

Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

Online & Print

Willits Weekly newspaper

A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

Donations Accepted Edition No. 333

Thursday, November 21, 2019

City council committee to look at food truck rules

Forrest Glyer
Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

The Willits City Council is looking into the possibility of loosening its restrictions on food trucks and other mobile vendors operating in the city, including allowing owners to park and operate their businesses in more locations.

The council was urged to consider changing their rules by a group of local business and food truck owners who spoke at the city council meeting last week, and they agreed to form an ad hoc committee

Read the rest of **Food trucks**
Over on page 6

City staff praised for work during power shutoff

Forrest Glyer
Reporter
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At last week's Willits City Council meeting, Human Resources Analyst Karen Stevenson gave high praise to the city staff in rising to the challenges brought on by PG&E's power shutoffs that darkened Willits in the last week of October.

Stevenson read a summary she wrote for the city manager's monthly newsletter.

"One of the key factors for the city experiencing minimal issues during this challenging time was the fact that city staff was prepared," she said. "From

Read the rest of **PSPS**
Over on page 6

Supes OK new by-laws, surcharge for county garbage agency

Mike A'Dair
Reporter
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On Tuesday, the board of supervisors approved and adopted an amended and restated joint powers agreement for the county's solid waste management authority, or MSWMA, by a unanimous vote.

In a second vote, the board approved an increase in the MSWMA per ton solid waste surcharge, agreeing to the concept that it be increased from \$5 a ton to \$6.50 a ton. The vote on this measure was also unanimous.

Both the JPA agreement

Read the rest of **Garbage**
Over on page 13



Above, from left: Parlin Fork crewmember Erik Jefferson loads potatoes into the truck. Parlin Fork's Felix Cortes shows off one of the cans of green beans that will be served as a side next week. Dahvi Hooper holds a photo of Jim Marill, past executive director for Willits Community Services, who passed away earlier this year. Below: Felix Cortes, left, Colt Mercer and Erik Jefferson, right, smile with some of the raw goods destined to become the Willits Community Services and Food Bank Thanksgiving Community Dinner.



Photos by Maureen Moore

Time for Turkey – and Ham!



Above: This year's Turkey Toss included a Ham Hold, also, as both meats will grace the tables this year at the Willits Community Services and Food Bank's Community Thanksgiving Dinner. At right: The 2019 Turkey Toss crew, from left: Parlin Fork Officer Ben Vielbig; Parlin Fork crewmember Colt Mercer; Willits Food Bank's Bobbie Powell; Willits Food Bank Executive Director Ruthanne Volz; Dahvi Hooper (holding Jim Marill's photo); Willits Food Bank's Dianne Carter; Willits Food Bank's Dan Beebe; Parlin Fork crewmember Erik Jefferson, and Parlin Fork crewmember Felix Cortes.



30th annual free Thanksgiving dinner set for Thursday, November 28 at Senior Center

How is it almost Thanksgiving?! Well, believe it or not, the big food-filled event is just a few days away, and true to tradition, the Willits Community Services and Food Bank will be serving up a tasty meal to the community next Thursday, November 28.

Read the rest of **Turkey**
Over on Page 15

School board likely to OK 2020 bond measure

Joanne Moore
Reporter
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Reports documenting the sorry state of school buildings, a possible solution in the form of putting a bond measure on the March 2020 ballot – supported by least three of the five school board members – how best to deal with aspects of a new state-mandated sex education curriculum, a great year so far for Willits High School athletes, and more.

All brought to you at the November 13 meeting of the Willits Unified School District Board of Directors,

Read the rest of **Bond**
Over on page 15

Supes approve contract with Measure B architect

Mike A'Dair
Reporter
mike@willitsweekly.com

On a 3-2 vote, the board of supervisors approved a \$3.3 million contract with the architectural firm Nacht & Lewis to perform pre-design and design work for Mendocino County in connection with the Measure B facilities project. The board's approval is contingent upon the contract receiving an endorsement by a majority of Measure B Committee members. The full Measure B Committee has not yet had an opportunity to weigh in on the Nacht & Lewis contract.

Read the rest of **Measure B**
Over on page 13

Supervisor McCowen won't seek fourth term

Mike A'Dair
Reporter
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Second District Supervisor John McCowen announced on Tuesday that he will not be seeking a fourth term in office and therefore will not be a candidate for Second District supervisor in the March 2020 primary election.

"Two weeks ago, instead of being in a board of supervisors meeting in Mendocino, I was in the Emergency Room in Ukiah," McCowen wrote in an announcement that was made public on Tuesday. "It was the first board meeting I've missed, and it also served as a reminder of

Read the rest of **McCowen**
Over on page 13

Go Wolverine football!

WHS Football to play Ferndale on Saturday in playoffs

Willits High School's football team beat El Molino High School 41 to 7 at Friday evening's home game, advancing another step in the 2019 CIF North Coast Section Division 7 playoffs. This November 15 game was the first home playoff game hosted at WHS's Maize Field in 10 years.

The WHS Wolverines, head coach Brandon Norbury, are next scheduled to play Ferndale High School on Saturday, November 23, in Ferndale at 1 pm.

Members of Willits High's varsity football team introduced themselves to school board members at last week's Willits Unified School District board meeting. WHS Athletic Director Brian Bowles, at right, updated the board members on the football and soccer teams' successes this fall.

Photo by Joanne Moore

– Jennifer Poole

What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from our readers

Thank you

To the Editor:

I wanted to thank everyone who donated or came by to our spaghetti feed last Saturday for Jordan Byrns. The event had a wonderful turnout, and there were many smiles and hugs. Chef Donte and his assistants in the kitchen kept us all fed while Saprina entertained us with her quick wit and humor and hugs. The raffle and silent auction went well.

I'd like to thank all of the merchants and private people who put a lot of thought and heart into their donations without whom this would not have been possible. A great big thank you to you all, and it is good to live in our small town.

Linda Byrns, Willits

'Green' Friday conversation

To the Editor:

Let's talk turkey! We're facing another possible public safety power shutoff. We're in the grip of a persistent drought. We're being warned of accelerating global warming and its dire consequences by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Can we do more than brace ourselves for disaster? Of course, try to be prepared. Have gas and propane, and food and water on hand. Have a "go bag" ready to grab. But, can and should we do more than simply react?

I think the answer is "Yes." Our extravagant use of energy to fuel our life "style" in the U.S. and now increasingly around the world, has tipped the balance of our finely woven earthly blanket of gasses toward global warming. Can human actions regain that balance? Perhaps. Should we try? Absolutely! Do we have the discipline and will? Look into our children's eyes.

I want to thank Robin Goldner for her letter in last week's paper that distilled the many complicated issues of climate change to a hard fact: We need to stop heating the planet. Inspired by Robin's letter, and discussions with people grappling with these issues, the Little Lake Grange and

the Willits Environmental Center decided to host a post-Thanksgiving "green Friday" (as opposed to "Black Friday") community conversation – a time to share our experiences about the recent power shutoffs, what we're learning about our power use and real needs, and especially about our commitment to make change.

Please join us at the Grange, 291 School Street in Willits, Friday, November 29, from 3:30 to 5:30 pm. Stay for a bring-your-own brown bag supper. Dessert and beverages will be provided. The event is free; families are welcome! We encourage young adults to be part of the discussion. Childcare will be provided.

Tackling change alone can be a recipe for discouragement. As a community, I think we can make meaningful and mutually encouraging steps toward a good future.

Ellen Drell, Willits

Memories from our friends and neighbors

To the Editor:

Last Sunday I had the good fortune to attend "The Grange Building comes to life as we remember its past as a Willits School," an Elder Talk presentation.

What a delight! Leading the panel for this popular series were Chuck Persico, Margie Handley, Lee Persico and Marnye Sylvander.

If they were the least bit nervous or self-conscious, it didn't show, because their storytelling seemed perfectly natural with one reminiscence prompting another.

If I quote them, it's paraphrasing as I don't take shorthand and my memory isn't the greatest so bear with me....

When asked about a favorite memory of the Pine Street school, Chuck Persico pressed his hand over his heart and revealed he was 7 years old when he fell madly in love with a little girl named Shannon. To this day, she remains his first love.

Chuck also remembered school dances when the boys were lined up on one side of the room, the girls on the other, and each boy was expected to walk across the room to ask a girl to dance, grateful to this day that his mother had taught him the basics so he was more confident than most.

The playground was a hubbub of activity and injury during lunchtime and recess. Pointing to the southeast corner, Marnye said she's returned to that playground because her mobile home "is right over there."

So much has changed since the late '40s and early '50s, not the least of which was the ability to raise "free range" children who seemed to walk everywhere. As Marnye said, "I was sent out to play in the morning and not expected home for dinner until 6." Margie agreed, saying she too was allowed amazing freedom as they moved from one neighborhood to another. A favorite hangout was Johnson's Department Store (now J.D. Redhouse).

Although they were raised on a ranch with animals that needed constant attention and they had assigned chores, Lee Persico said Saturday was shopping day for his mom, during which he was allowed to buy 22 shells and attend movies that played all afternoon. Chasing girls was a favorite pastime of his, but the rest of Lee's second- and third-grade antics resulted in getting kicked off the school bus, hours in the dark cloakroom, or sent to the principal's office.

Remember the little girl named Shannon? Well, during the brief session for questions from members of the audience, a lady stood up and said to Chuck Persico, "I'm from Ukiah and friends with Shannon. Is there anything you would like me to tell her?" Silent for a moment, Chuck then quietly said, "Please reassure her that I've moved on."

Future Elder Talks will surely depend on the generosity of some amazing volunteers, but if you get a chance, I would encourage you to attend. Their memories will fill your heart and bring you joy.

Gail Richards, Willits

Announcement from WCT

Circumstances dictate that the Willits Community Theatre must cancel the final four shows of 'Twelfth Night,' which had been scheduled for November 21 through November 24. We thank the cast and crew for their hard work on 'Twelfth Night,' and we thank Willits High School and the Willits Unified School District for their generosity toward us.

– Steve Marston, president, Willits Community Theatre Board of Directors

COLUMN | MCOE: A Perspective on Education

Technology in education – Using a data-driven approach

By Michelle Hutchins, Mendocino County superintendent of schools

One of the most effective ways to solve problems is to include the following steps. 1. Define the goal as specifically as possible.

2. Make sure you can measure progress. 3. Collect and review relevant data frequently. 4. Iterate. 5. Return to step 3 until the goal is reached.

At the state level in education, we often struggle to gather, review and respond to data in a timely manner, and it's hurting our schools. When we do state-wide benchmark testing, schools do not receive results until after the following school year has already begun, so we do not get the opportunity to rethink which classes we should offer or which students would benefit from various types of curriculum. It feels like we're always a year behind. In this age of technology, I cannot fathom why this remains the case.

I recently attended a meeting with

fellow county superintendents of schools, and many of us feel frustrated. The good news is that the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (pronounced "see-ses-uh") has been supporting a continuous improvement approach, and if enough superintendents carry the messages of our districts to the state level, change should follow.

Using a data-driven approach to problem solving would allow us to reach better conclusions and to model improvement science for our students. Every day in education, we make decisions about logistics, administration, academics and social issues. When we do using a formal problem-solving model with access to relevant data formatted so decision-makers understand it and can integrate it, we do better.

To be clear, many educators make great

Read the rest of **Tech** Over on Page 13



Mendocino County Superintendent of Schools Michelle Hutchins

The Rules: LETTERS

Letters & Commentaries: Email letters to willitsweekly@gmail.com. Letters focusing on Willits and Third District issues, activities, events and people have priority. Willits Weekly prints letters 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.

Typed letters can be sent to Willits Weekly, P.O. Box 1698, Willits, CA 95490, but email is preferred. 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. No letters from an anonymous source will be published, although a request to withhold the writer's name will be considered.



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Above, left: The small hall at the St. John Lutheran Church is filled with hungry soup enthusiasts. Above, right: Senior MacKenna Buckingham, church attendee Robb Remple, and senior Dylan Longmire help to serve and clear tables. Below: Marilyn Harden works at the pie station.

Fellowship and Soup

Luncheon at St. John Lutheran Church brings people together for a hearty meal and friendly conversation

On a chilly Friday, the Fellowship Hall of St. John Lutheran Church was filled with the enticing aroma of soup as old friends met and exchanged news and greetings. There were soft, plush knit goods for purchase; baskets, art and hotel stays were up for raffle; and there was food to whet the most discerning of appetites.

The variety of soups ensured that every attendee would find a bowl or two to satisfy their taste buds and warm their insides. The medley of these congregation-created liquid delights included chicken dumpling, chicken with wild rice, chili, clam chowder, steak and potato, and split pea (including a vegan option). In order to serve the variety of dietary requirements, gluten-free crackers and pie were available.

The diners could have two different soups, ensuring that no one would go home hungry. The tables were pre-set with baskets containing an assortment of homemade breads: poppyseed and banana mini breads, English and Hawaiian dinner rolls, and slices of sourdough, which were readily replenished by the Willits High School senior class

volunteers.

After enjoying the tasty soups, the attendees could dive into some sweet dessert treats which included apple, cherry, and peach pie, pumpkin bread, and cheesecake. All this epicurean goodness was offered for only \$8 (\$7 for pre-sale tickets).

In addition to the lunch, a temporary store occupied the Fellowship Hall where attendees could purchase an attractive array of knit afghans, hats, scarfs, and many other items made by the members of the St. John Women's Guild. Some came just to shop for these creative bargains.

A raffle was also available to those in attendance. The prizes consisted of two baskets, one chock-full of Thanksgiving treats to help construct a hearty feast. The other basket was loaded with family-fun items, games, and other treats. There was a beautiful afghan, created by some of the congregation members that, for the second

Read the rest of **Fellowship** Over on Page 14

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AND DOZENS OF HOT DEALS

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start at \$349!

SOFAS

start at \$449!

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Furniture Center

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SHOP: 6 am - 8 am

All Purchases of \$25 or more from 6 am to 8 am will be entered to win a \$100 Gift Certificate

40% Off Clothing & Footwear

30% Off Toys & gifts

SHOP: 8 am -10 am

All Purchases of \$25 or more from 8 am to 10 am will be entered to win a \$50 Gift Certificate

35% Off Clothing & Footwear

25% Off Toys & Gifts

SHOP: 10 am - 6 pm

All Purchases of \$25 or more from 10 am to 6 pm will be entered to win a \$25 Gift Certificate

30% Off Clothing & Footwear

20% Off Toys & Gifts

SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

30% Off Clothing & Footwear

20% Off Toys & Gifts

CYBER MONDAY

J.D. REDHOUSE & COMPANY

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Willits Weekly's
Puzzle Page

Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword

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



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!

POULTRY WORD SEARCH

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

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| ALEKTOROPHOBIA | BARRING | CAPON | EGG |
| ANTIBIOTIC | BEAK | CARUNCLE | FEATHER |
| AVIARY | BIDDY | CHICK | HATCHED |
| AVICULTURE | BIRD | CHICKEN | HEN |
| BANDING | BOOTED | CLUTCH | POULTRY |
| BARBICELS | BROILER | DUCK | TURKEY |

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| | | | | | | | | 64 | | | 65 | |

CLUES ACROSS

- Small viper
- Some are covert
- A waiver of liability (abbr.)
- Speak out
- Retirement plan
- Small dog
- City in Iraq
- Car mechanics group
- Shrimp-like creature
- Majestic
- TV detective
- Central Canadian province
- Causing to wind around
- Wise man
- Knicks legend Willis
- Muscular weaknesses
- John Stockton compiled them
- South American plant
- To some extent
- Where manners are displayed
- Showy
- Fall down
- Shoelaces are often this
- Disease-causing bacterium
- Egg-shaped wind

instrument

- Sufferings
- One who noisily enjoys
- About blood
- Transaction verification system (abbr.)
- Related through female family members
- Low velocity grenade
- 'In Living Color' comedian
- Veterans battleground
- Expression of creative skill
- Reserved
- Between northeast and east
- Patti Hearst's captors

CLUES DOWN

- Something useful
- It goes great with peppers and onions
- Orifice
- Turned into bone
- The Princess could detect it
- Bands of colors
- Makes use of
- Central African country
- Lake in the Kalahari Desert
- He was a 'Chairman'

- Legally possess
- One point north of due west
- Small peg of wood
- Stretch of swampy ground
- Is indebted to
- Where you were born (abbr.)
- A team's best pitcher
- Cool!
- Female sibling
- This stimulates the thyroid (abbr.)
- Reserved
- More prickled
- Forbidden by law
- One-time presidential candidate
- A TV show has more than one
- A place to stash things
- Defunct currency in India
- Causes to ferment
- A type of gland
- __ Humbug!
- Everyone has one
- Punctuation
- Central American fruit
- Brooklyn hoopster
- 100 square meters
- Local area network

WILLITS POLICE DEPARTMENT
POLICE LOG

November 11 to November 17

By Danya Davis, Willits Weekly

The officers of the Willits Police Department handled **168 incidents** in this seven-day reporting period.

Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

November 11

3:09 am: ESTRADA III, Michael Edward (39) of Sacramento was contacted in the 300 block of Mill Street. He was arrested on felony charges of violation of parole, and on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (loitering on private property) and resisting an officer.

9:02 am: Officers responded to a report of a sexual assault in the 100 block of East Commercial Street.

10:40 am: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 200 block of Margie Drive.

3:52 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

November 12

7:21 am: Officer responded to a report of illegal camping in the 200 block of Sherwood Road.

8:40 am: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 100 block of South Main Street.

2:39 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 1000 block of Magnolia Avenue.

3:53 pm: Officers responded to a report of threats in the 1100 block of Magnolia Avenue.

4:25 pm: MARTINEZ, Jorge Javier (23) of Ukiah was contacted in the 1700 block of South Main Street. He was booked on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct (alcohol) and violation of probation.

5:17 pm: PURDOM, Bobby Gene (71) of Willits was contacted in the 100 block of Alder Court following a disturbance. He was arrested pursuant to 368 (B) PC (Elder Abuse – resulting in great bodily harm or death).

November 13

2:28 am: CASTER, Evan Hale (36) of Fort Bragg was contacted in the 1600 block of South Main Street. He was arrested pursuant to 11377 H&S (Possession of Methamphetamine), 273.6 PC (Violation of a Protective Order), and 1203.2 PC (Violation of Probation).

11:39 am: Officers responded to a report of an assault in the 100 block of Creekside Court.

3:10 pm: Officers initiated a hit-and-run vehicle collision investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

4:01 pm: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 100 block of North Main Street.

5:58 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity near the intersection of Center Valley Road and East Hill Road.

6:17 pm: WYATT, Gary Shea (38) of Willits was contacted in the 100 block of Northbrook Way. He was arrested pursuant to 664/459 PC (Attempted Burglary), 647 (H) PC (Loitering), and 11550 (A) H&S (Under the Influence of a Controlled Substance).

6:29 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 100 block of Mill Creek Drive.

LITTLE LAKE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

FIRE CALLS

November 10 through November 15

Submitted by Little Lake Fire Department

November 10

7:14 am: Traffic collision in the area of Highway 20 and South Main

6:29 pm: Traffic collision in the area of Valley Road

November 11

5:27 am: Hazardous conditions in Pine Mountain on Ridgewood Road

November 12

9:38 am: Public assist out Highway 162, mile marker 11.50, towards Covelo

6:10 pm: BLS medical aid in the area of Muir Mill Road

November 14

8:08 am: Officers initiated a vehicle theft investigation in the 500 block of North Street.

10:38 am: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 200 block of North Main Street.

11:33 am: Officers responded to a report of a suspicious vehicle near the intersection of Coast Street and South Coast Street.

1:33 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity and an unwanted subject in the 200 block of North Lenore Avenue.

2:29 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing in the 100 block of Madrone Street.

6:05 pm: Officers responded to a report of a suspicious vehicle in the 500 block of North Street.

8:21 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 300 block of North Main Street.

10:36 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 100 block of Spruce Street.

November 15

8:15 am: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 100 block of Wood Street.

10:28 am: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 800 block of South Main Street.

10:53 am: Officers initiated a vehicle theft investigation in the 1400 block of South Main Street.

11:58 am: Officers initiated a burglary investigation in the 200 block of Shell Lane.

10:24 pm: Officers responded to a report of threats in the 100 block of North Main Street.

11:42 pm: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 200 block of South Main Street.

November 16

2:35 am: HARBOUR, Clint (56) of Willits was contacted in the 1300 block of South Main Street following a report of threats. He was arrested pursuant to 22210 PC (Possession of a Baton or similar item), and on misdemeanor charges of violation of probation.

10:04 am: MCCANN, Robert James (42) of Willits was contacted in the 500 block of East Commercial Street following a report of suspicious activity. He was arrested pursuant to 10851 (A) VC (Joyriding), on felony charges of possession of a stolen vehicle, and on misdemeanor charges of violation of probation.

November 17

1:42 am: Officers responded to a domestic disturbance in the 300 block of South Main Street.

10:23 am: Officers responded to a report of a suspicious vehicle in the 1600 block of South Main Street.

11:20 am: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 200 block of East Commercial Street.

1:16 pm: Officers responded to a report of trespassing near the intersection of Railroad Avenue and Barbara Lane and issued a warning.

7:35 pm: BLS medical aid on Baechtel Road

November 13

8:24 am: BLS medical aid in the area of Ridgewood Road

November 14

2:03 pm: Debris fire in the area of Davis St and Valley Road

November 15

8:34 am: Mutual aid request for a water tender to the Blue Incident in Covelo.



From far left: A roasted delicata squash salad with arugula is sprinkled with toasted pumpkin seeds, pomegranate seeds, and pickled red onion. Speakers Selena Rowan, Karin C. Uphoff and Antoinette Ascencio inform and inspire the guests. Baskets filled with real flowers and herbs decorated the tables and were for sale.

Photos by Mathew Caine



Harvest Dinner
Mendocino County Herb Guild turns Little Lake Grange into a woodland wonderland for their 2nd annual fundraising banquet

On Saturday, November 16, the Little Lake Grange was transformed into an enchanted forest world of savory farm-to-table food, eclectic adult beverages, tasty music, earthy aromas of soaps, sage and herbs, and reports from the world of the Mendocino County Herb Guild.

Mathew Caine
Features Writer
mathew@willitsweekly.com

The decorations, as designed by decorator April Hunter, included a 5-foot inverted manzanita as a centerpiece, which was dotted with miniature lights, adding to the forest biome motif. Even the live music stage was a forest-like scene of leaves and branches and woody creations.

This set the scene for the Herb Guild's second annual Harvest Dinner, headed up by Guild members Ana Victoria Salcido-Cobb and April Hunter. The event was co-sponsored by the Little Lake Grange, which has hosted harvest dinners stewarded by many different organizations for over a decade.

Each table sported a centerpiece basket of natural growing plants. Created by Donna d'Terra and Jonelle Puetz, these aromatic baskets were available to take home for \$15 to \$25. Vendors sold their goods of herbs, soaps, seeds, hats, and exotic international materials in the front hallway as the attendees entered.

A creative bar, full of a selection of exotic adult beverages, stewarded by Michelle Cummins, offered craft cocktails from the Tamar Distillery: Elderberry Martini, Rosehip Lemon Drop Vodka, Apple Chai Bourbon, and the licorice-tasting absinthe. In addition, there was wine, organic chardonnay and cabernet sauvignon from Frey Vineyards, and San Hedrin Brewery Black IPA.

Two non-alcoholic selections were also available: Apple Shrub with Mendo Vitality Tonic (from the Herb Guild) and Fresh-Pressed Chai Cider. Krista Pickens of Shewolf Coffee was in attendance with her deep, rich blend of coffee for the trip home. All of the libations were donated.

The food was made possible by donations from local farms, including HappyDay Farms, Seely Farm Stand, Cinnamon Bear Farms, Yokayo Roots Farm, New Agrarian Collective, Nurturing Seed, Green Uprising Farm, and Irene's Garden.

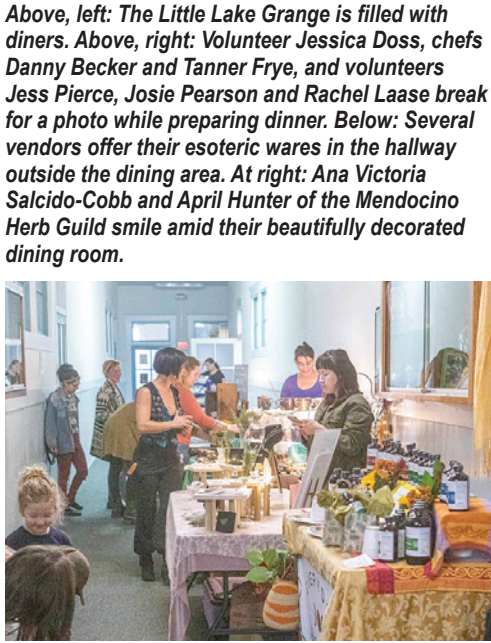
Chefs Danny Becker and Tanner Frye were back this year to create the farm-to-table meal, expertly cooked and plated. Each table had a basket of Eliot's Bread with a choice of thyme butter or seasoned olive oil. The first of the four courses offered a colorful salad of roasted delicata squash with arugula, toasted pumpkin seeds, pickled red onions, and pomegranate seeds, served with a dressing made with the Herb Guild's Vitality Tonic.

Next served was the potato and leek soup with harvest pesto. The entrée was butternut squash puree with balsamic roasted beets and a choice of either lamb meatballs or roasted mushroom medley. To top off the meal, dessert was an offering of poached pears with vanilla whipped cream and toasted walnuts.

The guests were entertained by a musical combo, consisting of bassist Lincoln Andrews, drummer Jesse Bessoni, and guitarist Aaron Bellomo, who deftly lent a smooth jazz intonation during dinner.

The event also featured talks by three speakers, which were preceded by a

Read the rest of
Harvest
Over on Page 14



Above: Lincoln Andrews, Jesse Bessoni and Aaron Bellomo entertain the guests with cool jazz. At left: Selena Rowan speaks about how herbs can alter one's life.

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KNIVES OUT

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(PG13) 2 hrs 10 mins

Wed/Thurs: 2:30, 5:20 & 8:15pm

to explore the idea.

Mayor Gerry Gonzalez appointed council members Saprina Rodriguez and Madge Strong to be on the committee after they volunteered.

Several of the council members seemed open to the idea of relaxing the rules of the city mobile vendor ordinance, which currently does not allow vendors to operate anywhere on or within one block of either Main Street or Commercial Street.

Food truck owner/operator Laura Rowland had asked the city council at a meeting a couple months back that they consider altering the rules, and it was placed on the agenda for last week.

Rowland said the owners of Brown's Corner would allow her to operate her mobile business on their property at the south end of town, but she couldn't because of the city rules.

"We've created all these visions and ideas for what we could do with that business, and we're limited by the current ordinances here in Willits," she said. "We'd love to bring this to the community of Willits and that's always been our vision."

Rowland and Nicole Toomey Flamer co-own Rosella's Italian Ice and The Icebox, and have been operating at events and various locations around the county since they were officially permitted in June.

Flamer described some of the positive impacts she's seen mobile vendors bring with events like "food truck nights."

"It's about creating communities," she said. "It's a way to bring people out of the house at night when they otherwise would not."

"They're out and they're in the community and they're enjoying it. And we put so much time into making our cities safe and enjoyable, this is what we want people to do. We want people to enjoy them. And I think this is a great way to encourage that."

Shauna Brown Martin, co-owner of Brown's Corner, also spoke at the meeting in favor of changing the mobile vendor rules, saying, "We need help getting people to our business."

She said that the Browns Corner lot could be used as a location for vendors, and the large lot next to it could potentially be rented and used as a venue as well.

"I just would love to continually support our community in their little endeavors that help them supplement their income," she added. "But I think that people aren't going to buy in with their food trucks unless we can lax the rules a little bit first and try to get them on Main Street."

"Hopefully you guys will keep it going, and we can work with you and negotiate some things that help us bring a little bit more to our community."

Tony Madrigal, owner of El Mexicano restaurant, said he was open to the idea of allowing more mobile vendors, but only if it was done in a way to minimize the negative impact on local "brick and mortar" businesses.

"It could be three [mobile] pizza places that put a brick and mortar pizza place out of business," he said. "Because the pie is only so big, and there's only so many people. I think if it was thought out right, I think we could probably make something work, whether it was [only] on certain days or in certain areas."

"You can get into a mobile business for \$50,000," he noted, "whereas some people have \$200,000 or \$300,000 or \$400,000 invested in [their business], and they're just hanging on by their teeth right now.... I'd hate to see more empty business fronts. We already have a lot."

He felt that if the mobile

business and brick and mortar business owners got together along with the city to discuss their concerns they could "come up with a happy medium ... where it doesn't hurt and it helps everybody."

Brown Martin pointed out that local brick and mortars could also potentially explore setting up their own mobile businesses as well.

Councilmember Greta Kanne said that in an online discussion she initiated on Facebook, the response from the community was "overwhelmingly positive" to allow more food truck activity in the city.

"People were excited about the idea of new types of food, new life in downtown," she said. "Somebody mentioned it would be great if there was a food truck at the skate park on weekends."

"There's interest for sure, but it also does have to be balanced to make sure that it doesn't harm the businesses that are here and have invested the time and the money and have been an integral part of the community for a long time," she added. "So that would be my goal – to make sure that it was something that gave new opportunity for new entrepreneurs but also was cautious and respectful of our current restaurant community."

Rodriguez said many she heard from in the Willits community wondered why Commercial Street was restricted for mobile vendors given its large sections with relatively few businesses operating there.

She said that many were enthusiastic about the idea of a special event involving food trucks, and Sunday was suggested since many local restaurants were closed that day anyway.

City Planner Dusty Duley noted that in 2014 the city council was looking to make changes to the mobile vendor rules for Willits. But after some revisions were approved by the council to be sent to the Revitalization & Economic Development committee, they were never followed through on due to staff turnover.

Christmas in City Park

The council also approved allowing Calvary Chapel in Willits to erect a large Christmas tree with lights in Bud Snyder Park for a few weeks around Christmas.

As detailed in a letter from Calvary Lead Pastor Jim Semisch to the city, their plans include to "have a Christmas tree lighting ceremony, sing Christmas songs, hear the story of the first Christmas, and enjoy warm goodies and drinks (all free of charge)."

"We believe this would be a wonderful event that could be something that our community celebrates annually for years to come," said Semisch.

The tree is planned to be about 20 feet tall, have a barrier around it, be anchored to the ground, and powered by solar.

The council approved the plan, but stipulated that groups of other affiliations be given the same type of opportunity and consideration for such activities, and that each activity be given a maximum of a three-week time period.

The agenda summary stated that City Attorney Jim Lance advised the city to use no public funds and give no official endorsement for any religious message, but said that "a public city park is considered a public forum where persons have a right to engage in free speech, including displaying menorahs and lighting Christmas trees."

The tree is planned to be set up sometime between December 8 and 15, and remain until just after Christmas.

the onset of the news from PG&E notifying us of possible PSPS events, [City Manager] Stephanie [Garrabrant-Sierra], department heads, and [Little Lake] Fire Chief Chris Wilkes met numerous times developing an action plan to ensure our water and wastewater plants, airports, City Hall and city parks and streets operated safely, without interruption," she wrote.

"We developed contingency plans and communication lines and posted information on our city website and Facebook page," she continued. "The message was be safe, be prepared, and stay calm. As a result City Hall was open for business as normal, all departments ran smoothly, and we received an abundance of positive feedback from the community for our efforts."

Stevenson highlighted the efforts of several employees of the city during the PSPS.

She said that Justin Vigil, acting chief water plant operator, "slept at the water plant to insure he was available for any issues [and] worked daily along with his co-workers to ensure our water was running."

She noted that Utilities Superintendent Scott Herman and Public Works Superintendent Bill Wilson received and dispersed 500 to 600 gallons of fuel per day while making sure that water, wastewater, and airport generators were operational prior to and during the event.

The wastewater department "lent mutual aid to Baechtel Senior Homes with the use of our Vac-Truck so they could empty their lift station in order to prevent a sanitary sewer overflow and give them enough time to recover until the power was restored."

In addition, Chief Wastewater Plant Operator Daniel Curtis "offered assistance to our neighbors in Lake County at Northwest Regional Wastewater by lending them a generator when their three generators failed to keep the power on at North Lakeport Water Plant when their main generator failed. This partnership allowed them to be able to keep all of North Lakeport supplied with water during the PSPS."

While City Hall was open for "business as normal," the Willits Community Center in the building was also opened "to all residents and visitors to use as a charging station, have access to restrooms, and come out of the cold," a decision which Stevenson said the city manager made.

"[Garrabrant-Sierra] made herself available to residents, businesses and visitors alike to answer their questions, give them an update on the situation, and calm their fears and frustrations," said Stevenson.

She noted that opening up the Willits Community Center in such a way was particularly important since PG&E chose not to use any Willits facility as one of their Community Resource Centers, even though they had previously indicated they would.

She said City Clerk Cathy Moorhead "also worked around the clock along with Stephanie attending calls, updating Facebook, assisting department heads and the council with whatever they needed. As we all know, Cathy knows the majority of people in our community, and she calmly took the calls and answered all their questions, ensuring everyone that City Hall, our police department, water, wastewater and airport were all running smoothly. Cathy is our rock."

Others she commended for their efforts included community development specialist Jim Robbins, intern Mercy Villegas, and Willits Chief of Police Scott Warnock.

"We are proud to say each and every city employee stepped up, trusted each other to do their job without exception, and offered a helping hand wherever it was needed," said Stevenson. "I would like to take a moment to thank all of our employees for going above and beyond, working around the clock, and keeping up to speed on the latest news to ensure our community was safe."

Garrabrant-Sierra also spoke at the meeting about how impressed she was with the staff during the PSPS, noting that the public works, water and wastewater staff were basically on call continuously throughout the event.

"We wanted to make sure first of all before the event that we prepared as much as possible so that there would be no interruption in city services," she said, "and that we treated this not as an emergency or a disaster but as a seamless event so that we would have as few interruptions as possible."

"I think it was successful as much as it could be," she continued. "I'm very proud of just how hard our staff worked. There was a lot of overtime put in.... The dedication was just really amazing."

She also was encouraged by the resilient spirit she saw of those in the community.

"I think I was most struck by just the level of cheerfulness people had," she said. "Nobody was panicking, no one freaked out, they just made the best of it. And that was great. It felt really good."

Brown's Corner got a round of applause at the meeting after Chief Warnock gave them a shout out for their activities during the PSPS.

"I just wanted to give kudos to Brown's Corner for being the only gas station open," said Warnock. "They were very responsive when the traffic was getting out of control. We helped them for a little bit, and then they got it all together."

Brown's Corner co-owner Shauna Brown Martin, who was in attendance to voice support for food truck businesses, said she had plans which she hoped would make the lines move much quicker at the station in the event of another PSPS.

Council OKs letter to PG&E

Also at the meeting, the council approved sending a letter from the city to PG&E which strongly criticized the utility's handling of the PSPS, and talked in great detail about the hardships which were brought upon the residents of Willits and others in Mendocino County.

The letter was drafted by Garrabrant-Sierra, and set to be signed by Mayor Gerry Gonzalez.

It was similar in tone and language to one sent to PG&E by the County of Mendocino, and Garrabrant-Sierra noted at the meeting that several other jurisdictions have sent or were planning on sending formal letters with

criticisms of the utility as well.

"Getting information out of PG&E was a struggle for both the city and the county," she said at the meeting, "and all the cities in California shared our frustration at the lack of current credible information to enable us to act in the manner we would like. It actually was very stressful on our residents and certainly on our staff."

The letter to PG&E led off saying "Our small city of Willits, an economically disadvantaged rural community in Mendocino County, spent months and considerable amounts of money and staffing planning for and responding to PSPS events this year. Despite being told that things were under control, that everything was planned, that there would be a website that would assist residents and that would give accurate information, that we would get 48 hours of notice in advance of any shutoff, that there would be a Community Resource Center in our community and, most of all, that we would not need to worry because PG&E had thought of everything, we were sorry to see that none of those representations were true."

The letter talked about calls from PG&E before and during the PSPS event which it described as often confusing, frustrating and uninformative.

"As a city, we were allowed only to listen, not participate in, planning calls with PG&E, the state, and local partners three times a day," it read. "We were told we could only communicate with our 'single point of contact.'"

"Listening to those calls was disheartening at best. We received poor information regarding any of the PSPS events. Mendocino County was virtually never mentioned in our calls, although we ended up receiving some of the longest impacts."

"Our PG&E contact had little information to share specifically to our city, other than being a good person to whom to vent our frustrations, and I know she did her best. Our county contact was equally frustrated with PG&E. We never received timely information that we could trust, as the information seemed to change constantly and whenever we were given any information, we were told: 'This could change, things are dynamic.'"

"Situation briefings on our three-times-a-day calls were mysterious as PG&E vice presidents talked about 'zones,' but could not answer questions regarding which parts of Mendocino County were in which zone. Confusion was the watchword of each call."

The letter detailed one particularly frustrating call:

"Before the outage, the [PG&E] vice-president on the call told everyone that most of the timelines were moved 'back.' No one understood what that meant, and when asked, he just repeated 'moved back' (he spoke louder). But did that mean sooner or later? No one knew, not even our single point of contact. Back could have meant 'backward' or sooner, or it could have meant later – which he did mean, we finally learned. Except that after being told timelines were moved back, they were not."

Like the letter from the county, the city letter included a point-by-point analysis of some of the "unacceptable conditions experienced during the events of the four public safety power shutoffs."

These included "unacceptable scope and duration of the PSPS, with areas in scope well out of wind event for a period of over 90 hours"; poor communication and lack of timely information from PG&E; the public being informed that power would be restored between the October 26 and 29 events, but this never occurring; de-energization timelines provided by PG&E which contradicted the website, the portal and verbal discussions; undue burden on vulnerable populations, particularly our oxygen dependent and senior populations; loss of food and income for low income/fixed income populations and wide-spread food spoilage; local businesses losing much-needed revenue; restaurants which were forced to close, give away food, and completely restock their food supplies; crippled communication providers; and widespread safety risks resulting from lack of light and other issues.

The letter also laid out several ramifications of the PSPS more specific to Willits, including:

"Our senior center had thousands of dollars' worth of food thawed, necessitating a public food giveaway"; "fuel supplies completely depleted, long lines and traffic jams at gas stations, necessitating sheriff's escort for EMS, medical suppliers, communication and fuel providers, and creating traffic hazards and need for police support for the lines around our sole open gas station"; "increase in crime, particularly theft and vandalism – Willits had a number of vandalized businesses"; "the need for large amounts of overtime paid to public works and utility workers to ensure that infrastructure ran without interruption"; and "house fires from use of generators, candles and outdoor camping equipment indoors.... In and around the Willits area, three homes were burned to the ground during this PSPS event."

The letter concluded: "Moving forward, it is critical that PG&E adhere to their promises to provide transparent, accurate and consistent notifications/information to local government officials, including cities, minimize impacts to areas not in fire danger areas or not in wind or weather impacted areas, increase PG&E staff capacity to allow faster response times to counties and provide information to cities, provide adequately equipped Community Resource Centers and not ignore rural vulnerable communities, and to plan for and meet the needs of your vulnerable and medically fragile customers. It is also imperative to include cities in your planning and information.

"Considering the harsh impacts we experienced in Willits, while experiencing no wind event, we would say that we were treated callously by PG&E during this event and request that our county and our city be treated with more respect and dignity in the future."

In addition to PG&E, the letter was cc'd to Governor Gavin Newsom, Congressman Jared Huffman, State Senator Mike McGuire, State Assemblymember Jim Wood, the California Public Utilities Commission, the California League of Cities, and the Rural County Representatives of California.



At left: Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee member Ellen Drell tells the group that anything a group decides to do doesn't have to be huge: "It can be as simple as carpooling to a meeting once a week. It's measurable on their impact on greenhouse emissions." Below: Singer, songwriter and Willits City Council member Madge Strong entertains the group with her uplifting song, "Believe in the Future." At bottom: Kirk Lumpkin recites his poem, "Re Bell, Re Bell, Re Bell," with bells emphasizing certain phrases.

WELL Fall Gathering

Willits Economic Localization celebrates its 15th anniversary working for a sustainable and healthy economy

People started gathering and bringing delicious homemade food to the Willits Environmental Hub at 4 pm Sunday. It was the 15-year celebration for Willits Economic Localization and the annual Fall Gathering.

In 2004 scientist Jason Bradford and his family moved to Willits. They'd carefully chosen the town because of its size, location, climate, resources, and community and because it was a farming / ranching area. Bradford is credited with starting WELL and the localization movement through showing the then-new film, "End of Suburbia: Oil Depletion and the Collapse of the American Dream," to a small group of interested people at the Willits Environmental Center when it was across from the post office.

The movie was a hit. It described what many locals were already thinking and experiencing. Bradford was charismatic and extremely knowledgeable. His experiences and ecological studies for his doctorate degree in South American jungles were impressive.

Membership in WELL grew, and working groups were formed around concerns with Willits' water supplies, energy production / use, food and local food production, and emergency infrastructure, to name a few.

Eventually membership swelled to over 360, and WELL

meetings and events attracted anywhere from 80 to 150 people. "Every month for about three years," said Brian Weller, one of the organizers, "we had a major event at the Willits Community Center. There were internationally recognized people like Richard Heinberg [of "Powerdown: Options for a Post-Carbon World"], and Julian Darley [filmmaker] giving presentations on aspects of localization." Simultaneously, the working groups were doing extensive research and produced documents which revealed Willits' vulnerabilities in researched areas.

WELL became noticed as a leader in localization and was contacted by people worldwide. Weller was invited to different communities in California, Oregon, Colorado, Germany, Ireland and England to present the work and vision of WELL. Groups like "Transition Town" drew from WELL, which took localization further and went more global.

Currently WELL is seen as a hub with information and a gathering place that supports other projects. It works collaboratively with groups like the Little Lake Grange, Mendocino County Fire Safe Council, and local fire safe councils, as well as other nonprofit groups. WELL also works with individuals working on localizing food, improving

Read the rest of WELL | Over on Page 11



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Pg. 9



At top, from left: Gretchen Moore looks over silent auction items at "An Autumn Evening in Willits," a fundraiser for the Cancer Resource Centers of Mendocino County. Vegetarian butternut lasagna, salad, and herb-roasted chicken was on the menu for the evening. Earlene Gleisner displays a pair of socks she wants to bid on. Above: The Little Lake Grange is filled with supporters of the Cancer Resource Centers of Mendocino County. Above, from left: Tammy Van Steen wins a gift certificate for Patrona Restaurant and a bottle of wine. A tasty buffet dinner is provided by Good Earth Kitchen. Executive Director Karen Oslund and Clancy Rash of Just Enough attend "An Autumn Evening in Willits," a fundraiser for the Cancer Resource Centers of Mendocino County. The silent auction offers unique and artistic items. Below, left: Just Enough entertains the crowd with a set of Bob Dylan, Kate Wolf, and other favorites. Below, right: The attendees enjoy a healthy meal from Good Earth Kitchen.



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Above: This photo shows the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee's structure with local focus groups as the base. Below: Madge Strong, president of the WELL board of directors, takes brainstorming notes after Ellen Drell's presentation on the county climate committee at WELL's 15-year anniversary celebration.

Photos by Ree Slocum

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The rest of **WELL** | From Page 7

transportation, reducing water usage, being prepared for emergencies, localizing investments, and supporting local entrepreneurs in Willits.

"It's really heartening to know that the community supports our work to make this a better place to live. We're trying to localize, not just for survive, but to thrive," Madge Strong, president of the WELL board of directors, said. Strong sees the "Paint the Town" project as one of those things that's fun to do and makes a difference. "People see the fire hydrants or recycle and trash bins and they smile," she said.

Paint the Town coordinator Paul Jacobson printed photos for the Hub wall and created a slide show of the creatively painted fire hydrants and trash/recycle bins for the anniversary celebration.

In addition to the celebration, WELL members got some work done as well. WELL volunteer Lisa Montez was elected to the WELL Coordinating Committee at the event. Ellen Drell also addressed the group as an appointed member of the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee, the new official advisory group to the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors.

Drell said creating the climate action committee was important because all the diverse issues about environmental protection, sustainability, and energy use "are wrapped up in this urgent need to address the warming planet," Drell said. "Most of us who are afraid, want to be doing something proactive as an antidote to our anxiety and we can actually make a difference."

Drell explained the mission for the county committee "is to set in motion countywide goals, policies and actions that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase carbon storage throughout the county, and will prepare Mendocino County residents to reduce or prevent or recover from, or better cope with, climate-caused disasters."

The first meeting of the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee is set for this week, starting at 3 pm on Thursday, November 21 at the county Administration Center, 501 Low Gap Road, Ukiah, in Conference Room C. The public is invited.

Those interested in joining or learning more about WELL, can contact Strong at 459-1493 or mstrong@willitsonline.com. Membership supports the work of WELL, and members receive an email newsletter every two months, with a calendar of local events and localization information.

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Estate Sale
Estate Sale at 2151 Valley Road. Ongoing thru December 31st. Tools, Art, Furniture, Antiques. Monday through Sunday 9am - 4pm. Everything must go.

Event Spaces Available
Event spaces available at the Willits Center for the Arts! • Great Room • Classroom • Ceramic Studio For inquiries, email manager@willitscenterforthearts.org or call 459-1726. For additional information visit: www.willitscenterforthearts.org/rentals

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Help Wanted
At Covello ranch: Exchange ranch and outdoors work for rent. Must have trailer/camper. Man or woman, retiree a plus. Must have good work ethic, be clean, healthy, reliable, with references. Call for details: 707-272-6354.

Moving Sale
Everything must go. Sunday, November 24 and Sunday, December 1, 9 to 5. 87 Hazel Street, across from Baechtel Grove Middle School.

Santa Photos
It's time again for Photos with Santa and Maureen Moore at J.D. Redhouse! Three times available: Friday, December 6 from 5 to 7 pm; Saturday, December 7 from noon to 3 pm and Sunday, December 8 from 10 am to noon. Digital images are just \$5 each - no appointment needed! Well-behaved pets always welcome to join. Info: 972-7047.

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Volunteers Needed
Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital is looking for positive members of the community to volunteer in the gift shop, information/greeting desk, hospitality cart and the garden. Hours are flexible and can include weekends. More info? Call 456-3245.

Volunteer Opportunities
The Willits Senior Center has many areas where your expertise and talents are needed. Front Desk, Thrift Store, Dining Room, Sunday Bingo, Sunday Breakfast, Special Dinners, Landscaping, Garden, Firewood. Come join our team, call Deb at 707-459-6826.

Willits Weekly is locally owned and operated!

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Handsome JoJo

JoJo is a handsome FIV+ guy with strong opinions. The second you walk in his condo you have to pay toll. "Toll" is head scratches or a pat, or he will grab you because he requires that you touch him as soon as possible.

JoJo would be great with older children that know cat body language – he does get over-stimulated and has been known to swipe at those who don't pay enough attention to how they are petting him. He is a super sweet guy that loves to play and be active. You likely will never see a mouse in your house with him around.

The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County is located at 9700 Uva Drive, Redwood Valley. Open hours: 1 to 5 pm, Wednesday through Friday; and 11 am to 3 pm, Saturday and Sunday. Please give us a call at 707-485-0123 if you have questions. You can view all our adoptable dogs and cats on Petfinder or through our website: mendohumanesociety.com. To volunteer or help take the dogs for a walk, please join HSIMC on Sundays at 11 am for an orientation.

Big Web

This big ol' guy is a bundle of sweetness and goofiness. He has the heart of a puppy! He lovvvvveeeeee toys! Web is a stuffie aficionado. He also knows "Sit," and walks well on a leash. This guy would be a great addition to a family or as your best pal. His easygoing and gentle nature make him great company! Web is a 5-year-old neutered male who currently weighs 84 pounds.

The Ukiah Shelter is located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah. Adoption hours are Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10 am to 4:30 pm, and Wednesday from 10 am to 6:30 pm. To view photos and bios of some of the other wonderful adoptable animals here, please visit online at: www.mendoanimalshelter.com or visit the shelter. For more information about adoptions, please call 707-467-6453.



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Gene Groen

April 2, 1934 to November 9, 2019

In the early morning hours of November 9, 2019, Eugene Gordon Groen passed away in the comforting presence of his wife, Honeylen, in Alameda, California at the age of 85. Born in Willits on April 2, 1934 to Gus and Eva Groen, he graduated from Willits High School in Mendocino County and attended UCLA for a year before transferring to UC Berkeley.

In 1956, Gene became a police officer with the Berkeley Police Department, and attended UC Berkeley part-time to complete his bachelor's degree in criminology. He then entered law school at Boalt Hall, where he obtained his LL.B. and was admitted to the State Bar of California in 1967. Gene practiced family law and criminal defense for ten years before turning to estate planning, trust, and probate law until he retired in 2010.

Gene was an avid music lover with a gorgeous tenor voice. He sang professionally as a jingle singer in the '60s ("Is your engine sick and tired? Want your car to run like new?"), also in his church and in various a capella groups over the years, with a special interest and talent for musical arrangement.

He was a member of the Bohemian Club and greatly enjoyed the company of other musicians. He was also a longtime part of the Bay Area sailing community, owning multiple boats over decades that he cruised and raced in the area. Gene took pride in staying fit, as an avid runner, then in later years walking and bicycling. Into his early 80s he often could be found doing a 14-mile circumnavigation of Alameda on his bike, and stopping at the park to do sit-ups and pull-ups.

He is survived by his loving wife of eighteen years, Honeylen, his children Steve, John, Melinda, Liza, and Mandy, grandchildren Nicholas, Joshua, Ashley, Ryan, Bryce, Kyra, and Nora, as well as a wide circle of friends made throughout the years. We all will miss his calm spirit, wit, and beautiful singing voice.

A memorial service will be held at Alameda Funeral & Cremation Services, 1415 Oak Street in Alameda, at 1:00 pm on Friday, November 22, 2019.



Above: WUSD school board President Alex Bowlds presents WHS senior Jaeva Cash with an Academic Scholar Award for her ACT score of 33, as her mother, Rachel Cash, PE coordinator at Brookside Elementary School, looks on.

Congrats | Jaeva

Congratulations to Willits High School senior Jaeva Cash, who was honored at the November 13 Willits Unified School District board meeting with an Academic Scholar Award, for her high score of 33 on the ACT test. The standardized ACT test measures college readiness. A score of 36 is a perfect score, and 33 puts Jaeva into the top 2 percent nationwide. Jaeva told school board members she wanted to go to CalTech and major in mechanical engineering or aerospace.

WUSD Superintendent Mark Westerburg commented that due to Jaeva's "stellar accomplishment" on the national test, she could get into college anywhere, with financial aid to help with her studies.

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The rest of Measure B | From Page 1

In the vote that took place on Tuesday, supervisors John McCowen, John Haschak and Carre Brown voted yes, and supervisors Dan Gjerde and Ted Williams voted no.

As with just about everything connected with Measure B, the contract is very surprising. In it, Nacht & Lewis proposed two approaches to siting and building a crisis residential treatment facility. The first approach would be to site and design a stand-alone, 16-bed facility. The second approach, which is original with Nacht & Lewis, is to remodel three single-family residences in locations to be named later, and to convert these residences into the county's crisis residential treatment facilities. These three remodeled residences would have a total of 16 beds.

This would be Phase Two of the architectural firm's contribution to the Measure B project. Phase Two includes design and documentation of either the remodeling work or the stand-alone building, and architectural support for the actual construction. For this, they are requesting to be paid \$375,000.

Phase One of the project will include pre-design work, geotechnical investigation, pre-design California Environmental Quality Act support, and surveying. This phase includes a half-day meeting for project visioning, 1.5 days of touring of existing proposed locations, which includes the old Howard Hospital in Willits and an empty lot on Orchard Avenue in Ukiah, plus two other, as yet unnamed, locations in the county.

In addition, the firm is proposing to hold two (two-day) workshops to assess building needs related to actual mental health treatment and further site visits and evaluations, including four potential CRT locations, two potential CSU locations, a revisit of Old Howard Hospital and the Ukiah site, plus one other, as yet unidentified, location for the PHF unit. This work will be done for a total of \$523,400.

Phase Three includes design and documentation of the construction of a psychiatric health facility and a crisis stabilization unit. For this the firm will be paid \$2.1 million. The total value of the contract is \$3,357,568.

An additional element that went into the supervisors' consideration is that the grant of \$500,000 which the Department of Behavioral Health and Recovery Services received in 2015 to fund the construction of a crisis residential treatment facility in Mendocino County, and which has so far received several extensions of its deadline, has another and probably final deadline coming up on December 5.

According to Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Director Jenine Miller, who spoke to the supervisors on Tuesday, the county would likely have to return the \$500,000 to the state if Behavioral Health cannot declare that the money has been given to a definite project by December 5. This "use it or lose it" calculation entered into the consideration of the county's evaluation committee.

According to a staff report written by CEO Carmel Angelo, "Based on their presentation and unique solutions and approaches, Nacht & Lewis was chosen by the evaluation panel as the most responsive proposer and best-suited partner on this project, as they included the approach of exploring the feasibility of remodeling existing facilities, ground-up construction, or tenant improvements in the pre-design phase of services in order to assist the county with determining the best approach and site for each facility."

Angelo had proposed that the supervisors approve the contract with Nacht & Lewis. However, McCowen said he wanted to hear from the Measure B Committee first, before he would feel comfortable approving the contract. The full Measure B Committee has not yet had an opportunity to look at the contract. However, Angelo said five members of the Measure B Committee had been members of the evaluation committee. These were Sheriff Tom Allman, Angelo herself, county Auditor Lloyd Weer, Fourth District representative Mark Mertle, and Third District representative Jed Diamond.

McCowen insisted that he wanted the Measure B Committee to concur with the Nacht & Lewis contract before he would feel comfortable voting for it.

Angelo told the board the November meeting of the Measure B committee had been cancelled, and that the next meeting of the committee would not take place until December 18. Angelo said that since the supervisors would not be meeting on December 24, the supervisors would not be able to consider any recommendation on the contract from the Measure B Committee until a meeting in early January.

McCowen then moved the board of supervisors approve the contract, contingent on a vote of the majority of the Measure B Committee in support of the contract.

Fourth District Supervisor Dan Gjerde did not like the contract proposal because he felt that paying a firm \$375,000 to supply architectural services to remodel three single-family residences was over-priced.

Fifth District Supervisor Ted Williams offered an explanation for why he was not able to support giving Nacht & Lewis the contract.

"To be clear, I'm not against this plan. I just want to see the other half of this plan. I want to see that we can actually staff and operate the facility that we are talking about building. And, hearing that the \$3.3 million is not capped, gives me great concern. What happens when we spend this money, we work through the process, we run over, we build a facility and we find that we can't staff it with personnel, they are not available here or we can't afford them?"

"That doesn't leave us in a good position," Williams continued. "I just want to see a strategic plan of: we're doing this but there are some other components that need to be worked out. And if in that process we find, we can't fit it within the Measure B budget, then I think we could come back and revisit this plan, to scale down."

Measure B was passed by 83.53 percent of those Mendocino County voters who voted in the election held in November 2017. It calls for a half-cent sales tax, per dollar spent, to be levied on all purchases made anywhere in the county, including the cities, for the first five years, which began in April 2018. Beginning in April 2023, the half-cent tax dips to a 1/8 cent tax which will be ongoing unless cancelled by the voters.

As of the October 23, 2019 meeting of the Measure B committee, the revenues brought in by the tax, less expenses, totaled \$10.4 million.

The rest of Garbage | From Page 1

and the surcharge increase need the approval of the governing bodies of the other MSWMA member jurisdictions, including the cities of Ukiah, Fort Bragg and Willits, for them to be binding across the cities and the county.

The main difference between the old JPA agreement and the new one is that the new one removes references to what had previously been the first mandate of MSWMA, which was "the siting, licensing, developing, constructing, maintaining and operating MSWMA disposal sites and sanitary landfills."

The second objective of the old MSWMA agreement was that the organization would prepare a solid waste management plan.

In the new agreement, the section that delineates the purpose of MSWMA has been rewritten to more accurately reflect what MSWMA is doing now. That section states that MSWMA shall prepare and implement the source reduction and recycling element of the Public Resources Code, and also operate and manage the Household Hazardous Waste Program; that it will make "reasonable efforts to increase recycling and diversion of materials"; that it will "provide for the proper handling of household hazardous wastes"; "provide educational outreach to encourage recycling"; "provide for the clean-up of sites where solid waste has been illegally disposed"; remove graffiti; and obtain funding to pay for the functions mentioned above.

The old agreement stated that the board of commissioners of MSWMA would elect or appoint a secretary and a treasurer. Under the new agreement, the general manager of the organization is automatically the secretary and treasurer of the organization.

With a nod to the plan that almost took place earlier this year, in which employees of C & S Waste solutions, the solid waste hauler for the City of Ukiah, came quite close to taking over many MSWMA functions, the new agreement allows that an agreement of that nature may legally take place.

That section of the new agreement states: "The commission may appoint a general manager, and may appoint one or more assistant general managers, to serve at the pleasure of the commission. Alternatively, the commission may independently contract for the services of a general manager, which shall not be considered an employee of the authority [i.e., MSWMA] or have any rights or benefits otherwise provided to MSWMA employees.

"The contractor's employees shall perform the duties of general manager and shall be regarded as the employees of the contractor and not of the authority," the new agreement states.

The negotiations to privatize many of the functions of MSWMA were under discussion at the agency from February through June of this year. In June, the proposal to privatize MSWMA was placed on hold, and former MSWMA Administrative Assistant Jennifer Lombardi was hired to fill the position of MSWMA general manager.

The rest of McCowen | From Page 1

how completely I put the demands of public service ahead of my personal interest.

"But after a great deal of reflection," the statement continued, "I realize that I cannot continue to give 100 percent of my time and energy to doing the job while simultaneously campaigning for the job. Therefore, I am announcing today that I will not be a candidate for re-election on March 3. Instead, I will continue to work hard doing the best job I can for the people of Mendocino County for the balance of my term."

McCowen has had a long career of public service. Prior to being elected to the board of supervisors in 2008, he had served on the Mendocino County Grand Jury, the Planning Commission for the City of Ukiah, and the Ukiah City Council. He was on the board of supervisors during the dark days of 2009 to 2011, in the aftermath of the Great Recession.

He served on the cannabis ad hoc committee with former Third District Supervisor Tom Woodhouse in 2016 and also served on subsequent cannabis ad hoc committees with Fifth District Supervisor Dan Hamburg in 2018 and with Third District Supervisor John Haschak in 2019.

Komer honored

Willits' Marc Komer was honored at Tuesday's board meeting for his contribution as longtime member and chair of the Mendocino County Library Advisory Board. Komer resigned from the LAB in September and attended his last LAB meeting on Wednesday, November 20. A proclamation honoring Komer was read by Third District Supervisor John Haschak.

The proclamation reads, in full:

"WHEREAS, Marc Komer joined the Library Advisory Board as the Third District representative in 2005; and

WHEREAS, Marc was instrumental in working with fellow LAB members in late 2010 to create a library funding subcommittee. Marc worked tirelessly with LAB members and Friends of the Library groups throughout the county to campaign for Measure A. Due to Marc's leadership and spirit of working together and collaboration, he helped to successfully pass Measure A in 2011 with 75 percent voter approval; and

WHEREAS, Marc was part of the LAB during the budgetary crisis as the LAB worked closely with the

county librarian to come up with creative solutions to assist the library and how best to use Measure A funds; and

WHEREAS, Marc has always advocated for the library, whether it was about concerns with funding, staffing or structure; and

WHEREAS, Marc has also been very supportive in the creation of a satellite library in Laytonville; and

WHEREAS, he listens and learns about the library, shows concern for staff, and wants our libraries to be successful. He always wants the best outcome for the library, staff and public. Marc's dedication to the public well-being through the public library system has made Mendocino County a better place.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Mendocino, hereby honors Marc Komer for his dedication to the public good through his tireless work on the Mendocino County Library Advisory Board."

The proclamation did not mention either Komer's or the LAB's opposition to the creation of the Cultural Services Agency, which is an amalgamation of the county's library system, museum and parks administration. The Cultural Services Agency was created in 2018. Komer waged a spirited campaign against creating it but was out-voted by the board of supervisors.

After Haschak read the proclamation, Komer was given an opportunity to speak to the supervisors, and he did not waive his opportunity to speak truth to power.

"I hope I will be remembered as someone who is direct and to the point," Komer said. "I tried to deliver messages that were important for you, as library directors, to hear. Sometimes you listened, and sometimes you shot the messenger. If I offended you, please forgive me. I did so in service to the library...."

"Some of you, and the executive office, may think that the LAB's opinions are inappropriate or contrary. Unfortunately, that is the nature of a volunteer citizen advisory group: to render opinions that are independent of fiscal and political considerations you may hold.

"If you don't like having such advice, then change the LAB's by-laws, or abolish the board [that is, the Library Advisory Board]. Let's not foster any illusions," Komer said.

The rest of Tech |

From Page 2

decisions every day. My point is that our process would be enhanced with access to data. Seasoned educators and administrators can only do so much in the absence of information.

Think about the last time you learned a new skill. If you got timely feedback and helpful instruction, you probably progressed quickly. If it became clear you didn't have the tool you needed to succeed, you probably went and got it rather than continually trying to achieve without it. Feedback is important.

We need to know how our students and teachers are faring compared to statewide norms so we can build on our strengths and make up for our weaknesses.

The Carnegie Foundation defines "improvement science" as "explicitly designed to accelerate learning-by-doing.... As the improvement process advances, previously invisible problems often emerge, and improvement activities may need to tack in new directions.... The overall goal is to develop the necessary know-how for a reform idea ultimately to spread faster and more effectively. Since improvement research is an iterative process often extending over considerable periods of time, it is also referred to as "continuous improvement."

In this age of information, it's time for us to start thinking differently, to figure out how we can gather and use data so our students have the skills they need to succeed in a changing world.

"I hope that is not the case, and that you and the LAB will continue to hold constructive joint workshops. Again, I strongly urge you to find another venue, other than the board chambers, to hold collegial workshops. In order to maintain the momentum of a robust library system, you and the LAB will need to work together, like we did to pass Measure A, in order to secure library funding and to fulfill the LAB's strategic goals. The LAB has the vision and the motivation; you have the political power. Thank you. "

New contract may be coming soon to IHSS

In closed session on Tuesday, the board of supervisors approved a provisional contract with the county's 1,371 In-Home Supportive Services workers.

Third District Supervisor Haschak said the contract is provisional because it has not yet been approved by the members of Service Employees International Union Local 2015, which is the labor union for the IHSS workers. Haschak said that a "rank and file" union vote on the contract is scheduled to take place on December 3, and noted that it will come back to the supervisors on December 10.

According to SEIU Local 2015 Field Representative Raul Gardea, the new contract will give IHSS workers an immediate salary increase of \$2 an hour, beginning in March 2020. The \$2 an hour bump will put the IHSS workers at \$1 per minimum wage, even after the California minimum wage is increased by \$1 an hour on January 1.

Thereafter, when the minimum wage goes up by \$1 a year, each year until 2022, as it is scheduled to do in California, the IHSS workers' wages will also go up a dollar an hour. So when the minimum wage is \$13 an hour, IHSS workers will be getting \$14 an hour; and when the minimum wage is \$14 an hour, IHSS workers will be getting \$15 an hour.

In addition, under the terms of the contract, the county has agreed to pay the union to develop a training program for IHSS workers.

"It is a big first step for our union," said Gardea. "It's our first Local 2015 contract, and it is one of the best contracts in the state. We are very proud of it, and we are very happy."

At right: St. John Lutheran Church sits on Mill Creek Drive. Far right: Carol Deuel finds a hand-knit scarf at the crafts store.

Photos by Mathew Caine

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JOHN FORD RANCH

RANCH RAISED NATURAL BEEF

No Hormones, Pastured in Willits, California



The rest of Fellowship From Page 3

year in a row, won first place at the Redwood Empire Fair, Best of Division. A Christmas print from artist Peggy Hebrard was also up for raffle, along with a one-night stay at Benbow Inn with a \$150 gift card.

St. John Lutheran Church has existed in Willits since 1958, originally occupying the Carnegie Library building until moving to its present location on Mill Creek Drive. The church is an altruistic organization. They organize a number of activities to help the homeless, including participating in the Brown Bag Lunch program, and they reach out to developmentally disabled adults.

According to Pastor Karl Bliese, the church deals with the homeless by helping them "one person at a time. We do a lot of work with the homeless here. It's hard for me to say that we have people and families in our community who live under a bridge." Bliese added, "We also serve the mentally ill. We try to give them someone to listen, find out what their needs are, and if we can help them materially in any way."

Additionally, the church participates in

Operation Christmas Child, a program that supports underprivileged children around the world. The church packs shoe boxes with items that would delight any child as well as a personal note. The boxes are then forwarded to the parent organization which distributes the gifts to children in a pre-chosen area of the world. This year, the church will pack 120 such shoe boxes and donate \$9 per box to pay for distribution.

Bliese has been with St. John Lutheran for 11 years, having found his calling through a series of trials and revelations in his life, including being born prematurely with several infirmities, including collapsed lungs. "When people ask me how I'm doing, I tell them better than I deserve. I wasn't supposed to live," he stated.

"God did a miracle," he said, "and out of gratitude, I've tried to live my life in service to him because I believe that what he did for me, he will do for anybody. I was chosen to live to proclaim the love of Jesus to the world." Although Bliese has cerebral palsy and is in a wheelchair, he feels blessed that he still has the ability to speak and spread his beliefs.



The rest of Cancer From Page 10

Bliese explained the basic beliefs of the Lutheran Church: "We emphasize salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. That's the heartbeat of our doctrine. Salvation is a gift. Heaven is a gift. Grace is needed here on earth. We define grace as undeserved love."

The proceeds of the St. John Soup and Dessert Luncheon will go to maintaining the church in order to be able to continue offering their beneficial programs. In addition, the luncheon was a chance to introduce the church to the public. Members of several local churches were in attendance.

"This is a real enjoyable event," stated congregant Robb Rempel. "People are happy. They're eating soup. They're conversing. They're striking up new relationships or seeing people they haven't seen in a while."

St. John Lutheran Church, 24 Mill Creek Drive, offers Sunday services from 10 to 11 am, with Bible Study/Sunday School following the service. All are welcome. For more info, call: 459-2988.

The rest of Turkey From Page 1

Everyone is welcome to come and attend the free dinner that will be held at the Willits Senior Center from 11 am to 3 pm.

A traditional meal of turkey, potatoes, stuffing, salad, and pie will again grace the tables, but this year, another savory addition will also be available: ham!

Other goodies, including 100 pies, some 250 pounds of potatoes, some 36 cans of yams, some 35 pounds of stuffing, and 11 gallons of salad dressing will all be donated by 101 Drive-In.

In addition to representing the 101 family at the annual Turkey Toss photo op on Wednesday, Dahvi Hooper will also be helping coordinate the volunteer servers for this year's dinner. If anyone is interested in helping to serve or assist with the event, contact at 841-6403.

Putting on the dinner literally almost does take a village to pull off, and along with the generosity and help from the community, the crew from the Parlin Fork Conservation Camp really plays an integral role in the success of the event.

Like last year, a crew from Parlin Fork came to Willits Community Services and Food Bank to pick up the frozen fowl to bring to their large-scale cooking facility out Highway 20 at the camp. The pick-up event is marked every year with the "Turkey Toss" photo op – which this year, also included a "Ham Hold" – to commemorate the event and

The rest of Bond From Page 1

with trustee Robert Colvig absent.

The reports, called "FIT" (facility inspection tool) reports, documented the conditions of district school buildings and described all of them, except for Sherwood, as being in fair condition.

"Fair," board president Alex Bowlds explained, indicates that "the school is not in good repair. Some deficiencies noted are critical and/or widespread. Repairs and/or additional maintenance are necessary in several areas of the school site."

Brookside Elementary School barely made it into the fair category, with a score less than 1 point above the cutoff which would have placed it in the poor category. "Poor," Bowlds continued, is defined as "deficiencies of various degrees have been noted throughout the site. Major repairs and maintenance are necessary throughout campus."

"Quite frankly," he said, "it's embarrassing and frustrating."

"FIT reports tell what your building's like ... what you've got to fix," said superintendent Mark Westerburg. "They showed exactly what we knew they were going to show. We have to do lots of repair."

He explained further that the reports were "not detailed ... [just] a walk-through look at things," and don't address some of the significant less-visible things that need fixing like electrical or plumbing.

"For example, 'there are two electrical outlets in [Baechtel Grove Middle School] classrooms, with kids who are one to one on computers,' he said. "What happens is the daisy chain from surge bar to surge bar to surge bar and ... poof, there goes the breaker."

"The entire main breaker box at Baechtel needs to be dismantled. We need to literally redo the entire wiring structure," he said. "The same is true at Brookside."

"I've seen the list of things on the deferred maintenance list, and many of them have little to do with maintenance. They have to do with making major repairs," said Bowlds. "That brings us to the next topic," he continued.

That next topic was discussion of a possible bond measure on the March 2020 ballot to raise the money to pay for the district's fix and repair needs.

"In my years in education, I've learned that the only way you can do anything significant with facilities is through bonds," said trustee Robert Chavez. "California funding [does not cover] facilities."

"The only way to fix public facilities is a bond," agreed Westerburg, who then described the results of a recent public survey gauging support for a bond measure.

"It was very well-done," he said of the survey. "The data shows more than a majority of people are very supportive, [and] you should let the public make a decision. If it's no, we need to buy a lot of duct tape."

The bond measure, explained Westerburg and Bowlds, would be structured so that the total amount authorized would be sold over the course of a number of years, broken up into four separate offerings, a procedure which would provide protection for taxpayers in the event of a weak economy or any malfeasance by the district.

"The idea behind it is, the initial bond measure would be sold, and the district would receive about \$4 million apportioned over a three-year window," said Bowlds. "If there is a significant downturn in the economy, we don't have to actually sell the bond's next series. It has a lot of protections built into it."

For example, "in three years we could say the economy is bad, [and] we're not going to

From Page 1

add to the fun of the process.

After the crew, and the birds, return back to the camp, cooking will commence for 24 hours straight leading up to the day of the dinner with eight birds being cooked at a time. The manpower, the oven power, and the extra-strength coffee (joked Parlin Fork Officer Ben Vielbig) all allow the daunting cooking task to be completed in time for the meal.

"This year's Community Dinner marks the first without the leadership and guidance of long-time food bank director Jim Marill who passed away in December 2019 following a long illness," noted Ruthanne Volz, new executive director of the Willits Community Services and Food Bank. "A remembrance of Jim will be placed at the dining hall entrance for all to see. Please join the community for a delicious special feast on Thanksgiving Day."

Marill was kept in memory at the Turkey Toss, too, with his photo being held during the group photo.

Come see the remembrance, have a great meal, support the food bank, and spend time with the rest of the community. There will be no meals-to-go provided at the event this year. Homebound Willits residents may call Debbie at the Senior Center at 459-6826 to order a delivered free holiday meal via Meals on Wheels.

More info: 459-3333.

access the whole amount," said Westerburg. "The board controls the revenue and the burden on taxpayers."

"Our plan [is to ask] for a small amount for three years, then get another amount" three years later, said Westerburg. "We don't need a massive amount of money to sit on. We need a fund so we can fix and repair stuff that we normally would not be able to deal with."

"From a budget standpoint, the district has been treading water ... just barely above water for a long time," said Bowlds. "Part of the reason is we spend so much money on maintenance. If we can get facilities improved to a point where we don't have to spend as much money on maintenance, it would help a great deal."

"We've been in deficit spending for two years and probably another year because of the way the state funds," he said. We get "about \$9,500 per student per year as opposed to the east coast, [where] many states spend in excess of \$20,000 per pupil per year."

Trustees Bowlds, Chavez, and Jeanne King indicated they were on board to go ahead.

Trustee Paula Nunez said she had "a whole lot of questions still."

Willits Teachers Association president Tessa Ford told Westerburg "you can count on WTA to help." California School Employees Association president Dan Green said he "hadn't polled the members ... but it has to happen, [and] we're in."

The board scheduled a special public meeting for Monday, December 2 at 5 pm at the high school media center to vote on whether to put the bond on the ballot or not.

The district's consultant is Adam Bauer, CEO at Fieldman, Rolapp & Associates, Inc, a financial advising firm specializing in the public sector, and he will be at the meeting to explain details of the measure and answer questions.

Another item of some import and concern that the board put off making a decision on until December, was how to deal with some of the new state-mandated sex education curriculum requirements.

Trustee King had expressed strong reservations with respect to some of the curriculum's content when it first came before the board for approval at their October meeting as an item on the usually non-controversial consent agenda.

The board agreed to remove it from the consent agenda at that meeting and put off any decision, with the expectation that King would provide more information on the matter prior to last week's November meeting.

The information she presented, although general in nature, might well cause significant concern for some parents.

"It's too much too soon," she said. "It sexualizes children."

"What's really important to me ... [is the state requirement] that the district shall respect the rights of parents and guardians to supervise their children's education on these subjects," she said. "It's really important to me that parents know what's being taught, this is what the state requires that we teach, and that we're transparent about what's being taught."

All the board members at the meeting agreed that a procedure to notify parents and guardians of curriculum content and their "opt out" rights would be sufficient to address board responsibilities and King's concerns.

A further aspect of the new curriculum the board will have to weigh in on is whether any of it will be taught in grades K-5.

"Middle school and high school [parents and guardians] can opt out of the sex part of the instruction, but not the gender part and HIV," said Westerburg. "Teaching at K-5 is optional."

The board will decide both issues, the notification and opt out procedure and whether the curriculum is taught at all in K-5, at its next regular board meeting on December 11.

Weighty matters of money and sex aside, the board got a ton of good news when it came to high school athletics.

"We've been nothing but successful this semester," said high school athletic director Brian Bowles. "The athletes put their hearts and souls into sports, [and] we have incredible coaches."

Varsity football had a big win last Friday, November 15, at the first playoff game the school had hosted in 10 years.

Junior varsity football took league champions.

"Varsity soccer had a miracle season ... almost worst to first this year," said Bowles.

Added bonus – the entire varsity soccer and football teams came to November's school board meeting and introduced themselves.

A new and successful set of rules is also assuring that athletes' academic achievements keep pace with their athletic accomplishments.

"If you have below a B in any class, you have mandated tutorial after school," explained Bowles.

In other good news, WTA president Ford reported "very positive things happening with [WTA and] the school board and district office."

"Last month [board president] Alex Bowlds came to our executive board meeting," she said.

And she characterized the content of a recent meeting with Westerburg, as "honest open dialogue."

Westerburg also had good news to report ... about high school CTE, or career and technical education.

"We have really really good programs [with] 68 percent of seniors having a CTE pathway endorsement," he said. "You graduate with some kind of skill other than just a diploma."

But there is one program that Westerburg "would desperately like to have" but lacks funding for: Culinary. "It's the missing link," he said. "It's a skill that we have to move from the home ec environment I grew up in into a CTE mentality of culinary."

Last but not least, a concerned and very patient member of the public addressed the board during the time set aside at the end of every meeting for "public comments for items not on the agenda."

Prefacing her remarks with the suggestion that the "public comment ... might be better placed at the beginning of the meeting," mother, retired elementary teacher and former Waldorf School board member Josephine Silva told the board that it's "not OK for 75 percent of students to not be proficient in language arts and math."

Despite the late hour and broad topic, a responsive and thoughtful conversation on causes and solutions ensued among all in attendance.

No single culprit or magic bullets were identified, but one takeaway is certainly the significant potential of the generally unused opportunity for public participation at all board meetings.

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- Design

The rest of Harvest From Page 5

welcome statement by Donna d'Terra: "We give thanks for this beautiful place we live, for this bio-region. We give thanks and acknowledgement to the First Peoples, the natives who tended this land for thousands of years before we got here. We give gratitude to all the farmers who grew the food that we're going to eat tonight and to the chefs and the volunteers that cooked it for us. We wish these blessings for people in every part of the earth."

The Mendocino County Herb Guild was formed about 2.5 years ago by a group of people who were interested in fostering a love and knowledge of herbs and herbalism in the community, a traditional practice going back centuries, involved in creating health through the use of natural growing medicines and salves.

The Guild's mission statement is: "To gather as farmers, medicine makers, and community members to create Full-Circle Herbalism, which benefits the community through regenerative cultivation and wild-crafting of herbs, intentional medicine-making and herb exchanges, conscious herbal education, and the development of accessible apothecaries and clinics, so healing plant medicine can be available to all who need it."

The money generated by the Harvest Dinner is earmarked for the purchase and fitting of an Herb Bus, a mobile apothecary to bring their practice and materials to every remote corner of the county. The Guild has raised \$7,300 toward purchase of the bus, including the \$3,300 raised at this year's dinner, leaving another \$2,700 remaining. A silent auction, organized by Keoma McCaffrey, generated \$1,000 of the total.

Those who would like to donate or learn more, please go to www.mendocinoherbguild.com.



At left: Minty Ryan of Good Looking Objects displays her jewelry in the hallway at the Grange.

Photo by Mathew Caine

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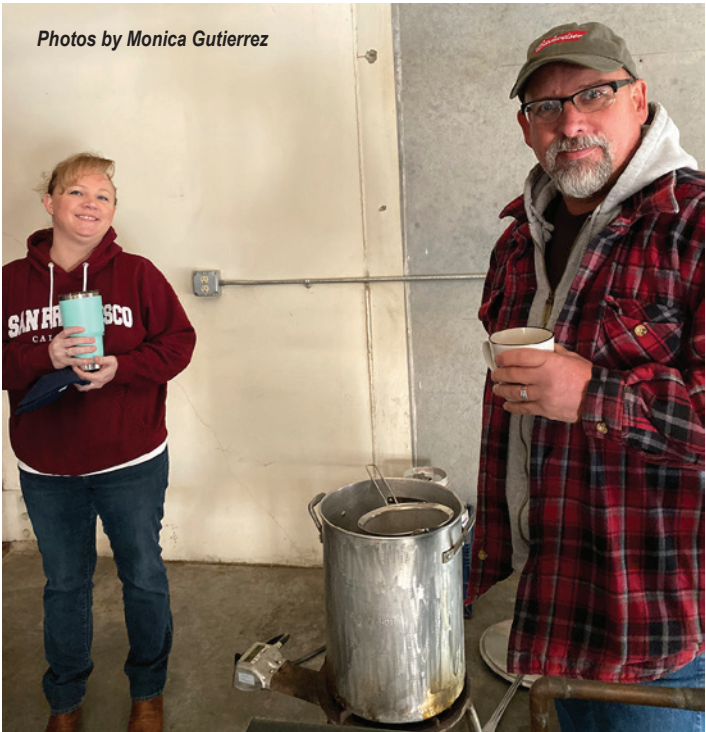
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Willits Weekly REMINDER:
Next week's paper will publish on Wednesday, November 27!



Above, from left: Joey Duenas, production planner, and Joan Baeskens, shipping specialist, begin a physical inventory count in the dark. BJ Gutierrez, human resources manager, serves hot coffee to Bruce Cartwright, engineer. Kristy Moss, customer service supervisor, serves hot lunch to a hungry crew.

BUSINESS IN WILLITS

No power? No problem at METALfx

SUBMITTED BY CONNIE BATES, FOR METALFX

The electricity may have been shut off, but METALfx associates rallied together to power through. On Saturday, October 26, METALfx, along with the entire City of Willits, received notification of a potential public safety power shutoff due to a raging wildfire miles away. Hours later, power was turned off and was not turned back on until late afternoon, Wednesday, October 30.

Although the wildfire never directly threatened METALfx, the company experienced significant impact from the power outage. If not for the efforts of METALfx’s determined team, the consequences of the 96-hour loss of power could have been far more detrimental.

Prior to the PSPS, METALfx had scheduled Monday, October 28, as an “all-hands-on-deck” inventory day. After more than a day without power, General Manager Jacob Brown didn’t know what to expect when he arrived at dawn. Despite associates having to personally deal with their own loss of power, Brown was gratified to see his team streaming in, enthusiastic and ready to proceed with inventory counts.

Not only did METALfx employees show

up for Monday inventory, but they returned Tuesday and Wednesday ready to take on the challenge of working in the chilly, dark facility. Out of the total 157 employees at METALfx, 94 were present on Monday, 88 on Tuesday, and 91 on Wednesday, all working through the power outage.

“The power might have been out, but it only seemed to energize our team of associates,” Brown said. “They all showed up ready to work with an excitement that was palpable. Task after task was completed with a sense of urgency. My appreciation and admiration of the effort put forth by our team of associates could not be any higher considering the circumstances. It was a job very well done.”

As a special thank you, METALfx Human Resources Manager BJ Gutierrez and Customer Service Supervisor Kristy Moss greeted associates each morning with steaming coffee, hot chocolate, and tasty Danish pastries, and served a delicious hot lunch each day.

President at METALfx Henry Moss stated: “Peter Johnston was everything you want in a facilities manager during a situation

like this; he was present, resourceful, and persistent. Dave Malarich, IT manager, likewise performed at a high level during this outage. Dave and Peter were on-site within minutes of the outage connecting our generator, which was critical to the continuity of our business.”

He continued: “Dave and Jeanie Malarich were the first ones here and the last ones to leave each day, getting systems online and then safely shut down. Our sales team stayed in daily communication with our customers, many of whom were also shut down or were directly impacted by the smoke.”

Moss also emphasized how proud he was of the resiliency shown by all associates throughout the event, many of whom were personally affected by the power shutoff.

While most manufacturing equipment could not be operated during the outage, METALfx ran multiple generators and a gas-powered air compressor so that crucial departments could still function. Generators kept key servers running including phone and email, so that customer service and sales could keep customers updated.

Inventory was successfully completed with flashlights and headlamps.

Ricky Hendricks, manager of shipping, stated: “It was great to see the teamwork among associates of all different departments to ensure the inventory was counted and logged correctly, in addition to accomplishing many outstanding tasks throughout the shop. It was a very productive three days given the situation.”

While many warn that such power shutoffs in Northern California could become the new normal, METALfx hopes this is the last power shutoff locally for some time to come. In a debrief after the incident, Moss declared, “Our team performed exceptionally well, but there is always room for improvement, and we must be prepared.”

The company has already put a plan in place to add an additional generator, transfer switches, and other equipment to expedite the process of getting operational should the situation arise again.

Family Practice

inspired to keep your entire family healthy this flu season.



It’s no secret that the flu season can hit children and our elderly community members the hardest. Getting flu vaccines for the entire family can protect the ones you love the most. Our expert team of providers are ready to serve your family this winter. We are accepting new and existing patients for sick visits, flu shots and other health concerns.

- In addition to the flu vaccine, we also recommend the following.
- Wash your hands with soap and water several times throughout the day.
 - Get 7-8 hours of sleep each night.
 - Stay hydrated.
 - Eat a well-rounded diet, full of immune-boosting foods

To schedule a sick visit, wellness visit or flu vaccination for your family call 833-AH-Wellness (833-249-3556)

Howard Pharmacy is welcoming walk-ins for the flu vaccine this season.

3 Marcela Drive, Suite B, Willits

