





## Senior Center menu for the week

Willits Senior Center is serving lunch in its indoor dining room, Monday through Friday, from 11:45 am to 1 pm. Drive-through lunches are available from 12 to 12:45 pm, outside the Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. Lunches are \$8; \$75 for a 10 lunch card for Senior Center members.

**Thursday, November 14:** Cranberry Glazed Pork Chops, Roasted Potatoes

**Friday, November 15:** BBQ Chicken, Baked Beans and Corn Bread

**Monday, November 18:** Pulled Pork Sandwich, Mac & Cheese

**Tuesday, November 19:** Lasagna w/Meat Sauce, Garlic Bread

**Wednesday, November 20:** Pork Burrito Wet w/Green Sauce

**Thursday, November 21:** Chicken & Dumplings

**Friday, November 22:** Turkey, Stuffing, Cranberry, Veggies, Roll

**Activities:** Bingo every Friday night, 5 to 7 pm. Exercise class every weekday morning from 9 to 10 am.

**Pancake Breakfast:** Every second Sunday, on December 8 next month, 8 to 11 am.

**Meals on Wheels:** The Senior Center Meals on Wheels program delivers lunch Monday through Friday. To sign up call Joliana at 459-6826, who can help fill out the application form. Call 459-6826 the day before needed to schedule home meal delivery. Delivered throughout Willits.

**Transportation for seniors:** Call 459-5556 to schedule. Pick up and drop off for grocery shopping, banking, doctors' appointments. Senior Center Thrift Shop: 459-2176

The Senior Center is in need of volunteers to help with the many activities here at the center, including volunteer Meals on Wheels drivers. "Volunteers are one-third of our workforce, which allows us to offer many services to our members and community." To learn more about volunteering: 459-6826.

## Friday's 'Ballots left to count' report

**Submitted by Mendocino County Elections Office**

*Editor's Note: This press release was released Friday, November 8, and the election results were updated online as of Wednesday, November 13. As of that date, Mendocino County has an estimated 10,000 ballots still to process and report.*

November 8 – Mendocino County Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder Katrina Bartolome announced that as with every other election, there are ballots left to be processed and counted as part of the official canvass. [As of Friday, November 8] Mendocino County has 21,132 Vote By Mail ballots to process and 2,204 Conditional Provisional/Provisional ballots to review and process.

As of November 8, the outstanding ballots left to count the "Hot" Municipal contests have the following number of ballots left to count:

City of Ukiah – 3,747

City of Willits – 1,060

City of Fort Bragg – 1,708

City of Point Arena - 116

Supervisory District Breakdown:

1st Supervisory District has 5,133 ballots to count

2nd Supervisory District has 3,745 ballots to count

3rd Supervisory District has 4,563 ballots to count

4th Supervisory District has 5,598 ballots to count

5th Supervisory District has 4,297 ballots to count

According to Assembly Bill 3184; we will not certify our final election results until December 3, 2024. We will be updating our website on a weekly basis until we certify the election.

If you have received a letter to cure a mis-matched or missing signature on your ballot envelope, you have until December 1, 2024 (two days prior to certification) to return your documents to cure your signature. If you have any additional questions, please call our office at (707) 234-6819.

## Mendocino Railway awarded grant for 3 new locomotives

**Submitted by Mendocino Railway**

November 4 – Mendocino Railway has received a \$14.8 million grant to replace three Tier 0 locomotives with three new Tier IV locomotives. The grant was made through the federal Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement Grant Program.

The CRISI Program, administered by the Federal Railroad Administration, funds projects that improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of intercity passenger and freight rail. As a Class III common carrier railroad that offers freight rail services, Mendocino Railway is honored to have been awarded this grant, which will allow Mendocino Railway to further reduce the environmental impacts of its railroad operations.

These new engines will run predominantly on the California Western Railroad, commonly called the "Skunk Train" out of Fort Bragg and Willits, in Northern California.

"Mendocino Railway is proud to stand alongside other Class II and Class III common carrier railroads in securing this vital funding to promote continued environmental sustainability," said Robert Jason Pinoli, president of Mendocino Railway. "This project is a critical step in advancing our operations while allowing us to do even more to align with federal and state goals to reduce emissions in the transportation sector.

"Railroads are already among the most environmentally friendly ways to transport goods and services," Pinoli said, "accounting for less than 2% of total greenhouse gas emissions annually. Trains can move 1 ton of freight more than 500 miles on less than 1 gallon of diesel. This grant reaffirms our railroad's commitment to even cleaner, and even more efficient, transportation of freight and passengers."

Mendocino Railway's sister company, Sierra Northern Railway, is the lowest emission railroad in America, operating a fleet of Tier III locomotives and building the first Zero Emission hydrogen fuel cell locomotive in the nation. In fact, the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association recently awarded Sierra Northern Railway its prestigious Environmental Award.

The new Tier-IV locomotives are projected to reduce fuel consumption by up to 47% and significantly reduce Mendocino Railway's already low railroad emissions, directly supporting state and federal objectives to further reduce the carbon footprint of railroads. In addition to reducing emissions, the project will improve safety and operational efficiency by replacing nearly 70-year-old equipment.

The new Tier-IV locomotives will also assist Mendocino Railway in diverting more freight traffic from trucks to rail, which will help further reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions. By enhancing the capacity and efficiency of its freight operations, Mendocino Railway is positioning itself to meet the expressed demand for local freight services along its line.

Mendocino Railway extends its gratitude to the Biden-Harris Administration, the Federal Railroad Administration, and the Southern California Air Quality Management District for their leadership and support. Mendocino Railway also thanks Crystal M. Zorbaugh and her colleagues at Mullins Law Group for their advocacy and commitment to this important project.

The CRISI Program is the only federal grant program that prioritizes smaller railroads. According to the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association, this round of funding involved a record \$1.29 billion in grants being awarded to 81 short-line projects across 36 states.

Mendocino Railway's California Western Railroad / Skunk Train is a Class III common carrier public utility railroad located in the redwood forests of Northern California's Mendocino County. This heritage freight railroad, which has been operating since 1885, added passenger service after its founding, initially moved redwood logs from the rugged back country to Mendocino Coast sawmills, later transporting finished lumber out to the national railroad network. In 1925, the railroad became known as the "Skunk Train" and, since that time, has become a beloved institution touted as one of the "10 Best Rail Tours in the Country" (USA Today) and a "Top 10 Family Activity in California" (National Geographic Traveler). The Skunk Train's journey covers the same 40-mile route that its freight trains use, crossing over some 30 bridges, all while retaining its original charm—minus the historic pungent aroma that once preceded the train's arrival. Freight, passenger, and excursion trains operate year-round.



Above, from left: The antipasti are already on the tables for the attendees to snack on while waiting for the meal. Two of the items available at the silent auction are a statue of St. Francis and a flower arrangement by Annette Pinon. A green salad whets the appetites for the main pasta course. Below: The ladies of the St. Anthony Women's Guild work tirelessly in the kitchen to create a meal for the congregants and others. At right: The dining room starts to fill up prior to the dinner service.



## A Taste of Italy

### Saint Anthony of Padua Catholic Church holds fundraising dinner with delicious Italian food and silent auction

Saint Anthony is the patron saint of lost things (among other attributes). The only thing lost at Saturday's Italian Dinner – A Taste of Italy, held at Saint Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, were some diets, with the ample portions of tasty penne pasta. Not to mention, a heavenly dessert of chocolate chip brownies with cream cheese hazelnut frosting.

Ninety diners sat at tables of eight, talked, drank wine, and enjoyed the food and community. The fundraiser was to generate money for several altruistic projects of the church and the guild, including annual scholarships for graduating seniors who are active in the church. A silent auction and raffle added to the money-making efforts.

Saint Anthony of Padua Catholic Church exists to serve the community with several masses each week and a sense of welcoming to all. This year, the guild decided to produce the Taste of Italy as their fundraiser.

"We have about 150 families," explained Robin Carter, vice president of the Saint Anthony Women's Guild. "This is our first time doing a big dinner like this. Usually, in the past, we've done rummage sales and bake sales, kind of your general ladies' groups fundraising activities. The rummage sales got to be a lot of work and the amount of people who attended was dropping off. This was even before COVID. We still do the Our Lady of Guadalupe festival every year in December. We really go all out on that one. We even bring in a mariachi band."

Jill Persico, president of the Women's Guild, took on the duties of chef for the evening and brought her old family pasta recipe to the proceedings. "The pasta sauce is my mother's recipe," said Persico. "I call it Ma Pieritti, which is my maiden name. My mom was Sicilian, and my dad was Tuscan. I adapted the dish to my own style but basically, it's her recipe. I was channeling her as I was cooking this afternoon. The meatballs are also my mom's recipe and it's what we serve at the Loose Caboose.

"My daughter, Amy, put

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

# Flowers by Annette

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Phone: 707-459-6588

Website: [www.flowersbyannette.net](http://www.flowersbyannette.net)

## Mendocino County Farm Bureau moves to Gobbi Street

November 1 – The Mendocino County Farm Bureau is proud to announce its relocation to a new office building at 455 E. Gobbi St. in Ukiah.

This is a move that reinforces the Farm Bureau's commitment to providing high-quality resources, advocacy, and educational support to the agricultural community. This new and larger facility allows MCFB to better serve its members, including farmers, ranchers and rural residents across Mendocino County.

The decision to relocate is part of MCFB's ongoing efforts to adapt to the growing and evolving needs of the local agriculture industry in Mendocino County. With expanded facilities, including new meeting spaces, and updated workstations, the building is well-suited to accommodate MCFB's expanding efforts. The new space will be a central hub for MCFB and their members to work.

MCFB built their current office on Talmage Road in 1978 after purchasing the property from the Ukiah Fruit Growers. After almost 50 years, MCFB is looking forward to welcoming members, partners and community members to our new location.

*About the Mendocino County Farm Bureau*

*Founded in 1918, the Mendocino County Farm Bureau is a nonprofit organization devoted to advancing the interests of local agriculture. MCFB works to promote economic sustainability, environmental stewardship, and the heritage of rural communities through advocacy, education, and member services. As a trusted voice for agriculture in Mendocino County, MCFB is dedicated to ensuring that farmers and ranchers have the resources and support they need.*

REMEMBER: Deadline is end of day Monday for each week's Thursday edition. This includes submissions, editorial content, and ads, too! Email is best: [willitsweekly@gmail.com](mailto:willitsweekly@gmail.com)

### The Rules: LETTERS

Letters & Commentaries: Email letters to [willitsweekly@gmail.com](mailto:willitsweekly@gmail.com). Willits Weekly prints letters and commentaries about Willits and Third District issues, activities, events, and people. We print letters to the editor from residents of Willits and the Third District only. To encourage a variety of voices, Willits Weekly limits letter publication from any one writer to once every four weeks.

Letters and commentaries must be submitted with a name, address and phone number, although only the author's name and city of residence will be published. Deadline is end of day Monday for each Thursday edition. No letters from an anonymous source will be published, although a request to withhold the writer's name will be considered.

# Willits Weekly

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P.O. Box 1698 Willits, CA 95490 / 707-459-2633; 707-972-7047  
[willitsweekly@gmail.com](mailto:willitsweekly@gmail.com) / [www.willitsweekly.com](http://www.willitsweekly.com)

Jennifer Poole, publisher and editor / [willitsweekly@gmail.com](mailto:willitsweekly@gmail.com) / 707-459-2633

Maureen (Moore) Jennison, art director and photographer / [willitsweekly@gmail.com](mailto:willitsweekly@gmail.com) / 707-972-7047

Jackie Cobbs, features editor

Mathew Caine, photographer / features writer

Barbara O'Reardon, Brooktrails reporter

Annie Everts, reporter / features writer

Addison Alvarado, school board reporter

Danya Davis, Police Log

Margi Gomez Guhde, features writer / reporter

Sheri Dockins, sports reporter

Ava Dockins, sports photographer

April Tweddell, ad sales / 707-972-2475 / [willitsweekly@gmail.com](mailto:willitsweekly@gmail.com)

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# Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

## SUBSCRIPTION FORM

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

In the mail: ☐ 1 year - \$100 ☐ Additional donation included \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Home delivery: ☐ 1 year - \$75 (Home Delivery only available in Willits, Brooktrails & local areas) (call for details)

Make checks payable to Willits Weekly | No invoice sent – please just send in payment | P.O. Box 1698 in Willits, CA 95490

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### QUESTIONS: 707-459-2633 | 707-972-7047

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# Winter Wonderland

HOT COCOA  
PHOTO OPS  
ORNAMENT CRAFTS FOR KIDS

APPLE CIDER  
CHRISTMAS TREES

## KICKOFF EVENT NOVEMBER 23<sup>RD</sup>

(707) 459-6791

208 E. San Francisco Ave.  
sparetimegardencenter.com

NEW STORE HOURS  
Mon - Sat 9 am - 5 pm  
Sunday CLOSED



Above, left: Willits City Council candidate Matthew Alaniz and Brooktrails City Manager Tamara Alaniz are active in the church.

Above, right: Father Aaron spends the evening table hopping and greeting the attendees.

At left: One of the attendees brought his own mood lighting for the table.

Photos by Mathew Caine

## Ho fio fio! Merry Christmas!

It's Santa here, writing to all of you in the wonderful town of Willits. I've loved visiting with you each year, and my heart is full of joy from all the love and cheer you've shared with me. You've made my Christmas journeys so very special, and I'll always treasure the memories of our visits. This year, however, I must let you know that I have to spread my holiday cheer far and wide. There are many other children across the world who are also waiting for my visits, and it's important that I share my magic with all of them.

But don't worry, I've not forgotten you. To make sure you still feel the holiday spirit, I've asked some of my special helpers to visit JD Redhouse & Co.! They'll be there to take fun Christmas photos and, most importantly, collect any letters you have for me. I know it's not quite the same, but I promise I will be thinking of you all!

Remember, Christmas isn't just about the presents or the visits; it's about the love, the kindness, and the magic we share together. Keep being the wonderful, kind-hearted children I know you to be, and know that I'll be sending extra Christmas cheer your way. Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas filled with joy, love, and lots of holiday magic!

**Warmest wishes,  
Santa Claus**



## Holiday Photos

with Maureen Jennison

### Featuring - Santa's Helpers

## Saturday, November 30th

### 2:00pm - 5:00pm

FAMILY OWNED  
J.D. REDHOUSE & CO.  
MODERN MERCANTILE



Willits Weekly's  
Puzzle Page

Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword

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

Level: Beginner



HOW TO  
SUDOKU

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

AUTUMN WORD SEARCH

H	S	I	R	S	O	V	B	S	L	U	K	F	W	W	B	M	L
G	O	D	M	P	L	P	A	N	O	A	N	A	L	O	Z	P	L
N	I	R	G	E	L	A	V	E	G	O	I	T	S	E	C	E	O
L	N	S	E	A	K	I	C	Z	R	O	U	R	B	A	I	O	U
A	R	O	W	S	U	L	C	H	N	R	C	R	G	D	E	N	S
F	S	E	I	R	R	E	B	Z	N	A	G	E	U	N	D	S	H
Z	V	E	N	O	P	E	L	H	I	S	E	T	U	N	T	S	E
B	E	I	N	B	U	L	H	I	S	E	T	U	N	T	S	E	H
R	L	O	M	Q	P	R	Y	T	V	I	R	E	P	L	A	C	E
A	Q	A	U	K	E	A	F	C	I	G	P	O	U	C	N	R	A
C	K	N	S	N	S	A	G	A	T	I	F	N	Q	O	O	G	L
R	P	I	H	S	A	C	R	U	W	K	R	H	Y	H	G	H	A

ACORN	COOL	HARVEST	RAINBOW
ANIMALS	CORNUCOPIA	HAY	RAKING
APPLES	CRANBERRIES	LEAVES	SCARECROW
AUTUMNAL	CRISP	MAIZE	SCURRY
BAKING	DECIDUOUS	NESTING	SEASONAL
CASSEROLE	EVERGREEN	PERSIMMON	SEPTEMBER
CHESTNUTS	FALLING	PIE	SQUASH
CIDER	FIREPLACE	PREPARATIONS	STEWES
CINNAMON	GOURD	PUMPKINS	TREES

	1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12	
13								14						15
16			17					18						19
20			21					22			23		24	
25						26				27		28		
29				30				31		32			33	
			34	35						36			37	
38	39									40				
41						42				43				
44					45		46			47			48	49
51			52		53			54					55	
56				57				58			59			
60			61		62					63				64
65		66								67			68	
	69									70				

CLUES ACROSS

- Schoolhouse tool
  - Martens
  - Slags
  - One who scrapes
  - Centliler
  - White wine
  - Of I
  - Former Syracuse great Warrick
  - Relating to the ear
  - Sandwich shops
  - Victories
  - White (French)
  - Self-immolation by fire ritual
  - Genus of parrots
  - Unhappy
  - Talk incessantly
  - Type of Squad
  - Unit of perceived loudness
  - Violent seizure of property
  - Agave
  - Sound units
  - Removes from record
  - Partner to Mama
  - Mythological bird
  - Dash
  - Hair product
  - Two-year-old sheep
  - Signs a deal
- Conifer
  - Autonomous republic in NW Russia
  - Wife of Muhammed
  - British Air Aces
  - Ears or ear-like appendages
  - Not caps
  - Deep-bodied sea dweller
  - Rural delivery
  - Feeling
  - Study of relations of organisms to one another
  - Room to argue
  - Question
- CLUES DOWN
- Cream puff
  - Road open
  - Stressed syllable
  - Thailand's former name
  - Cologne
  - Recounted
  - Garment of cloth
  - Airborne (abbr.)
  - Reproduced
  - Emits coherent radiation
  - 'Westworld' actor Harris
  - Smallest interval in Western music
  - Unstressed central vowel
- Lives in
  - When you expect to get somewhere
  - Storage bags
  - One who covers with plastic
  - Cast out
  - Automobile
  - Repaired shoe
  - Belonging to the bottom layer
  - Possesses
  - Soda
  - Programs
  - In an unexpected way
  - A bag-like structure in a plant or animal
  - For each
  - Unbelief
  - Seized or impaled
  - Arrive on the scene
  - Especially happy
  - Classic western film
  - Split pulses
  - Frida \_\_\_\_ Painter
  - Start again
  - Employee stock ownership plan
  - Young women's association
  - Frozen water
  - 'The First State'
  - Computers need one



The rest of Italy From page 3

Above: Loose Caboose Café owner Jill Persico created a tasty and filling meal of pasta from an old family recipe.

Photos by Mathew Caine

this together," continued Persico. "She's my youngest daughter and is co-managing the Loose Caboose with me and will eventually be taking over. I'm doing the cooking and she's taking us into the 21st century, doing a lot of online stuff and our Facebook page. She's responsible for us taking credit cards now."

The silent auction had several items of interest to the attendees. There were two statuettes of Saint Francis of Assisi, a couple flower arrangements from Annette Pinon of Flowers by Annette, an amethyst and sterling silver necklace, a ceramic serving set with a wooden salad bowl, and more. The raffle prize was a basket of miscellaneous and valuable items.

Father Aaron, whose Indian name is Arogyaiah Bandanadam, shortened for Western parishioners who are unaccustomed to pronouncing the difficult foreign labels, has been in the church for seven years. Prior to that, he was a missionary priest.

"We used to have a Fall Fiesta every year in October but since COVID we didn't have any gatherings," said Bandanadam. "But we wanted to have a community gathering like this. There are some people who come for the 5:30 pm Saturday mass but there is no connection between the 9 am Sunday and the Saturday masses. This kind of gathering will be helping us to know each other. We welcome all the people, even those who are not members of our church."

By all measures, this was a successful event, both in terms of attendance, the quality of the dinner, and the sense of community coming together for a common purpose. Saint Anthony's of Padua has become an integral part of the ethos of Willits with their sizable congregation, their inclusivity, and their welcoming and friendly demeanor.

To learn more about Saint Anthony's of Padua, located at 61 West San Francisco Avenue, visit <https://santhonywillits.org/>, call 459-2252, or email [santhonywillits@gmail.com](mailto:santhonywillits@gmail.com).

Below, left: Jane and Dan Miller celebrate their seventh anniversary by attending the Italian dinner. Below, right: Mary and Chris Horger take on the bar duties.



JD REDHOUSE & COMPANY PRESENTS

## CHRISTMAS WREATH WORKSHOP

**WHAT'S INCLUDED:**

- WIRE FRAME
- GREENERY
- FILLER
- BOW
- INSTRUCTION
- LITE

REFRESHMENTS

**WHAT TO BRING:**

- COMPACT
- GARDEN SHEARS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1ST  
WILLITS CENTER FOR THE ARTS  
12:00PM - 2:00PM

**MAKE ONE FOR \$30.00 OR TWO FOR \$50.00**

SPACE IS LIMITED  
RSVP BY TEXT: 707-367-9471  
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5TH ANNUAL  
**GRINCH**  
PHOTOS

10 AM - 1 PM PROFESSIONAL PHOTOS TAKEN BY MAUREEN  
DIGITAL IMAGES \$5 PER GROUP ARRANGEMENT  
1PM-4PM TAKE YOUR OWN PHOTOS BY DONATION

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH 10-4  
242 East Commercial Street, Willits CA 95490

Imagination Station  
EDUCATIONAL  
TOY  
BOARDS

PHOTOS BY  
MAUREEN JENKINSON

Adri's Salon  
**VENDOR MARKET**

22 NOVEMBER

Local vendors/salon discounts  
Friday 3pm-6pm

1615 A South Main ST.  
Willits CA.

MENDO CRAFT PRESENTS

Toy Depot  
Grinch  
photos

YOU ARE INVITED

## Grinch

**VENDOR MARKET**

DECEMBER

SUNDAY | 1st | 10am-5pm

280 E. COMMERCIAL ST. WILLITS CA

The Whistle Stop

Willits Community  
Services & Food Bank  
Invites you to a Free  
Sit Down Dinner

**35th Annual Willits Community  
Thanksgiving Dinner**

**November 28, 2024**

11AM - 3 PM

Come Give Thanks and Celebrate This  
Holiday with your Community

**Willits Senior Center  
1501 Baechtel Rd**

There is no charge. Anyone may eat for free.  
Donations are gladly accepted and will benefit the WCS & Food Bank in their continuing effort to provide Essential Human Services

Food Made Possible by: Sherwood Valley Casino  
Desert Made Possible by the Seventh Day Adventist Church, The Church of Jesus Christ and Members of the Willits Brown Bag Program  
Food Prepared by Purkin Farms Conservation Camp

# What's Happening Around Town

## Thursday, November 14

**Willits Farmers Market:** The weekly farmers market is indoors for the season, at Little Lake Grange, 391 School Street. Thursday, November 14, 3 to 5:30 pm. Local produce, local meat, farm fresh eggs, delicious meals, tasty treats and hot drinks, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more.

course menu created by Chef Adam Celaya, from 6 to 8 pm on Saturday, November 16. Price

including champagne and this special meal (meal is veggie friendly) is \$125 per plate, with all proceeds going to the Willits Center for the Arts. Limited Seating Bring your favorite Gary photos and stories to tell! Tickets are available online or at the WCA Gallery desk. Buy early, tickets are selling.... <https://www.willitscenterforthearts.org/event-details/toast-roast-for-gary-martins-curator-retirement>



## Friday, November 15

**Blue Luke at Shanachie:** "Blue Luke" Andrews is a prodigy guitarist, born and raised in Dos Rios, Mendocino County: "Imagine a band that takes the soul of the blues, the groove of the funk, the grit of rock & roll and the rich harmonies of jazz to create exactly what you've always wanted to hear." Friday, November 15 at 8 pm, Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street.

## Saturday, November 16

**WCT Staged Reading: the British romantic comedy "Home, I'm Darling,"** written by Laura Wade and directed by Sarah France, will be presented as a staged reading at Willits Community Theatre on Saturday, November 16 at 7:30 pm and on Sunday, November 17 at 2 pm. 37 West Van Lane. Tickets are \$10 and available at the door.



**Cosmic Family Band at Shanachie:** A local Mendocino County jam band, "sharing original music that is a reflection of being a part of this amazing community. We're the Cosmic Family Band and so are you." Saturday, November 16 at 8 pm at Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street.

**Toast & Roast for WCA's Gary Martin:** Join us in celebrating Gary Martin's retirement as Willits Center for the Arts Gallery Curator with a candlelight dinner in the Galleries, with an elegant full-

WILLITS  
GEM & MINERAL  
SOCIETY

Rockluck  
(Potluck)  
Thanksgiving Style  
Free cool rock!  
Door Prizes

MON  
11-18  
7-8:30PM  
At the  
Willits Grange

Bring a dish (2' x 2' max)  
for show & tell  
"Theme: Name your potluck  
entree a 'luck'!  
(Please no alcohol or pork)  
The potluck is a group activity

## Monday, November 18

**Willits Gem & Mineral Society Meeting:** Join the Willits Gem & Mineral Society for a free

monthly meeting, on Monday, November 18 this month, featuring a "rockluck" (potluck) – Thanksgiving style. Bring a dish (bring your own cutlery; no alcohol) and a rock for show & tell. 7 to 8:30 pm, at the Willits Grange, 291 School Street. All future meetings (including December and January) held every third Monday.

## 37th annual Holiday Express, December 7

Come join Roots of Motive Power for their FREE annual Holiday Express family event, Saturday, December 7, 11 am to 4 pm at the Roots yard, 420 East Commercial Street in Willits. FREE train rides; meet Santa and receive a small gift; Wagon Full of Toys Raffle at 3:30 pm; free admission and crafts at the Mendocino County Museum; Trees, Refreshments, Decorations; and more. More info: [www.rootsofmotivepower.com](http://www.rootsofmotivepower.com) or check out the "Roots of Motive Power" page on Facebook.

ROOTS OF MOTIVE POWER PRESENTS:

## HOLIDAY EXPRESS

December 7th  
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
**FREE FAMILY EVENT!**

- FREE Train Rides
- Meet Santa & Receive a FREE Small Gift
- Wagon Full of Toys Raffle at 3:30 p.m.
- FREE Admission and Crafts at the Mendocino County Museum
- Trees, Refreshments, Decorations and More!

420 E. COMMERCIAL ST., WILLITS, CA  
[www.rootsofmotivepower.com](http://www.rootsofmotivepower.com)

ROOTS OF  
MOTIVE POWER

## Willits Community Christmas Chorale, December 1

Hosted by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 265 Margie Drive, Sunday, December 1, beginning at 6 pm. Christmas is just around the corner. Come to get into the Christmas spirit by enjoying and participating in music from our community. Refreshments of cookies and apple cider will culminate the event.

ARTS  
Presents Your

## Members Small Works Show

meet the artists Nov.30, 6-9pm

Opening  
Nov. 29  
through  
Dec. 24th  
open  
Weekends  
11 am - 5 pm.

Discover  
unique, small  
handmade  
gifts crafted  
with heart!

Join us for the December show.  
Deadline for entries, Nov. 25  
Contact [glm1950@gmail.com](mailto:glm1950@gmail.com)  
71 E. Commercial St. Willits, CA

## Community Thanksgiving Dinner coming up; volunteers needed

Willits Community Services and Food Bank needs volunteers for the 35th annual free Community Thanksgiving Dinner, set for Thursday, November 28 from 11 am to 3 pm at the Harrah Senior Center, 1501 Baechtel Road. Sponsored by Sherwood Valley Casino. Volunteers are needed to make desserts, to set up on November 27, to serve food at the dinner, and to deliver meals to seniors on Thanksgiving Day, November 28. Anyone interested in volunteering can call Kim at (707) 459-3333.

Experience the  
impossible with an  
evening of magic  
and  
mentalism.

Robert will  
astound you  
with his mental  
skills and  
intuitive abilities,  
in a riveting  
performance that  
you'll remember for  
years to come.

**MAGIC  
and Mentalism**

**Robert Goleman**

"Nothing short of astonishing."

November 23 - 7:30 pm  
Sponsored by Sherwood Valley Casino  
37 West Van Lane, Willits





Above: This wreath was placed on the Vietnam Memorial in honor of Veterans Day.

At right: Veteran Bill Barker decided to contribute to the fund before eating.

At far right: This young one is looking forward to digging into the pancakes, eggs, and ham.

Photos by Mathew Caine



**George Leithner**  
March 2, 1956 — February 10, 2024

George Randolph Leithner passed away peacefully on February 10, 2024, surrounded by his loving family after a brief illness. Born on March 2, 1956, in San Bruno, California, George was the cherished son of Anita (Simon) and Leslie Desavedo. When his mother remarried to Ralph Leithner, he adopted 5-year-old George, and the family settled in Belmont. He attended Central Elementary, Ralston Junior High, and Carlmont High School, where he formed lifelong friendships.

George grew up with siblings Monica, Jenny, and Ron, enjoying life's simple pleasures. As a dedicated Boy Scout, he embraced the outdoors, developing a lifelong love for fishing, hiking, and camping. Standish and Hickey State Park was a beloved camping spot for George, visited often both in childhood and adulthood. Family trips to their cabin in Brooktrails, Willits, were treasured times of togetherness in nature. Living many years in Belmont and then Woodside, George made Brooktrails his full-time home in 2008.

Throughout his life, George adored his dogs—Leroy, Blue, and Tucker Bear—who were more than pets; they were children to him. Tragically, George's mother, Anita, and his beloved dog, Leroy, both died in an auto accident in Hopland in 1983. George carried these heartbreaking losses the rest of his life.

George saw God's presence in nature and often requested prayers. He especially loved the peace of the Pacific Ocean's beaches, where he basked in the sounds of waves and seagulls and his dogs played. Enjoying rock and roll, he played drums in a band with friends during his teenage years. In his later years, he added mellow smooth jazz to his playlist.

A caring, loyal family man, George had a deep, enduring bond with his father, Ralph, who was his best friend and companion for many years. His sister, Jenny, and her family provided support in his later years, sharing in the joys and memories that George cherished so deeply. Known for his remarkable memory, George loved to recount family stories, strengthening the family's shared history with his recollections.

George worked in various trades, from railroad work to A & D welding in San Carlos, and in construction. Being skilled with his hands, he enjoyed cooking, woodworking, gardening, and especially "Lightin' up the Q" to barbecue for family and friends. George became an excellent barbecuer as he caringly learned how to cook everyone's steak order to perfection. Generous with his time and affection, George would often call loved ones just to check in, and light a candle for those to honor birthdays, going through difficulties, and in memory of those who had passed.

George's honesty, trustworthiness, and infectious laugh left a lasting impression on everyone he met. Known for his humor, he loved to make others laugh and smile with his jokes and always ended his messages with, "Lots of love to you all." His family and friends will remember George as a man of love and laughter.

Preceded in death by his parents, Anita and Ralph, George is survived by his sisters, Monica of Sonora and Jenny (Attila) of Chico, his brother, Ron (Melissa) of Granite Bay and many nieces, nephews, and friends. George will be forever missed but lovingly remembered.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Sunday, November 24, at 11 a.m. at the Brooktrails Community Center. Memorial donations in George's honor may be made to the Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County.

George grew up with siblings Monica, Jenny, and Ron, enjoying life's simple pleasures. As a dedicated Boy Scout, he embraced the outdoors, developing a lifelong love for fishing, hiking, and camping. Standish and Hickey State Park was a beloved camping spot for George, visited often both in childhood and adulthood. Family trips to their cabin in Brooktrails, Willits, were treasured times of togetherness in nature. Living many years in Belmont and then Woodside, George made Brooktrails his full-time home in 2008.

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# Veterans Day 2024 in Willits

## American Legion Post 174 honors veterans, first responders with breakfast and flag raising

The morning's rain did not bode well for the scheduled flag raising at noon by the American Legion Post 174, as they have done every year, in honor of all the veterans and service members who have served faithfully through time and have given generously of their lives in order to secure the freedoms that are enjoyed as citizens of the United States. Prior to the flag raising, the energetic and early rising veterans of Post 174 treated veterans, first responders, and Scouts to a hearty breakfast of scrambled eggs, pancakes, and ham, with juice and well-appreciated coffee.

With doors open at 8 am, the volunteers, some of whom had been working on the meal from before 6 am, worked like a well-oiled machine, efficiently pouring batter onto the griddle, scrambling eggs, and heating the ham. Some of the regular volunteers could not help out this year, so the remaining workers, toiled extra diligently to produce the morning repast. The small basement dining room/kitchen received visitors, veterans, and some local politicians until 11 am, by which time the rain had let up so that the flag raising was not in jeopardy.

"This is to show our appreciation," said Post Commander Curtis Deshiell. "Even the first responders. Everybody helps out and does their thing in the community." In a small town like Willits, volunteerism is very much alive and well, as there is much to be done for the citizens and not a lot of funding to hire workers.

In addition to the breakfast, there was the presence of two members of Sherwood Firewise Communities, Keith Rutledge and Terry Phenicie, who attended to offer free reflective address signs to the veterans, so that their houses could be easily identified in the event of a fire.

"Basically, the Willits Basket Beaters, which is our local disc golf club, held a benefit at their last rally in the summer and out of the prize money, they donated \$1,000 to Sherwood Firewise to pay for address signs for veterans and first responders. So, we have 25 address signs to give out today," explained Rutledge. Sherwood Firewise is coordinating with the local Scout Troop 42 to install the signs, which come with metal posts for mounting.

"We just finished our first Cal Fire grant which was a half million dollars and we did about 200 acres of roadside reduction work," Rutledge recounted. "It was on Blue Lake Road, Ridge Road, and Timber Road, up top. We secured the emergency access routes, the Fircro and the Willits Creek route, and now we're working on clearing the major arterioles within the subdivision so that people can have an easier time getting out if there is a fire.

"We secured another grant to do the Sherwood Rancheria, First, Second and Third Gates, Sylvandale, Spring Creek. We're getting ready to start on Sherwood Road, from the Willits city limits, all the way up to the 'Y' at the Sherwood, Fort Bragg turnoff. We'll be doing roadside fuel reduction on both sides of the road, including some overhanging trees, which is something

we just added on."

After the meal was over, the American Legion members adjourned to the flagpole at the Mendocino County Museum for their annual Veterans Day flag raising, as the rain had fortuitously ceased temporarily, and there was a large patch of blue sky above the town. Several Willits veterans and other citizens observed the rite, as Post Commander Deshiell addressed the people, and John Frankum raised and saluted the flag. The event was graced with the presence of a 100-year-old World War II veteran, John Bothwell, who received a round of applause for his service and longevity.

Mayor Saprina Rodriguez rarely misses one of these flag raisings as she appreciates that the sacrifices of these armed services members afford the freedoms for all. "We appreciate the people in the service," said Rodriguez. "They put their lives and time on the line for each of us so that we can enjoy the freedom of being out here today.

"We each have members of our family who serve or have served in the armed services, so we know what the sacrifice is, to the individual, to the family. People who have taken that step in their lives to go into the armed services to ensure that there is freedom for all of us, I have the deepest respect for them. I always look forward to coming on Veterans Day and 9/11 and any other opportunity I have to really show my appreciation for veterans. It's the least we can do."



At far left: Willits Mayor Saprina Rodriguez had a breakfast meeting with Willits City Manager Brian Bender at the Legion breakfast. At left: Terry Phenicie of Sherwood Firewise Communities explains how to obtain the free reflective signs.

Below, from left: Veterans John Frankum and Post 174 Commander Curtis Deshiell were in charge of raising the flag at the Veterans Memorial at the County Museum. Stacks of buttermilk pancakes – always a welcome comfort food – kept coming out to be served. Frank Deuel usually serves the coffee, but decided to be served instead this morning. Carol Deuel signed her home up for the free reflective address signs.

Photos by Mathew Caine



### OBITUARY |

## Samuel Snider

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of our beloved father Samuel Snider on September 30, 2024 at the age of 72. He passed with God's grace surrounded by his loving children and grandchildren.

Samuel Eugene Snider was born September 23, 1952 in Willits, California. He was the youngest of three siblings born to Clifton and Eleanor Snider.

He graduated from Willits High School in 1970 and attended Lassen College in Susanville, where he earned multiple certifications in Fire Science. He worked for the US Department of Forestry for a few years before returning home to Willits, where he worked for several lumber companies and local mechanic shops doing small and large mechanic repair.

He was raised to know the value of hard work, and grew up with a homestead and outdoor lifestyle. He had a deep respect and love for nature. He loved gardening, hunting, and fishing.

Samuel took the time and felt it was important to teach his family the homestead lifestyle that was passed down to him from the generations before. His greatest joy in life was his family, and he will be deeply missed.

Samuel was a devoted son, loving father, and grandfather. He was very hard-working. He had a great sense of humor and a very generous heart.

He was preceded in death by his parents Clifton and Eleanor Snider and sister Sonja Herrick.



He is survived and lovingly remembered by his brother Steven Snider, children Rebecca (Philip II) Laurent, Cassie (John) Allen, Samuel Snider II, grandchildren Mia Monica Mann, Annalise Mendoza, Jasmine Mendoza, Destiny Laurent, Gracie Laurent, Philip Laurent III, Jane Allen, Alice Allen, Lucy Allen, great-grandchildren Julian, Nicolas, Aldo, Madelyn, and Hugo Jr. Mendoza, and nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Sam also loved spending time with his church family at the Seventh Day Adventist Church where he served as a Deacon for many years.

Please join us for a memorial service November 24, 2024 at 1 pm at the Seventh Day Adventist Church, 399 West Mendocino Avenue in Willits, with Celebration of Life to follow at 22751 Bray Road, Willits.

## Wreaths Across America at Willits Cemetery, December 16

### Submitted by Willits Wreaths Across America

Please join us, including our local American Legion Post 174 assisted by the Willits FFA and Willits 4-H group, at the Willits Cemetery, 1200 Highway 20, on Saturday, December 16, to remember and honor our veterans through the laying of Remembrance Wreaths on the graves of our local fallen heroes.

The annual Wreath Laying Ceremony is at 9 am, followed by the laying of the wreaths. Wreaths will

be placed at all three cemeteries in our district and at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in front of the Mendocino County Museum.

We welcome everyone to attend and help lay the Remembrance Wreaths.

For more info on Wreaths Across America, visit [www.wreathscrossamerica.org](http://www.wreathscrossamerica.org), email [willitswaa@gmail.com](mailto:willitswaa@gmail.com), or call Location Coordinator Natalie Spackman at 707-841-7214.



Willits 4-Hers and Willits FFAers stand with veterans during the 2023 Wreaths Across America event

**NOYO**  
THEATRE Willits, CA  
57 East Commercial Street - Willits  
707-459-6660  
[www.noyotheatre.com](http://www.noyotheatre.com)  
**We will be closed Monday, Nov. 18 for a private rental.**

**RED ONE**  
(PG-13) 2 hrs 3 mins  
Fri.-Thurs.: 4:30 & 7:15  
Sat. & Sun.: 1:45, 4:30 & 7:15  
**THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER**  
(PG) 1 hr 39 mins  
Sat. & Sun.: 7:30:15  
Thurs.: 4:45 & 7:30  
Movie Times for Nov. 15 thru Nov. 21

**THE SHINING**  
(PG-13) 2 hrs 3 mins  
Tues.: 3:30 & 6:45  
**THE SEARCHERS**  
(Not Rated) 1 hr 39 mins  
Wed. & Thurs.: 10:45 & 1:30  
Wed.: 4:15 & 7:00  
Tightwad Titles for Tuesday (Nov. 19) are in RED. All tickets at just \$6!

**SATURDAY NIGHT**  
(R) 1 hr 49 mins Fri: 3:30 & 6:45  
**BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER**  
(PG) 1 hr 39 mins Fri., Tues., Wed.: 5:00 & 7:30  
**THE SHINING**  
(PG) 1 hr 49 mins Sat. & Sun.: 3:30 & 6:45  
**THE SEARCHERS**  
1 hr 39 mins Thurs.: 4:15 & 7:30  
**OVER 21 CLUB — Luxury Recliners, laser projection beer and wine sales**



Above: The pancake station was manned expertly by Kennedy Cooper. Below: Raghdha Zacharia and Caroline Ponikvar volunteered to help serve the breakfast.



Obituary  
**Francis 'Frank' Porro**  
November 28, 1925 – August 23, 2024

Francis "Frank" Porro, our beloved "Papa," was called home August 23, 2024, just shy of his 99th birthday. He was born and raised in Willits, residing there 80 years.

He made many civic contributions during his five elected terms on the Willits City Council starting in 1952. (Mayor twice and Vice Mayor several times.) He graduated from Willits High School in 1943 during World War 11.

He enlisted in the U.S. Navy, at the age of 18, where he was assigned to destroyer duty as a radar operator. He served in the Aleutians and the South Pacific for three years.

After the military, he enrolled at Santa Rosa Junior College and met the love of his life, Ernestine "Erni" (Stevens) Porro, to whom he was married for 71 years.

During 25 of their Willits years, Papa and Granny owned and operated the Willits Dry Cleaners. Papa also sold cars and retired at 79 before moving to Fortuna in 2005.

He was preceded in death by our Granny in September of 2018. Now together in Heaven forevermore, we know Papa is at last with his sweetheart bride again, finally resting in peace. He is survived by his two children, Michael (Sharon) Porro and Deborah (David) Fonsen, five grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

He leaves us with many happy memories of joyful times. His bright smile and chuckle, his twinkling blue eyes, love for good Italian food, appreciation for music and dancing, enjoyment of gardening, talent for propagating Aloe Vera plants, the excitement of the horse races, loved to play cards, and an avid sports fan.

He was the master maker of a "great dinner cocktail," the one and only Papa's signature "Old Fashion." He always knew what to offer his grandkids. A frozen treat (he loved ice cream) or some type of sweet. He cherished every smile and hug. We will cherish always the special times and fondness for life that he brought with him and to all he knew with his kindness, humility, and the classic gentleman he was. He was one of the last great World War 11 Veterans – he served our country honorably and was cared for honorably at the Redding VA home the last few years of his life.

He left a lifetime, lasting impression on all who knew what a classic he was, and we loved him especially for it. We honor you dear Papa. You will always be with us in spirit.

Until we meet again, and hear you say, LET'S HAVE A PARTY! Salute and go 49er's.



SPIRITUAL PATHWAYS

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

**Amazing Grace Assembly of God Church**  
803 Coast Street  
P.O. Box 489, Willits  
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 Bandanadam  
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://saintanthonywillits.org/  
saintanthonywillits@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**  
Church Service:  
Sunday 10:00 to 11:00  
(707) 459-2988  
24 Mill Creek Drive  
ALL ARE WELCOME

**Willits Seventh-Day Adventist Church**  
707-459-5714  
Friendly, open worship  
Saturdays  
Bible Study - 9:30 a.m.  
Worship Service - 10:45 a.m.  
Zoom Transmission Available.

Wednesday  
Prayer Meeting - 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  
www.umcwillits.org  
www.willitsumc.org  
Facebook: facebook willits umc  
If you want to be included in this column please call:  
**April Tweddell**  
(707) 972-2475  
april@willitsweekly.com



Above: Willits Varsity Football: from left, top row, Zain Marshall, Chase Tonne, Ryan Carter, Jayden Schlegel, Thomas Rano, Aaron Diaz, Ricky Britton, Nick Doyle, Damian Reiter, Donald Glenn, Donny Alexander, Adrian Lopez and Clayton Cooley; bottom row, Corey Rocky, Rocky Ramirez, Isaac Silva, Kolbe Bufardeci, Lincoln Nass, Porter Garman, Leo Moratti, Ayden Thrillikil and Jayden Finley.

At right: Wolverines Girls Soccer: from left, top row, Coach Juan Diaz, Jewel Bashara, Nora Martin, Alexandra Mendoza, Ava Dockins-Kline, Natalie Hernandez, Kate Winter, Ava Holmen, Nina Corona, Madison Winter and Coach Maya Valley; bottom row, Madison Bouthillier, Anny Gutierrez, Alihna Diaz, Maia Collins, Briana Carrillo and Delia Siderakis.



Community Sports News

Wolverines Football crushed after new competitive equity system by NCS pushes them out of playoffs; girls soccer ends their season on a high note as league champs after playoffs loss in Arcata

The thing about sports in small communities and schools is that for some students, it is everything. When there is not much else available to do in a small town, sports become the primary motivator for a great number of kids. They tend to put their all into doing well in the sport, which in turn motivates them to do well in school and have good behavior, in order to stay in the sport, which in turn also promotes long term goals after high school. It is a confidence booster, and a chance to be a part of a team which teaches discipline, promotes respect and camaraderie.

Willits Wolverines Football has a great history of having a successful program with talented and dedicated athletes. It is a family-like atmosphere where all the kids feel welcome and supported by the coaches and staff. They hold team dinners weekly during the season where the kids and families all bond together before game day.

Last year, the Wolverines had an amazing year with a record of 9-4. They were placed into the playoffs and made it to the championships game. They fell a little short, giving them a fire in their spirit to reach that spot again this year. They did just that with another phenomenal year of football, an 8-2 record, with only one league loss, by three points, to Kelseyville.

These boys practiced and played hard to earn another spot in the playoffs this year, only to be told this last Sunday that due to the new system of “competitive equity” implemented by North Coast Section, the only team in their league making it into the playoffs would be the league champions, the Kelseyville Knights.

Willits (8-2), St. Helena (6-4), Ft. Bragg (6-4), and Middletown (5-5) did not make it. To add to the disappointment, there will be no meeting in

the middle for small town Kelseyville. They will have to drive hours north to play Del Norte on their home turf.

It was a very sad day in the communities of small schools. These kids, coaches and families were crushed by the news. Junior QB Corey Rocky played an amazing season. He felt shocked and dismayed after leading an extremely dedicated and passionate group of players. He holds on to hope they will make it next year.

However, it is most devastating for the seniors who will not get another shot. Ayden Thrillikil, Clayton Cooley, Chase Tonne, Jayden Finley, Leo Moratti and Kolbe Bufardeci all had to hang up their WHS helmets for the last time, not able to reach a well-deserved playoff spot.

This new playoff system was designed with the purpose to create playoff divisions based on a team's current success of the season, rather than past success. The teams are put into base divisions determined by their enrollment, but will be placed into divisions for the playoffs based on their MaxPreps / CalPreps computer ratings. The top eight teams in the computer rankings, regardless of division, will be placed in the Open / Division 1 bracket. From there, Divisions 2 through 7 will be seeded in descending order based on computer rankings. Teams not pulled up into the Open / Division 1 bracket can only move a maximum of two divisions up or down.

This concept of “competitive equity” will certainly be a flawed system in critical areas. Some say it creates more evenly matched playoff brackets, while there is the valid concern that it lessens the quality of section champions while punishing strong playing teams. If you are a large school, you will not be affected in Division 1. Small schools will have to win their league, as there will not be room for teams that don't have the championship title.

This being the first year of the “competitive equity” system, it is with great hope that the need for modifications is seen and heard in order to keep our kids motivated to stay in sports, working hard to make the playoffs each season, with a more reasonable outlook beyond strictly league champions. We have to do right by all of our athletes, by all the kids. They deserve better.

Good records and hard work deserve a chance in the playoffs for all schools. That is exactly what these young athletes from small schools will continue to be cheated out of, if this system remains as is. In the midst of the heartbreak amongst the smaller football communities, it has been beautiful to see the surrounding areas support one another, and pull together for the greater good.

“The playoff system is flawed!” said Coach Brandon Norbury. “I feel horrible for our entire team and coaching staff. We have been hard at work since the spring, then into summer, and had a great football season! We're peaking

as a football team right now. We build our program for playoff football! I can't even fathom what the NCS is thinking, or how they came about their decisions toward playoff eligibility, particularly for Division 7.

“Last year we made it all the way to the North Coast Section Championship game, losing by seven points to Ferndale, who went on to win the California state title. And this year we have a better overall record at 8-2 and can't make it in? Something is wrong,” said Norbury. “A special thank you to our senior football players, and coaching staff,” he added.

“We believe the problem with the new playoff format is that the original bylaws were not designed to let big schools in to bump the D7 schools out, but that is in fact what happened,” said Assistant Coach Matt Moratti. “We need to, as a league, work together with other leagues of small schools to figure something out – whether it be amendments to the current system, or proposing a new system all together.”

“The new NCS playoff format for football is completely unfair for small schools,” said Middletown Coach Bill Foltmer. “Why have divisions, when larger schools with mediocre records can drop down and take the spots away from small schools? In our league and division, five teams qualified and only the champions, Kelseyville, with a 9-1 record made the playoffs. They got a low seed and have to travel all the way up to Northern California for their first round game. Willits High School, from the NCL 1 really got screwed, having an 8-2 record, and not making the playoffs after a fantastic season. The NCS should be ashamed of themselves. No consideration or respect for small schools. None of us were complaining about the old format, so why are they changing it? They knew this would be a problem for small schools, and they let it play out anyway.”

“It is ridiculous that Willits football can have as great of a season as they had, and not get an opportunity to make the playoffs,” said Fort Bragg Coach Cody Lowe. “The new playoff system is disregarding small schools to include more large schools with losing records, and that is not what it is supposed to be about.”

St. Helena Coach Brandon Farrell also agreed: “This is really sad for our league. Only one team gets in the playoffs, and they have to go on the road. An NCL 1 8-2 team has to sit on the sidelines while larger enrollment schools infiltrate smaller school divisions and feel good about their mediocre .500 seasons. The reason we have conferences and leagues is to separate schools by their reasonable and potential ability compared to other leagues. Hopefully we can all do something about this sooner than later.”

The community would like to congratulate Wolverines Varsity Football on the incredible season they had. We are beyond proud of each and every amazing player for your success, all of your hard work and commitment. You played with immense heart and spirit! It was awesome to witness! Continue to work hard – on the field, in the classroom, and in life. This is the type of excellence that will take you far.

“Friday Night Lights” at WHS, and other small schools, continue to bring families and friends together to grace locals with some good and wholesome football. It generates talent and the motivation for bright futures for these young adults. We can't let that falter for these kids. We sincerely

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**JOHN FORD RANCH**

RANCH RAISED NATURAL BEEF

No Hormones, Pastured in Willits, California

Read the rest of Sports  
Over on page 9

LEGAL NOTICES

WW519  
**Fictitious Business Name Statement**  
2024-F0480  
The following person or persons are doing business as Fashion BellaChris, 76401 Covelo Road, Unit 9, Covelo CA 95478; mailing address: 2738 Comanche Street, Santa Rosa, CA 95403.  
Registered owner: Celestina Blanco Martinez, 2738 Comanche Street, Santa Rosa, CA 95403.  
This business is conducted by an individual.  
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on October 16, 2024.  
FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on October 16, 2024.  
/s/ Celestina Blanco Martinez  
Publication Dates: October 31, November 7, 14, and 21, 2024

WW520  
**Fictitious Business Name Statement**  
2024-F0458  
The following person or persons are doing business as MJ Farm, 5926 Ridgewood Road, Willits CA 95490.  
Registered owners: Jeff and Melissa Apodaca, 5926 Ridgewood Road, Willits CA 95490.  
This business is conducted by a married couple.  
The registrants commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A.  
FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on September 24, 2024.  
/s/ Jeff Apodaca  
Publication Dates: October 31, November 7, 14, and 21, 2024

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\$39,811 - \$48,380

**Corrections Deputy**  
\$58,136 - \$67,308

**County Health Officer**  
\$185,224 - \$225,139

**Deputy Probation Officer I & II**  
\$55,577 - \$74,505

**Deputy Sheriff-Coroner**  
\$84,323 - \$102,460

**Legal Secretary I/II**  
\$37,648 - \$55,744

**Mental Health Clinician I/II**  
\$62,337 - \$87,630

**Principal Department Analyst**  
\$82,264 - \$100,006

**Program Administrator**  
\$74,048 - \$90,022

**Program Specialist I/II**  
\$51,396 - \$68,931

**Screener**  
\$41,142 - \$50,024

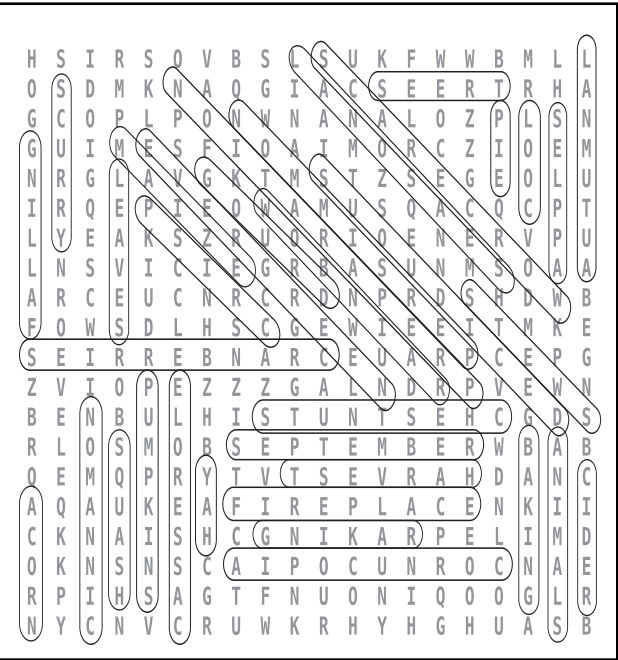
**Social Worker Assistant II**  
\$46,176 - \$56,139

**Supervising Health Program Coordinator**  
\$75,920 - \$92,268

**Supervising Public Health Nurse**  
\$113,609 - \$138,091

**Youth Corrections Officer**  
\$55,348 - \$67,267

For a complete list of current job openings and to apply:  
[www.mendocinocounty.gov/jobs](http://www.mendocinocounty.gov/jobs)  
EOE



LEGAL NOTICES

WW521  
**CITY OF WILLITS SERVICES & FACILITIES DEPARTMENT NOTICE TO BIDDERS**  
PROJECT NO. 2021-03  
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Sealed bids for: The work shown on the project plans entitled: **CITY OF WILLITS SERVICES & FACILITIES DEPARTMENT PROJECT PLANS** For: **CITY OF WILLITS RAIL WITH TRAIL PROJECT - Project No. 2021-03** General Work Description: This project generally includes construction of a 1.6-mile Class I bicycle and pedestrian multi-use trail within the Great Redwood Trail Agency (GRTA) right-of-way. The new multi-use trail will include, but not limited to, demolition of existing improvements, adjustment of utilities, clearing and grubbing, tree removal, earthwork grading, construction of multi-use trail with aggregate base, hot mix asphalt and concrete materials, construction of three (3) pre-engineered and pre-fabricated clear span steel truss bridges, concrete bridge abutments and work at each bridge approach, new striping, signing and markings, improvements at existing public and private trail crossings, including improvements of existing railroad at-grade crossings, concrete sidewalk, curb and gutter, driveways and pedestrian curb ramps, landscape and irrigation, tree planting, electrical and lighting, environmental mitigations, compliance with regulatory requirements, traffic control and development, implementation of a storm water pollution prevention (SWPPP) for the work, and other miscellaneous requirements. The work will include coordination with City of Willits, GRTA, California Western Railroad (CWR), operator of the Skunk Trail. Off-site improvements include the creation of wetland, know as "Rail with Trail Project: Wetland and Riparian Establishment" located on the north side of E. Commercial Street adjacent to the Willits Skate Park. Work includes grading, topsoil preparation, erosion control, plantings and plant establishment.

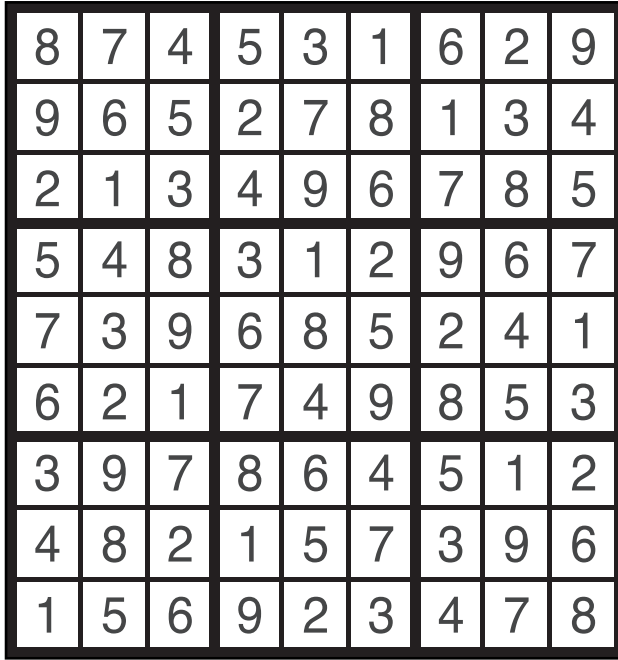
IN  
City of Willits, County of Mendocino, State of California &  
The work described in specifications books entitled:  
CITY OF WILLITS - BID BOOK & TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS  
CITY OF WILLITS - PROPOSAL PACKET  
CITY OF WILLITS - AWARD PACKET  
For:  
**CITY OF WILLITS RAIL WITH TRAIL PROJECT - Project No. 2021-03**  
IN  
City of Willits, County of Mendocino, State of California will be received by a designated representative, of the City of Willits, County of Mendocino, State of California, until the hour of 2 p.m., January 7th, 2025, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud in the City Council Chambers of the City of Willits, located at 111 East Commercial Street, Willits, California.  
**THE ENGINEER'S ESTIMATE OF PROBABLE COSTS IS: \$8,233,390**  
The contractor shall possess a Class A license at the time this contract is awarded.  
Key Dates:  
• Bid Advertisement: November 7, 2024  
• Bid Advertisement in Paper: Twice  
• Bid Period: 61 days  
• Last Day for Technical Questions: Monday, December 16, 2024  
• Addendum Issued: December 20, 2024  
• Bid Opening: Tuesday, January 7, 2025: 2:00 pm  
• Location of Bid Opening: City Council Chambers  
• Staff Report for Council: January 13, 2025  
• Award: January 22, 2025 (Council Meeting)  
Interested bidders should contact the following in order to obtain electronic copies of plans and other bid documents:  
Brandy Sanderson  
bsanderson@cityofwillits.org  
(707) 459-7143  
CITY OF WILLITS: s/Dolores Pedersen, City Clerk  
DATED: 11/7/2024  
Publication Dates: November 7 and 14, 2024

The rest of Sports  
From page 8

hope conversations can open up with ideas for solutions to this problem for our small schools, so these talented athletes / students can continue with forward momentum of maintaining their earned spots in the North Coast Section Playoffs.

**Girls soccer**  
Wolverines Girls Soccer traveled north to Arcata High School to play the Arcata Tigers in round one of the playoffs game. While the game was met with fierce competition, our girls remained vigilant. Despite a valiant effort, especially by the tenacious defenders and beast of a goalkeeper, we came up short with a final score 2-0.

What a fabulous experience for the Wolverines as they held their heads high, knowing how very far they have come by becoming league champions for the first time in two decades! Congratulations! You ARE number one! We are looking forward to the next season with great enthusiasm and excitement. Your community is SO proud of you!



CLASSIFIEDS

**Do you need food?**  
Willits Food Bank, 344 Railroad Avenue, Willits, CA 95490. Open Wednesdays & Fridays, 1-4:30 - Bring an I.D. (707) 459-3333

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COLUMN | AT THE MOVIES

‘The Best Christmas Pageant Ever’

**The Story:** A movie we all needed about now. Christmas time at a medium sized church. As you probably guessed, it's all about the annual Christmas

Pageant. Pious and sensitive 11-year-old Beth Bradley (Molly Belle Bright) has enticed a notorious ragamuffin cohort of young troublemakers, aka The Herdmans, to perform in the pageant. She's promised them candy and cookies galore.

Being as how the notorious Herdmans are apparently reckless, randomly destructive bullies, why would gentle Beth take such an action? Well, Beth's much-loved and loving, kind and gentle mother Grace (Judy Greer) has volunteered to direct the Pageant. Grace is short of actors for Joseph and Mary, the three Kings and an angel or two. Beth fears failure and humiliation for her mother. The whole town is holding its judgmental breath.

**My Thoughts:** Imogene Herdman (Beatrice Schneider) is around 13. She's tough. She is clearly intelligent. She's generally up to no good. And it is she who runs the Herdman clan. And now she's got the lead part of Mary. Clearly, it's not "type casting."

She kept me guessing. As an audience member, I truly wondered how she was going to succeed, or if she would even show up. Miss Schneider is a fabulous young actress. Her performance, and in fact the whole movie, brought me to tears. The feel-good kind. This movie could very-likely become an annual event. It inspires brotherhood and sisterhood. It celebrates kindness.

**Parents:** Bring your kids. Right actions rule the narrative. All the lessons in this movie are good ones.

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





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**Best of Lake & Mendocino 2024**

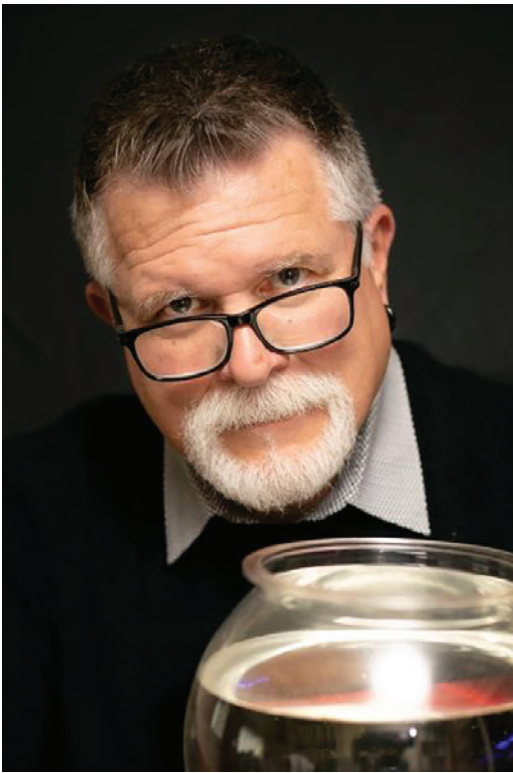
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CEO & Financial Advisor  
nicholas.casagrande@cetera.com

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The Best of Lake and Mendocino presented by Bicoastal Media is a vote-based contest for individuals and businesses that serve Lake County, CA, and Mendocino County, CA. Nominations are provided by the community and after the nomination period is completed, the names of nominated businesses in each of the categories are finalized and make up the official Best of Lake and Mendocino voting ballot. The audience can then vote on one choice in each category. Voters are allowed to nominate without limits and once the voting period has begun, one vote per category per 24-hour period is allowed. Listing in this publication and/or award is not a guarantee of future investment success. This recognition should not be construed as an endorsement of the advisor by any client. No compensation was provided directly or indirectly by the recipient for participation or in connection with obtaining or using the third-party rating or award.



## WCT presents Fort Bragg Magician and Mentalist Robert Goleman, November 23

By Steve Hellman, for WCT

Prepare to be amazed, as Fort Bragg magician and mentalist Robert Goleman appears in his premiere performance at the Willits Community Theatre on Saturday, November 23, at 7:30 pm. For an experience witnessing the impossible, the local master presents an evening of mind-bending magic and mentalism so mesmerizing – the moments can be unforgettable.

Performing for more than 50 years, Goleman has staged large-scale productions with his magic troupe The Fabulous Blendos, presenting big box illusions, a juggler, and a band. In his current version, Goleman dishes up a personal brand of close-up parlor magic, as well as mentalism, where he will astound with his amazing mental skills and intuitive abilities, with lots of audience participation.

Goleman describes his show as an experience somewhere between belief and disbelief. “For my new show, I start with classic style magic tricks, and take a sharp turn into mentalism, making revelations with an accuracy that will leave participants shrieking in disbelief – witnessing what should be impossible – before their very eyes.”

Imagine a riveting and intimate magical encounter, that audiences have called “nothing short of astonishing” and “memorable for years to come”.

Appearing for one show only, with limited seating, Goleman’s appearance on November 23 is expected to sell out. Early tickets are encouraged, at \$20, available online at: www.wctperformingartscenter.org. Season sponsors for Willits Community Theatre are the Community Foundation of Mendocino County, NC Financial Group, Sparetime Supply, KZYX Radio, and Jerry Drew Painting

Magician and Mentalist Robert Goleman performs one night only – Saturday, November 23 – at the Willits Community Theatre in Willits. Some locals will remember Goleman’s delicious wares – Bolliver’s Fine Food, Confections, & Artisanal Chocolates – from the Willits Farmers Market.

Experience the impossible with an evening of magic and mentalism. Robert will astound you with his mental skills and intuitive abilities, in a riveting performance that you'll remember for years to come.

**MAGIC and Mentalism**  
**Robert Goleman**  
“Nothing short of astonishing.”

**November 23 - 7:30 pm**  
wctperformingartscenter.org  
37 West Van Lane, Willits

**1 in 8 women**  
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Don't miss the post-screening Q&A!

Mary Beth Brangan, SOS Director & Producer  
James Heddle, SOS Filmmaker & Director

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The rest of Elections | From page 1

final tally. Voter Registrar Katrina Bartolomie said there were an estimated 10,000 ballots still to process and report countywide. “They’re still opening ballots,” she said, referring to California’s postmark+ 7 days policy, which allows mail-in ballots postmarked by Election Day to be counted as valid if they arrive at the Voter Office seven days after the election.

An estimate for the number of ballots still to process and report in the Willits City Council race was not yet available.

None of the other rankings were changed from initial results.

Willits Unified School District Board had two seats open, and the update shows April Lamprich with 2,081 votes (41.49%); David Liiker with 1,657 votes (33.03%), and Dianne McNeal with 1,278 votes (25.48%).

For the Mendocino County Office of Education board Trustee Area 3 seat, representing Willits, Laytonville and Covelo, as of the update, Michelle Hutchins is in the lead with 2,363 votes, with David Strock receiving 1,807 votes.

For the Mendocino County Office of Education board, Michelle Hutchins is in the lead for the Trustee Area 3 seat, representing Willits, Laytonville and Covelo, with 2,364 votes (56.68%), and David Strock is in second with 1,807 votes (43.43%).

With this November 13 update, a total of 24,062 votes countywide have been reported, of Mendocino County’s 54,640 registered voters, or turnout of 44.04 percent – turnout will increase significantly when the final 10,000 ballots are processed and reported.

Voter Registrar Bartolomie says there will be another update by next Friday (November 22). “We hope to be done by Thanksgiving,” she said. “but there’s no guarantee.”

If you have received a letter to cure a mismatched or missing signature on your ballot envelope, you have until December 1, 2024 (two days prior to certification) to return your documents to cure your signature. If you have any additional questions, please call the Elections Office at (707) 234-6819.

Full elections results are posted online at www.mendocinocounty.gov/government/assessor-county-clerk-recorder-elections/current-election-results

The rest of Cubbison | From page 1

Kennedy’s newly appointed lawyer FredRiccو McCurry said in his filings that he needs to familiarize himself with details of the high-profile case.

“The discovery in this case is voluminous, and the theories underlying the prosecution of the case are complicated. I will need time to review the discovery, conduct proper research, consult with my new client, and consult with co-counsel,” wrote McCurry.

Cubbison attorney Chris Andrian of Santa Rosa said last Friday that given the situation, McCurry’s requests are reasonable, and he will not oppose.

Judge Ann Moorman is scheduled to act on McCurry’s request at a hearing set for next Wednesday, November 13.

Originally, that hearing was to hear arguments in Andrian’s pending motion to dismiss the felony charge against the suspended Auditor, citing the volume of missing county emails related to the three main figures in the case: Cubbison, Kennedy, and now retired Auditor Lloyd Weer. Kennedy contends Cubbison authorized the extra pay. The suspended Auditor says the deal originated between Weer and Kennedy. Weer’s role has been fiercely debated, but he was not charged by Eyster.

Now, Moorman will decide when to hear arguments on Andrian’s motion to dismiss, and to set a new date in early 2025 for a preliminary hearing. Such hearings are critical to determine if there is enough evidence to move ahead with prosecution. They often provide the public with an up-close account of what is behind a criminal filing.

Eyster rocked county politics in October 2023 when he filed criminal charges against a fellow elected official who had challenged his own office spending. Eyster earlier had taken the unprecedented step of publicly blocking Cubbison’s appointment as interim Auditor at the county Board of Supervisors’ level, contending she was unqualified. Cubbison questioned Eyster’s spending, including hosting annual staff parties at a local steakhouse under the guise of “training sessions.” Guests included employees’ wives and girlfriends.

County supervisors almost immediately suspended Cubbison after Eyster filed the criminal case, without granting the elected official a public hearing. That action is now the focus of a pending Cubbison civil case contending the board denied her “due process.”

Eyster initially resisted stepping away from the Cubbison prosecution but then hired former Sonoma County Prosecutor Traci Carrillo to press the case. Carrillo, now in private practice, was hired under a contract providing a \$10,000 retainer and an hourly rate of \$400.

Carrillo called the latest delay an “unfortunate and frustrating reality.”

“I assume the court will grant the continuances, and hopefully he [McCurry] can get up to speed in short order,” said Carrillo.



## Three new deputies sworn in Tuesday

Posted by Mendocino Sheriff

November 12 - The Sheriff’s Office this morning swore in two deputy sheriff-coroners and welcomed back one corrections deputy at a ceremony with loved ones and Sheriff’s Office staff in attendance.

Corrections Deputy Gabriel Rodriguez is returning to the Sheriff’s Office after a one-year hiatus. Deputy Sheriff Kevin Di Franco comes to the Sheriff’s Office from the Contra Costa County Sheriff’s Office. Jace Kroh is a recent graduate of the Police Academy and was a Community Services Officer with the Sheriff’s Office prior to today’s appointment.

All three were raised in Mendocino County. Please join Sheriff Kendall in congratulating Gabriel, Kevin and Jace.

At left: The three deputies sworn in by the Mendocino County Sheriff’s Office Tuesday morning were all raised in Mendocino County.



New director of Mendocino County Social Services, DeNeese Parker

Antle, Mendocino County CEO. “Her professional experience, combined with her strong ties to our community, make her the ideal leader to head Social Services. We look forward to the positive impact she will have on our residents.”

## Mendocino County welcomes DeNeese Parker as new director of Social Services

Posted by Mendocino County Executive Office

Mendocino County is proud to announce the appointment of DeNeese Parker as the new director of Social Services. A Mendocino County native, Parker brings over 20 years of experience in family and children’s services within the court system in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Her wealth of experience, coupled with her dedication to improving community well-being, will be invaluable as she leads the department in supporting Mendocino County residents.

“I am extremely honored to have been given this opportunity to be a part of this team, for an incredible county that is very dear to my heart,” said Parker. “I look forward to working hard with the county to ensure that the departments we lead are focused on becoming the most efficient, effective, accountable, and transparent organizations possible.”

Parker most recently served as

## CAL FIRE offers \$70 million in Forest Health grants

Submitted by CAL FIRE, Sacramento

November 13 – The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection is announcing the availability of up to \$70 million in funding for projects aimed at improving forest health across the state. CAL FIRE is soliciting applications for projects that work to proactively prevent catastrophic wildfires and restore forests to healthy, functioning ecosystems while also sequestering carbon and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Applications will be accepted from November 13, 2024, and will be due by no later than 3 pm on January 15, 2025.

“We know this work makes a difference both in forest health and wildfire resilience, and that is why CAL FIRE is proud to have awarded over \$700 million in Forest Health grant funding since 2017,” said Chief Matthew Reischman, deputy director of Resource Management. “This Forest Health grant funding supports sustainable land management practices, reforestation efforts, promotes a healthier ecosystem, and ensures that future generations can enjoy and benefit from California’s natural resources.”

The Forest Health Program funds active restoration and reforestation activities aimed at providing for more resilient and sustained forests. This ensures the future existence of forests in California while also mitigating climate change, protecting communities from fire risk, strengthening rural economies, and improving California’s water and air.

A virtual pre-recorded workshop will be made available to explain the grant process and requirements. Please check the Forest Health webpage https://www.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/grants/forest-health to view the workshop. Any questions can be directed to ForestHealth@fire.ca.gov.

Projects that receive funding from the Forest Health grant program are designed to complement the California Forest Carbon Plan, California’s Natural and Working Lands Implementation Plan, California’s Wildfire & Forest Resilience Action Plan, California’s Strategic Plan for Expanding the Use of Beneficial Fire, and AB 32 Climate Change Scoping Plan.

The Forest Health grant program is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide program that puts billions of cap-and-trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment– particularly in disadvantaged communities.

## WCA hosts 8th Annual Members Small Works Show

Submitted by WCA

The Willits Center for the Arts invites the community to celebrate the holiday season with the 8th Annual Members Small Works Show, opening on Friday, November 29. A beloved tradition, this exhibit features a diverse collection of small, handcrafted pieces by local artists, with all works available for purchase through December 24.

Artists from across Mendocino County are warmly encouraged to participate, with memberships available starting at \$30. The Small Works Show offers a unique opportunity for local creatives to share their art in a welcoming space while supporting the vibrant arts community in Willits.

Opening day will be Friday, November 29, from 11 am to 5 pm, with extended hours on Friday, December 13, to coincide with the Willits Holiday Craft Show (11 am to 7 pm). Shoppers and art lovers alike are invited to explore and take home unique, handmade gifts perfect for the holiday season.

For more information on how to become a member or participate in this year’s show, please contact the Willits Center for the Arts or visit https://www.willitscenterforthearts.org/membership-1

Join us in supporting our local artists and making this holiday season one to remember!

WILLITS CENTER FOR THE

**ARTS** Presents Your

**Members**

**Small Works Show**

**meet the artists Nov.30, 6-9pm**

Opening Nov. 29 through Dec. 24th open Weekends 11 am - 5 pm.

Discover unique, small handmade gifts crafted with heart!

Join us for the December show.  
Deadline for entries, Nov. 25  
Contact gtm1950@gmail.com  
71 E. Commercial St. Willits, CA



MCHC welcomes Women’s Health Nurse Practitioner Joleen Buffington

Submitted by MCHC

MCHC Health Centers is proud to welcome Women’s Health Nurse Practitioner Joleen Buffington. She will see patients two days a week at Little Lake Health Center in Willits, focusing primarily on gynecological care.

Care for Her Director Dr. Donna Smith says: “Joleen is very hard-working, knowledgeable, and compassionate. She is very committed to women’s healthcare, but specifically, she has an interest in preventative care as well as menopausal issues. It is a privilege to have her as a part of the Care for Her team.”

Having spent most of her adult life in a rural area, Buffington understands the critical importance of high-quality, patient-centered care and the pressing need for more female providers in underserved communities.

“Accessing care can be incredibly difficult, especially when basic transportation to a medical appointment is a challenge for many, or there are no female providers to give care,” she explains. “I am committed to improving access for people in our communities. My goal is to help women and trans men live their best lives.”

As a young breast cancer survivor, Buffington brings first-hand knowledge of the complexities involved in seeking care in rural areas, where resources and providers are often limited.

“Navigating my diagnosis and treatment in a rural setting was extremely challenging,” she recalls. She is an active advocate and co-facilitator with a young survivor’s group at the Breast and GYN Health Project and Young Survival Coalition.

Buffington began her healthcare career at Adventist Health Ukiah Valley as a labor and delivery registered nurse. After relocating to Arcata, she continued her work in obstetrics and gynecology. With 16 years of nursing experience and the perspective gained through her own health challenges, she decided to pursue advanced practice education and become a women’s health nurse practitioner.

A graduate of Frontier Nursing University in Versailles, Kentucky, Buffington completed her gynecology residency at MCHC, where she was inspired to join the Care for Her team at MCHC.

“I was deeply impressed by the kindness of the providers, the support from the staff, and the diverse patient population,” she says.



Joleen Buffington

Buffington appreciates that many of her patients express interest in holistic care, seeking to complement Western medicine with natural remedies. Whether it’s using essential oils as eco-friendly alternatives or lavender for stress relief, she values their curiosity and willingness to explore alternative treatments.

Deeply committed to MCHC’s mission of providing care to all individuals, regardless of their background or financial situation, Buffington places a strong emphasis on forming meaningful partnerships with her patients. She works collaboratively with them to achieve their health goals.

“I strive to create an environment where patients feel safe and comfortable,” she says. With new patients, she prioritizes listening over speaking, aiming to understand the individual holistically rather than focusing solely on their immediate health concerns.

“If a patient comes in for something like a yeast infection, I use the opportunity to open up a broader conversation. This helps me see them as a whole person and understand other aspects of their life the next time I see them.”

A lifelong learner, Buffington is dedicated to expanding her knowledge and providing evidence-based care at every stage of a patient’s life. She is an active member of the National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Women’s Health and The Menopause Society, and is currently working toward certification as a Menopause Society Certified Practitioner.

“I have a passion for reading the latest scientific research and staying current with evidence-based practices. I’m a perpetual student,” she says.

Outside of her professional life, Buffington enjoys spending time with her husband, daughter, and their French bulldog, whom she affectionately describes as “a little terrorizer.” She also loves creating art, walking, hiking, water sports, and attending live music events.

MCHC Health Centers includes Hillside Health Center and Dora Street Health Center in Ukiah, Little Lake Health Center in Willits, and Lakeview Health Center in Lakeport. It is a community-based and patient-directed organization that provides comprehensive primary healthcare services as well as supportive services such as education and translation that promote access to healthcare.



Little Nina

Nina is your typical, playful kitten! We think Nina would make a great addition to any family.

The Mendocino County Animal Shelter, located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah, is open to the public from noon to 5 pm Tuesday through Friday and 10 am to 3 pm (closed for lunch from 1 to 1:30 pm) on Saturdays. Make sure to pre-fill

out the adoption application available at [www.mendoanimalshelter.com](http://www.mendoanimalshelter.com). Call 707-467-6453 for more information.

Perfect Brother

Meet Brother! Looking for a swimming partner? How about a medium-sized snuggle buddy?

Brother is a sweet dude and the perfect size! He won’t get too big, and he is ready to start meeting new people. He hopes to find his family soon!

Brother has done well in playgroups here onsite and has loved hanging out with staff and volunteers. Brother is a pro at fetch and is a super star swimmer in our kiddie pools! Make sure to keep his kiddie pool filled up or you could find him attempting to swim in his water bucket! Come meet this super cool guy anytime during open hours!

The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino is located at 9700 Uva Drive in Redwood Valley. Feel free to visit us, no appointments needed! We are open Wednesday through Friday, 1 to 5 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 11 am to 3 pm; closed Monday and Tuesday. Check out all of our available dogs and cats on our website: [www.mendohumanesociety.com](http://www.mendohumanesociety.com), on our Facebook page, and on [www.petfinder.com](http://www.petfinder.com).



Intelligent Ginger

Ginger is a happy, easy going 9-year-old girl who deserves a loving home. She came to Milo a couple of years ago and was adopted by her fosters. Unfortunately one of her owners passed away and she now needs a new home.

Ginger is currently in a foster home. She loves people! She loves her walks, is very active, and enjoys hiking. She



gets along well with other dogs when she is off leash. She is working on her manners when she is leashed and meets other dogs. She is very smart, is house trained, knows her name, and follows commands very well. Ginger is a real sweetheart. If you would like to adopt Ginger, please complete an adoption application and we will contact you. Ginger’s adoption fee is only \$100.

To learn more about Ginger, or to view other adoptable animals, visit [www.milofoundation.org](http://www.milofoundation.org) or the Milo Foundation Sanctuary Facebook page. The sanctuary is currently doing pet adoptions by appointment only. Please complete a pet-adoption application before requesting an appointment. You can reach the Milo Foundation at 459-4900.

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Electric Years

Over the past decade, Sonoma Clean Power has helped customers trim costs, reduce greenhouse gases, and learn about energy efficiency, while pushing for fire safety and grid reliability.

10electricyears.org

