

Willits Weekly

EST. 2013

Online & Print

Willits
Here's our last issue in 2013!
Back at it on January 2!

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A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

Thursday, December 19, 2013

Edition No. 34

By donation

Brooktrails board asks residents to voluntarily reduce water use

Mike A'Dair
Reporter
mike@willitsweekly.com

Brooktrails directors are asking all township residents to voluntarily reduce their water consumption by 20 percent.

The request became necessary due to meager rainfall in recent months.

According to a report presented to the board by Brooktrails General Manager Denise Rose, as of December 6 Brooktrails had used 70 percent of its stored water and only had enough water left for 80 days. By the time of the December 10 Brooktrails board meeting, that level had fallen to 73 days worth of water, due to additional water lost during the cold snap.

By the time this story is published in Willits Weekly, there will be enough water in Brooktrails' water system to provide water to residents for 64 days.

Rose told the board a voluntary reduction of 20 percent "may result in adding approximately 16 days of water supply."

Rose stated the recent cold weather resulted in an additional loss of approximately 200,000 gallons of water, or three days' supply, due to breaking water pipes on vacant houses.

Read the rest of **B'trails Water** Over on Page 9

Madrigal reappointed Willits mayor

Zack Cinek
Reporter
zack@willitsweekly.com

The city council voted unanimously last week to reappoint Mayor Holly Madrigal to the position of mayor.

With Madrigal's appointment as mayor, Councilman Ron Orenstein retained his position of vice mayor.

"I am very excited to be mayor this year," Madrigal said this week. "I am going to be focusing on helping guide Willits after the bypass and making sure that our businesses stay prosperous."

Madrigal, Orenstein, Madge Strong, Bruce Burton and Larry Stranske make up the Willits City Council.

Madrigal has also entered the race for Third District supervisor, announcing her candidacy earlier this year.

At a time when the city faces a water shortage, water is on the mayor's mind, too: "I also really want to work on water conservation in town," Madrigal said.



Above: From left: (on bumper) Tim Caldwell, Mike Cornwall and Rick "Santa" Maddox; (on ground) Chris Dunham, James Magann, Robbie Guevara, Cameron DeConti, Ned McKinnon, Fred Barry, Jim Brackett and Levi Persico and Sandy Turner and Roxie (front).



Above: Evelyn and Levi Persico pose with Edie Ceccarelli, who came to donate money to this year's program.

Below: Ethel Redman wraps under the supervision of Snoopy.



Below: left: Sandy shows off something she really appreciates: batteries taped to the toy that needs them. Right: "Elves" work away wrapping gifts for the kids, including from left: Rick Maddox, Cameron DeConti, Ethel Redman and Levi Persico. Photos by Maureen Moore



It's time to Wrap Wrap for the Holidays!

"We're really down to the time where we need those gift items back," stressed Sandy Turner, organizer of the Willits Community Christmas Program.

This year 375-plus kids from 170-plus families are relying on the generosity of the community to get those tags filled and items returned so the wrapping and organizing can begin in time for the December 24 delivery.

"There's no shame in bringing only one item, or all the items on the tag, or if you simply can't fulfill it at all, just bring it back and we'll take care of it," explained Turner.

Wrappers are also desperately needed to finish preparing the gifts already brought back. They have the tape, scissors, paper and tags – they just need hands!

Follow the signs at the Sparetime Supply Wholesale yard to help out! It's fun and free and a huge help to getting the project completed.

To find out more, contact Turner at 490-8872 – Maureen Moore



Above: Rick "Santa" Maddox is excited to get out and make deliveries on December 24.

Below: Rows of still-to-be-finished tags hang awaiting helpful wrappers.

Photos by Maureen Moore

Willits may face water shortage

Zack Cinek
Reporter
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Already facing second-level water conservation measures, Willits residents continue to drink from a dwindling water supply.

The city's water conservation policy kicked into voluntary phase II water cutbacks last month, and water plant employees reported it was helping – until freezing temperatures arrived.

"We saw a reduction in demand by 100,000 gallons or so," Water Plant Operator Steve Anderson said at a city council meeting last week. But he added it seemed like everybody's pipes were breaking or running through the night to prevent freezing.

When the council approved a call for water conservation last month, Anderson said the city had about 100 days of water remaining in its two

Read the rest of **City Water** Over on Page 11

Supes give themselves special planning powers

Mike A'Dair
Reporter
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Supervisors on Monday gave themselves decisive power on any planning matter without the item having first to go before the county planning commission.

The new ordinance, passed on a 3-2 vote reads: "The board of supervisors hereby deems it appropriate and necessary to reserve to itself the functions of the planning agency when time is of the essence with respect to any discretionary permit or approval, based upon the project's special contribution to the county's general welfare and economic or environmental wellbeing.... (etc.)"

"The board of supervisors may call for direct review of any application, approval, or permit, including actions assigned to, or taken by, the planning commission, the coastal permit administrator, the zoning hearing officer, and the planning director to the board."

Before adopting Monday's ordinance, the board had the right of final decision on planning questions. However, the items would have to be considered and voted upon

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

Group seeks public bank for Mendocino County

Speaking at Little Lake Grange on Saturday night, author Ellen Brown told area residents the United States banking system is seriously flawed because it is supported by the Federal Reserve system, which she described as a privately run banking cartel.

Brown noted the Federal Reserve loans money to other banks at 0.25 percent, while governments, including the federal government, have to borrow that money at a much higher rate of interest. As a result, Brown said, more than half the United States' \$15 trillion national debt is the result of accumulated interest on borrowed money. She noted governments at all levels would benefit if they could borrow Federal Reserve money at the rate reserved for banks.

The way to do that is, she believes,

is to form a public bank. Doing so, Brown said, would be good for government and would also benefit the people.

"If we really want to be sustainable, we have to be the bank," said Brown. "If the federal government were to follow this model, there might not be a national debt in the U.S. And if you want to escape paying taxes, one thing you can do is to allow the government to make some money."

Brown reviewed the benefits of public banking by touting the results it has had in North Dakota, the only state in the union with a public bank. Brown said the sparsely populated agricultural state near the Canadian border enjoys a surplus of government funds, and the biggest problem government routinely faces there is

how to deal with the surplus. She said North Dakota was one of the few states in the country not hurt by the Bush recession, adding that in 2010, near the bottom of the recession, the Bank of North Dakota paid \$30 million in dividends back to the state government.

To charter or not to charter

The Mendocino County Public Banking Coalition has become convinced Brown has found a way out of the economic quagmire which has become the norm since the days of the 1973 OPEC oil price hike.

The citizens' group wants to create a public bank in Mendocino County. To do so, the group feels it must change Mendocino County from being a General Law county (which

Read the rest of **Banking** Over on Page 9

Mike A'Dair
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What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from readers

Thank you

To the Editor:

To the Willits community: I would like to say thank you for your support and patience with us here at your local Post Office. Conditions during this last severe snow storm and extremely cold weather made delivering mail extremely difficult, if not impossible.

The clerks and mail carriers know you have been inconvenienced. We appreciate your friendliness and understanding during this extremely busy time.

The employees here at your Post Office went to great lengths to get mail to you, including working their days off, and two carriers even used their own 4 wheel drive vehicles to deliver mail. I'm sure everybody is aware that our mail trucks don't handle snow well, even with chains. I'm proud of the way the employees here worked safely to get your mail to you.

I would also like to thank the county road department for the very hard work they did getting the roads passable so we could deliver your mail.

So a big "Thank You" to everybody: we appreciate it, and Happy Holidays!

Dale A. Briggs, postmaster, Willits

About Dividing the Community

To the Editor:

In Willits of late there has been much discussion and concern about the community becoming divided, mostly related to the differences of opinion with respect to the Caltrans bypass. And certainly, I would agree that the idea of a "divided community" is somewhat of an oxymoron.

I would like to believe that I am just as much concerned about community as anyone else is, if not more so.

Being schooled in the thought of Wendell Berry (among other things in my experience), I am convinced that we – as individuals – cannot thrive outside of a healthy community. I moved to Willits seven years ago largely motivated by the possibility of finding (or helping to build) such a community. And to a large extent – I am happy to report – that hope has been fulfilled.

Differences of opinion, however, need not lead to divisions. In fact, I doubt that a community can actually thrive without such differences, expressed in a respectful manner. And a community that cannot agree to disagree will inevitably be (or become) divided. That, I believe, is indisputable.

What troubles me in what I hear (at least, as I interpret it) is the implication that one side of the debate is seen as automatically "righter" than the other. A few years ago in the council chambers one night, the opinion was expressed to me that "we should not bring up the issue of the bypass because that would divide our community." The "we" in this utterance clearly meant: those who oppose the bypass. And with that, it was clearly implied that opposition to the bypass would "divide" our community. And the logical conclusion of that is that it could not possibly be the supporters of the bypass (or the passive compliance with

Caltrans) that would divide the community. No, it would clearly be the fault only of the opponents.

I am quite willing to concede that those who support or favor the bypass have their own reasons, which – within their own conceptual framework – might make perfect sense. In other words, I do not wish to accuse them of ill-will or a lack of community spirit.

However, I must (if I am to adhere to the spirit of our Constitution) maintain my own right to disagree with them. I can disagree with their "reasons" and/or the whole framework within which those reasons make sense. But this I have already done on many other occasions. So I need not repeat that here.

What is at stake is that if, in voicing my opinion, I am (or anyone else is) accused of ill-will and/or a tendency or even intention to "divide" the community, then certainly the seeds of division have already been sown. And with that, the health of our community will be greatly impaired.

David Partch, Willits

Priceless

To the Editor:

Caltrans says that Mr. Will Parrish owes them about a half-million dollars (\$481,588 to be exact) to cover the "direct and indirect costs" of the delays in the construction of the Willits Highway 101 freeway bypass.

These costs were incurred, according to Caltrans, during Will Parrish's 11-day occupation of the contractor's wick drain machine in his attempt to stop the largest wetlands fill operation in Northern California in half a century.

Caltrans seeks to bill Mr. Parrish for this half-million dollars. They have informed the District Attorney's Office that they wish to include these claims for "restitution" in connection with Mr. Parrish's prosecution for unlawful entry onto Caltrans' project site in the case of "People v. Parrish." Mr. Parrish's case is currently scheduled to be heard in Mendocino Superior Court on January 27, 2014 at 8:30 am. Please attend this important event.

I requested a copy of Caltrans' half-a-million dollar itemized budget through the California Public Records Act and received it a couple of days ago. It is quite an extraordinary piece of accounting by the entity that is now the landowner of one-third of Little Lake Valley. On behalf of concerned citizens, I am submitting to the District Attorney's Office a counter claim, an itemized budget of the price tag for the wetlands of Little Lake Valley (see below).

Let's consider the history. Concerned citizens tried for about four decades to convince public officials that there were better alternatives to Caltrans' overbuilt, overpriced and destructive Highway 101 bypass. These concerned citizens spent decades meeting with regulatory agencies, lobbying elected officials, signing petitions, writing letters, organizing educational forums, filing lawsuits, and finally, when all else failed, resorting to non-violent civil disobedience.

In March, Caltrans flexed its muscle, dug in its heels, ignored the cheaper and less-destructive bypass options, and began building the overpriced monstrosity requiring the largest wetlands fill in Northern California in half a century. I have some questions about the economic assumptions upon which Caltrans' financial claim for restitution is based.

Caltrans claims Mr. Parrish caused its contractor, Flatiron, to lose money by delaying the construction. If

there is a genuine concern about wasting taxpayer money, shouldn't the less-expensive and less-destructive bypass options have been considered?

Despite these other options, Caltrans is using taxpayers' money to wick-drain and fill the wetlands in order to build their preferred bypass option. Caltrans' mitigation plan supposedly compensates for this wetlands destruction. Does Caltrans' decision mean the assessment has been made that these wetlands are more economically valuable as a freeway than as a wetlands?

In Caltrans' accounting system does the wetlands only have economic value when it is being wick-drained to become a freeway and/or when someone is stopping it from being wick-drained to become a freeway?

It is expensive for Caltrans to build a freeway – especially a freeway over a wetlands. And, if Caltrans has its way, it will be costly to stand in the way of building a freeway. But, how do you measure the value of a wetlands? To value something means to esteem it or to treasure it.

But, it also means to assign it a monetary value. If Caltrans can assign monetary value to the delays associated with NOT being able to wick-drain the wetlands, surely we can assign monetary value to preserving the wetlands. Here's a start.

Little Lake Valley Wetlands: Itemized Budget

Prime habitat for deer and elk ... *Sinifity*%; Habitat for Chinook, Coho, steelhead, bass ... *Sinifity*%; Habitat for cinnamon teal, warbler, heron, ducks, coot, flycatcher ... *Sinifity*%; Habitat for turtles, frogs, sunfish ... *Sinifity*%; Diverse mycorrhizae of wetland soil ... *Sinifity*%; Home for valley, Oregon white and black oaks (some ancient) ... *Sinifity*%; Home for willow, cottonwood, elderberry, ash, madrone, alder ... *Sinifity*%; Habitat for many grasses such as semaphore, meadowfoam, bluegrass ... *Sinifity*%; And other grasses such as velvet grass, bent grass, oatgrass, fescue, etc. ... *Sinifity*%; Wetlands serving the vital function for flood control ... *Sinifity*%; Wetlands serving as a basin to hold water to fill ground water aquifers ... *Sinifity*%; Wetlands serving to control erosion and sedimentation ... *Sinifity*%; Wetlands serving as nature's finest water filter ... *Sinifity*%; Preservation of the Pomo cultural heritage for future generations ... *Sinifity*%; Future of the Little Lake Valley watershed ... *Sinifity*%; Future of Haehl, Baechtel, Broadbus, Upp, Mill, Outlet and other creeks ... *Sinifity*%.

Total..... Priceless

I would like to request that the District Attorney's Office please consider the above budget in the case of "People v. Parrish."

Sara Grusky, Willits

Thank You

To the Editor:

Phoenix Hospice would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all the people who have so generously donated to our 11th annual "Light Up a Life" community celebration. These donations go towards providing quality end-of-life care for members of our community.

We especially would like to thank Greg Schindel, Threshold Choir and Breath. These wonderful musicians filled our evening with music that was magical and inspiring.

Author Earlene Gleisner was present to share with us her insights on one of her most recent books, dedicated to Phoenix Hospice, titled "Life on a Limb." She graciously donated all event proceeds from the sale of this book to hospice.

During the testimonial portion of our program, many took a moment to stand with their candles to share their memories and personal story; bringing many of us to tears. Thank you for reaching out and touching our hearts.

We appreciate the insightful thoughts of our Medical Director, Dr. Charlie Hott, and our Spiritual Care Team, Roland Hulstein and Dennis Long.

We want to thank the Howard Memorial

Maintenance Team who set up all the beautiful lights around our hospice and home health building, along with HMH Executive Chef Kyle Evans and his wonderful team of bakers for the cookies for the Willits event.

Thank you to the City of Ukiah who lit up the plaza with beautiful, white lights in all the trees and to Jose who is always there to make sure the event goes off without a hitch.

We graciously want to thank all our volunteers who have labeled invitations and baked cookies for Ukiah event. Their tireless efforts and hours make this event possible.

Last but not least; a very special thank you to our loyal business sponsors who so generously support the cause of hospice: Adam's Restaurant; Body Works Gym; Brookside Retirement Residence; DripWorks; Earl T. Myers, OP; Empire Mortuary; Eversole Mortuary; Howard Memorial Hospital; HMH Foundation; Holy Child Residential Care Homes; Holy Spirit Residential Care Homes; Law Offices of John Smoot; MCI Transformer Corp.; Mendocino Bridal & Tux; Mendo Lake Respiratory Services; Mountain View Assisted Living; Northbrook Healthcare Center; North Valley Bank; SHN Consulting Engineers & Geologists, Inc.; Sparetime Supply; Redwood Cove Healthcare Center; Redwood Meadows; Ukiah Healthcare Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation; Ukiah Valley Medical Center; Verihealth; Willits Furniture; and Willits Redwood Company.

Tammy Long and Linda Beebe, Phoenix Hospice

I am because of agriculture

To the Editor:

I am who I am because of my experiences in high school agriculture, and the idea that my future grandchildren may not have that opportunity saddens and pains me beyond belief.

Agriculture is a lifestyle and a vocation that has made America what it is. In the next century agriculture is going to be even more important, requiring more education, technical know-how and ingenuity.

Pulling the rug out from under high school ag programs is short-sighted. As an ag teacher, I see firsthand the benefits of the Agricultural Incentive Grant. The state mandates a series of activities and curriculum to encourage student growth from each local chapter. A grant is received, that is in turn matched by the district, which promotes educational excellence, leadership potential and hands-on skills that allow students to excel.

Governor Brown would like to deposit the money in the school district's general fund without the stipulation of matching or any oversight. It would amount to the death of career technical education by a thousand cuts ... probably literally.

The oversight of the California Department of Education ensures this small amount of the state budget is spent in a productive manner educating tomorrow's educated and informed leaders and back-yard sustainable gardeners, as well as larger-scale farmers and ranchers.

Without this dedicated grant money, the schools would probably find it difficult to safeguard their ag programs, or match the funds necessary for hands-on activities, school farms, and many of the agricultural experiences that keep our state one of largest agricultural producers in the world.

Read the rest of **Letters** |
Over on Page 11



Above left: shoppers Rick and Anita Hawley, John Glycer and Doreen Glycer check out the fair.



Above right: Anne Vanderhork holds one of her handmade quilts.

Holiday cheer at the Crafts Fair



Below: Mary Anne Underhill holds a custom iron work piece by her husband, Mike.

Holiday spirit and the sound of music reigned at the Crafts Fair at the Community Center for three days over the weekend. Pine boughs, red ribbons and colored lights decorated the top of the walls, and fine artists and crafters each had their own unique booths.

Expanding the fair to three days was a good move, said coordinator and potter Bonnie Belt. "I've had good reports from everybody; they feel well supported this year, and they're liking the third day." The Holiday Crafts Fair added Sunday as a third day this year for the first time.

"Sunday turned out to be a really good day," said Willits artist Ann Maglente. "It was definitely worth it for all the vendors to do a third day, and if you're going to set up a booth...."

Maglente was selling hand-painted and framed prints of birds, scarves, cards and the "Naturally Delicious" roasted almonds she and her husband, Jon, make. Maglente made a point of praising David Partch, who'd arranged three days of acoustic music for the fair, and the Kids Fair on Saturday.

"Everybody enjoyed the Kids Crafts Fair," she said.

David "The Pickle Man" Rice said the fair went great for him, and he'd already sold out of his kosher dill pickle chunks. "We always do well here," he said. Rice comes from Cobb in Lake County. Vendors from Laytonville, Fort Bragg, Redwood Valley and other surrounding areas participated this year, as well as many Willits artists and crafters.

Gregg Lindseley of Earth & Fire Pottery said his fermentation crocks were big sellers this year: "I can't keep up with the demand." Mead jugs – for making honey wine – were sold out by Sunday.

The Willits Charter School kids were also busy providing lunch and goodies for the crowds. Director John Kirchiro said his students were "doing it all" – making the food, serving it out, taking orders – "and people are loving the food."

Raffle tickets to benefit the Willits Center for the Arts went "very very well," volunteers at the raffle table said. "We've all felt a lot of holiday cheer."



Above: Tamara Steffen of AngelFire Jewelry holds a hand-crafted necklace.

Below: David "The Pickle Man" Rice holds a jar of his famous dill pickles.



See many more crafts fair photos online at www.WillitsWeekly.com



Above left: Vendors Jackie Standley and Mary Anne Underhill; Gregg Lindseley of Earth & Fire Pottery with one of his handmade cups; and cutting boards, a checkers board, and a clock penholder with wooden pen, made with exotic woods by Alfredo Vionnet of Anything Wood from Laytonville.



At right: Greg Burdick of Greg's Redwood Burl in Fort Bragg shows off one of his wooden bowls.

Photos by Maureen Moore

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The Rules: **LETTERS**

Letters & Commentaries: Email letters to willitsweekly@gmail.com. Letters from area residents, focusing on Willits issues, activities, events and people, have priority. Typed letters can be sent to Willits Weekly, P.O. Box 1698, Willits, CA 95490, but email is preferred.

Letters & Commentaries must have a name, address and phone number, although only the author's name and city of residence will be published. No anonymous letters will be published.

Willits Weekly

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EST. 2013

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Puzzle Page

Activities & fun for kids of all ages

In the Stars...

ARIES
Mar 21 - Apr 20
Aries, handle some unfinished business and establish clear priorities. Otherwise, you may turn what could be a productive week into something frustrating.

TAURUS
Apr 21 - May 21
Taurus, when you wear your heart on your sleeve for everyone to see, you cannot be shy about expressing your emotions. Friends may be skeptical of you though.

GEMINI
May 22 - Jun 21
Gemini, don't be shy about sharing unique plans with your loved ones. The support of friends and family members will only restore your confidence in this new direction.

CANCER
Jun 22 - Jul 22
Expect your ideas to take shape over the next couple of days. Cancer. Concrete plans will materialize as you begin to pull thoughts from your imagination. The results will be unique.

LEO
Jul 23 - Aug 23
You probably are not interested in inching along this week, Leo. Though it's good to attack a project with gusto, don't rush so much that you make mistakes.

VIRGO
Aug 24 - Sept 22
Virgo, you are quite comfortable sharing your thoughts now that you have gotten some things worked out. It's now much easier to talk about future possibilities.

LIBRA
Sept 23 - Oct 23
Decoding all of the mixed signals coming your way won't be easy, Libra. The only thing you can do for the moment is to take each signal one at a time.

SCORPIO
Oct 24 - Nov 22
Scorpio, you are not in the mood to play games, so you will want to push your romantic relationship to the next level. You will have no problem leading the way.

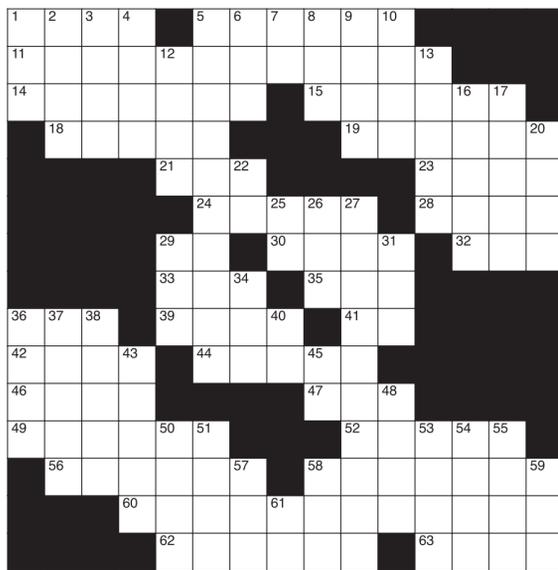
SAGITTARIUS
Nov 23 - Dec 21
Opportunities to address your physical well-being present themselves this week, Sagittarius. Make the most of these opportunities to make a significant change.

CAPRICORN
Dec 22 - Jan 20
Capricorn, you will ride a creative wave for the next several days. Inspiration will strike when you least expect it. You should have some time for play.

AQUARIUS
Jan 21 - Feb 18
Aquarius, expect some support from family members and close friends. Receive their generosity as warmly as you can, even if you're feeling a bit smothered.

PISCES
Feb 19 - Mar 20
Pisces, it can be easy to get swept away by other people's agendas when you attempt to lend a helping hand. Do your best to pitch in.

Crossword Puzzle



CLUES ACROSS

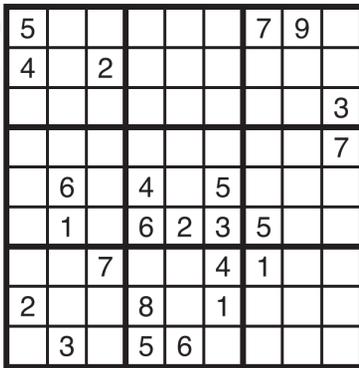
- Leopold's partner in crime
- Black furs
- Truman's hometown
- Dean residence
- Chief Polish port
- Grin
- Complied with
- Explosive
- Perennial woody plant
- Expression
- Small Japanese deer
- Denotes past
- Bullfighting maneuver
- Deaf signing language
- Assistance
- What part of (abbr.)
- Parts per thousand (abbr.)
- Two-toed sloth
- Exclamation of surprise
- Extinct European ox
- Moving in a circle
- College army
- Radioactivity unit
- Give a quick reply

- Spanish appetizers
- Environment
- Gold, quartz or iron
- Fellowes' Masterpiece series
- Old style recording
- Questions

CLUES DOWN

- Box top
- Small integers
- Mild yellow Dutch cheese
- Bolivian savanna
- Open air performing for love
- No matter what or which
- Religious degree
- Lower limb
- Prefix meaning inside
- Crust covering a wound
- Assail repeatedly
- Samoyedic (alt. sp.)
- Damascus is the capital
- Peeps (Scot.)
- Transaction
- Touchdown
- Associated press
- An opening between things
- Increasing
- Cologne
- Ethiopia (abbr.)
- A 24-hour period
- Kitty sound
- Prefatory discourse
- fruti
- Biblical Sumerian city
- Criticize harshly
- 25th state
- Comedian Carvey
- A wild disturbance
- Pueblo American Indians
- 9-banded armadillo
- Arbitrageurs
- Thai language of Khammuane
- Atomic #105
- 1st weekday (abbr.)
- Fleur-de-
- The 7th tone

Sudoku



Level: Intermediate



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!

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Rick Maddox, Cameron DeConti and Dustin Butler with the bikes.

Christmas bikes

Sparetime Supply employees, left to right, Rick Maddox, Cameron DeConti and Dustin Butler, pose with eight bicycles and a scooter in still-snowy Brooktrails Tuesday morning.

These bikes are the last of 26 donated bicycles fixed up by the Brooktrails Property Owners Association bicycle rehab group for the Willits Community Christmas Program this year.

The Sparetime guys picked up the bikes and delivered them to Sandy Turner's Christmas Program team at Sparetime Wholesale, otherwise known as "Santa's Workshop," to be delivered to Willits kids on Christmas Eve.

The BPOA group, led by Robert Terry, has been contributing bikes to the local Christmas effort since 1997: the 26 completed this year brings the number of bicycles donated, rehabbed and given away again to a total of 490.

"We wish to thank all the local folks who donated their excess bicycles to our program," Terry said. "We will now accept donations which will become part of next year's workshop!" Anyone interested in more information about donating a bike should call Terry at 459-6760.

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Trivia
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101 N. Lenore Ave. • Willits

Dear Santa, Please bring me toys, a car, and a toy reindeer. A new pencil. Thank you. -Jayden, 4

Dear Santa, I want a Thomas train, Dora and toys. Merry Christmas. -Maelie, 3

Dear Santa, I love you Santa very much. I want you to bring me toys, Dora and her friends. And an Easter Egg. I love you with my heart. -Timothy, 4

Dear Santa, I want 2 motorcycles and a dinosaur. -Cash, 4

Dear Santa, I love you Santa very much. I want you to bring me toys, Dora and her friends. And an Easter Egg. I love you with my heart. -Timothy, 4

Dear Santa, I want a remote control Lightning McQueen, a paint spinner and Star Wars Legos. I love you. I want a reindeer, too. -Steven, 4

Dear Santa, I love you Santa very much. I want you to bring me toys, Dora and her friends. And an Easter Egg. I love you with my heart. -Timothy, 4

Dear Santa, I want a remote control Lightning McQueen, a paint spinner and Star Wars Legos. I love you. I want a reindeer, too. -Steven, 4

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Dear Santa, I want 2 motorcycles and a dinosaur. -Cash, 4

Adult salmon and steelhead

coming soon to a creek near you

Joe Scriven
Columnist

Observing big fish in a small creek is a special occasion that few people get to experience, even when it occurs in their own neighborhood every fall and winter. Returning adult salmonids are rare, precious, vulnerable, and fun to watch — from a distance. The tributaries to Outlet Creek that flow through Willits can provide excellent viewing opportunities from public access spots or if you have permission to access private property.

Many creatures feed on adult salmon and steelhead as they swim into small streams to spawn. In this part of the Eel River, black bears and river otters are very effective at capture and consumption of this prized protein source. Historically, native people in this area have utilized salmon and steelhead as an important food source. Now, as many of us are aware, the ability of these salmonid species to survive, let alone provide sustenance to their many predators, has been reduced dramatically.

The ratio of fish to humans in the Outlet Creek watershed has changed; where the fish once outnumbered humans, they are now outnumbered. The current score in the Outlet Creek watershed: humans about 5,000; Chinook and Coho salmon and steelhead trout about 500, and that's on a "good" year. This year Outlet Creek and its tributaries may see significantly fewer returning salmonids due to the lack of rain; these fish may simply spawn in the mainstream Eel River. Those few fish that do make it up here to reproduce will be even more important to the survival of these populations.

Allllll aboard The Santa Train

Some trains are already sold out, but some are still available online at www.skunktrain.com/christmas.html.

Above: The train waits to depart the Willits Depot in the fresh snow. Below: Al Robinson waves as the train crosses Croppley Lane last week.

Photo by Eldon Miller Photo by Maureen Moore

The snow that blanketed town and the surrounding hills and valleys last week made rides on the Skunk Train's annual Christmas Train even more festive. The engines pulled pajama-clad kids of all ages through our Northern California Winter Wonderland as they enjoyed carols on board with train singer Greg Schindel, cookies and cocoa from helpful elves, and wrote letters to Santa Claus.

The 90-minute ride's halfway point features a lovely light display in a forest clearing along the tracks. Special visitors are also picked up there; Santa and Mrs. Claus, who smile for photos, accept letters, hear stories and dispense candy canes and more merriment on the return ride.

Trains will run daily through December 23. See calendar page for daily train times.

Wishing holiday cheer to all of you

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

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Willits Weekly
EST. 2013
A Nostalgic & Modern Record of Community and Life in Willits

What's Happening Around Town

Things to do, see and enjoy in and around Willits

Thursday, December 19

Shanachie Pub: Solo coastal guitarist Steven Bates, 3rd Thursday of every month. 6 pm, no cover. 50 South Main Street. Visit www.myspace.com/stevenbatesmusician.

Friday, December 20



Annual Rotary Crab Sale: rescheduled from last weekend. Fresh boiled crabs, today from 9 am to 6 pm, and Saturday from 9 am until crabs are gone. \$10 per crab; proceeds to benefit the Rotary's scholarship program. 2,500 pounds of crab on order! Location: either Sweetwater Station or La Bodega, on Highway 101.

Willits Weekly Christmas Cookie Party: Wonderful readers and supporters, come join us this evening, from 4 to 7 pm, upstairs at the Great Room at the Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street, for our 1st annual Cookie Contest, Holiday Party and Cookie Swap. All are welcome! Come taste our "celebrity" bakers' cookies, and cast your vote for the People's Choice award. Bring your own cookies to swap. Invited bakers include:

Tam Adams of Emandal, Kathryn Sterngold of SugarKat Kitchen, Lori Dorholt and Kathy Albright of Ardella's, Lynn Kennelly of the Willits Chamber of Commerce, a team from Howard Memorial Hospital, and the ladies of Les Schwab Tire Center. Judges include Lee Bryant, Jolene Carrillo and Holly Madrigal. There will also be a cookie swap table, so those who want to bring cookies and treats to exchange with other eventgoers can do so. A soundtrack of holiday music will keep the spirit of the evening festive, and Devon Jones will sing, accompanied by Nancy New on guitar. Willits Weekly will also have back issues available, and T-shirts and gift subscriptions packaged for holiday gifts.

Round Valley Farmers Market Holiday Craft Fair: noon to 4 pm in the Round Valley Library Commons Community room. Farmers, bakers, crafters, musicians, artists ... all are welcome! Vendors pay only \$5. Come gather with community and support local economy. Info: Genevieve at 983-8338

Saturday, December 21

19th Annual Winter Solstice Celebration and Spiral Dance: traditional ceremony of drumming, songs and dance, elemental honoring and spiral dance, plus this year: a midwinter tale for children and adults about generosity and giving. Costumes encouraged. 6:30 pm at Little Lake Grange, 291

School Street. \$5 to \$10 donation for the Food Bank; also bring extra warm blankets, coats, socks, etc. for donations. Info: 459-6362.

Wowsler Winter Solstice Celebration: Wowsler and Mendo Tribal Werkz present "Audio Corroboree, A Winter Solstice Celebration," debuting Mendo's new community arts/build space, at Wowsler, 330 East Commercial Street. Featuring heavy-hitter DJs An-Ten-Nae (acid crunk from San Francisco), iNi (trip hop, dub step, drum & bass, & down-tempo-

Sebastopol), Zack Darling (mashup-meets-bass-fusion, North Bay), and Lexonic (progressive trance, Bay Area). Lights by AuroraScope and Manna Light; sound by Full Circle; deco by Psynesthesia and Full Circle, and aerials by Circus Mecca. 18+ to enter. 21 to drink @ the outdoor bar. 7 pm to midnight. \$20 at the door; no presales. A benefit for Wowsler; free entry for Wowsler members. Designated drivers get 5 free sodas. Visit: www.wowsleric.com; www.audiocorroboree.com

Shanachie Pub: Forrest & Friends Holiday Jam, with Forrest Glycer of Schindig. Acoustic and electric music to celebrate the holidays. 8 pm. No cover. 50 South Main Street. Info: 459-9194.

Tuesday, December 24

Tightwad Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre: All 2D movies that are in their second week are \$5 on Tuesdays at the Noyo Theatre

for all ages, all showings. This week's "Tightwad" movie: "The Hobbit" (in 2D). For showtimes: w w w . noyotheatre. com. 57 East Commercial Street. 459-6660. Noyo Theatre will be open on Christmas Day, too.

Annual Christmas Eve Service: Willits United Methodist Church, 7 to 9 pm. 286 School Street. Everyone is welcome!

Traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service: at St. John Lutheran Church, 24 Mill Creek Drive. 7 pm. Please bring non-perishable food items to donate to the Willits Food Bank. Info: 459-2988.



Christmas Day

Wednesday, December 25

Merry Christmas!
Free Christmas Dinner: Long Valley Garden Club invites the public to its 9th annual free Christmas dinner on Christmas Day, from 12 noon to 6 pm in Laytonville, at 375 Harwood Road. Tuesday prep will be from 9 am to noon. Please join us for either or both days. To donate food and/or time, call Amanda at 984-7108.

Santa Trains

run through 12/23

Skunk Train Santa Trains: special Christmas Trains through December 23 at the Willits Depot: 90-minute round-trip train rides, including a visit from Santa and his elves, music, cocoa and cookies. All guests encouraged to wear pajamas! Tickets: \$35 for adults; \$25 for kids (2 to 12). 964-6371 or www.skunktrain.com. Departures from the Willits Depot: December 19 at 3:30 pm, December 20, at 3:30 pm (only a few tickets left) and at 6:30 pm, December 21, 12:30 and 3:30 pm trains sold out; 6:30 pm train (only a few tickets left), December 22, 12:30 and 3:30 pm trains (only a few tickets left), and 6:30 pm, December 23, 12:30, 3:30 and 6:30 pm.



Photo by Dick Graham

New Year's Eve events

New Year's Eve at Digger's: featuring DJ Mikey T, no cover, champagne at midnight. 244 South Main Street.

New Year's Eve at Shanachie Pub: featuring Nevada soul/funk/power trio The Mark Sexton Band: "the love child of Stevie Wonder, Soulive, and Steely Dan." Also, Hodge Podge Productions. 8 pm. \$10 cover. Visit www.marksextonband.com. 50 South Main Street. Info: 459-9194.

New Year's Eve Special Packages: Enjoy New Year's Eve with these package deals from Baechtel Creek Inn, Adam's Restaurant and Shanachie Pub: Package #1: 1. A premium room for two at Baechtel Creek Inn & Spa; 2. Dinner for two at Adam's Restaurant, including an appetizer, soup or salad, entree and champagne; 3. A ride for two, to and from Baechtel Creek Inn and Adam's Restaurant/Shanachie Pub by Willits Designated Drivers. 4. Two tickets for the New Year's Eve Party at Shanachie Pub. \$280 plus tax per couple; call Baechtel Creek Inn at 459-9063. Package #2: 1. Dinner for two at Adam's Restaurant including an appetizer, soup or salad, entree and champagne; 2. Two tickets for the New Year's Eve Party at Shanachie Pub. \$160 plus tax per couple, call Adam's Restaurant at 456-9226.

Ongoing Events

Willits Farmers Market: Winter market at Little Lake Grange, 291 School Street, from 3 to 5:30 pm. No market on Thursday, December 26.

Willits Community Drum Circle: 7 to 10 pm at the Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East Commercial Street. Every 2nd and 4th Fridays. Free. Everyone is welcome. Info: 459-4932

Willits Frontier Twirlers: on Christmas break; classes will resume on Monday nights at the Willits Center for the Arts, starting January 6. Info: 459-9526.

Brooktrails Lodge Winter Schedule: every Thursday night at 8 pm: "Dream Capsule Entertainment," featuring local musicians and talent; Happy Hour, and Ladies' Night specials. Every Friday night: Open Mic, with drink specials and prizes. Every Saturday night: "Electro-Dance" at 7 pm. Info: Shawntee Wirth at dreamcapsuleindustries@gmail.com or 459-6792.

Laytonville Winter Farmers Market: Mondays from 2:30 to 4:30 at the Laytonville Grange, 1620 Branscomb Road. Buy local: vegetables, apples, juice, bakery, beef, lamb, pork, jewelry, aprons, children's clothing, knife sharpening and more.

Wrap for the Pups at Willits Power



Love dogs? Hate wrapping presents? Willits Power Carhartt has a solution: Bring in your gifts to the store at 1600 South Main Street, and for \$2 to \$4 per gift, staff will wrap gifts for you. Proceeds will be donated to the Frank Grasse Dog Park. Willits Power will match the total raised and present the monies to the park after the event's end on Christmas Eve. Boxes and a selection of festive papers are both available at Willits Power; all you have to do is bring the gifts! More information: 459-6420.

Christmas Tree pickup Jan 4

Boy Scouts will pick up trees free of charge

Annual Boy Scouts Christmas Tree Pickup: Saturday, January 4, 9 am to 3 pm. Please have your tree ready and visibly placed near the street by 9 am. A community service provided by Boy Scout Troop 212 and the First Baptist Church. Scouts in uniform will gladly accept donations

Get in the Act!

WCT offers master classes

Ever dream about performing onstage but didn't know how? Want to design and operate the lights and sound system of a live performance, or even to design and build a set? Stop dreaming and actually learn from the masters. Live that dream!

Tony Award-nominated actress, Linda Posner, is offering two master classes on "Acting and Auditioning," on Saturday, January 18, and Saturday, January 25 at the Willits Community Theatre.

Professional theater technicians, Joe Dowling and Kevin Moore, will begin a four-class series in "Theater Tech" beginning on Saturday, January 11. This first class will cover hands-



on operation of lights and sound equipment. Three additional Saturday classes, scheduled for February and March, will cover light rigging, light and sound design and set construction. Class times are 10 am to 1 pm. Additional workshops are scheduled through May and include "Playwriting" with Don and Ann Samson, and "Directing" with Bill Barksdale.

Fees per class are \$25 adults and \$15 students. Scholarships are available to cover all costs. Funded by a grant from the Mendocino Community Foundation. Full class descriptions and scholarship forms are available at www.willits theatre.org or call 459-0895 for more info.

Come celebrate the holidays and **New Year's Eve** with all of us at

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Ring in the beginning of 2014 with **D.J. Mikey T.**

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Thurs: 12:30, 3:00, 5:30 & 8:00pm

HOBBIT: The Desolation of Smaug in 2D/3D (PG-13) 2hrs 41mins
Friday: (2D) 4:15, (3D) 7:15pm
Sat-Tues: (2D) 1:00, 4:15, (3D) 7:15pm
Xmas: (2D) 4:15, (3D) 7:15pm
Thurs: (2D) 1:00, 4:15, (3D) 7:15pm

Tightwad Tuesday Film: HOBBIT 2 in 2D only - \$5.00
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Liz Carrillo, Sheryl McFadden and Arcelia Duran pose with the caroling kids at of The Flower Lady of Willits

Caroling Kids

Room to Bloom Preschool kids sing for season

The kids of Room to Bloom Preschool were out caroling and spreading holiday joy to local businesses and passers-by on the sidewalk this week, and enjoyed the smiles and effect their singing had on the surprised and happy listeners. During their three trips out, they popped into many businesses, including Taco Bravo, the police and fire departments, Ardella's, First Nails, Brickhouse Coffee, Paradise Juice, Chase and North Valley banks and Tango. They sang favorites "Feliz Navidad," "Jingle Bells," and more.



Left: Brookside winners: Rajan and McKenzie Erickson and Shelby Bowen. Right: Blosser winners: Samantha Jenkins, Quinn Harroun, Heaven Siderakis.

Walk-a-Thon WINNERS

Elementary schools award top earners

Six students won top awards for their earning efforts for this year's Walk-A-Thon events, held at Brookside and Blosser Lane Elementary Schools this year. Three winners were awarded from each school. Winners from Brookside included Rajan Erickson and McKenzie Erickson who both tied for first/second place and Shelby Bowen, who won third place. Blosser winners included Samantha Jenkins in first, Quinn Harroun in second and Heaven Siderakis in third.

First-place winners received a trip to the Willits KOA, second-place winners received tickets to the Noyo Theatre, and third-place winners received a \$25 Visa gift card.

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Help Wanted
 Managing Director: WCT seeks permanent P/T administrator: publicity & marketing, computer graphics, finance, personnel, record keeping and community liaison. Salary negotiated. See willitsweekly.com for full job description. Submit resume to WCT, P.O. Box 80, Willits, or wct@willitsonline.com.

Help Wanted
 Ardella's Downtown Diner now hiring all positions. Apply within. No phone calls please.

Help Wanted
 Housekeeper wanted for Baechtel Creek Inn. Must be able to go up and down stairs, lift up to 30 pounds, and be reliable and willing to work. Apply in person.

Help Wanted
 Maintenance person wanted for Baechtel Creek Inn. Must be available on weekends, and weekdays. Apply in person.

House Rental Wanted
 Looking for a 3 bedroom house to rent long-term, close to town. Local Willits business owner (with 1 dog). Very responsible and quiet. 707-235-9315; before January 1 preferred. References available upon request.

New Patients Welcome
 Phillip J. D'Angelo, DDS
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Old Cars Wanted
 ALWAYS LOOKING for Cars, Scooters & Motorcycles! '40s thru '50s. Show Car to Parts Car. Please call Alan: 489-7165 or email agrossman@pacific.net.

Pinball Machines
 PINBALL MACHINES for sale. 459-6372.

Rummage Sale
 Every Saturday from 10 am to 2 pm at 1st Baptist Church, 145 Wood Street. Rain or shine. We accept rummage donations, and have an ever-changing selection of goods!

Swim Coaches Wanted
 Swim Coaches for Willits Otters swim team, Feb. through Aug. Coaching experience desired. Monday through Thursday, 5:30 to 7 pm. Some weekends required for swim meets. Call 391-2154.

Help Wanted
 Front desk agent wanted for Baechtel Creek Inn. Rotating schedule. Must be flexible and customer service-oriented. Apply in person.

Puzzle Answers From Page 4

CLASSIFIEDS!
 \$10 | 30 words | 2 weeks!

L	O	E	B	S	A	B	L	E	S				
I	N	D	E	P	E	N	D	E	N	C	E		
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A	I	D	P	C	T								
P	P	T	U	N	A	U	A	H					
U	R	U	S	G	Y	R	A	L					
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Thanksgiving and Hanukkah have passed, and Christmas and New Year's are ahead. This is a time for family, friends, celebration and peace. It is also a time when many of us experience extra tension or stress in our relationships. The holidays can feel like we're entering a mine field of unexpected blow-ups.

Holidays can trigger feelings and produce expectations in you that you might not even be aware of. It doesn't mean that anything is wrong with your relationship if you find yourself all of a sudden in the middle of an argument with your partner. It could happen at the most innocuous times, while you are preparing your holiday dinner, for example, or when engaged in other activities together. In fact, unexpected arguments are quite common during this time of the year.

Be extra-gentle and understanding with yourself and one another during the holidays. Avoid picking at each other and getting into an argument. Express what makes you unhappy, stressed or fearful. Put energy into discussing what you need from each other right now and what would be helpful.

Again, give yourself and your partner some extra slack. It will help to keep you from taking things too personally. Remember, it is the time of the year that is stressful, not necessarily your relationship that is causing stress! If you have children, be extra-loving with them as well.

Holidays come with a certain amount of built-in stress that we need to be aware of and counterbalance. A good way to do that is by increasing the positivity in your relationship. Experiment with going out of your way to notice and express what you appreciate and like about your partner and your partnership.

It can be small things like how much you liked

Mushroom-growing log stack approved for

Brooktrails Community Garden

Mike A'Dair
 Reporter: mike@willitsweekly.com

The North Coast Mushroom Farmers' Cooperative has permission to place a demonstration stack of mushroom-growing logs in a shady area of the Brooktrails Community Garden, the township's board of directors decided at a December 10 meeting.

Brooktrails resident Peter Norris made the request on behalf of the cooperative. Norris had previously approached the board on November 12, and, while the board seemed favorable to the idea, Director Tim Ramminger wondered if allowing Norris and the 'shroomers to put two or three 5 foot by 5 foot stacks of mushroom-growing logs in the garden could amount to an improper gift of public resources to a private business.

The board requested a legal opinion from Brooktrails Counsel Christopher Neary, who determined it would be legally permissible to offer space in the Brooktrails garden for the purposes of demonstrating how to go about growing Shitake mushrooms.

Norris said it isn't totally clear whether the cooperative will actually use the Brooktrails Community Garden as a mushroom-growing space. "Right now some of our board members are concerned about lack of security if we were to put some stacks there," Norris said. "But we will probably put something in there in the spring."

Currently about 25 people are members of the cooperative, Norris added, and stacks have been placed from Laytonville to Greenfield Ranch in the Ukiah area. He noted the cooperative also has obtained permission to put a stack of mushroom-growing logs in the Willits Community Garden, near the WISC center on South Lenore Street.

When asked why the cooperative wants to teach people how to grow mushrooms, Norris said, "We want to create living-wage jobs."

Brooktrails seeks climate money

Directors also unanimously approved a resolution stating the district's support for a grassroots effort to distribute revenues from carbon emissions cap-and-trade sales to local districts in California, including Brooktrails.

The Local Climate Initiative is being coordinated by a coalition of local governments and their lobbying organizations, including the California Special Districts Association, of which Brooktrails Township is a member.

The focus of the initiative is Assembly Bill 32, also known as the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006. That act currently stipulates that funds generated from carbon emissions sales be directed toward school districts in California to assist with energy conservation education.

However, the Local Climate Initiative seeks to amend the language of AB32 to provide that funds generated from carbon emissions cap-and-trade sales can also be distributed to local governments, including the governments of special districts, for energy-generating or energy-saving projects.

According to the resolution, Brooktrails has "identified \$2 million in unmet needs for high-priority projects that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase energy efficiency, and capture and sequester greenhouse gases, including installation of solar technology, construction of green facilities, and the installation of energy-efficient pumps and processing equipment."

The resolution designates Brooktrails General Manager Denise Rose as the township's Local Climate Initiative representative.

Happy Holidays the way he or she looked at you. But it makes a huge difference, whether you just keep your thoughts to yourself or whether you express them out loud. It might make you both feel so good that you will decide to keep doing it and make it a habit for the New Year.

If you have the same arguments that come up every year, maybe now is the moment to come up with a preventive strategy or a plan beforehand so you do not step into the same traps over and over again? Make your relationship your first priority. Relax, take time to sit together with a cup of tea, a glass of wine, or go for a walk. Share your hot spots and trigger points. Learn what kind of extra support you need from each other.

Remember, it is not about who is right and who is wrong. It is about discovering how the holidays can be more enjoyable for both of you and the whole family. It is about being in touch with what is meaningful to you and what you value.

If you are alone during the holidays, have a little powwow with yourself. Acknowledge what is difficult for you around these days. Remember what actions have helped you in the past or envision how you would like your holidays to look and who could be your ally. It can be fun to do something completely different. You might even consider inventing a new holiday tradition.

For those folks who don't grapple with the above issues and cannot relate to what I am writing about, simply enjoy the holidays with your family, friends and partners.

Merry Christmas and a fulfilling New Year to all of you!

Doris Wier is a certified life and relationship coach who works and lives in Willits. She coaches individuals, couples and teachers, and offers Explore-Shops on conflict resolution in partnerships. For more information on the process, call 456-9246, or check www.embraceconflicts.com and www.facebook.com/doriswier.

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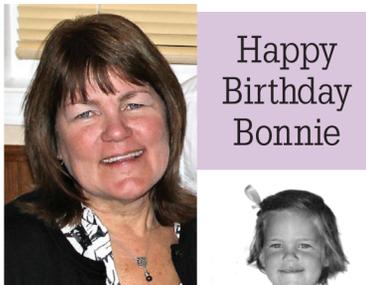
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Congratulations Column



Happy Birthday Bonnie

Happy Birthday to Bonnie Madrigal, born December 16, 1953. To my darling wife of 40 years and 4 beautiful children, wishing you a glorious 60th birthday! The years come and go, but you are still as sweet as ever! I love you! - Dave

Send us your congratulatory notes - they're free!
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Left: Ana and Gil Cox, co-owners of Summer Breeze Ranch.
Photo by Dean Cox

Below: Goats in the Coxes' "Animal Welfare Approved" flock eat natural grass hay, which is grown organically right on the ranch.
At bottom: Ranch foreman Mike Sturm with baby Tinker and Xena, the grandmother of the ranch's seven Anatolian shepherds.
Photos by Ana Cox

Goat of Approval

Shamrock Artisan Cheese goats now 'Animal Welfare Approved'

The flock of dairy goats at Gil and Ana Cox's Summer Breeze Ranch in Willits - where Shamrock Artisan Cheese is handmade from start to finish - is now certified as "Animal Welfare Approved."

This certification and food label lets consumers know that these animals were raised in accordance with the highest animal welfare standards in the United States, using sustainable agriculture methods on an independent family farm.

"I'm proud of everything that we've been able to accomplish while we've been in this county, which I absolutely adore," Ana Cox said. "I am so glad to be part of Mendocino County."

The Coxes are currently raising 186 goats, including Alpines, La Manchas, "and a very few Nubians," Ana said. "That's our milkers, our dries [goats who will be bred this year to milk next year], our babies, and our boys."

Like other AWA farmers across the country, the Coxes recognize the growing interest consumers have in how animals are being raised. Raising the goats out on pasture is integral to the farm's operation.

"Letting our animals have the chance to be out enjoying our ranch and eating what is good for them is the most important thing for us," says Ana. "We don't push them like larger dairies; we let them be goats." The Coxes milk 98 La Mancha and Alpine does on 130 acres, and produce their Shamrock Artisan Goat Cheeses

at their cheese processing facility right on the ranch.

The Coxes shared the Redwood Empire Fair's 2013 "Agriculist of the Year" honor this year for their outstanding management practices and their success in agricultural endeavors in Mendocino County. Achieving AWA certification for their dairy goats also distinguishes their animal husbandry practices in the marketplace.

"While our local markets know us, customers who don't know us as well are looking for something that verifies we're raising our animals the way we say we are," says Ana. "AWA certification does just that."

Shamrock Artisan Goat Cheese is available at the Willits Farmers Market (Thursdays from 3 to 5:30 pm at the Little Lake Grange during the winter), as well as other farmers markets in Mendocino and Sonoma Counties



and stores throughout Northern California.

At the Willits market right now, Gil and Ana are featuring their new Tome du Corbier cheese.

To buy cheese directly from the farm or to place an order for shipment, contact Ana at ana@shamrockartisan.com or 459-2363. To learn more about the farm, visit www.

Read the rest of **Goat** | Over on Page 11

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Brooktrails Fire Department 2013 Awards

On Saturday, December 14, the Brooktrails Firefighters Association held its annual Christmas party. As part of the party, the Top 10 awards and Chief Awards were presented.

The Top 10 responder awards are for the firefighters who attend the most calls and drills for the year, and they were presented to the following firefighters: 1. Joshua Marcantonio; 2. Robert Nowlin; 3. Robert McKenzie; 4. John Turner; 5. Albert Hinkle; 6. Eli Owen; 7. Kevin Kocher; 8. David Edgar; 9. Justin Sentak; and 10. Andy Whitlock.

The Chief's Award is presented to those who serve above the call of duty. Typically, it is awarded to an individual, however this year it was presented by Fire Chief Daryl Schoepner to the following firefighters: Deputy Chief Jon Noyer; Battalion Chief Robert Nowlin; Captain Andy Whitlock; Engineer Robert McKenzie; Engineer David Edgar; Firefighter Martin Duran; Firefighter Albert Hinkle; Firefighter John Turner; Firefighter Niko Steffen; Firefighter Joshua Marcantonio; and Firefighter Eli Owen.

It was their skill, teamwork, compassion and professionalism that truly made a difference in saving lives.

A special thank you to the Willits Lions Club for a great meal and to the Flower Lady of Willits for the beautiful flowers!!

- Brooktrails Fire Department

The rest of **City Water** | From Page 1

reservoirs. He said the supply is now about 75 to 80 days.

The city's water rights are not helping to keep much-needed water behind dams. "We have to release what is coming in because there is so little coming in," Anderson said. The city has about 467 acre feet of water, but it is not all going to be usable.

At National Weather Service headquarters in Eureka, there is no relief in the forecast. "We keep looking out as far as we can - nothing changes at all," said Alex Dodd of the NWS.

Looking at rainfall data from Ukiah, Dodd said there has been 7.5 inches of rain in Ukiah since January 1, on track to be the driest calendar year on record.

City Hall's third level of water conservation will not come before the council until Willits has less than 300 acre feet of water behind its dams.

The current water conservation policy calls for voluntary cutbacks and restricts outdoor watering to even and odd days of the week.

Stepping up conservation to the next level would mean commercial and industrial users would be asked to reduce water use by 15 percent, "provided that no commercial or industrial user will be required to reduce usage to less than 100 gallons per day."

The policy states homes would be limited to 250 gallons per occupied residential unit per day. If taken to the next phase, the city's policy also bans, for example, washing sidewalks and

vehicles.

Councilman Bruce Burton urged his fellow council members to prepare for talks about conserving more water.

"I think we are going to need to get that on the next agenda," Burton said. "I think we need to be prepared to have a discussion about additional water conservation measures."

City Manager Adrienne Moore said this week it is likely the city will issue a call for voluntary phase III conservation if there is no significant rainfall from now until the Jan. 8 council meeting.

Tidbits and Reports

Geoffrey Wright, Caltrans' resident engineer for the Willits bypass, reported work on the project is in a lull for the winter season.

Bernard Kamoroff reported to the council that the recent biker's Toy Run was a success. About 150 bikers rode in the event. Kamoroff said almost all Willits' merchants donated to the raffle.

City Hall's temporary financial director spoke briefly to the council. "I have probably dealt with many of the challenges I will face here," Gordon Elton said. "But I was enjoying my retirement."

Elton replaces Joanne Cavallari who took employment with the city of Cloverdale earlier this year. Elton is retired from the City of Ukiah.

Ice covered many of Willits parking lots, streets and sidewalks, not just

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

by the planning commission first. If an applicant was unhappy with the planning commission's decision, he or she could appeal its decision to the supervisors.

Only one member of the public spoke on the proposed ordinance. Lee Edmundson, a resident of the village of Mendocino and longtime participant in politics there. Edmundson said he had not heard anything about the issue being on the supervisors' agenda for the December 16 meeting.

"I have concerns about this," he said. "I'm not sure how much time you guys have had to think about this. I would urge you to kick the can down the road on this. Think about it and see if you can think of any unforeseen consequences that might arise if you guys approve this."

Third District Supervisor John Pinches assured Edmundson his fears were groundless and the ordinance was designed to address questions of a "seasonal nature," such as permits for log decks, that might not be able to be approved in a timely manner if they were to go through the regular planning process.

Supervisor Dan Gjerde (4th District) said he wanted a stipulation to be included in the ordinance which would require the board to first make a finding that time was, indeed, "of the essence." However, County Counsel Thomas Parker told Gjerde that such would be the case when any county supervisor brought the item to the board for emergency consideration.

The board then clarified how the process will work. First, a supervisor will bring a planning question to the board. Then the board will vote on whether the item should be considered. Only then will the board consider the item.

The board will not be required to provide any more public notice than that any particular item is on the agenda for board consideration.

According to Parker, the putative item could be considered on the same day the question of whether or not to consider the item is approved. Unlike ordinary "emergency items," which require four-fifths board approval to be heard, these "time sensitive" planning items will require only a simple majority (three affirmative votes) to be heard.

Board Chairman Dan Hamburg said he would not vote for the item because he thought it would upset members of the planning commission.

"What we are basically telling them is, you are not good enough to hear the really good stuff. We will hear the good stuff, or the stuff we want to hear; you can hear the other stuff. I don't like that, and I don't think I would like it if I was a member of the planning commission."

The item was approved with little other discussion. Supervisors Pinches, Carre Brown and John McCowen voted in favor of the ordinance; supervisors Hamburg and Gjerde against it.

The rest of **Letters** | From Page 2

We safeguard the farmland through the Williamson Act; shouldn't our future farmers also receive educational protection?

The many conferences and conventions through the Future Farmers are, in many cases, life-changing events for students who have never been out of Willits. The career development and public speaking techniques taught in the program are lifetime skills. The ag department sponsors trips to six trade schools and junior colleges to help students find a career after graduation. Everyone is either in agriculture, knows someone in agriculture, or knows a child who has benefited from an agricultural program - or eats.

Please take 20 minutes to write or email Governor Brown (please postmark letters by 12/20/2013) and forward copies of the same letter to our state legislators, Senator Noreen Evans and Assemblyman Wes Chesbro. Explain to the folks in Sacramento the necessity of the Agricultural Incentive Grant. Write about how important agriculture is to our local economy and state, and how it has benefited us or those we know, so this program can continue.

Write to: Governor Jerry Brown, State Capitol, Suite 1173, Sacramento, CA 95814; Senator Noreen Evans, 200 South School Street, Suite D, Ukiah, CA 95482; and Assemblyman Wes Chesbro at the same address: 200 South School Street, Suite D, Ukiah CA 95482.

I am concerned for the future of agriculture.

Becky Bowlds, Willits High School agriculture teacher

Thanks to Stacey

To the Editor:
The Harrah Senior Center would like to say thank you and a sad goodbye to Stacey, our loving bus driver for all the time he's been here with a huge heart. We - the center staff and all his friends who rode the bus - will miss you very much, and we wish you well in your new job. Lots of love,

Priscilla Tarver, for the Harrah Senior Center

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Wishing You a Happy Holiday

The rest of **Salmon** | From Page 4

Successful spawning without interruption or harassment is something that creek lovers and fish aficionados can work to ensure. For those who want to observe salmon and steelhead at a safe distance, finding a good vantage point to look down onto the creek makes a difference. Getting to the site before the sun casts a glare on the water will improve your viewing, too.

Inadvertent activity that causes harassment of these fish will negatively affect their ability to spawn successfully. If your presence affects the fish's behavior and it swims away from its spawning nest (redd), then you are too close and should back away.

Observing these fish is best done with binoculars from a distance. Some digital cameras have adequate zoom capabilities that you can further magnify on a computer.

Wading in the creek while adult salmonids are spawning is not recommended, because of the potential to step on redds and destroy the embryos. This year's opportunity to see these fish in local creeks will be from December through April.

It could be argued that promoting fish viewing might increase poaching of these special creatures. Another opinion is that more sets of caring eyes will reduce the opportunity for poachers to succeed. Since harvesting any fish in these creeks is illegal, reporting occurrences is encouraged - if it can be done in a manner safe to you.

Joe Scriven has been working on salmonid habitat projects in Mendocino County since 1998. His ability to catch steelhead has not improved during that time, but he still enjoys being on the water. He works for the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District as a fisheries biologist and project manager. Contact him at joe_scriven@mrccd.org.

The rest of **Goat** | From Page 10

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TWINKLE TWINKLE



All over town, homes are full of night-time festivity, including these snapped by Willits Weekly's Maureen Moore last week. Now that it's not quite so freezing cold, hop in the car and take a tour of the twinkles and decorations this holiday!



Furry Friends Hoping for a Home

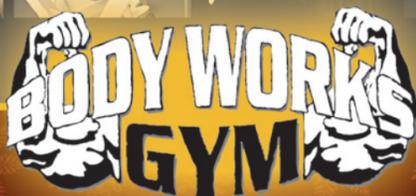
Meet super-sweet little Spot, a 15-pound terrier mix! This little guy was found all by himself way out on a rural road in our county, and sadly nobody came looking for him. We are guessing his age to be around 5 years old. And as he was a stray dog, we don't know anything about his past. But what we do know is that he seems to be a well-balanced canine with a delightful disposition – and we believe he will make a great companion or a family pet. Spot is very friendly, and gets along great with both dogs and people. He's the perfect-sized dog to hang out on your lap, or to go for walks. Spot is current on his vaccinations, and is already neutered – so he's ready to meet his new family & go home right away!



Photo by Rood Coats

The Ukiah Animal Shelter, 298 Plant Road, is open Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10 am to 4:30 pm and Wednesday from 10 am to 6:30 pm. More info: www.pawstoadopt.com or contact Adoption Coordinator Katherine Houghtby at 707-467-6453 or houghtbyk@co.mendocino.ca.us

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