequently with the statistics that Mendocino County has had, that the higher number will be determinative. In other words, if the county's daily count is red, but its positivity count is orange, the county will be red. If the case count is orange but the positivity count is red, the county will still be red.

Regionally, the bulk of cases – 886 – are from people who live in the Ukiah valley. All of the other regions in the county are reporting much lower numbers of cases. The north county has 113; the north coast 97; the south county region has 43; and the south coast area has 23.

Altogether 31,203 tests have been administered to the people of this county, and the results of 1,282 tests are pending.

separately from regular ballots. If you are not registered to vote, you can register at the polls on Election Day and vote provisionally.

If you haven't received your ballot in the mail, please call 707-234-6819 or drop in to the Voter Office at the county Administration Center, 501 Low Gap Road, room 1020, in Ukiah, during our special Saturday hours this weekend, 9 am to 3 pm on Saturday, October 31, for a replacement ballot.

Polling locations are open on Election Day only, but the official ballot drop box locations at the City of Willits, City of Fort Bragg, the City of Point Arena, and the County Admin Building in Ukiah are available 24 hours per day, seven days per week; the Boonville Fairgrounds Office is open Monday through Friday from 9 am to 4 pm.

For questions or additional information please contact the Election / County Clerk's Office by calling 707-234-6819.

Checking your ballot status

Mail-in ballots were mailed to all active registered voters in Mendocino County on October 5, for the November 3, 2020 election. According to Voter Registrar Katrina Bartolomie: "We have received numerous complaints about the State of California's new 'Where's My Ballot' site. Please be aware that this site does not work in all of Mendocino County.

The Elections Office has a solution for county residents to see if your ballot has been received; this service has been used by our voters for several years. Visit our website at <https://www.mendocinocounty.org/government/assessor-county-clerk-recordor-elections/elections/vote-by-mail-absentee-status> to check and see if we've received your voted ballot.

The female driver and male front passenger succumbed to their injuries and were pronounced deceased at the scene. The female rear passenger was flown to Enloe Medical Center in Chico with major injuries. The identity of the driver and front passenger are being withheld pending notification of next of kin. The identity of the rear passenger is being withheld pending positive identification.

The Long Valley Volunteer Fire Department, CalFire, ReachAir, Laytonville Ambulance, and the Mendocino County Sheriffs Office assisted the California Highway Patrol with processing the collision scene and transporting the injured party.

The cost of the former motel is \$10.6 million. The State of California has awarded the county a grant for \$9.6 million for this purchase. Of that, \$8.3 million will be used for the purchase price. Van Sant said the remaining \$2.3 million will come from budgets within the county's Whole Person Care program, and from federal CARES Act funding.

The remaining \$1.3 million from the state grant will be used for operation and management for the next two years, Van Sant said.

The old Best Western is located in one of Ukiah's secondary commercial hubs. It is near the Department of Motor Vehicles, the town's new and out-of-the-way post office, and a Veterans Services office, and it's not far from two shopping centers.

The possibility of creating homeless housing in east Ukiah has brought out a good deal of criticism from Ukiah residents. Some have accused the county of ramming this through in secrecy, without public comment. Others have pointed to the central location of the former motel as precisely the reason why it is the wrong place.

As Martha Barra said at last week's meeting: "You are placing this in one of the best commercial neighborhoods in Ukiah." Barra and others have urged the county to void the Best Western purchase, and instead to place the housing unit at the Whitmore Lane facility, which the county has also recently purchased and is currently using as emergency housing for those who must be in isolation or in quarantine due to COVID-19.

Van Sant said that Whitmore Lane wouldn't work for the marginalized housing unit, because it is so remote from services. She pointed out that the far southern end of Ukiah has few stores, no post office, no DMV, and no Veterans Services office. Because of this, the Whitmore Lane facility would not have qualified for the state homeless grant, which the county is using to purchase the Best Western.

As for the lack of public input, Van Sant agreed that is what happened. She said it happened because the county only got the grant from California on September 16.

State Senator Mike McGuire participated in the supes' Zoom meeting and urged them to support the purchase. He reminded the supervisors there is lots of money to deal with the homelessness issue in California. The legislature recently dedicated \$600 million for this purpose, and McGuire said Governor Gavin Newsom is promising to add another \$200 million.

Van Sant promised a town hall meeting in the near future to talk to the citizens about the new housing complex and to listen to community concerns. She said the county is putting out a request for proposals for a company to manage the facility.

First, big fires.

Though not in charge, Little Lake Fire was part of what Chief Chris Wilkes described as a "wonderful collaborative effort" that came together to fight the local Oak Fire in September.

The incident commander on that fire, CalFire battalion chief Michael Maynard, "sent out a letter thanking everybody for the Oak incident response," said Wilkes, adding that he thought it "deserved to be read publicly."

So he did.

Excerpts include Maynard's assessment that it "was a challenging incident on many levels: location, access, evacuation, structure threat. Every indication was it could become a major incident with significant loss," he wrote. "Considering the conditions and the task at hand this was an enormous effort.

"I had the responsibility of being incident commander, and have received acknowledgement for a job well done. And it's only fitting to pass along the thanks and recognition to everyone," he continued.

"We had to make tough decisions that affected the different stakeholders' jurisdictions and communities we protect," he wrote. "Knowing everyone grasped the importance of what we were mitigating and the job at hand was awesome. The preparation and planning that was in place paid dividends immediately. My hat is off to everyone involved."

Preparation and planning for wildfires is keeping pace in many ways as fires increase in intensity and their seasons lengthen.

For example, during red flag warnings (the National Weather Service's highest alert for extreme fire behavior), pre-

positioned strike teams (five engines and a lead vehicle) are often dispatched to strategic locations, ready to go into action immediately.

"We sent out a county-wide pre-positioning strike team over to Lake County a couple weeks back," said Wilkes. "They were supposed to be there just through the red flag warnings, and the first night they were there ... 4, 4:30 in the morning ... they get dispatched out to the Glass incident in Sonoma County.

"They were the third unit put on that incident ... right in the action when that fire was rockin' its hardest down there in Sonoma and Napa.... And they did well," he said.

Smaller, local fires are also being dealt with well.

"We had a vegetation fire right at the corner of Baechtel Road and Main Street under the bridge," said Wilkes. "And we had three engines there ... plus Brooktrails responding ... so we had plenty of apparatus and staffing."

Most of the fire district's calls, though, are not to fires ... but to vehicle accidents and medical emergencies.

Total monthly calls (call volume) "slowed down during the first part of the pandemic ... [but was] kind of back to normal last month," said Wilkes. "We had 76 calls for service.

"When we have more calls, it's not like our folks show up less," he said. "It seems like when we have more call volume, they show up more ... get in a rhythm of going and doing it."

And the department literally has more folks "going and doing it."

"The roster is up in the 36 range," said Wilkes.

"We do have a lot of new firefighters," said training chief Eric Alvarez.

Along with new firefighters, there's new equipment and almost a new firehouse.

"We're approximately two weeks behind on the [firehouse] project.... One of those weeks is because of the Oak incident," said Wilkes. "On paper, it's 365 calendar days [to construction completion].... So that puts it at the end of July 2021.

"I thought it would be really nice to do a grand opening or a key ceremony during Frontier Days," he added.

Along with the firehouse, the district had projected "expenditures of roughly \$240,000" for "items we were going to purchase in our project," said Wilkes. But a recent grant from the USDA will pick up 55 percent of that cost.

"That's a big deal for us," he said.

Another recent big-deal donation was \$25,000 from local cannabis business LEEF Organics.

Among other things, much needed but pricey combustible gas indicators that sniff for flammable gases will be purchased for each duty rig from the proceeds. (See Willits Weekly's October 15 edition for the interesting back story on this donation.)

And, finally, the imposition of impact fees to be paid to the district on new development projects is close to implementation, but still "a work in progress," Wilkes said.

The fee amounts were set in accordance with the results of a "nexus study" done for the district.

They are paid to the district by the city and county, who collect them using the authority of their own impact fee ordinances.

Problem is, Willits doesn't have an impact fee ordinance, so they're in the process of "putting that together," said Wilkes.

And, the county is "reviewing ... the nexus study ... before they put it on their agenda."

Willits Senior Center Lunch

Drive-Thru & Walk-Up Meals

The Willits Senior Center is continuing to provide drive-thru, walk-up and delivered meals, now that inside dining has been shut down again by the state. Call 459-6826 for more info.

Drive-thru and walk-up To Go meals are still available 12 to 1 pm, Monday through Friday. Pickup is outside the Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. As of October 2020, To Go meals are \$7 for any seniors, \$8 for anyone under age 55, or \$6 if you are a member and you purchase a meal card for 10 meals at \$6 each.

Home Meal Delivery

The Senior Center Meals on Wheels delivered meals are \$5.50 per meal. Call 459-6826 the day before needed to

schedule home meal delivery; Monday through Friday. Delivered throughout Willits. Can you

Thursday, October 29: Ghoulash

Friday, October 30: Turkey / Birthday Dinner

Monday, November 2: Pork Chop with Onion Gravy

Tuesday, November 3: Hot Dogs with Chili

Wednesday, November 4: Pork Fajitas

Thursday, November 5: Chicken & Dumplings

Friday, November 6: Country Fried Steak

Transportation for seniors: Call 459-5556 to schedule. Pick up and drop off for grocery shopping, banking, doctors' appointments.

Kendall was appointed by the supervisors on December 17, 2019, the same day that the board of supervisors voted to accept the retirement of former Sheriff Tom Allman.

On October 13, Little River resident David Ayster phoned in a comment to the board of supervisors in which he accused the board of malfeasance, bad faith, and bad government in the long-term appointment of Kendall.

"The public should be fully informed in these matters, so that we can understand how we are being governed," Ayster said. "When the public gets something as mundane as a parking ticket, there is always a record of what statute or code has been violated and it's clearly written on the ticket.

"It seems to me that the least we should expect from this board is a reading into the public record of the statute the governs these very important appointments. It would be a common courtesy, at least," Ayster said.

On October 20, Curtis sought permission from the supervisors to answer Ayster's complaint publicly. The supervisors granted that permission, although Supervisor McCowen warned he did not want the board's decision to allow Curtis to explain his legal advice to the board to be viewed by the public as setting a precedent.

Curtis then referenced Section 25304 of the California Government Code. He read: "The board of supervisors shall fill by appointment all vacancies that occur in any office filled by the appointment of the board and elective county officers, except judge of the superior court and supervisors. The appointee shall hold office for the unexpired term or until the first Monday after January 1 succeeding the next general election."

Curtis acknowledged the section was ambiguous, inasmuch as Section 25304 seems to say that the board of supervisors could have appointed Kendall to serve only until Monday, January 4, 2021, which would be the first Monday after January 1 after the next general election. In December 2019, the next general election was to be held in November 2020. Instead the supervisors appointed Kendall to serve until January of 2023.

Curtis then read a section of case law, which he said clarified the matter further. The case was from 1901, X.L. Murphy versus the State of California, in which the then attorney general opined: "The board of supervisors only has power to appoint a successor for the full remainder of the original term remaining unexpired. The successor appointed to fill the vacancy does not have to run for office until the next general election at which the office would normally be filled, and the board may not appoint an individual for a shorter period term to be filled than the next general election occurring in the county."



Far left: This beautiful autumn-theme hand-crafted pottery plate from the Jan Hoyman Studio in Ukiah is one of 100+ items up for auction. At left: Auction items include a 750 mL bottle of Charray "S" Stout Whiskey, uniquely distilled from bottle-ready Big Bear Black Stout beer (8.1 percent ABV) from the award-winning Bear Republic Brewery in Northern California. Below: The antique Barnsby English leather saddle of Hall of Fame Inductee Noor (raced 1947-1950), who was Seabiscuit's stablemate at Ridgewood Ranch, is up for auction. At left, below: A guitar signed by country singer Garth Brooks is included in the auction.



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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

Claws for a Cause

Seabiscuit Therapeutic Riding Center's annual fundraiser goes virtual, with 100+ items available for online live and silent auctions

Submitted by the Seabiscuit Therapeutic Riding Center

It's time for the annual Claws for a Cause auction, which supports the Seabiscuit Therapeutic Riding Center. This year's fundraiser will be a virtual event with a live auction held on YouTube Live on Sunday, November 8 at 4 p.m. The silent auction opens for bidding on Friday, November 6, and runs through Sunday.

The annual Claws for a Cause fundraiser helps support Seabiscuit Therapeutic Riding Center throughout the year, a therapeutic riding program that serves children and adults in Mendocino County. The goal of STRC is to teach the skill of horsemanship to individuals with disabilities and use the added benefits of horse movement, coordination, and personal awareness to help develop skills and strength in their daily lives.

With over 100 items up for auction, there's something for everyone. Items include wine and gift baskets, beautifully hand-dyed scarves, vintage jewelry, a lobster dinner for four delivered to you, and a two-night stay in Mendocino. The auction also includes several items for horse lovers: a new Wintec English saddle, a practically brand-new Crates western saddle, and saddles owned by the Howard family, including a western saddle that was used by the Howard grandchildren.

Noor's riding saddle is up for auction as well. Hall of Fame Inductee Noor (raced 1947-1950) was Seabiscuit's stablemate at Ridgewood Ranch and had quite the successful career in his own right. The saddle is an antique Barnsby English leather saddle, made in Walsall, England. It was originally owned by Charles S. Howard (from the estate of Lindsay C. Howard, Jr., Charles Howard's grandson) and is supplied by Lisa Howard, great-granddaughter of C.S. Howard and donated by Jacqueline Cooper, president emeritus of the Seabiscuit Heritage Foundation. The saddle includes a letter of authenticity. Don't miss your chance to own some history!

Other items up for auction include a Garth Brooks autographed guitar and a 750 mL bottle of Charray "S" Stout Whiskey, uniquely distilled from bottle-ready Big Bear Black Stout beer (8.1 percent ABV) from the award-winning Bear Republic Brewery in Northern California. A hand-crafted pottery plate with an autumn theme (10.75 inches wide) from the Jan Hoyman Studio in Ukiah will also be available.

This year's auction will use Greater Giving Online Bidding – allowing for a paperless bidding system. Bids are made using a smartphone or tablet on silent auction items. Also, packages can easily be tracked by "following" their activity without having to continuously return to a table or bid sheet.

To participate in the auction, visit <http://strc.ejoinme.org/claws4cause> and click on the link titled "Click Here to Register & Bid." The link will take you to a page where you can create a free account with Greater Giving, which allows you to participate in the online bidding.

Help support this worthy cause and treat yourself at the same time!

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Severe drought affecting Eel River flow and fish life

Submitted by the Eel River Recovery Project

The Eel River Recovery Project is conducting fall-flow reconnaissance while collecting automated water temperature gauges, and recently surveyed three important northern Mendocino County tributaries: Outlet Creek, Tenmile Creek, and the upper South Fork Eel.

The lack of rainfall in February 2020 and low rainfall in the southern part of the Eel River watershed through the rest of last winter are resulting in extensive dry stream reaches and record low flows downstream at South Fork Eel River gauges.

Outlet Creek is a major tributary of the upper Eel River that has headwaters above the city of Willits. Upper Baechtel Creek is one of these headwaters and has maintained surface flow in most years since 2012, or at least cold-water pools with steelhead trout juveniles. In 2020, this reach is dry and fish-less.

Broadus Creek was also dry and without fish of any kind, as was Mill Creek below Willits Creek. Willits Creek barely maintained surface flow below Brooktrails, and riffles were too shallow to support steelhead, but pools there provided some of the only cold-water habitat in the Outlet Creek watershed in 2020.

Outlet Creek, below Highway 101 at the bottom of Little Lake Valley, lacked surface flow. However, reaches downstream of there and above Long Valley Creek maintained surface flow and California roach were present and

abundant. Lower Long Valley Creek was warm but connected with roach surviving, while the uppermost reach of the creek at Highway 101 was dry.

In sum, Outlet Creek is exhibiting severe ecological stress and is failing to support cold-water fish species, with only limited reaches supporting any fish life at all.

A survey of Tenmile Creek near Laytonville had more mixed results. Main Tenmile Creek ran dry above Highway 101, near Harwood Park and downstream near the Black Oak Ranch. However, it had surface flow in a middle reach supported by springs and retained steelhead trout.

Lower reaches of Cahto, Streeter and Big Rock creeks are underground. Nonetheless, headwater reaches of these creeks maintained cold water and steelhead trout as did Mill Creek and Peterson Creek. The extent of steelhead distribution and standing crop in Tenmile Creek is far less than in 2019.

Tenmile Creek feeds the upper South Fork Eel River, which is experiencing the lowest flow levels ever at U.S. Geologic Survey flow gauges at Leggett and Miranda. On October 20, the Leggett gauge reported 11.6 cubic feet per second, only barely higher than the record low in 2002 of 11 cfs, while the median flow for the previous 50 years is 29 cfs.

The USGS gauge at Miranda was 13.5 cfs, which was at an all-time record low for the date, and less than one third of the median flow of 56 cfs derived from 81 years of data. The

At top: Wolfgang Ronnefeldt inspects Mill Creek in Willits, which gets salmon and steelhead in the winter. At right, above: Steelhead trout juveniles swim in the cold middle reach of Tenmile Creek on October 15, 2020. At right: Coho salmon juveniles congregate in Dutch Charlie Creek on October 17, 2020.



The rest of Assistance | From Page 1

"We have a very active small team of four. We have a lot of territory to cover this year," she said. "This is one of the best ways we can help, to reach out to the public and let them know what services are available through the county or through our state, local and federal partners and non-profit agencies.

"Today we are looking for people who have been evacuated," continued Antle. "If they were evacuated in the Oak Fire, they may be eligible for assistance through FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency]. If you had out-of-pocket expenses, your hotel, your food, those kinds of things, you can apply at the FEMA trailer.

"The folks who actually lost their homes," she said, "can come and apply for individual assistance through FEMA. And there may be some additional assistance that, say, Red Cross or SBA or USDA may be able to assist them with, like living expenses, etc." The Mendocino County Disaster Recovery Team can be reached at: 707-234-6303 or disasterrecovery@mendocinocounty.org. Visit www.mendocinocounty.org/community/fire-recovery to learn more.

"We're here to offer assistance," said the Red Cross's Don Rowe, "to anybody whose home was damaged in the Oak Fire. We have apps that people can download for

their phones or tablets. We have subjects like first aid, pet first aid, information on floods, tornados, earthquakes, wildfires, hurricanes, general emergency information. The apps are at www.redcross.org, they tell people where the shelters are open across the county."

Some of the other agencies represented were:

- Mendocino County Behavioral Health, which oversees most of the mental health entities throughout the county and deals with issues created by the recent challenges. They have a hotline: 855-587-6373 "for those people who are considering suicide or are in great distress." They can be found on Facebook, "EachMindMatters" or on the web, www.eachmindmatters.org.

- Mendocino County Social Services, which offers food stamps and health information, aiding people in filling out paper applications for those not computer savvy. www.mendocinocounty.org/government/health-human-services-agency.

- Mendocino County Environmental Health, which helps property owners remove toxic materials and rebuild septic systems and wells, for which they offer permits. They help with several steps of recovery of properties. Info: 707-234-6625 or they can be found on Facebook,



lower Eel River at Scotia measured 65 cfs on October 20. While not a record low flow, this is far less than the 108-year median flow of 147 cfs and the 200 cfs adult salmon need for migration.

The last viable population of coho salmon in northwestern California is in the upper South Fork Eel in Mendocino County. While tributaries like Jack of Hearts and Redwood Creek ran low, they remained cold but had no coho salmon juveniles. Dutch Charlie Creek in the same vicinity had similar flow levels, but also abundant coho salmon. It appears that excess sediment is impairing habitat and may be more limiting than flow in this area of the upper South Fork watershed.

For more information, visit www.eelriverrecovery.org or the ERRP Facebook page. Call 707-223-7200, if you have questions or you want to volunteer.



Above, from left: The United States Department of Agriculture is represented by Carol Mandel, who can help with erosion and plant life. Vince Hawkins and Gary Leonard of Mendocino County Environmental Health help with permits for rebuilding septic systems and wells and removal of toxic materials. Barbara Moed, air pollution control officer with the Air Quality Management District, provides information on toxins at home sites.

may have been affected by the fires. Info: cannabisprogram@mendocinocounty.org.

- The Air Quality Management District was there to help those who were returning to their homes or wanting to rebuild to be safe from toxic ash and other environmental perils, including asbestos. Info: 707-463-4354, mcaqmd@commendocino.ca.us or visit: www.co.mendocino.ca.us/aqmd.

- The United States Department of Agriculture, which provides technical assistance to landowners regarding natural-resource conservation, including which trees can be saved and how to avoid runoff erosion into streams and waterways. Info: 707-485-3233 or carol.mandel@ca.usda.gov.

- Mendocino Cannabis Alliance, with the mandate to help growers during the pandemic to keep themselves and their employees safe and healthy. Info: www.mendocannabis.com or 707-234-5568.

The Local Assistance Center was only operating in Willits that one afternoon; a second LAC took place in Covelo on October 28. However, anyone needing the assistance of any of these organizations or agencies can contact them at the above numbers, email addresses or websites to get help on the road to recovery.



At far left: The Home Energy Assistance Program is represented by Vicky Rodriguez and Sylvia Lopez.

At left: Tarryn Scroggins and Jessica England are ready to help people with Medi-Cal and CalFresh.

Photos by Mathew Caine



94th annual Micro – but county-approved – rodeo held at WFD grounds to continue title

One of the big potential tragedies of 2020 was narrowly averted on a recent Sunday when a tiny group of cowboys and cowgirls gathered at the Willits Frontier Days Rodeo Grounds to hold the Ranch Rodeo event and allow Willits Frontier Days to keep its coveted title of "Longest Continuous Running Rodeo in the State of California."

The three teams – Whiskey and Wild Women, Key Livestock, and Heart Bar Ranch – competed in calf branding, team sorting, ranch doctoring, dally calf roping, and trailer loading during the rodeo on October 18. First place went to Whiskey and Wild Women, second

to Key Livestock, and third to Heart Bar Ranch.

"My favorite quote of the day was from Lee Persico," said Alexis England, WFD volunteer. "He was up in the announcer's booth and laughed and said: 'We have never had to do a rodeo under cover before!' Lee's been involved with WFD since he was 1.5 years old."

WFD kept the event quiet and without spectators to comply with the county's special allowance of the event, and everyone looks forward to a regular celebration in 2021.

– Maureen Jennison



Below: The few contestants who competed at the 2020 Ranch Rodeo at the Willits Frontier Days grounds pose in front of the empty stands. Left, right and above: Contestants participated in minimal events, but still showcased their skills of the cowboy way of life during the October 18, 2020 rodeo.



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