

Thursday, December 15, 2016

Read the rest of
Equipment |
Over on Page 11

What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from readers

WECS Winter Fund Drive

To the Editor:

The 2016 Willits Community Services Fund Drive is up and running. Please help us to provide essential human services to our greater Willits and north Mendocino County communities. Our economy continues to make it difficult for so many people just to survive. The availability of financial resources from outside of our community continues to diminish, and this has made it very challenging for WCS and organizations like Willits Community Services to continue to provide essential human services.

WCS has been serving the greater Willits and North County communities since 1981. For over thirty-five years WCS has provided a safety-net of human services that help cushion the effects of short and long term unemployment, poverty and crisis by providing temporary assistance programs and services to people in need.

WCS manages to provide these programs and services through a combination of funding sources, including local contributions. Especially now, the local donations of our community are the most important, because it is those dollars, more than any other resource, that keep the doors open, the lights on and the services and programs operating.

Please help us continue to serve our community by helping us reach our Winter Fund Drive financial goal of \$34,000 this winter season. Your support will go a long way to help people in crisis in our community.

Unless anonymity is requested, donors to WCS's Winter 2016 Fund Drive will be published every week in Willits Weekly during our appeal. Our Main and Commercial streets "thermometer" will also display results during this time.

Total campaign results will also be printed in our local newspapers when all results are in. Thank you for your consideration.

Jim Marill,
executive director, WECS

Winter Fund Drive 2018

Willits Community Services and Food Bank announced Tuesday that the first group of contributors to the 2016 Winter Fund Drive has raised \$4,011 towards the drive's \$34,000 goal. To donate, please send a check to Willits Community Services, 229 East San Francisco Avenue, Willits, CA 95490. You can also donate via the PayPal Giving Fund. Open this link: www.paypal.com/fundraiser/10586513705061881, then search for "Willits Community Services." Or through Ebay Charities. Open this link: <http://charity.ebay.com/charity/search/> and search for "Willits Community Services."

Thank you to this week's contributors:

Rosalie Anchordoguy & Henry Shebitz; Martin & Laura Clein; Robert Fry; Bill & Emmy Good; Bruce Haanstra & Carol Aleshire; Marge Handley; Michael & Patricia Harrison; Lowell & Wilma Justus; Kingsley Augusta Chapter #58 Order of the Eastern Star of CA; Geraldine Lassner & Kathlie Havice; Debbie McCubbin; Jean & Michael Morawski; J. Francis & William Schatz; Dennis & Rowayne Schrage; and St. Francis in the Redwoods Episcopal Church.

Willits Library needs volunteers

To the Editor:

If you are the kind of person who loves books and reading, and you have an extra couple of hours a week, why not volunteer at the Willits Library? Our library is in need of immediate help. County Library Director Karen Horner has been seeking a new branch librarian, but so far she hasn't found the perfect person. This has left the Willits Library a bit short-handed. This is a perfect opportunity for the community to pitch in. The primary need is for volunteers to help tidy and shelve books, but there are other jobs available as well.

Contact Wendy Copperfield, library volunteer coordinator, to find out how you can help. Copperfield says even short amounts of time put into volunteering at the library will be helpful.

Regular library hours are Tuesday through Thursday, 10 am to 7 pm; Friday, 10 am to 6 pm; and Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm. Stop by the library, or call 459-5908 to learn more.

Mendocino County Library Advisory Board

KLLG needs hosts

To the Editor:

People have asked me why, when they tune in to KLLG, there is mostly only easy-listening music on the air. Easy to answer.

KLLG wanted to go on the air 24/7 from the get-go. We wanted everyone who tuned to 97.9 at any hour to hear that we were there. We wanted people to know that when the power, phones, and internet are down, KLLG can still communicate ... and keep us informed ... and connected. If there is critical information for you to know, KLLG will be the place you turn to. The fastest way for everyone in 95490 to get critical messages is by radio.

We are in the process of developing a

lot of local programming. Training live hosts and DJs takes time to develop well. However, as time goes on and we develop live programming, we shall pull the music playlists down and play our locally created shows. We estimate that within a year we shall have half our hours filled with hosted shows. Note: there are 168 hours in the week. That's a lot of hours to fill.

What can you do? You can take a leap and tell us that you want to have a show. There are many possibilities. You could play music you like and want to share. You could gather local news from our community that you feel we all ought to know about ... and share it. You could come up with a show our old youngsters or our young youngsters might be interested in. You could gather and share information that would make life better for 95490. Given the strange nature of our times (you could have a show about that!), we believe KLLG can help make our community more resilient.

There are pluses and minuses to a low-power station. While our signal doesn't get out of Little Lake Valley, we are able to focus in detail on information that is crucial to 95490. For our local businesses, this is extremely important; that is, 100 percent of our listeners are potential customers of theirs. 100 percent! KZYX, KOST, KUKI and other full-power stations—they cannot make this claim. We are truly a community radio station. And it takes a community to keep us on the air!

So, KLLG is up and running. We are seeking not only your membership and underwriting, we are reaching out to encourage you to create a show of your own. And we are here to help you do that. You'd be surprised how easy that is. If you can speak clearly and believe in what you want to share, we can have you on the air in no time. And it's fun. It's a rush. It's a way of giving back to your community. How about our own local trading show? How about a show on brewing?

Yes, smartphones and social media may make us think that radio is a relic from the past. Not so. There are quite a few community radio stations around the world that have carved out a special, valued space in the lives of their listeners. They do it because of the relevance, proximity and energy they put into their programming.

Even if you're just slightly interested in the possibilities, give us a call. 459-KLLG (5554). We can answer your questions. Or visit our website: KLLG.org. This is your radio station. Become an integral part of its creation.

Lanny Cotler, KLLG general manager, Willits

'Twas two Fridays before Christmas

'Twas two Fridays before Christmas, at Ardella's Diner, An event was just starting, no contest anywhere finer.

The walls were hung with festivity and flair, In hopes the whole community soon would be there.

The tables were set, the cookies were spread, The plans of a wonderful party dancing in our heads.

Jennifer in her scarf, and Maureen in her sweater, Couldn't think of a way for the party to be better.

When out on Main Street, there arose such a clatter, We sprang from the booths to see what was the matter.

Away to the entrance we flew like a flash, And gasped as we saw the huge crowd gathering for the bash.

The streetlights shined on the plates, trays and tins Of many cookies and sweets, baked with hope to take the win.

Honor and bragging rights would soon be bestowed, For goodies that made everyone cry their best "Ho! Ho! Ho!"

Businesses, individuals and returning champions short and tall, Set up tables displaying their goodies for the tasting of all.

More rapid than eagles, the tasters they came, And they sampled, and shouted, calling out their favorites by name!

"It's delicious, this fudge!" "Those cookies, oh my!" "The candy, divine! And the caramels, you must try!"

To Ardella's Downtown Diner, the people they ran, We must taste and cast our votes while yet we still can!"

Tallies were made, and the judges would name The best treats made by those who competed and came.

Their photos in the paper the winners would see, With copies, we hope, of the winning recipes.

After the judging, the party will still go on, With cookie swaps (bring your own) until they're all gone,

Carols sung by Nancy New and Devon Jones, And holiday spirit until everyone goes home.

The party will pay thanks to all who have shown such support, For this crazy and amazing endeavor, WWW, for short.

Join Willits Weekly to toast to next year's editions Filled with news and community, innovation and tradition.

From 5 to 7 pm on Friday, December 16 we will be, At Ardella's Diner with T-shirts and back issues to see.

We encourage all to come with this cordial invite, As we say Happy Holidays to all, and to all a great night!

— Maureen Moore

IF YOU'D LIKE TO ENTER THE COOKIE CONTEST - let us know! 972-7047!



Below: New Willits Police Department Interim Chief of Police Scott Warnock getting sworn in Friday by Willits City Manager Adrienne Moore. Above: The group poses together including, from left: WPD Officer Kevin Leef, City Manager Adrienne Moore, Interim Chief Scott Warnock, with his new badge, Officer Michael Nguyen, Sgt. Jake Donahue, and former WPD Chief Gerry Gonzalez in civvies.



New interim police chief in Willits

Friday was Willits Police Chief Gerry Gonzalez's last day serving as chief. "We want to thank him for the many, many years of service he has provided our community," said the Willits Police Department on their Facebook page. "Please join us in wishing him the best in his future endeavors as councilman, and please give a warm welcome to our Interim Chief of Police Scott Warnock!"

Congrats | Author Roni McFadden

Congratulations to Willits author Roni McFadden who recently won a gold medal at the Readers' Favorite 2016 International Book Contest in Miami, in the non-fiction – general category for her book "The Longest Trail." Two weeks before that award, "The Longest Trail" won a bronze medal in the 13th annual Will Rogers Medallion Awards in Fort Worth, Texas.

"The Longest Trail" tells the story of a troubled young girl who falls under the mentorship of an old cowboy. She goes to work for him at his pack station in the High Sierra Mountains and discovers her real worth, thanks to the horses and the ancient Native American spirits that dwell there."

Visit www.thebiscuitpress.com for more information on McFadden and her books, also including "Josephine – A Tale of Hope and Happy Endings."

OBITUARY |

M. Shelley Falkenberg-Young

Our fierce and beautiful daughter, sister, niece and mother passed away last week. Shelley was born in the Philippines on December 4, 1981, and moved to Willits in December 1988. She attended Willits public schools, and earned an academic presidential scholarship to attend Mills College in Oakland. Shelley graduated there with a B.A. in English literature in 2004, and then moved back to Willits and married Eric Young in 2005.

Shelley was exuberant and gifted with many talents; she loved art, painting, writing, gardening, knitting and sewing, music and guitar. Her intelligence, tenacity and love of learning are remembered by her teachers and school peers. She excelled in sports, including volleyball and basketball. She was joyful and could fill a room with laughter. She made friends and confidants wherever she went. She had an indestructible commitment to her family and limitless love for her children.

We love Shelley with all our hearts, but we now know that was not enough to shield her from the world. The reality of Shelley's death is devastating, and no possible reason can justify her loss. She had so much to give to the world. We will miss her idealism, her wry political and social commentary, humor and altruism to everyone she met.

Rest in infinity. We love you dearly.

Shelley was the eldest daughter of Thomas and Alwyn Falkenberg, sister to Carolyn, half-sister to Robert, Trygve and Erik, and niece to Glenda and Christine. She leaves behind two children, Hunter August and Isabel Alba. Shelley is also survived by her loving partner Devin Howard, step-dad Eldon Molanen, brother-in-Law Pankaj Prasad, nephews and nieces, and her only surviving grandmother Ineiga Limosnero, and aunts, uncles and numerous cousins in the Philippines.

A Mass in her honor will be held at St. Anthony's Church in Willits at 12 pm on Saturday, December 17, to be followed by a "Celebration of Life" at the Willits Art Center at 2 pm.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks for gifts to her children's college fund at: www.paypal.me/shelleyslegacy.

Arrangements under the care and direction of Anker-Lucier Mortuary.

The rest of Found

The Rules: **LETTERS**

Letters & Commentaries: Email letters to willitsweekly@gmail.com. Letters focusing on Willits and 3rd District issues, activities, events and people have priority. Willits Weekly prints letters from residents of Willits and the 3rd District only. To encourage a variety of voices, Willits Weekly limits letter publication from any one writer to once a month.

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, from top: Ceramic artist Bonnie Belt. Michelled Oye of Michelle's Art Design. Misty Blough, owner of Misty Made and her display of candles. Roq Horowitz of Pottery By Roq. Willits High School students Tyler Austin, Wayne Waters and Kaylan Stone sell candy at the Sober Grad table.

Above, from left: Ariel Herz-O'Brien watches Nancy Finn of Chasing Rainbows Dyeworks. Ron O'Brien performs. Sandy Greyback of HDL Farms.

At right: Shoppers wander the aisles of the Willits Community Center checking out the wares.

Below, left: Shoppers look at the display of art.

Below, right: Tess McGuire, with her colorful felted wool hats.

At bottom, left: Kathryn Green of Mariposa Tie Dye.

At bottom, right: The door prize ticket box.

Photos by Mathew Caine



Merry and Bright

Artisans at the Holiday Crafts Fair offered gifts for all

Bigger and better than ever, the annual Willits Holiday Crafts Fair had vendors upstairs at the Willits Center for the Arts this year, as well as at the Community Center. Vendors included old favorites and new artisans, too.

Those seeking holiday gifts for family, friends, colleagues – or themselves! – had a wide choice of items, in a wide range of prices.

This reporter had several personal missions: Selecting a new set of hand-quilted potholders from Karen Gridley, finding a new "favorite" mug to replace a broken old favorite, and buying some last-minute year-end cards from artist Marco Donner. Mission accomplished, with a new "belly mug" from Earth and Fire Pottery.

Oh yes! and having lunch, too. A plate of delicious lasagna and salad with homemade ranch dressing and a cup of coffee from the Willits Charter School culinary program hit the spot.

Willits Weekly's Maureen Moore bought two jars of jam from Hue De Larouque Farm, a classic raspberry and an intriguing "medium" spicy yellow bell pepper with habanero, and a hand-poured whipped pumpkin pie candle from Misty Made & Sew Much More. Also on the list were a German shepherd Christmas tree ornament from Jacki Pealatore, and two chocolate bars – one with rose and Himalayan crystal salt – from Heart of Shasta.

One final note: Visitors to the Willits Art Center intrigued by the hand-blown Christmas tree ornaments by Kale Haschak should know that Haschak will be in the January "Glass Tangents" show at the Willits Center for the Arts, with his fellow Willits glass artist, Jonah Ward. Opening reception is Saturday, January 7.

– Jennifer Poole



Above: Wolfgang Ronnefeldt, holds one of his salves. Below: Jacki Pealatore at her Picaro Gordo booth.



Above, from left: Aidyn McFadden sings "Do You Hear What I Hear." St. Anthony's Catholic Church choir sings "A Voice Cries Out." Dawn McClelland sings "Santa Baby."

At left: LDS Choir sings "Infant Holy, Infant Lowly." At left, below: Gloria Ulrich, one of the organizers, sings.

At left, bottom: Greg and Donna Schindler harmonize.

Photos by Mathew Caine

29th Annual Willits Community Christmas Chorale

gets crowd in holiday spirit at Sunday evening concert

there for 10 or 12 years," McFadden said. St. Anthony's Catholic Church choir sang "A Voice Cries Out," "There is a Longing," and "Night of Silence/Silent Night."

"Room to Bloom was just a crack-up once they got ahold of the mike," McFadden said. "They were so little, and they were so cute. Emandal Chorale brought down the house. Their performance of that South African hymn 'Sithale Halleluya' really got the audience involved."

"Clay Romero sang the 'Christmas Hallelujah,' McFadden said, "and when it got to the chorus everybody in the audience started singing. It was very spontaneous.... First it was a humming, and then as everybody realized that their neighbor was singing, by the end everybody was singing the chorus."

Other performers included the LDS Choir, Gloria Ulrich, Erin Mendosa (who got a standing ovation for "O Holy Night"), Chanterelle, Judy Folkes Newton (who sang "Mary, Did You Know?" a cappella), the St. Francis of the Redwoods Episcopal Church Choir, and Michelle Snider, who led the community sing-along.

The 29th annual Willits Community Christmas Chorale featured 14 different choirs and soloists in a two-hour program Sunday night at the LDS Church on Margie Drive.

Music ranged from the secular to the religious, featuring hymns and Christmas carols, as well as popular songs like "Santa Baby," sung by soloist Dawn McClelland, and "Christmas Boogie," played by pianist Ed Rinehart.

Room to Bloom School's young students sang familiar Christmas carols "Jingle Bells" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas," and the School of Developing Virtue Girls Orchestra played the prelude music, including "Heart Sutra," "Big Fish" and "Joy to the World."

Chorale organizer Roni McFadden was pleased with the number of performers. "We had five new soloists who'd never performed at the program before this year," she said, including McFadden's niece Aidyn McFadden, age 11, who sang "Do You Hear What I Hear?"

"And the Catholic Church joined in again, they hadn't been



Above, from left: Roni McFadden, Chorale organizer, gives the official welcome. Pastor Tommy Brown of the Seventh-day Adventist Church gives the invocation. Michelle Snider directs the community sing-along.

Below, from left: Room to Bloom Preschool, directed by Sheryl McFadden, sings "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." The audience participates in the community sing-along. The School of Developing Virtue Girls Chinese Orchestra opened the show.



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Above, left: The Willits High School Wolverine wrestlers pose for a group photo after winning the McKinleyville Invitational tournament on December 10.

Above: Wrestler Justin Verdot, left, placed first at 195 pounds, and Carson Miller, aka "Smalls," won first at 106 pounds.

Congratulations to the team, and also to head coach Brian Bowles. Catch the Wolverine wrestlers at two home meets next year, the CMC (Coastal Mountain Conference) Duals Meet at Willits High School on Wednesday, January 18 and again on Wednesday, January 25.

Thanks to Mike Horger and Kristen Vesey for this update and photos.

WHS Wrestlers Win

Wolverines win last weekend's McKinleyville Invitational

The Willits High School wrestling team took the "overall" win at the McKinleyville Invitational tournament in Humboldt County last weekend.

Justin Verdot placed first at 195 pounds at the December 10 tournament, and Carson Miller, aka "Smalls," also took home a first-place win in his division at 106 pounds.

Tyler Vesey, 138 pounds, Mitchell Hollingsworth, 220 pounds, Renee Torres, 145 pounds, and Adrian Brito, 126

pounds, all earned second-place finishes.

Third-place finishes went to Colton Horger, 285 pounds, Triston Martin, 160 pounds, Jacob Arms, 170 pounds, and Bryon Bolton 195 pounds.

Wolverine Beau Roberts took fourth place, 160 pounds, and there were three fifth-place Wolverine finishes: Craig Stewart, 220 pounds, Justin Hawkins, 182 pounds, and Dominic Bertolino, 132 pounds.

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Above, from left: North County Women in Business member Saprina Rodriguez shares some of her purchases at Cat's Meow. Tara Moratti shows off some of her purchases. North County Women in Business members April Tweddell and Kitty Norris flank Willits Chamber of Commerce board president Lisa Epstein.

"I got a great discount on it!" said Cynthia Lamon, about the new plaid flannel duster from MonkeyWrench she was wearing at the North County Women in Business lunch at the Mendocino County Museum Saturday. These words were heard often during the lunch, where participants in the "Holiday Shopping Extravaganza" - aka "Discover Willits" - gathered after their hard morning's work of checking out the great local businesses in town.

Tara Moratti and Kitty Norris braved the

downpour Saturday morning together. "We had a wonderful time," Norris said. "I had a great stroll through town, exchanging love and hugs with everybody. It was perfect." Norris and others, including Willits City Councilwoman Saprina Rodriguez, described a busy morning in town, with waits to check out and even waits to try on clothes.

Claudia Wenning applauded Patricia Baumann and Jenny Senter of North County Women in Business for organizing

the event. "I'd like to see this event happen every year," Wenning said. "It would be a beautiful tradition."

North County Women in Business Network meets on the first Wednesday of the month from 8:15 to 9:30 am at the Willits Center for the Arts. Free to members of the Willits Chamber of Commerce; \$5 for non-member drop-ins. Visit "North County Women in Business Network" page on Facebook for more information.

- Jennifer Poole

Below, from left: North County Women in Business chairperson Patricia Baumann models one of the raffle items, a scarf donated by Celtic Heritage Destinations. Cynthia Lamon had a great time shopping at many stores. Cynthia Lamon and Jill Carey didn't let a little rain interrupt their shopping at the Discover Willits event. Attendees enjoyed the wonderful lunch catered by Elevenses.



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At top, from left: Tom Girdauskas on bass. The Cult of Ours, from left, Tom Girdauskas, Donnie "Lama," Jesse Bessoni and Kyle Madrigal. Harmonica player Donnie "Lama."

Above: Kyle Madrigal plays the synthesizer to open the show. At right: Drummer extraordinaire, Jesse Bessoni.

Below: Tom Girdauskas, left, on bass, Jesse Bessoni on drums, and Kyle Madrigal on guitar.

Photos by Mathew Caine



The Cult of Ours

New Willits band does improvisational jazzy groove jam

The latest new and exciting band to come out of Willits, The Cult of Ours, isn't so much a band as it is a core group of incredibly accomplished musicians, as unique for what they don't do, as for what and how they perform. For one, they don't do song titles. They don't even do songs, per se. They don't do lead singers. They don't do band leaders. And they certainly never do the same show twice.

What they do is play some of the grooviest, jammiest, jazziest, intoxicating music you're likely to hear in all of Northern California.

"We call it live groove jam," said Tom Girdauskas before taking the stage at the Shanachie Pub on December

2. Girdauskas plays bass and is one of the founders of The Cult of Ours. "It's improvisational by nature and unpredictable. We have some grooves that we like to go to that you might call a song, but some of them will go on for 10 minutes. The whole point is to move the audience, literally. Get their bodies moving. Get them dancing."

Girdauskas, who picked up the bass 20 years ago, said he only got serious with playing the instrument over the past three years, "to the point that I wanted to make it a part of my life where I play music regularly, as many days a week as I can, with other people."

One of those people happened to be drummer extraordinaire, Jesse Bessoni of Mad Cow Jazz Quintet.

"[Bessoni] and I put this together because we really liked the way we play together," Girdauskas explained. "Kyle [Madrigal, of the Dirt Flood Band] got attracted to that. The three of us have been going as The Cult of Ours for about nine months. We've played several parties, and we opened the Crawfish Boil [in Laytonville] this last season in September."

Girdauskas described Madrigal as "a master musician.

He plays guitar and various synthesizers. He's just a savant. This kid can play any instrument, it doesn't matter. Set him down in front of any instrument, and he'll figure something out and make you feel it."

The group added two more musicians to the core: harmonica player Donnie "Lama" and Page Fender on horn.

The band took the stage after a DJ synthesizer display by Madrigal opened the show.

Five minutes into a funky groove, and suddenly the room was filled with admirers and dancers. The room would only get more crowded as the night continued and more musicians, including two rappers, joined in the fun.

Girdauskas explained the relationship that The Cult of Ours strives to nurture between musician and audience.

"Everything that we do, it's really whatever that moment is, how the audience responds and feeds the music, how the music feeds them, and that loop we get going; the groove builds and everyone gets fed by it."

Those moments can be during performances at places like Shanachie Pub, or during the private parties they play. They're an adaptive bunch, playing for whatever the occasion calls for.

"We're really good for ambient groove music," said Girdauskas. "That's why we get hired for private parties, because you don't have to stand there and pay attention to us; we don't have a dynamic front singer. You can watch the band if you want, or you can have a good conversation at the same time. The music is good for all of it. It's good for a party. That's what we try to bring."

If you haven't witnessed the tour de force of funky groove music that is The Cult of Ours, come to the Shanachie Pub on Saturday, January 14.

To book the band for parties or events, call Tom Girdauskas at 354-3123. You can follow The Cult of Ours on Facebook.

The rest of Equipment

From Page 1

pieces of equipment," Bowen said. "It ranges through the entire facility, [and includes] software updates for our scanners so we will be using half of the radiation to get the same quality of film.

"We've been able to update our coils in our MRI scanners so we have better resolution. The new mammogram screen is now 3-D, which is state of the art, and we'll now be able to keep those studies in town.

"We have the best microbiology department in Northern California," Bowen continued. "The only place that can compete is Stanford. We can use spectrophotometry to identify organisms within several hours. That should translate into shorter hospital stays because our antibiotics can be directed more specifically.

"We're putting monitors in so we can actually download vital signs directly into the medical record rather than having people writing on pieces of paper and typing them into the computer," Bowen noted. "We're going to have a new pulmonary function lab; there are only 250 like it in the whole United States, so we can do fantastic pulmonary function studies."

All in all, 55 new pieces of healthcare-enhancing equipment were purchased by the hospital.

"Even though we're a small community, we have an incredible facility with incredible equipment," said Kevin Erich, new interim CEO of Howard Hospital. "That's thanks to the foundation, thanks to you as the city council and the excellent work you've done, and to Pepsi for what they were able to do."

"This is the culmination of a journey that started around 22 years ago," said Mayor Bruce Burton during his introduction of the presentation. "It was then we had learned that Remco was going to be shutting down. We were concerned about losing 200-plus jobs in the community, some of the best-paying jobs."

Burton explained how he and others, interested in keeping the facility in use, sought the advice of "hot-shot attorneys in San Francisco."

Although the facility was eventually auctioned off in the mid-1990s, Burton's efforts "gave us a conduit to a legal team that said that they could force the cleanup of the property as opposed to it being left to the regular devices of the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the normal enforcement."

The city sued, and "an ensuing settlement was made with the owners [PepsiCo], that as part of their obligations in the cleanup, they had to eventually fund two accounts," Burton recounted. "One of them was \$2 million for natural resources damage and the other was \$2 million for medical monitoring. The city had made a commitment to take the money we negotiated with Pepsi, and donate [it] to building the new hospital."

Because Adventist Health stepped in to fund the remaining \$20 million necessary to complete the hospital project, the \$4 million pledged by the City of Willits was kept in the bank.

"In the last year, the foundation came up with the idea that they would buy the equipment and donate it to the hospital," Burton said. "That ended up being a game-changer, and an acceptable means to being a conduit to bringing that money in for the health and welfare of the community."

According to Erich, Howard Hospital employs roughly 330 people, 245 of which are full-time workers.

"When you translate that into dollars, it's a sizable amount that comes back into this community that helps support Willits," Erich said. "I think it's so incredibly amazing to have something like this in our town here."

The \$4 million was dispersed to the following hospital departments (numbers are rounded): Emergency: \$75,000; Imaging: \$1.4 million; Laboratory: \$978,000; Surgery – ICU: \$650,000; Patient Experience: \$180,000; Physical Therapy: \$70,000; Energy Efficiency: \$15,000; Respiratory Therapy: \$91,000; and Surgery: \$522,000.

To find out more about Frank R. Howard Memorial Hospital, go to: www.adventisthealth.org/howard-memorial. The Howard Foundation's website is: www.howardfoundation.org.

The rest of Interviews

From Page 1

fully understand what all the terminology is and where the revenue sources are."

Strong was elected for her second four-year term in November, and for Rodriguez, this will be her first. Despite being new to the city council, Rodriguez has leadership experience as a Willits Unified School Board of Trustees member from 2011 to 2015.

"One of the very first things I did when I found out I won, was to meet with City Manager Adrienne Moore," Rodriguez said. "I know what my own strengths and weaknesses are, and so I asked her for information. For example, I know the water and waste systems aren't something I'm fully informed on. [Moore] set up a tour for me to go out to each department within the City of Willits. I'm very much looking forward to the challenges of being a councilwoman."

Strong, who identified herself as a staunch environmental advocate, said the most important lesson she learned from her first four years on the council is that "you're one vote out of five, so it takes three votes to get something done. Sometimes you have to be patient or give up on things."

Strong hopes the new council will create majority votes for more environmental initiatives.

"Among other ideas: banning Styrofoam containers, protecting heritage trees, possibly looking at bee-killing herbicides," Strong said. "I don't know if there will be a majority on the council for that. But it's something I want to look into."

Rodriguez said there wasn't any particular project she was set on pursuing as a councilwoman.

"I've been asked about my pet projects," Rodriguez said. "I wouldn't say that I necessarily have a pet project. Anything that I believe will help create a positive outcome for the city of Willits will be my project. There's nothing wrong with taking on multiple projects; I have a lot of energy and enthusiasm. Bring it on."

Economic effects of the 101 bypass

Both Strong and Rodriguez acknowledged the need for a multi-tiered approach to attracting both visitors and businesses to Willits, particularly in increasing the use of technology and online resources.

"We do have a lot to offer," Strong said. "I think we can do a better job between the chamber of commerce and the city in making more use of online resources and really improve the amount of publicity we get as a community."

"I do more than half of my Christmas shopping here in town," Rodriguez said "I was very impressed with the deals and the variety our local merchants have. I'm a presence on Facebook, and I was impressed that they were using social media and other sources to get information out."

Rodriguez recently opened up a Facebook account called "Saprina Rodriguez, Willits City Council woman elect."

Rodriguez said she plans on posting not only her views on certain topics, but information about what occurs in council meetings.

"You might want information on a meeting that you couldn't go to," said Rodriguez. "I feel we need to use social media and technology more to get that information out to

people."

"The bypass is a done deal, and we all knew it was going to affect traffic," Strong said. "We're going to have to do the best we can to attract visitors off the highway and to encourage local citizens to buy local and keep our businesses as healthy as we can."

Strong praised the diligence of both Moore and city staff at dealing with the many changes that have taken place in Willits over the last four years.

"[Moore] has done such a good job in steering us as a city manager and being able to make the best of our budget," Strong said. "I've been very pleased with having her as the city manager. The staff is doing a fabulous job; they're often under a lot of stress because we can't hire as many people as we'd like to, so everybody has to pull hard."

Commercial cannabis

Rodriguez said she opposes cannabis cultivation within city limits, while acknowledging the importance for patients to have access to medical cannabis.

"The challenge for me is that anything I approve [regarding cannabis ordinances] stays medical-based," Rodriguez said. "I'm not in favor of supporting recreational marijuana as an industry here in Willits.

"I know that's not very popular," she admitted.

Despite her opposition to cultivation, she voiced her support for medicinal dispensaries.

"We have three pharmacies in town," Rodriguez said. "To say that I would say no to a medical dispensary would be an injustice, simply because you can go to the pharmacy and pick up drugs that can be equally or more powerful than cannabis."

Strong believes the new council will be favorable to cannabis businesses.

"I think we have a fairly good majority for opening the doors for marijuana businesses in Willits," Strong said. "It all comes down to the particulars. There are a lot of nuances in what we come up with for ordinances. It's not going to be black or white, but I think there is a majority towards moving [towards being] a little more permissive in allowing some commercial uses for medicinal marijuana."

"Willits has to address [cannabis]; it can't be ignored," Rodriguez said. "But it needs to be a very thoughtfully researched conversation. I need to be highly convinced that this is a good thing for Willits."

Conclusions

"It's very important to me to be as educated as possible before I take the oath of office," Rodriguez said about preparing herself for the office. "For the first several months it will be about outreach and research. It's the council's job to have a greater vision for all of Willits and to think big picture and small picture. How can we attract businesses here? How do we define ourselves as a community?"

Strong said she looks forward to working with the new-look city council.

"I was impressed with both Rodriguez and Gonzalez at the public forum," Strong said. "They both care about the city, and they're smart. They will apply themselves, and we'll have some differences on some issues, but I think it will be a team of people that will do our very best to make the city as healthy as it can be."

The rest of Access TV

From Page 1

television providers to generate, broadcast and provide public access, educational and governmental programming, known as "PEG."

However, according to a January 8 article in the Ukiah Daily Journal, "Mendocino Access Television shutting down," by Justine Frederiksen, former MATV Executive Director Erica Cooperider concluded soon after she was hired that the \$60,000 from the county was insufficient to keep the station afloat. She estimated her budget ought to be about \$100,000 annually, and, according to the article, came to the conclusion that "trying to make up about \$50,000 of the budget was just not possible," and the station would be closing down.

Mendocino County found another provider to broadcast its board meetings and certain other meetings, such as the county's Planning Commission and LAFCO (the Local Agency Formation Commission). The City of Ukiah took over broadcasting meetings of its city council.

However, MATV was not willing to go gently into that good night. A new board of directors was formed, determined to keep the station alive and functioning.

A December 4 letter from current MATV President and Executive Director Emmanuel Mallo, addressed to the board of supervisors, frames the struggle for survival from the station's perspective.

"In our last board meeting we decided Mendocino Access Television will improve and expand its quality of services to the community, as a major community television provider in the community," Mallo wrote. "We realized MATV survived six years of a turbulent inception stage. Five of those years were experimental, supported with PEG funds and donations from members. Meanwhile, this year, MATV has successfully delivered programs in the absence of PEG funding. Volunteers and donors kept our doors open, kept programs live on television, and we improved on viewership. That is testimony that MATV, the voice of the people, is finally here to stay, and needs support."

The station seeks back payment of the 2016 PEG funding and advance payment of PEG funding for 2017. Mallo also requested "an immediate allocation of the sum of \$12,000 for a new cablecast server to replace the main one, which is down."

In asking a few preliminary questions of Mallo, who was in the board room on December 6, Second District Supervisor McCowen asked how many members the station has currently. Mallo told him MATV has 43 members.

"There's not a lot of financial support for this model," McCowen said. "Forty-three members, I think, would be the high-water mark for the last several years."

The rest of Chase

From Page 1

stop signs and driving in opposing lanes of traffic to get away," according to a Clearlake Police Department press release.

The chase reached speeds "in excess of 55 mph on Lakeshore Drive, which has a posted speed limit of 30 mph," the press release said.

During the chase, the Honda clipped a slower vehicle it was trying to pass. The vehicle's driver was not hurt.

After crashing into an embankment on 40th Avenue at Boyles Avenue while trying to make a turn, Spaggiari allegedly rammed Lenz' patrol car "several times," then almost struck a second patrol car joining the chase head-on.

After crashing into a parked vehicle near Irving Avenue, Lenz rammed the pickup truck with his patrol car when Spaggiari aimed the Honda at a third police car.

After Spaggiari was arrested, officers discovered the Honda had been reported stolen from Willits about four hours before the Lake County chase began.

During questioning Spaggiari reportedly told officers he fled from Lenz because he was "out on bail for two cases." He added he believed

In Frederiksen's article, former MATV Executive Director Cooperider is quoted as saying: "There were never more than 20 or 30 subscribers at the most."

A November 10 letter from the MATV board of directors to Mendocino County CEO Carmel Angelo announced the station would not be offering new programming on its channels after November 15, and would be operating for "limited hours only. There will be a message running on all channels explaining that we are waiting for the county and the City of Ukiah to decide if they will honor their commitment to the public by providing access TV or not."

Contacted by Willits Weekly, county Assistant CEO Alan Flora detailed examples from the county's experience with MATV, during the five years it was providing service to the county.

According to Flora, MATV presented the county with "repeated malfunctions, repeated requests to use county equipment or purchase additional equipment [even though MATV had equipment purchased from franchise fees]; limited if any communication on meeting preparation or recording coordination; repeated requests for funding for third-party expertise or other representatives [even though the county was contracting with MATV to provide the service]; poor support from MATV made having off-site [i.e., non-Ukiah] board meetings a challenge; and reliability issues for live broadcasts."

Flora's list continues: "MATV's process for putting recordings online for public viewing involved mailing a DVD to Oregon for upload to the web. The process was cumbersome and involved lengthy delays.

"Even after the county provided significant advance notice of changes to the meeting schedule or off-site meetings, MATV techs and staff frequently arrived unprepared for the set-up, requiring the county to provide additional support. MATV's staff was unavailable for meetings, with no arranged backup support. MATV staff would often leave or be unavailable even during meetings. MATV would experience lapses in insurance coverage.

"We thought we were getting poor service," Flora said.

An additional layer of complexity is added to the problem because the world of media and communication is changing so quickly now that, to some extent, technological progress may have obsolesced bulky cameras, television studios and even television stations.

As he was providing background to this agenda item on December 6, Flora told supervisors: "This is really all I need now to record that information and to put it up on the internet." Flora was holding up his iPhone.

the Honda "was stolen, but denied he was the one who had stolen it," according to the press release.

Spaggiari was booked into Lake County Jail on two felony counts of assault with a deadly weapon upon a peace officer, a felony count of evading, a felony count of evading by driving the wrong way against traffic, a felony count of vehicle theft, and a felony count of resisting an officer with violence.

Spaggiari, a Ukiah fast-food restaurant worker, had been arrested November 21 by Ukiah police on suspicion of vehicle theft, but was released from Mendocino County Jail after posting \$15,000 bail.

On August 9, Willits Police Department officers arrested Spaggiari on suspicion of possessing a stolen vehicle after they spotted him driving a golf cart in the 500 block of East Commercial Street.

While seated in the backseat of the patrol vehicle, Spaggiari slipped his handcuffs and attempted to escape, the WPD says, but was quickly recaptured.

This report was based on press releases from the Clearlake and Willits Police Departments.



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Above, from left: Valerie Trimmer at her market table of hand-knitted goods. Robert Goleman of Bolliver's holds a tray of his fine chocolates.

Locally made

Willits Farmers Market offers gifts and crafts by county artisans

The Willits Farmers Market, at the Little Lake Grange for the winter, offers a lovely selection of gifts for the holidays, with two more Thursday markets before Christmas: December 15 and December 22

Jennifer Poole

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A beautiful little jar of hand-crafted jam by Amanda Fairall is great as a stocking stuffer or part of a holiday basket. These award-winning jams, made in small batches, offer a taste of summer during the winter. Just a few of the fruit flavors available: Chocolate Covered Strawberry, Blackberry. Fresh from the Garden Boysenberry. Mixed

Berry Medley, and Everything But the Kitchen Sink Jam.

Mujeres Unidas of Willits are offering their handmade holiday wreaths – corona navideñas in Spanish, or “Christmas crowns” – at the farmers market. The wreaths are decorated with big colorful bows in red, gold, silver or blue, just a touch of glitter, and Christmas ornaments like balls, drums, or little wrapped presents. Big conifer swags with bows are available, too, as are colorful hand-painted scarves and crocheted ponchos and shawls.

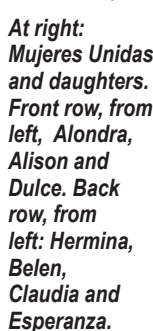
Artisan chocolates by Robert Goleman of Bolliver's Fine Foods are available in gift boxes or by the piece.

Chocolate varieties include Three Bite Caramels, “tri-sectioned bonbons of dark and rich vanilla cream butter caramel in dark chocolate”; Mangoneros, “dark chocolate cups with two fillings: dark chocolate, habañero and aged rum, as well as white chocolate, fresh mango and lime”; and Tangerine Dreams, “white chocolate cups, filled with a tangerine and peach white balsamic buttercream, made with fresh peaches and tangerines.”

Valerie Trimmer's hand-knitted goods – including scarves, hats and her specialty, fingerless gloves in rich shades – are perfect as a winter holiday gift. Her colorful cotton dish clothes are another easy stocking stocker or addition to a holiday basket. Another chocolate option for a good girl or boy is a bar or two of Equal Exchange Fair Trade & Organic Chocolate, available in multiple flavors from Liam UíCearbhaill at the Grange Grains table. Bite-sized wrapped bars are available, too.

Jessica May of Arabella Soap Company will also be at the farmers market the next couple of weeks, offering her delightfully scented soaps, lotions, lip balms, body butters, candles and more. Everything is handmade in small batches, with mostly organic ingredients. Shouldn't every Christmas stocking have a tube of lip balm in flavors like Chocolate Mint, Green Tea Lip Balm, Hibiscus Orange, Lemon Calendula, or Vanilla Cocoa Butter?

The Willits Farmers Market, at the Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street, is open Thursday afternoons from 3 to 5:30 pm. Catch the market on December 15 and 22 before the winter break.



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Petite Selena

Selena is 1 year old, petite, and full of feline curiosity. This beautiful young cat was found as a stray and has been at the shelter with us since September. She's now been spayed, microchipped, vaccinated, and is waiting to go home with her forever family! Selena loves people and other cats, and could live with a cat-friendly dog.

Come out today and give Selena a home for the holidays! Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County, where you can come visit, play with and/or adopt dogs and cats, is open to prospective adopters from 1 to 5 pm, Wednesday through Friday, and from 11 am to 3 pm, on Saturday and Sunday. Info: 707-485-0123 or visit www.mendohumanesociety.com.

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The Ukiah Animal Shelter is located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah, and 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 more of the wonderful adoptable animals at the shelter, please check out www.mendoanimalshelter.com. More info about adoptions: 467-6453.



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December 21	<div><h2>Willits Weekly's Cookie Party</h2><p>5 to 7 pm on Friday, December 16</p><p>It's time for Willits Weekly's annual Cookie Party! We invite the community to come to Ardella's, Downtown Diner on Friday, December 16 from 5 to 7 pm to taste cookies, swap recipes, listen to Christmas carols sung by Nancy New and Devon Jones, and celebrate the holiday with us! IF YOU'D LIKE TO ENTER THE COOKIE CONTEST: Send an email to willitsweekly@gmail.com or call 972-7047. You can also download the baker's entry form here: www.willitsweekly.com/WW-Cookie-Entry.docx. Enter as a business, or as an individual! We hope to see you there!</p></div>	

Crossword
Puzzle &
Sudoku

9x9 grid for a crossword puzzle.

Puzzle answers on page B7
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!

BAKED GOODS WORD SEARCH

Word search grid containing various baked goods and ingredients like BAKE, BARS, BATTER, BEATING, BLEND, BOWL, BROWNIES, BUNDT, BUTTER, CAKE, CHOCOLATE, COOKIES, COOLING, CREAMING, CROISSANTS, CUPCAKES, DOUGH, FROSTING, GARNISH, GREASE, INGREDIENTS, JELLYROLL, LEAVENING, MUFFINS, NUTS, PAN, PASTRY, PIES, PROOF, SHEET, SHORTENING, SUGAR, VANILLA, WHIP, WHISK, YIELD.

9x9 grid for a crossword puzzle.

- CLUES ACROSS
1. Way to fish
4. Not us
8. 'M*A*S*H' actor Alda
10. A store of valuable things
11. Bring on
12. Gave birth to horse
13. British poet Hunt
15. Swine-like
16. Asteroid 1532
17. Devout
18. A boost
21. Licensed for Wall Street
22. Tooth caregiver
23. Political action committee
24. Make a soft murmuring sound
25. Porky is one
26. Taoism
27. 1950s sex symbol
34. Imprisonment
35. Small freshwater ducks
- CLUES DOWN
10. Destructive storm
12. Condemn
14. Baseball players do this
15. Exclamation that denotes disgust
17. When you expect to get there
19. Dreams up
20. Peacock network
23. Robbers
24. Beverage container
25. Celebrations
26. A way to change color
27. Bullheaded
28. Type of visual display
29. Easily purchased type of medication
30. City along the western Rhine
31. Animal disease
32. Martinis have these
33. Run away
34. Remove errors from
36. Slugger Ruth

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Don't forget, there's also "I <3 Willits Weekly" T-shirts to accompany your gift subscription or to be given separately! Black cotton with white lettering, available in medium through 2XL. Shirts are \$20 each.
Pick up a presentation envelope and glossy gift certificate at the Winter Willits Farmers Market from 3 to 5:30 pm at the Little Lake Grange on Thursday, December 15 or Thursday, December 22.
You can also stop by Willits Weekly's Cookie Party and holiday celebration on Friday, December 15 from 5 to 7 pm at Ardeila's Downtown Diner to pick up a Willits Weekly gift certificate. Or, feel free to call to arrange a pick-up, 707-972-7047.



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Willits Weekly Holiday
Willits Weekly is soon taking our annual holiday break! Our last edition of 2016 will be the Christmas, December 22 edition, and our first edition of the new year will be Thursday, January 12.



Above, from left: Christmas cheer as seen through the window at the Willits Center for the Arts. Sulin Bell's scarves are a stunning complement to the colors of the paintings on display.

Art for Christmas

WCA's December show offers 'Small Works' for unique holiday gifts

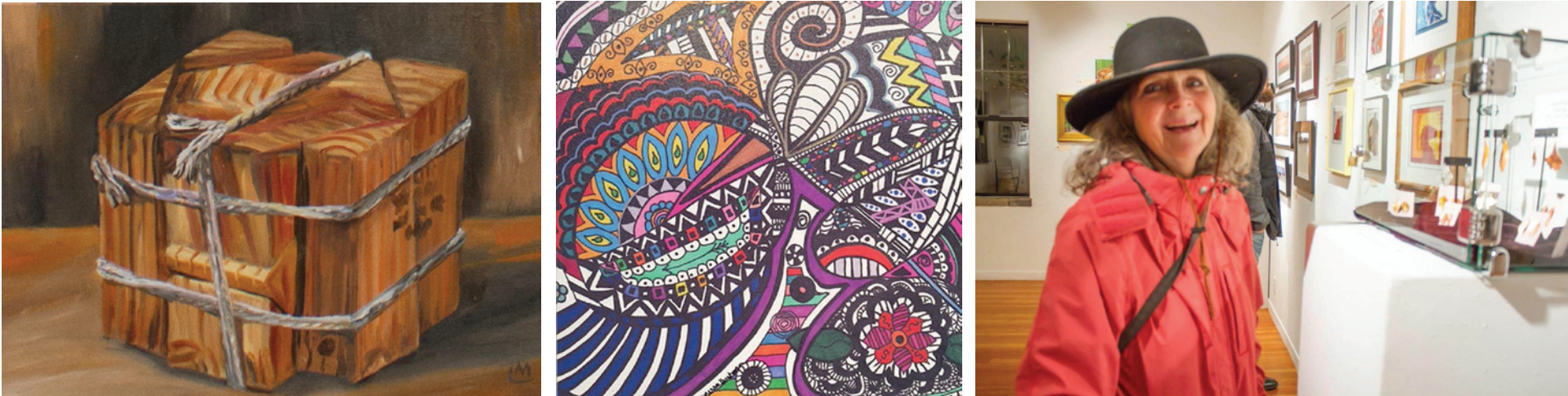
Are you having trouble finding that perfect holiday gift? Consider giving the gift of art this year! You will find a wealth of choices at the Willits Center of the Arts "Small Works" art show, which runs through December 24. Saturday's opening reception highlighted the "small art," perfect for gift-giving, of over 28 artists. Paintings, photography, jewelry, scarves, pillows, hand-blown glass ornaments, icon-style art, cards, and more make for a cornucopia of gift ideas. This month only, the WCA show is unique in that, if you find something you want, you can purchase it and take it with you that day.

Jenny Senter Features Writer
The opening reception for the "Small Works" show was on the same night as the first day of the Willits Center for the Arts Holiday Craft Fair. Holly Madrigal, WCA manager, said the reception was well-attended and the artwork sold briskly. She said the artists will add new pieces to the show, as their art sells. She encourages people to stop by often to see the new additions to the show.

Kale Haschak's stunning hand-blown Christmas ornaments proved to be a popular gift idea. The colors and 3-D designs had art patrons poring over the basket filled with the glass ornaments. Jen Bixler, who collects a special ornament every year for her tree, shared the problem many had - deciding on which ornament to take home.
The vibrant colors of rust and corrosion proved to be a fascinating subject for photographer Ree Slocum, as showcased in her photo collage. She explained she was in Tacoma, Washington, photographing the dismantling of Chris Baldo's Lidgerwood log skidder. The skidder was built in the late 1920s and has been in the elements for some time, creating a wealth of rust and corrosion.

Artists offering "small works" in the show include Ree Slocum, Bonnie Belt, Morgan Rex, Peggy Hebrard, Sandy Strong, Linda MacDonald, Steve Eberhard, Kale Haschak, Ursula Schlichting, Lynne Whiting Robertson, Laura Corbin, Theresa Roberts, Michael Coons, June Ruckman, Betty Hansen, Bob Wilkinson, Diane Putman, Margaret Piouette, David Weitzman, Elizabeth Raybee, Robert Yelland, Laura Wiecek, Jerry Albright, Nancy Reed, Leslie Rich, Donna Stropes, Jeanne Koelle, Sue Ellen Parkinson, Chris Forest, and Vanessa Kirshman. (I've probably missed a few, so please accept my apologies, if so.)
The "Small Works" show runs through Christmas Eve, December 24, at 71 East Commercial Street. Hours are 11 am to 5 pm, Wednesday through Sunday.
Note: The Willits Center for the Arts will be closed from December 25, 2016 through January 7, 2017.

AT left, from top: Kale Haschak's beautiful hand-blown Christmas ornaments. Emily Rose Smith is bringing up her daughter, Eva Pinon, to be a dedicated patron of the arts. April Tweddell with friends from Ukiah, Jessica James and Ed Keller. Below, from left: Linda MacDonald's "Reconstructed Deconstruction." Vanessa Kirshman's "My Mind is a Mess" was created with a variety of mediums, including Sharpie markers (Photo by Holly Madrigal). Art lover Cypress Ross was enthusiastic about the beautiful "Small Works" on display.



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At left: Santa and Abby have a chat. Far left: Photographer Maureen Moore and Bliss Seifert of the Mendocino County Care-A-Van snap a quick selfie after the Friday event. Above, from left: Some of the Willits Junior Horsemen members who helped at the Sunday event including, from left: Elena, Danielle, Callie, Lisa and Catie. Some of the Willits 4-H members who helped at the Saturday event, including, from left, back row: Emma, Brady, Lisa, Catie, Elena Danielle and Collin. A smiling Bayleigh, Santa and Jessica. Orion gets comforted by big brother Roman. Santa and Doodah the dog. Kassidy didn't find Santa as amusing as sister Mariah. Far right: Santa and a holiday festive Tinley.

Santa Photo Success

Weekend fundraiser earns \$725 for three local organizations

Santa saw around 375 groups of kids, families, friends and animals on Friday, Saturday and Sunday at J.D. Redhouse during the fifth annual event that was photographed by local photographer Maureen Moore.

Each day, a different group received half of the monies taken in that day as part of the 50/50 fundraiser. Friday benefitted

the Mendocino County Care-A-Van crew, who received \$165; Saturday benefitted the Willits 4-H, who received \$255; and Sunday benefitted the Willits Junior Horsemen, who received \$305.

A big thanks to everyone who participated! If you haven't already, feel free to check out all the images online at: <http://photographress.zenfolio.com/pixwithsanta>.



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COYOTE VALLEY



4th Annual Willits Weekly Cookie Party

this Friday at Ardella's Diner

The community is invited once again to come celebrate the season with cookies, carols and Willits Weekly!

The fourth annual Willits Weekly Cookie Party will be held on Friday, December 16 from 5 to 7 pm at Ardella's Downtown Diner, 77 South Main Street.

Bakers will bring entries of sweet treats to try their hand at winning the coveted People's Choice and Judge's Choice awards – and the delightfully tacky trophies which accompany those bragging rights.

Three capable tasters have already been secured to offer their assessments of the goods: veteran winner turned judge for one more year, Tam Adams of Emandal; Misty Gonzales of Willits Power and Hardware; and Jessica Logan Koehler, cookie aficionado, stylist and previous wrangler and sequester of judges next door at Headquarters Salon where the judge's judging is held.

We need people to come and vote for the People's Choice, however, and that's where the community comes in!

The event is free and open to the public, and all are encouraged to come in and sample the treats. Vote by number on a slip of paper – the winners will be announced later that night.

A cookie swap area is also set for those who want to bring treats to share, and Willits Weekly will have T-shirts and gift certificates for sale, with the current Willits Weekly editions to give out, too.

Veteran musical ambience providers Nancy New and Devon Jones will be back, singing carols and songs of the season live during the event.

Anyone wishing to enter the contest as a baker is welcome; there is no cost to enter. It's suggested to bring 5 to 6 dozen bite-sized pieces for sampling. Cookies are displayed on the booths and tables of the restaurant, so entrants need not worry about bringing tables, but can bring decorations, signs or other bits and pieces to spruce up their displays.

An entry form is available online at www.willitsweekly.com/WW-Cookie-Entry.docx or can be requested by emailing willitsweekly@gmail.com.

Any questions or for more information: 707-972-7047. See you there!

At top, from left: Devon Jones and Nancy New sing at a previous cookie party. Misty Gonzales and Rosanna Franceschini sample cookies. The People's Choice voting area. Judges had a hard choice at the 2015 contest. At right, from top: Aunt Polly's Munchins, the winner of Judge's Choice last year. At right, center: Rachel Belvin stands with 2015 winners Lisa von Schlegell, left, and Kathryn Sterngold, right. At right: Jo's Lemon Snowflake Cookies, the winner of People's Choice last year. Far right: Plates of cookies displayed on the Ardella's booth.



Willits Weekly Cookie Contest

2015 Judge's Choice Winner, baked by Lisa von Schlegell

Aunt Polly's Munchins

- 1 cup butter (2 sticks), softened
- 1 cup light brown sugar (white in original recipe)
- 1 cup white flour
- 1 cup whole wheat pastry flour (was all white in original recipe; can also use some brown rice flour, substituting maybe 1/4 cup)
- 1 cup ground almonds (grind in food processor until clumps together slightly)
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Mix all together.
- Roll into 1 inch or so balls, then flatten slightly with thumb.
- Optional: You can put jam into the thumbprint (I use plum or maybe lingonberry) or a small chunk of bittersweet chocolate.
- Bake 12 to 15 minutes, until lightly browned.
- Transfer cookies carefully to rack to cool.



Willits Weekly Cookie Contest

2015 People's Choice Winner, baked by Kathryn Sterngold

Jo's Lemon Snowflake Cookies

- Makes about 2 dozen
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup butter, soft
- 1 egg
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/2 teaspoon lemon extract
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 1/2 cup flour
- 1/4 cup powdered sugar
- Process zest and granulated sugar in food processor for 30 seconds, until zest is fine. Cream this with butter until light and fluffy.
- Mix in egg, vanilla, lemon extract and lemon juice, scrape sides, and mix again.
- In another bowl, stir together salt, baking soda, baking powder and flour just until mixed.
- Add this to wet mixture, and mix together just until dough is formed.
- Scrape sides and mix again. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
- Meanwhile, preheat oven to 350 degrees, and line cookie sheets with parchment paper.
- Roll heaping teaspoons of dough into balls, and cover in powdered sugar (be sure to cover thickly).
- Place balls 2 inches apart on cookie sheets and bake for 9 to 11 minutes or until tops have cracked and bottoms are just slightly golden.
- Let cookies cool for 3 minutes and move to rack to cool thoroughly.
- Last year these cookies won the Press Democrat's cookie contest in Santa Rosa. Winning the popular vote at Willits Weekly's cookie contest last year, too, Jo's Lemon Snowflakes are for sure a winner all the way around.

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At top, from left: Norma Staley wraps gifts at the old Rexall building, which is serving again as headquarters for the Willits Christmas Kids Program. Tim Westby helps bring donated toys into the headquarters to get sorted, distributed and wrapped before delivery on Christmas Eve. Jerry Harris gets the last of the items out of the truck and into the building.

Members of the Willits Wild Bunch and Christmas program helpers receive \$1,000 worth of toys from Willits Frontier Days, including from left, back row: Kat Harris, Marcy Barry, Danielle Barry, Samantha Arms, Tim Westby, Rita Calderon, Jerry Harris, Briana Lopez, and Gloria Westby. Front row: Norma Staley, Margaret McGill, and Santa Calderon.

Below, from left: Santa Calderon checks the bag allocated for one child to ensure all is wrapped and ready. Jerry Harris assembles a tricycle before wrapping. The old Rexall building gets a festive makeover during the Christmas program.



Willits Christmas Kids Program in full swing

Donations, wrapping and more at old Rexall building

Just passing the 10-days-to-go mark, elves and Willits Wild Bunch members are hard at work filling the Christmas wishes of children around the community.

Distribution to nearly 440 kids from 200 families will start at 10 am on Christmas Eve, and helpers from the Willits Rotary Club, the Little Lake Fire Department, the Brooktrails Fire Department and the Willits Wild Bunch themselves will help deliver the gifts to those in need this holiday.

Before they can get delivered, gifts and tags need to get returned to the old Rexall building or to any of the drop-off locations – including J.D. Redhouse and Main Street Music – to be sorted, wrapped and allocated.

“We’re going to be removing the tag trees from the businesses on Friday evening,” explained Kim Venturi, member of the Willits Wild Bunch and one of the head organizers for this year’s Willits Christmas Kids Program. “We will have to go shop for everything that’s left on the tags

Read the rest of **Gifts** | Over on Page B7

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The rest of **Gifts** | From Page B6

that haven’t already been fulfilled by the community.”

Venturi urges anyone to get any or all items filled on tags while they can, or if someone is unable to fill their tags, to please return them to the Rexall building.

“Even if there’s only one or two items filled, that’s great, too,” explained Venturi. “Anything helps, and it all adds up to helping us shop for less at the end.”

Many individuals, groups and businesses have donated already, however, and a recent truckload came in from Marcy Barry of Willits Frontier Days.

“We’re donating \$1,000 worth of toys to the program this year,” explained Barry. “This money came from the Willits Frontier Days bartenders’ tip jars, and each year, we are happy to make this donation from our tips.”

Barry did some local shopping with the \$1,000 and purchased hats, scarves, clothes, toys, books, art supplies, stuffed animals and more, and spread the items out over a range of ages.

This is the first year that veteran program organizers, Sandy and Jerry Turner, have handed over the reins to another group.

“I can’t believe the amount of work this program takes, and how dedicated Sandy and her family were to helping it happen over the years,” said Venturi. “She still pops in and checks on things, but is happy to get to spend the holidays with her family for sure!”

A banner declaring “Happy Retirement Sandy and Jerry – you are always welcome” hangs in the front room at the Rexall building, ensuring that if the Turners need to pop back in and do some wrapping, they know the door is always open.

If you are interested in helping during the last few days, contact Venturi at 972-8727 or stop by 90 South Main Street “when you see the lights on!” and get set with a wrapping station or other helpful task.



The rest of **Report** | From Page 1

Energy

AB 1923 allows owners of 5-megawatt biomass plants to sell energy back to privately owned energy companies. Previously, the ceiling on this kind of energy buy-back arrangement was 3 megawatts.

Schools

AB 2615 levels the playing field for education grants for after-school programs, making it possible for small, rural districts to compete with other districts of the same size. Wood said prior to passage of the measure, small rural districts were at a disadvantage, because frequently they would have to compete for funding with some of the largest and richest districts in the state.

Marijuana

AB 2516 directed the California Department of Food and Agriculture to develop cannabis regulations for small “cottage industry”-type cannabis grows.

Assembly Bill 211 reset the deadline for local jurisdictions to adopt regulations for the cultivation of medical cannabis.

Health Care

Assembly Bill 1863 allows licensed marriage and family therapists to be paid at Medi-Cal rates in federally qualified health centers. Prior to passage of the law, while psychiatrists and licensed clinical social workers could be paid at Medi-Cal rates by rural and community health centers, marriage and family therapists could not. This created a disincentive for rural healthcare centers to hire MFTs, when in many instances MFTs would be able to provide important and needed skills at those clinics.

According to an information sheet provided to Willits Weekly by Wood’s staff: “Adding MFTs to the list of the prospective payment system billable providers will solve existing gaps in workforce capacity by providing clinics with an adequate source of funding for their employment, which will also help meet the demand for mental health services, particularly in rural communities.”

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Wood also touted the provisions of AB 72, which he termed the “Surprise Medi-Cal Billing” act. This law prohibits physicians who are not part of a plan, but who provide necessary medical services to a patient who is covered under a plan, from billing at rates that are “greatly in excess of rates provided for in the plan.”

According to Wood, AB 72 “limits doctors from charging more than 125 percent of what Medicare pays.

“People should not be penalized by physicians who are not part of their regular network, when they have no idea that that person is going to bill for services,” Wood said.

AB 72 also requires the California Department of Managed Health Care to create a dispute resolution process.

Trump concerns

Wood acknowledged the election of Donald Trump to the presidency is a cause for concern for California. Early in his presentation to supervisors he said: “The results of the recent election will cause us to think about how we can protect the gains we’ve made in recent years and how we can work with the administration, when we can.”

Wood said his main focus over the next two years would be protecting federally funded healthcare programs like Medicaid, Medi-Cal and the Affordable Care Act.

Wood said “early numbers” being circulated in Sacramento about the financial impact of Trump’s presumed policies to the state’s health care programs is \$20 billion.

“There is concern about that,” Wood said. “The goal being, to keep as many people as possible in the system.”

Both board Chairman Dan Gjerde and Second District Supervisor John McCowen praised Wood, saying he had gotten a lot done over the past two years.

Wood was reelected to another two-year term in the California Assembly in November. In Mendocino County, he garnered 73.64 percent of the vote.

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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.

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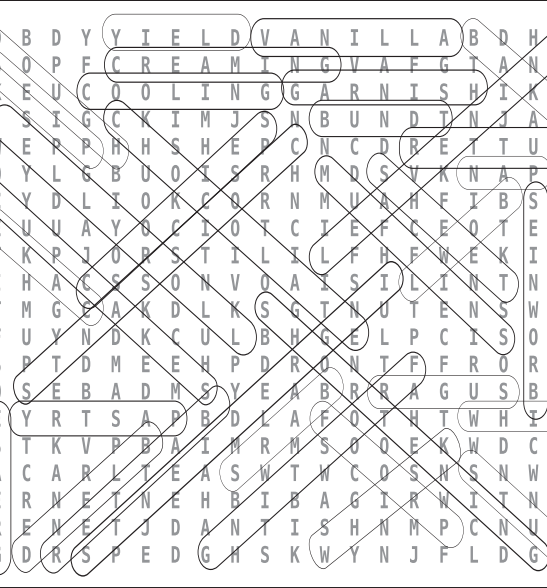
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WW’s Cookie Party!

It’s almost time for Willits Weekly’s fourth annual Cookie Party and festivities. The party will be held at Ardella’s Downtown Diner on Friday, December 16 from 5 to 7 pm.

Send us your ad!



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Santa to a Senior Program

Every year, employees at Frank Howard Memorial Hospital finds ways to give back to the community and share their blessings during the holiday season. This year, besides giving to the Food Bank via the Food and Coat Drive and to the Willits Christmas Program, employees decided to give to another group that's often forgotten during the holidays -- the seniors. So HMH reached out to the Harrah Senior Center for the "Be a Santa to a Senior" project. Employees adopted seniors who are homebound either due to age, sickness or disability. The seniors sent their wish lists, and employees were asked to fulfill their wishes. Most of the seniors wanted simple things, a crossword puzzle, a book, or a food basket.



HMH employees were happy to go above and beyond, bringing big baskets filled with food, chocolates, and items they hope will bring joy to our seniors in the community.

– Cici Winiger, for HMH

Above: Laura Azevedo, Sandy Smith, Katherine Leon and Kim Katri, with their gifts ready to give.

At left: Deb Holcomb at the Harrah Senior Center receives the gifts from HMH employees.

Homegrown Pumpkin Pie Recipe

Adapted from Alice Waters' Pumpkin Pie recipe in "The Art of Simple Food," published in 2007 by Clarkson Potter/Publishers.

The key to the deliciousness of this pumpkin pie recipe is to use fresh pumpkin: It's easy to roast a pumpkin, and canned puree can never compare. Be sure to choose a pumpkin meant for pies – like a Sugar Pie pumpkin – instead of a jack o'lantern made for carving. A 2 pound pumpkin is ideal for one pie, or roast a bigger pumpkin and use extra pumpkin for a second pie, a pudding or soup.

Make a favorite pie pastry, bottom only, or buy a pastry shell, and pre-bake it as usual.

First, preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Cut your pumpkin in half, and scoop out the seeds and some of the fibrous part. Place pumpkin halves cut side down on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper (oiling the sheet will do, but parchment paper is best). Bake 45 minutes to an hour, or until the pumpkin is tender throughout.

Remove from oven and let cool thoroughly. Scoop the pumpkin flesh from the peel, and mash it with a potato masher. You can leave it "rustic" with more texture,

or mash it smoother, according to taste.

In a small saucepan whisk together 1/4 cup cream with the flour. Heat the mixture over low heat until it comes to a boil and thickens. Slowly whisk in the rest of the cream. Continue whisking until the mixture returns to a boil. Remove from the heat.

Gather your ingredients:

- 1 cup cream
- 2 teaspoons flour
- 3 eggs
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- pinch of fresh-ground black pepper
- 1-1/2 teaspoons of brandy (optional)

Measure 1-1/2 cups of mashed pumpkin into a medium bowl, and whisk in the eggs. Add the brandy, if desired. In another bowl, stir together the brown sugar, granulated sugar, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, salt and pepper. Then, stir the sugar and spice mixture, and the thickened cream, into the pumpkin mixture.

Pour into the prebaked pie shell and bake for 45 to 50 minutes, until the center is almost set. Let cool completely before cutting.

Serve with a dollop of freshly whipped cream.

– Jennifer Poole



Willits Junior Horsemen members pose with Santa and Angie Herman, a representative from SAFER horse rescue, including, back row, from left: Sam, Angie Herman, Santa, Elena, and Callie. Front row, from left: Danielle, Lisa, Catie and Claire.

Willits Junior Horsemen donate \$500 to equine rescue and rehabilitation program

Each year, members of the Willits Junior Horsemen club like to choose a group or organization to donate back to, and this year, they chose SAFER, an equine rehabilitation and rescue organization that serves Sonoma, Lake and Mendocino counties.

The club donated \$500 to SAFER, and members were able to present the check to program representative Angie Herman during their Santa Photo fundraiser at J.D. Redhouse on Sunday, December 11.

Based in Sebastopol, SAFER (Sonoma Action for Equine Rescue) helps with feed

and hay assistance, fostering and adopting horses, rescuing from auctions, and accepting horses through owner surrender. Some horses have even been fostered and placed with families in Willits while they await new homes.

SAFER was chosen this year because the group wanted to make sure to select an equine organization, in keeping with the "horsemen" theme. In the past they have donated to the Seabiscuit Therapeutic Riding Center in Ridgewood Ranch and to Toys for Tots.

– Maureen Moore



Photo by Jennifer Poole

Above: The Willits Chamber of Commerce's Carlin Horger, left, and one of three local Small Business Saturday basket winners, Julia Sotomayor.

Small Business Saturday winners: shoppers and local businesses

The Willits Chamber of Commerce has announced three basket winners for their Small Business Saturday contest: Winners are Julia Sotomayor, pictured, Carol Deuel, and Debra McCarthy, all of Willits.

Winners were chosen by a drawing of "passports" submitted by participants in Small Business Saturday. The passports were stamped by participating businesses for each visit on Saturday, November 26. Small Business Saturday, a national event sponsored by American Express, is always scheduled for the Saturday after Thanksgiving.

Basket winner, Julia Sotomayor, who works at Georges Geodes & Gems, had a great time shopping that day, starting with the gem store, which was a Small Business Saturday participant. "It was so much fun shopping at the local stores, knowing that you're supporting someone's dream, that they worked so hard to make happen," she said.

Sotomayor shopped mostly at stores she's "established a relationship with," she said, "the stores that have made an impact on me over the years, the businesses that

I recommend when people ask at George's Geodes and Gems. We all need to support each other," she said.

"The chamber would like to thank the local businesses for their generosity with the prizes in these baskets," said Carlin Horger, a volunteer with the Willits Chamber of Commerce. "It shows appreciation of the people coming in to shop locally, and lets shoppers know the local businesses are trying to please them."

The beautiful baskets were put together by Annette Pinon of Flowers by Annette.

According to a November 28 press release from American Express, "the outpouring of support for local businesses across the country hit record highs [on Small Business Saturday 2016], with 72 percent of U.S. consumers aware of the day." An estimated 112 million Americans reported shopping at small businesses on Small Business Saturday, according to the Small Business Saturday Consumer Insights Survey, marking a 13 percent increase from 2015.

– Jennifer Poole

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