

Brooktrails board hears results of water reuse study

Barbara O'Reardon
Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

Due to space constraints in the final edition of the newspaper for 2025, a portion of the report on the last meeting in 2025 of the Brooktrails Township Community Services District Board had to be held until now.

Summaries and highlights of recent board meetings in 2026 will be reported in the February 19 issue.

As the December 9 meeting began, District General Manager Tamara Alaniz introduced the Carollo Engineers environmental engineer to the board: "Andy Salveson has been the lead engineer on our water reuse planning study, and he's going to talk about what the results of the planning study were – what came from the work that we have done. We received a grant from the state to apply for the grant for the planning study. We received those grants, and through those grants

Read more of **Brooktrails**
Over on Page 9

Willits man arrested after standoff with UPD

Posted by Ukiah Police Department

On Monday, February 2, 2026, at approximately 7:28 pm, officers from the Ukiah Police Department were dispatched to the 500 block of North State Street regarding a report of a male subject in possession of a large knife who was yelling and acting erratically. The subject was reported to be shirtless.

Upon arrival, UPD officers contacted the male subject, later identified as Robert Wayne Bell, 43, out of Willits, who was making sporadic and incoherent statements. With the assistance of Redwood Community Services, officers attempted for over an hour to negotiate with Bell in an effort to have him drop the knife and accept assistance.

While attempting to de-escalate and gain compliance from Bell, he actively cut himself and exposed his genitals to officers. It was apparent that Bell was under the influence of a controlled substance and not comprehending

Read the rest of **Arrested**
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Above, from left: Baby clothes, like this adorable onesie, are available to purchase at the Senior Center Thrift Store. The Thrift Store is located just north of the main Senior Center building at 1501 Baechtel Road. A Willits Wolverine shirt and a Hurley T-shirt are ready to find a home. Below: Center employee Melissa Wiley and volunteer Helen Oglesby smile at the front desk of the Thrift Store and will be excited to see everyone at this weekend's Thrift Store Extravaganza sale.



Above, from left: Music sections of thrift stores always generate fun finds: Get ready to set the mood for Valentine's Day with this "Sinatra Love Songs" CD, complete with 15 romantic classics. Soak in the instrumental arrangements with this "The Very Best of Yanni" CD. There's sure to also be some real bangers on this "Greatest Hits of 1721" compilation CD, which includes songs from Bach, Vivaldi and more. Below, left: Volunteer Gerry Figg-Hoblyn percolates on a price for this hand-painted bird on a gourd which came in as a donation. Below, right: Shelves are lined with special treasures including these various glass items. At bottom, from left: Books and books and books are available to purchase. The "to sort" pile of clothing in the back is overflowing the collection bins. Both fancy and more everyday shoes are offered for sale.

Thrift Store Extravaganza

Willits Senior Center gears up for \$1 clothing blowout sale at Saturday event

Refresh your wardrobe, create a costume, or search for the perfect statement piece at the Willits Senior Center's upcoming Thrift Store Extravaganza sale this Saturday, February 7.

From 11 am to 3 pm, all clothing items will be just \$1 each as the center is brimming with pants, shirts, coats, sweaters, sleepwear and more, and they're hoping to make room fast so they can process the mountain of donated bags and move new pieces out onto the floor.

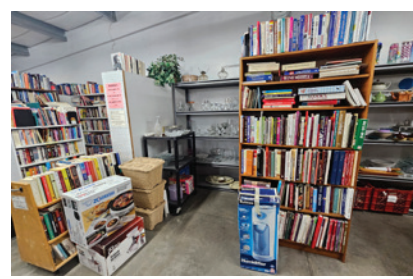
"We're going to try and do this kind of sale monthly," said Willits Senior Center Executive Director Richard Baker. "At least something like this until we can get though all the clothing donations we have. We hardly have room to store everything that we've received. We have a cargo container stuffed full of things we haven't even been able to go through yet!"

The thrift store helps generate 25 to 30 percent of the funds needed to run the Willits Senior Center, and these sales help get customers in the doors and items back out into the community.

"There are so many generous people in the community, and we are so pleased to receive so many donations," thanked Baker. "We try not to refuse anything, but we do ask that people be selective in what they choose to bring to us, so that we can have the best opportunity to sell it and help raise money to keep things operating for years to come."

Anyone interested in volunteering to help sort items is welcome to contact Baker to sign up by calling 707-459-6826.

– Maureen Jennison



Job cuts coming to City of Willits

B.B. Kamoroff
Reporter
willitsweekly@gmail.com

Dark clouds hung over city hall at the first city council meeting of 2026, on January 14. Mayor Tom Allman, reelected as mayor for 2026, did not mince words: "Our financial situation makes this a very tough year. In the next 90 days, 120 days, this council is going to make some really tough decisions."

Facing a \$2 million deficit, interim city manager Bob Richardson repeatedly said that he was working on a "reorganization of the city." Without coming right out and saying it, Richardson and city council members made it clear that some city employees are going to lose their jobs.

The council and the city manager, expressing the need for outside help with the reorganization – and most likely not wanting to be the ones blamed for wielding the axe – have hired a personnel/human resources consultant, Deborah Muchmore of Muchmore Than Consulting

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

Bakewell family files wrongful death suit

Submitted by West Coast Trial Lawyers

February 2 – The family of a 36-year-old father of three filed a federal wrongful death lawsuit today, saying cops applied excessive force and used unconstitutional policing practices, and then failed to provide medical care, when victim Nicholas Bakewell stopped breathing.

"Following the death of George Floyd, law enforcement agencies nationwide recognized the dangers of positional asphyxia and updated training accordingly," said Houman Sayaghi, a partner at West Coast Trial Lawyers, which represents the Bakewell family. "This case raises serious questions about whether those safeguards were followed when they mattered most."

The lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California against deputies from the Mendocino County Sheriff's Department, officers from the City of Willits Police Department,

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

Animal Services has spay / neuter appointments for dogs and cats

Posted by Mendocino Animal Care Services

Upcoming cat and dog spay/neuter appointments are available March 6, 7 and 8 at Mendocino County Animal Care Services, 298 Plant Road in Ukiah.

(Please be sure to read the ENTIRE post)

Mendocino Animal Care Services is happy to announce that we will be collaborating with Animal Balance this year to host THREE high-volume spay and neuter clinics, and we have available appointments for the first upcoming clinic.

As of the afternoon of February 3, the March 6 clinic has a few spots left for small male dogs and male and female cats.

March 7 and 8 both still have spots for large and small dogs as well as male and female cats.

We are asking that those interested in booking an appointment call the clinic line at 707-463-4782.

Please keep in mind:

These appointments cost a total of \$122, and this amount is due at the time of booking. You will be asked to pay with a card over the phone. This amount will NOT be refunded if you cancel or no show for your appointment.

Currently, we are only booking one animal per owner. If we end up with an excess of open appointments, we may circle back to allow for multiple animals from the same home.

No dogs over 90 pounds or flat faced dogs (pugs, bulldogs, etc.) for this clinic.

These appointments will be booked on a first come/first served basis. If all the slots are full at your time of calling, you can be placed on the waitlist for a future clinic.

There may be a high-volume response to this post so please be patient while waiting for a return call and/or if the voice mail is momentarily full. We will get back to everyone as quickly as we can.

The shelter is CLOSED Saturday afternoon - Tuesday morning. Messages will NOT be returned during that time. Please do not spam message the voicemail - if you have left your info we will get back to you ASAP during business hours. Thank you!

Willits Weekly is back for 2026

Willits Weekly is back for another year, thanks to all our advertisers and supporters who make a locally owned, independent print newspaper still possible for our small town.

We'll continue to cover local news and colorful feature stories about goings-on in Willits. The centerspread calendar of events is a favorite of many, including those who produce local events and happenings. We'll continue to offer expected elements of small town papers like classified ads and a police log. Our letters page is open to residents of Willits and Mendocino County's Third District writing about Willits and Third District issues, activities, events, and people.

One change for 2026 is an earlier print deadline at our wonderful printer Western Web up in Humboldt County. We'll be going to press for our Thursday editions on Tuesday evenings this year, not Wednesday evenings. Our submission deadline has always been end-of-day Monday for each Thursday edition, and that won't change, but the earlier print deadline means less flexibility to get late submissions into that week's edition.

Thanks to all our readers, and thanks again to our advertisers. We're glad to be back.

**Jennifer Poole, publisher / editor,
and Maureen Moore, art director /
photographress**



Soroptimist Phone Book deadline coming up

Submitted by Vicki Ham, SI/Willits Phonebook Committee

The deadline is approaching for the 2026 Willits Soroptimist Phone Book!

Soroptimist International of Willits members are busy putting together the 2026 edition of the Willits Community Telephone Directory to be distributed in early April. Do you need to update, remove, or add a phone number? Email willitsphonebook@gmail.com.

Those interested in advertising in, or sponsoring the phonebook, which is a fundraiser to support the Willits Soroptimist club and its mission to support women and girls, including awards programs, scholarships, and donations, can also email willitsphonebook@gmail.com. The deadline for ads and changes is February 12, 2026.

CAL FIRE Mendocino Unit meet and greet

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Mendocino Unit hosts a meet and greet at Chamberlain Creek Fire Center on February 7, 2026, at 10 am.

Please bring your resume with contact information and a photo.

We look forward to seeing you there! 15800 Highway 20 on the way to Fort Bragg.

Memo from Round Valley Indian Tribes

January 14, 2026

To: The Honorable Brooke Rollins, Secretary, Department of Agriculture [and] The Honorable Doug Burgum, Secretary, Department of the Interior

Subject: Fishery and Water Rights held in Trust by the United States for the benefit of the Round Valley Indian Tribes that will be affected by resolution of Pacific Gas & Electric Company's Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Project Number 77-332.

Dear Secretary Rollins and Secretary Burgum:

Greetings from the Round Valley Indian Tribes. We are writing to you today about recent statements by the Administration regarding the Potter Valley Project. Based on these statements, we believe there are additional facts of which you should be aware, and we therefore request government-to-government consultation in this matter.

We are a federally recognized Tribal Nation located in Northern California and our members are descendants of seven distinct tribes: Yuki; Pit River; Little Lake; Pomo; Nomlacki; Concow; and Wailacki. The Eel River and its tributaries border our reservation lands and has been the center of our culture, religion, and economy from the beginning of time. In 1856, the Secretary of the Interior set aside the Nome Cult Farm that comprised 25,030 acres as a reservation for several tribes, including those that comprise the confederated Round Valley Indian Tribes. President Grant in 1870 expanded the reservation to 31,683 acres and confirmed its designation as the Round Valley Indian Reservation.

The Reservation remains our home today.

In creating the reservation, the United States implicitly reserved water from all appurtenant sources then unappropriated, including the Eel River; as necessary to accomplish the Indian purposes of the reservation. (See *Cappaert v. United States*, 426 U.S. 128,138 (1976). Our federal reserved water rights were vested on the date the reservation was created, 1856. They are senior to all appropriative rights in the Eel River system. Our federal reserved fishing rights likewise were secured by the creation of our reservation, including the act of Congress in 1873, which enlarged our reservation by 77,000 acres and set the boundaries of our reservation "extending from the Middle Fork of Eel River on the east to the Eel River on the west ... and the center of the Middle Fork river shall be the eastern boundary, and the center of the Eel shall be the western boundary of said reservation, with the privilege of fishing in said streams." Act of March 3, 1873 (17 Stat. 633).

Although our water and fishing rights are unquantified and unadjudicated, they are the senior, or first priority, rights on the Eel River system for which the United States has a fiduciary responsibility. An unbroken line of case-law supports the existence of Tribal rights in similar circumstances and the obligation of the United States to protect our rights. (*Winters v. United States*, 207 U.S. 564 (1908). Because Winters rights belong to the Tribes themselves, the United States may not impair such rights by diverting water subject to the right off the reservation); *Arizona v. California*, 460 U.S. 603, 626-627, (1983) (when the United States holds tribal water rights in trust, it must manage those rights as a fiduciary held to the most exacting fiduciary standards).

In the early 1900s, the Potter Valley Project (PVP), which is junior to the date of our reservation by more than 50 years, began diverting Eel River

water into the Russian River system. The diversion was intended principally for the development of electricity (which PG&E ceased generating in 2021 because it was no longer economically sound to maintain and operate the project) and then made available for beneficial use by water users in the Russian River Basin, which continues to this day.

While this diversion has been a significant benefit to the communities of the Russian River Basin, it has also resulted in the PVP effectively subordinating the Eel River to the needs of the Russian River and along with it, our culture, our fishery, our economy, and our way of life.

Over the past 100 years, we never received any electricity generated by the PVP or any economic benefit from our water being taken to benefit junior water users, as is commonplace throughout the west. By any measurement, this has been a one-sided arrangement to benefit others at our expense.

We provide this background because the United States is our trustee and holds in trust our water and fishing rights. In our review of recent public statements and filings made by the Administration before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the alleged impacts of removing the PVP on junior water users is discussed at length, but the impacts from retaining the PVP on our senior water and fishing rights, much less our culture, our economy, and our way of life, are never mentioned. Also not mentioned is the obligation of the United States as trustee, to protect these rights.

Additionally overlooked are the benefits of the Two-Basin Solution, which strikes a balance between the needs of the Eel River and its communities, and that of junior Russian River water users. Under this approach, we are agreeing to forbear the exercise of our senior water and fishing rights and allow for diversions to be maintained for junior water users, in a manner that will also support recovery of our fishery, for thirty (30) years with a potential renewal for an additional twenty (20) years, if certain conditions are met.

Moreover, we are collaborating with our partners in the Russian River Basin to expand the storage of Coyote Valley Dam and to expedite a pipeline from Lake Mendocino to minimize disruptions to our neighbors. Our tribal members work and live in the broader regional community and despite the historic injustice to our tribal community, an "all or nothing approach" is simply not realistic. We have instead agreed to a solution that protects our sovereignty and rebuilds our fishery and our economy while also allowing diversions to continue despite our holding senior rights.

Notwithstanding our desire to find a workable solution, we continue to hear from opponents to the Two-Basin Solution that the Administration is continuing to explore maintaining these facilities. We do not understand how a one-sided solution that will cost hundreds of millions of dollars in infrastructure retrofitting while continuing the subordination of our rights and our tribal community, will benefit the entire region. Instead, it will only benefit a select few who want to continue a century of their gains at our expense.

Our desire to work with those who want to work with us will not extend to working with those who seek to harken back to a time in our history when Tribal resources were subordinated to benefit others in violation of our federal fishing and water rights.

We were not afforded the opportunity to oppose the initial Potter Valley Project

Read the rest of **Potter** Over on page 11



From far left: Northspur's Jacob Foley enjoys creating his own special brands of beers. The Hoppy Tail IPA label featuring the longest resident at the Humane Society, Hanky Panky, Dylan has been behind the counter since the beginning of Northspur Brewing Co.

Photos by Mathew Caine

Hoppy Tails

Northspur Brewing Co.'s benefit IPA release for the Humane Society is a popular success

"This is a West Coast IPA, called Hoppy Tails," said Jacob Foley, proprietor of the Northspur Brewery. The release is "a benefit for the Humane Society of Inland Mendocino County. We just did one batch of it. We may do more in the future. I think we've gone through pretty much the entire batch in 30 days. Seven barrels, 217 gallons."

The beer has proven to be quite popular, so much so that Foley is considering making another batch in the future. The proceeds of the brew went to the Humane Society in order to help them continue the work they are doing, taking care of and finding forever homes for the dogs and cats in their facility.

Several members of the HSIMC's board of directors and volunteers were in attendance Friday, January 30, at the Brewery. Teresa King, president of the board, has worked tirelessly to create a loving environment for the animals to exist in prior to either fostering or adoption. She brought her own foster dog to the event. Little Renee seemed quite at peace in her holder, as were the several other animals in attendance. "Right now, I think we have 135 animals in our care," said King. "That's dogs and cats. A lot of them are currently in foster care. This [Renee] is one of our fosters. The shelter is always packed. We have 75 dogs and 60 cats. And it's just the beginning of kitten season. We're going to start seeing a lot of mommies with kittens," King said.

"All of our animals have to be spayed and neutered before we can adopt them out," King said. "That's the holdup with a lot of it, because we can't get enough vet appointments. Today, we had the Animal Control Care-a-Van, a travelling vet clinic. They were at HSIMC today. They spayed and neutered 30 dogs. That was a huge help for us."

As far as the Northspur event, King said: "Tonight, we're all here to support Jacob, who is supporting the Humane Society by creating a special IPA beer, Hoppy Tails, for us, with a portrait on the can of our longest resident, Hanky Panky. He's been with us for over three years. I think, according to Jacob, that we are going to run out of Hoppy Tails tonight. It's always good that we have the community's support."

Most of the board members and volunteers are dog and cat lovers. Several of them foster and adopt, especially those with an abundance

of land and space. "I'm a volunteer and a foster," explained Elise King. "We foster dogs. We'll bring them home and give them a warm place to sleep and play with them and walk them. It's hard to give them up, although we have two that we didn't give up. We've been fostering a third for a while. We live on a farm. We have plenty of space."

"I know it sounds clichéd, but people should adopt dogs because they become your best friend," Elise said. "They follow you around. They love you. My life is so lonely without a dog, even though I have a husband and a mother-in-law. It's a selfish thing really, having a dog. They give you so much. You give them a life."

"There are too many dogs in the shelters, in awful conditions," Elise continued. "The more we help with fostering and adopting, they don't have to be homeless anymore. There are so many dogs out there that need a home, and there are so many puppies too. People should adopt a puppy from the Humane Society rather than puppy mills. I would adopt five dogs if I could. I love our dogs; Bunnie we got first, and we thought it would be funny if we named the second one Clyde."

Jaime Wilkes, vice-president at Sparetime Garden Supply, is also vice-president of the board at the Humane Society. "There is a major need in the rescue community for people who have love for animals and have the time and ability to help out in any way they can. I don't have a lot of time to spend at the shelter, but I do have time to advise on the board and help with fundraisers. That's the way that I can give back because I am passionate about animal rescue."

The next fundraiser for the Humane Society of Inland Mendocino County will be on Valentine's Day, February 14, at Mendo Mill on Commercial Street in Willits. From 11 am to 2 pm, the Humane Society will be having an adoption event, also including games, giveaways, and a photo booth, according to HSIMC fundraising chair Kelsey Radmilovic.

The Humane Society of Inland Mendocino County, at 9700 Uva Drive, Redwood Valley, exists entirely on contributions and fundraisers. More information, adoption fees, hours, etc. can be found on their website: <https://mendohumanesociety.com/>, which also has photos and information about all of their animal residents.



At top: Some of the volunteers and board members in attendance. Above: Hoppy Tails is just one of the beers sampled by Humane Society volunteers and enthusiasts. At left: The next fundraiser and adoption event will be February 14, Valentine's Day, at Mendo Mill in Willits. At left, below: Volunteer and foster parent of three dogs, Elise, brings the shelter dogs home and plays with them and walks them. Below: Kelsey Radmilovic, HSIMC fundraising chair, Julie Allen, volunteer, and Jaime Wilkes, vice-president of the Humane Society board, enjoy some refreshments. At bottom: Bo and Jackson are enjoying the patio at Northspur Brewing.



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Thursday, February 5

Willits Farmers Market: Join your neighbors Thursdays from 3 to 5:30 pm at the Little Lake Grange for the freshest produce available, local meat, farm fresh eggs, hot and cold food from local businesses, along with crafts, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more. The market honors EBT and WIC cards and matches benefits to double your dollars.

Free Food at Mendo Food Network: First Thursday of each month (excluding federal holidays) receive free food from 10 to 11:30 at 1250 Blosser Lane, Willits.

Behind the Scenes Tours at the Museum: First and Third Thursday of the month from 2 to 3 pm. To reserve your tour, call the Mendocino County Museum: 707-234-6365.

Friday, February 6

Rotary Club Crab Sale at Willits Kids Corner: Get live or boiled fresh crab for \$20 to \$25 apiece to raise funds for scholarships for Willits High School students on Friday, February 6 from 10 am to 5 pm (unless sold out early) in the parking lot at 90 South Main Street. Sale will continue on Saturday, February 7 at 10 am if there are crabs remaining.

Create It, Make It, Break It STEM Activity at Library: Join us for this week's activity 'Building Bridges' on Friday, February 6 from 3:30 to 5 pm at the library. Ages 9 to 14.

Food Not Bombs in Rec Grove Park: a free meal, zines and supplies every first and third Friday around 5 pm at the picnic tables. Everyone is welcome.

Wolf Tree at Northspur Brewing Co: Acoustic Americana on Friday, February 6 from 6 to 8 pm at Northspur Brewing Co., 101 North Main Street.

Valentine's Family Dance at Blosser Lane Elementary: Come have some family fun for only \$2 per person at this fundraiser benefitting Blosser Lane School's PTO on Friday, February 6 from 6 to 8 pm at 1275 Blosser Lane. Refreshments available for purchase and students must be accompanied by an adult.

Saturday, February 7

Extravaganza Sale at Senior Center Thrift Store: Bring your own bag and find something new-to-you on Saturday, February 7 from 11 am to 3 pm when all clothing items will be only \$1 apiece at Senior Center Thrift, 1501 Baechtel Road.

Cupid Craft Fair at the Grange: From inexpensive to fancy, find unique, locally handcrafted Valentine's Day gifts including candles, jewelry, ceramics, candy, cakes and even Love Potion #9 on Saturday, February 7 from 11 am to 4 pm at the Little Lake Grange

SELVA Art Exhibit opens at WCA: Enjoy this collaborative exhibit featuring painter Salvador Andrade and ceramicist Alberto Lozano Ruvalcaba along with refreshments on Saturday, February 7 from 6 to 8 pm at Willits Center for the Arts, with galleries open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 11 am to 5 pm through February.

Capoeira Roda at WCA: Experience the Afro-Brazilian martial art, Capoeira hosted by Capoeira Forcas de Aguas on Saturday, February 7 from 11 am to 5 pm in the Great Room at Willits Center for the Arts.

Wild & Scenic Film Fest at Noyo Theater: Experience North America's premier environmental film fest with a 2-hour screening of 11 inspiring short

films on Saturday, February 7 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm at the Noyo Theater. Cost is \$22 adults, \$14 kids 5 to 15 and benefits Mendo Land Trust. For tickets and list of films: wildandscenicfilmfestival.org.

Sunday, February 8

Pancake Breakfast at the Senior Center: Second Sunday of the month from 8:30 to 11:30 am. Menu choices:

1) Biscuits & gravy with scrambled eggs. 2) All-you-can-eat pancakes with scrambled eggs, sausage or bacon, coffee, orange juice or milk. This month's special is Chile Relleno Casserole and Spinach Quiche! Adults \$13; Senior Center members \$12; Children 8 and under \$8 and benefits Nutritional, Transportation, and Outreach services for Willits seniors.

Samba Dance Class at WCA: Learn and practice this Brazilian dance with Carmen Day on Sunday, February 8 from 5 to 6:30 pm at Willits Center for the Arts. Cost is \$15.

Tuesday, February 10

Digital Skills for Everyday Life at the Library: Join us for this digital skills-building program on the second Tuesday of the month from 11 am to 12:30 pm at the Willits Branch Library.

Wednesday, February 11

Science Fair Showcase at Willits Community Center: Come support local students and check out their creative and impressive science projects on Wednesday, February 11 from 3 to 7 pm, open to the public at the Willits Community Center.

Free Dog Services for Low-Income Folks at Food Bank: Volunteers will be distributing flea & tick medication for dogs, as well as accessories from 11 am to 2 pm on second Wednesday of the month at the Willits Food Bank, 244 Railroad Avenue. Dogs in attendance must be sociable and well controlled.



Weekly and more. See February 5 listing for more details.

Trivia Night at The Munchery: Every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month at 6 pm at The Munchery, 1797 South Main Street, Willits.

Friday, February 13

Create It, Make It, Break It STEM Activity at Library: Join us for this week's activity 'Tying Knots' on Friday, February 13 from 3:30 to 5 pm at the library. Ages 9 to 14.

Art Talk with Gary Martin at WCA: a presentation on the history, symbolism and cultural significance of African Art in ancient traditions and contemporary practices on Friday, February 13 at 6:30 pm at Willits Center for the Arts.

Willits Cupid's Love & Laughter Crawl: Presented by Madame King, the Crawl begins Friday, February 13 at 7:30 pm starting at Buzzard's Roost with stops at Northspur Brewing Co., Shanachie Pub, John's Bar, Drover's Distillery and ending at The Munchery. Dress as your own version of Cupid!



Saturday, February 14
Happy Valentine's Day!

Willits Photography Club at WCA: open to all skill levels and meets on Saturday, February 14 from 10 am to noon in the classroom at Willits Center for the Arts. (Enter through back door).

Parents' Night Out Babysitting Fundraiser: Drop off the kids for an evening of pizza, games, crafts, facepainting, and dancing while supporting the Baechtel Grove Middle School PTO. For kids 5 years to 6th grade. Cost is \$25 per child or \$45 for two. Space is limited so sign up early at BGMS Office or message 707-234-9681. February 14 from 5 to 8 pm at the Brookside Cafeteria, 20 Spruce Street, Willits.

'Where's the Love 2' at the Noyo: Presented by North Coast Comedy with headliner Shawn Felipe and featuring Nick Larson and Danielle Arce on Saturday, February 14 at the Noyo Theater. Doors open at 6:30 and the show runs from 7:30 to 9 pm. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased at Eventbrite.com or at Mendocino Book Company. 18 and older only.

Murder Mystery Fundraiser at the Grange: Willits Community Services presents 'Love & Lies at the Little Lake Saloon,' to benefit the Willits Food Bank on Saturday, February 14 from 5:30 to 10 pm at the Grange. Sorry, this event is sold out! Tickets will not be available at the door.

Sunday, February 15

Annual Willits Classic Race at Rec Grove: participate in North Coast Striders' 3-mile walk/run or 10-mile run along Willits' back roads to support the Willits High School Cross Country and Track teams. Register at runsignup.com or at the event at 9 am on Sunday, February 15. Races begin, rain or shine, at 10 am at Rec Grove Park, Willits.

PARENTS' NIGHT OUT:

VALENTINE'S EDITION

Planning a Valentine's date night? BGMS PTO has you covered! We are hosting a Parents' Night Out babysitting fundraiser. Drop off your children for a fun, supervised evening and support our school at the same time. Space is limited, so sign up early!
Date: Saturday, February 14th
Time: 5-8pm
Location: Brookside Cafeteria

Pizza, snacks, drinks, games, crafts, glow-in-the-dark hide and seek, facepainting, dancing, and more.

Age range: 5 years to 6th grade (must be potty trained)
Cost: Flat Rate-\$25 per child or \$45 for two. Sign-ups in the office at BGMS or you can message (707)234.9681 to set up a meet. Payment due at time of signup. Signups end February 12th @ 3pm

Adult supervision provided by parents and some school staff



Ongoing Events at the Willits Library
Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. Info: www.mendolibrary.org or 459-5908.
Open hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 10 am to 7 pm; Friday, 10 am to 6 pm; Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm; Closed Sunday and Monday.

Penny University Coffee Klatch: Wednesdays, 11 am to 1 pm, in the Willits Library meeting room to discuss various topics while enjoying a "cup of joe."

LEGO Club: Tuesdays from 4 to 6:30 pm. "Bring your imagination and start building."

Tech Help: Saturdays from 11 am to noon, come get computer help and your technical questions answered!

Spinning and Knitting: Saturdays at the library; from 1 to 4:30 pm. All skill levels welcome! Spinning, 1 to 2 pm; Knitting, 2 to 4:30 pm.

Story and Playtime: Fridays from 11 am to noon, bring the kids for a story followed by play time in the Children's Area.

ABC Art Artists Meet-Up: Work on your personal art project, meet other artists and find inspiration Thursdays and Fridays from 1 to 3 pm. Ages 18 and up.

ARTS CENTER FOR THE ARTS presents
SELVA
Salvador Andrade & Alberto Lozano Ruvalcaba
OPENING Saturday Feb 7 * 6-8pm
Art ~ Community ~ Refreshments ~ FREE



Galleries open Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays
11am to 5pm through Sunday March 1, 2026

Willits Center for the Arts
71 East Commercial St., Willits, CA, 95490

NED LEDOUX
AT THE WILLITS FRONTIER DAYS RODEO GROUNDS

SAVE THE DATE
SATURDAY, JUNE 20, 2026



FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM
WWW.WILLITSFRONTIERDAYS.COM

COLD-WEATHER CLOTHING DONATION DRIVE
Drop off your Clean, Gently Used Coats, Scarves, Gloves & Hats to be distributed to Those in Need at:
WILLITS BRANCH LIBRARY and EVERGREEN LAUNDERLAND
Please DO NOT leave items at the food bank

WILLITS CENTER FOR THE ARTS Presents
African Art Tradition, Innovation, and Cultural Meaning
Friday, February 13, 6:30 pm.

An illustrated lecture exploring the history, symbolism, and cultural significance of African art

presented by art historian Gary Martin, M.A.

Willits Center for the Arts
71 E. Commercial St.
Willits, CA 95490
www.willitscenterforthearts.org

Willits Daily Bread Serving
Hot Dish or Soup with a bagged Sandwich & Snacks
Monday - Thursday 4:30 - 5:30
Pet food available most days
66 East Commercial Street
Across from Noyo Theater

SKUNK ALLEY IMPROV
EVERY SUNDAY 6:30PM - 8:30PM
EVERY LAST SUNDAY IS A SHOWCASE OF THAT MONTH'S WORK-AUDIENCE INVITED!
\$5 ENTRY CASH OR VENMO
IMPROV LESSONS AND PRACTICE
INSTRUCTOR: SCHUYLER MARCIER
AT THE WILLITS COMMUNITY THEATRE
27 W VAN LN, WILLITS, CA 95490

Willits Branch Library
Digital Skills for Everyday Life

Want to learn everyday skills that will help you stay connected?

The Willits Branch Library is offering a digital skills building program.

Join us on the
2nd Tuesday of each month
11:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Chromobooks are available for Check-Out.

Willits Branch Library
701 E. Commercial Street
Willits, CA 95490
www.willitslibrary.org

'Importance of Being Earnest' opens at WCT February 20

Oscar Wilde's most beloved play is a sparkling comedy of mistaken identities, romantic entanglements and society's most ridiculous rules! Directed by Maria Monti, this fast and exquisitely silly comedy opens on Friday, February 20 at 7 pm with show times each Friday and Saturday at 10 pm and Sundays at 2 pm through March 8 at Willits Community Theater. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased at the door or online at wctperformingartscenter.org.

Submit Entries for Battle of the Bands by February 14

All ages and genres are welcome to participate in The Battle of the Bands to be held on Saturday, March 28 at the Little Lake Grange. Submit entries to tommygpresents64@gmail.com by noon on February 14. Must include band name, contact person, member names and what they play, brief description of music and bio, a photo and a link to your music. Entry fee is \$30 with all proceeds to be divided by the top three bands, and the Grand Prize is recording time at Russian River Studios.

Farmers' Convergence Conference in Hopland February 20, 21 and 22

The School of Adaptive Agriculture is bringing together farmers, educators, researchers, food producers and nonprofits aligned around one goal: thriving land, enduring farms, happy workers, and a well-nourished community. This year's conference is partnering with the UC Hopland Research & Extension Center and will feature presentations and tours, along with Farm to School Program assistance. For more info and to register: schoolofadaptiveagriculture.org/convergence.

WILLITS SCIENCE FAIR
Judging will take place February 8-8
Classroom visits will take place February 9-12

OPEN HOURS FOR THE PUBLIC:
Wednesday, February 11 from 3-7 pm
Location: Willits Community Center

For More Information, please contact:
sciencefair@willitswillits.com
http://www.willitscommunitycenter.org/sciencefair

Sip Some Soup
A joint fundraising event for Willits Daily Bread & Willits Shelter Action Group

Join us again for this much-loved community fundraiser. Try and vote on soups, enjoy bread and jam from Emandal Farm on the River, and browse our silent auction.

Taste, vote and celebrate local flavors with neighbors.

Willits Community Center
March 14th 2026
5pm-7pm

Tickets: \$15 per Adult, \$25 per couple, and \$5 for children 12 and under.

Grow Your Own Medicine Chest Garden
A free talk by Donna d'Terra, founder and director of Motherland Botanical Sanctuary and Herb School. We plan to offer seeds or starts for several of the herbs discussed.


Saturday, February 7th
11:00 am - 1:00 pm
The Community Room at the Round Valley Library Commons
2995 Howard Street
Sponsored by the Seed Library and the Round Valley Branch Library.



COLUMN | AT THE MOVIES

'Iron Lung'

The Story: (The first thing that needs to be said: This movie is not about polio, a crippling disease. It's an homage to a computer game of the same name that may, or may not, cripple the brain.) The Convict (Markiplier) is pretty much trapped inside a pipe-shaped submarine that looks like it was screwed, hammered, soldered and welded together out of leftover steel parts and high-grade plastics. There's a speaker screwed to the low ceiling. I think the submarine's design was inspired by the titular


Dan Essman
Columnist

Set design aside, the Convict (who repeatedly proclaims his innocence to the female voice from the speaker) has been sentenced to ride this slapped-together sub to the bottom of (I'm not kidding) an actual ocean of actual blood.

He is told that his job is to photograph whatever it is he may see on the huge camera screen on the wall. Also, he is warned to be on the look-out for leaks in the submarine's walls, and/or fires. The Convict finds everything the female Voice from the speaker says to be deeply disturbing, and he wonders aloud if maybe he's been given a death sentence, a one-way trip to the bottom of the ocean of blood.

Again he insists he is innocent of some crime, but he doesn't know what that crime is. The Voice insists that his descent is necessary and of the highest importance, and that when he completes this deadly dangerous mission, he will have paid his debt to humanity and will be released back into the world a free man. (Whatever that world may be considering he is in a hacked-together submarine in a very real ocean of very real blood.)

My Thoughts: After the movie ended, I questioned three young women at the theater. All three were thumbs-up enthusiastic and enjoyed the movie. I confessed that I was a bit confused, (My actual question, word for word, was "What did I just watch?") They seemed to be "in the know" about the whole world of "Iron Lung-ology." They revealed to me that the monster at the bottom of the blood ocean was (spoiler) an H.P. Lovecraft horror beast!!!

Parents: No. No. No.
Willitsian Daniel Essman prefers his reality attenuated by the wisdom of the imagination.



Above, from left: Siblings Sophia and Aiden Punihaole-Figueroa both got first place at the Redwood Empire Classic. North Coast Section Division 3 Champions pose for a photo after a long day of wrestling. WHS girls pose for a photo with their first-place trophy left to right: Allaya Glass, Emelia Owsiany, Head Coach Dana Karkar, Bella Glenn, Dannyka Smith, and Sophia Punihaole-Figueroa. From far left: Rickey Ramirez uses a takedown technique to make his way to pin his opponent. Brian Bowles strategically runs an ambar on his Clearlake opponent. Emelia Owsiany smiles at her corner while pinning her Middletown opponent.

Photos by Ava Dockins

COMMUNITY SPORTS NEWS

WHS Wrestling enters Friday home meet as NCS Duals Champions

Willits Wolverines Wrestling has grappled their way into one of their most successful seasons. From the grueling practices, the dark early am hours of departures, to moving into the gyms for tournaments, and battling extensive matches all day, these talented young athletes give it their all on that mat and in the classroom, maintaining good grades to participate. Willits Wolverines family has done a phenomenal job working together to keep these kids well-fed, studying, rested, and headstrong to take on anyone!

2026 North Coast Section Champions Willits Wrestling will compete in the next step, the Boys Coastal Mountain Conference League Championship 2026, hosted by Willits High on Friday, February 6 from 7 am to 4 pm.

To catch you up where we left off last year:

On 12/20/25 our gutsy Lady Wolverines headed south to compete in the Castro Valley Tournament. Senior Emelia Owsiany had an outstanding day of wrestling, won 1st place and received an iconic letterman's jacket. Freshman Sophia Punihaole-Figueroa had a rugged set of matches earning a 3rd place medal, and Ember Hetherington wrestled tough for 4th place. The boys team loaded up their van in beastmode fashion, ready to rumble at the Healdsburg Tournament. Boys wrestled hard, learned, and leveled up. Donald Glenn and Vladimir Bertolino went undefeated that day.

On 1/3/2026 the boys attended the rowdy contest of champions in Concord, while the girls tussled in the Bay Area at Pittsburgh High

School for the annual Queen of the Mat tournament. Bringing home the hardware for our Lady Wolverines were Emelia Owsiany 2nd place, Alison Merino-Estrada 3rd place, and Ember Hetherington and Sophia Punihaole-Figueroa 4th place. For the boys, seniors Rickey Ramirez and Donald Glenn brought home 2nd place medals.

On 1/7/26 was the duals vs. St. Helena and Upper Lake held here in our fabulous Steve Short Gymnasium. There were some riveting matches. Willits did more than enough for the takeover win.

On 1/9/26 the girls took the scenic stroll over to Napa, the toughest girls tournament around. While we had no placers, Willits wrestled hard and put some more tools on their wrestling belts. The boys went off the beaten path through the giant Redwood North to attend the annual Eureka Classic. Placers were Vladimir Bertolino 1st place, Donald Glenn 1st place, Zain Marshall 2nd place, and Thomas Rano 5th place.

On 1/14/26 was the duals vs. Lower Lake and Ft. Bragg held at Ft. Bragg High School, where Willits came out on top with the dub. On 1/17/26 the ladies competed in an all-girls duals at St. Helena High School where they placed 3rd as a team, bringing home another beautiful trophy for the case. The boys headed south to Windsor where they competed in the annual King of the Mat tournament. Bringing home medals were Donald Glenn 1st place, Rickey Ramirez 2nd place, Zain Marshall 4th place, Gavin McFadden 6th place, and Vladimir Bertolino 7th place.

On January 21, Willits celebrated yet another win in their duals against Kelseyville and Cloverdale, leaving them feeling amazingly accomplished in their undefeated status.

After that on January 24, both girls and boys attended the annual Redwood Empire Classic Tournament at Ukiah High School. The Lady Wolverines dominated this tournament and took first place as a team. Taking home medals were Bella Glenn 1st place, Sophia Punihaole-Figueroa 1st place, Emelia Owsiany 2nd place, Dannyka Smith 2nd place, and Allaya Glass 3rd place. The boys placers were Aiden Punihaole-Figueroa 1st place, Kassy Lopez 1st place, Thomas Rano 1st place, and Silas Thompson 4th place.

On January 28, Willits hosted its final dual meet before North Coast Section meets kat home against



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IN WILLITS

Lic# 679517
KARA@GARMANCONSTRUCTION.COM

Read the rest of
Sports
Over on page 9

LEGAL NOTICES

WW584

Fictitious Business Name Statement

2026-F0009

The following person or persons are doing business as Longevity Kombucha, 349 S. Main St., Willits, CA 95490. Mailing Address: 438 McPeak St., Ukiah CA 95482.

Registered owner: Jared Soinila, 438 McPeak St., Ukiah CA 95482.

This business is conducted by an individual.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 1/6/2026.

FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk Recorder on 1/6/2026.

/s/ Jared Soinila
Publication Dates: February 5, 12, 19, 26, 2026

WW586

Fictitious Business Name Statement

2026-F0021

The following person or persons are doing business as Hidden Gem Studio, 234 S. Main St. #3, Willits, CA 95490. Mailing Address: 390 W. Mendocino Ave., Willits CA 95490.

Registered owner: Emilie Cavallari, 390 W. Mendocino Ave., Willits CA 95490

This business is conducted by an individual.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 3/20/2024.

FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk Recorder on 1/6/2026.

/s/ Emilie Cavallari
Publication Dates: February 5, 12, 19, 26, 2026



The rest of
Sports
From page 8

Middletown and Clearlake. Willits proudly took the win as Willits fans, family, friends and Head Coach Brian Bowles also gathered to give a heartfelt farewell to our seniors, phenomenal athletes and humans Dannyka Smith, Emelia Owsiany, Delia Siderakis, Alison Merino-Estrada, Rickey Ramirez, Donald Glenn, and Gavin McFadden.

It has been an honor to watch you all grow and throw down your skills as the incredible wrestlers you are. Your community wishes the absolute best for you on your next journey in life. We are so proud of you and can't wait to see what you do out there in life. This brings us to one of the most exciting times of the season for Willits Wrestling.

On 1/31/26 our undefeated crew of duals wrestlers headed into the NCS Duals Championships at Lower Lake High School. It was a packed scene full of intensity as each mat set the stage for the duals matches. First up Willits High went head to head coming out with a strong win against Oakland Military Institute 59-18. Next the Wolverines went to war with Healdsburg in the semifinals to steal the points 41-33, leading us to the final moment.

These determined athletes landed themselves in the same exact position as last year with the same team, McKinleyville. The Wolverines Wrestlers were hungry for the win and did not give into pressure. They displayed an admirable amount of toughness, skill, and a gnarly amount of grit in each and every impressive match to get the job done.

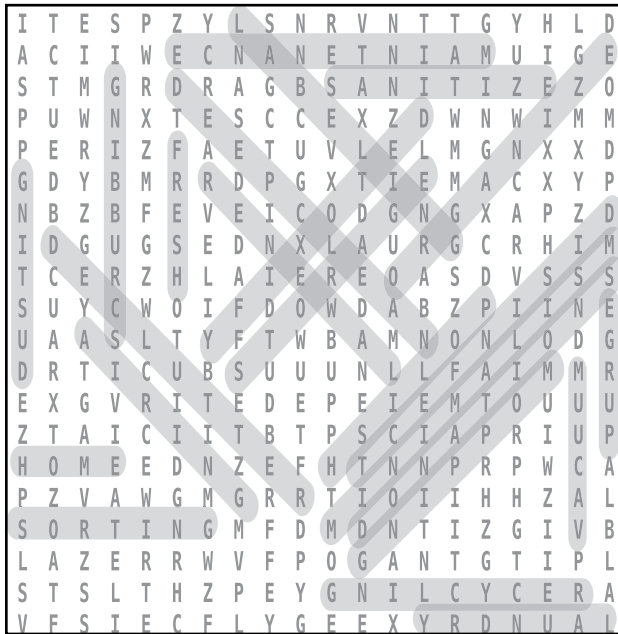
Willits conquered McKinleyville 44-29 to be crowned as the 2026 NCS Duals Champions! Amazing job by all. "It's been a fun season," said Coach Will Dunaway, "and I'm very proud of all the student athletes that have battled through the entire season. Their dedication, determination, and hard work is paying off when it matters most." Congratulations on a sensational season so far Willits Wolverines Wrestling!

Wolverines Wrestling fans are eager to see what happens in the upcoming League Championships held here in our hometown this Friday, on 2/6/26, and NCS boy and girls Championships at James Logan High School on 2/20 and 2/21!

"The season is over in three weeks with the league being the first qualifying tournament. I am excited to see their hard work pay off," said Head Coach Dana Karkar. Good luck, WHS Wrestlers! Let's Go Wolverines!

Standout wrestling performances from Ricky Ramirez, Vlad Bertolino, Kassi Lopez, Aiden Punihaole and Brian Bowles who all went undefeated. Aiden Hult, Donald Glenn, Thomas Rano, and Gavin McFadden all wrestled amazing matches and finished the tournament with 2-1 records.

"We look forward to performances from all our wrestlers at league championships this Friday hosted at Willits," said Head Coach Brian Bowles.



LEGAL NOTICES

WW585

NOTICE TO CREDITORS OF THE KITTY BARR TRUST

[Probate Code §19000, et seq.]

Case No. 25PR00408

In re: the KITTY BARR TRUST, Dated June 21, 2013

KITTY LOUISE BARR, aka KITTY L. BARR, aka KITTY BARR, Decedent.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the creditors and contingent creditors of the above-named decedent, that all persons having claims against the decedent are required to file them with the Superior Court of the County of Mendocino, at 100 No. State Street, Ukiah, California 95482 and deliver pursuant to Section 1215 of the California Probate Code a copy to Alison Morse, as trustee of the KITTY BARR TRUST dated June 21, 2013 wherein the decedent was the settlor, c/o Jennifer M. O'Brien, Neary and O'Brien, at 110 So. Main St., Ste. C, Willits, CA 95490, within the later of four months after February 5, 2026 or, if notice is mailed or personally delivered to you, 60 days after the date this notice is mailed or personally delivered to you, or you must petition to file a late claim as provided in Section 19103 of the Probate Code. A claim form may be obtained from the court clerk. For your protection, you are encouraged to file your claim by certified mail, with return receipt requested.

Publication Dates: February 5, 12, 19, 2026



More of
Brooktrails
From page 1

we've been able to produce a study that's now been submitted to the state and that's what Andy is going to talk to you about tonight."

Salveson began saying: "We are going to see some technical documents here. Some of you may not be familiar with water reuse practices in California and around the world." The agenda item for the report included: Goals of the Project, Background, Evaluation of Project Alternatives, Preferred Project, Preferred Project Details, and finally Next Steps.

Project Goals are: Create an alternative water supply for future growth and current supply diversification. Use recycled water funding grant from the state to develop a feasibility study to evaluate local water supply opportunities via potable reuse."

Salveson explained: "When we talk about potable reuse, that water is municipal wastewater that has gone through multiple advance purification barriers to become drinking water quality. In this case it would be going through Willits.

"And, if that surprises you," he said, "understand that this has been happening since the 1960s in California. San Diego is one example that will soon have half of its water supply through advanced purification of recycled water."

Continuing, Salveson said: "This project is looking to create an alternative water supply for future growth and current supply diversification. We will evaluate potential constraints, permitting requirements, and identify next steps for a preferred project. These are complex projects that require a lot of analysis and time to get it right."

Alaniz interjected: "We've been working on this project for about a year, maybe 14 months. It's taken that long to get a project plan that we can look to building in the future."

Salveson said: "On the background, Brooktrails sends all water to Willits Wastewater Treatment Plant for treatment. After treatment it's discharged

CLASSIFIEDS

Brown Bag Lunch Program

Every Saturday at 1 pm sack lunches are served by local churches, community organizations, and families at Bud Snider Park on East Commercial. Come at 1 pm to be assured a lunch!

Do you need food?

Willits Food Bank, 344 Railroad Avenue, Willits, CA 95490. Open Wednesdays & Fridays, 11 am to 4:30 pm. New Client Choice model where you select your own items. Bring shopping bags. Bring an I.D. Info: (707) 459-3333

For Sale

• Men and Women's golf clubs • Lots of coins and uncirculated stamps • Fly fishing gear w/500 flies • Many collectibles. Please call John for inquiries: (458) 232-8098.

Indoor Yard Sale

Giant Indoor Yard Sale - Deep Valley Christian School, 8555 Uva Drive, Redwood Valley, (across from the Broiler). Saturday, February 28 - 8 am to 4 pm

Lawn Bids Wanted

Willits Elementary Charter School seeks bids to improve the current lawn. We would like to remove the current grass, regrade, and install RTF sod. In order to make a bid, please contact the school to look at the current lawn. Phone: 707-459-1400. 405 E Commercial St. Willits, CA 95490. Bids due by Feb 27th.

RV/Trailer Space for Rent

Space for RV's and Trailers - starts at \$500 per month, includes water & garbage. Close to Safeway in Willits. Call Tony (707) 972-4696. See at http://www.oaknvine.net/lp

Love Willits Weekly?

Help support our free-circulation community newspaper by becoming a "street subscriber"! You send in an annual donation, and pick up the edition on the street each week! We love our regular subscribers too: \$75 for home delivery in the Willits area; \$120 for a year's subscription in the U.S. mail. Fill out a form on page 2!

Classified ads are just \$15 for 30 words for two weeks.

Email us your ad today to include your ad here next week!

to the environment. The two main alternatives: Look at capturing that wastewater before it gets down to Willits and doing advanced purification here in the community for that new water supply. The other option is to continue sending that water down to Willits and capture that water, and through these different treatment processes, do advanced purification there, and then bring that water back."

Talking through the project steps, Salveson began: "We need to understand the local conditions on the ground. And, that literally means the ground where we can put treatment facilities, but it also means, Where is the water? What is the water quality? - so we can do all of this fancy environmental engineering."

Carollo Engineers had a very good, productive site visit a year ago and learned about all of the conditions that exist here, Salveson said. Knowing how much water is available helps set the engineering design criteria. The firm was able to develop a number of options, and came to understand, in conferring with the general manager, what things were most important for the community. Cost and water supply reliability are important. Rain is important. There were a number of criteria that the firm went through in trying to determine which had the greatest importance versus the others. Different alternatives were ranked and a completed feasibility study was then submitted to the State Water Resources Control Board.

Alternatives that were evaluated:

- 1) Decentralized Indirect Potable Reuse at BTCSD (Brooktrails)
- 2) Indirect Potable Reuse at Willits Water Treatment Plant
- 3a) Decentralized Direct Potable Reuse at Brooktrails
- 3b) Decentralized Direct Potable Reuse at Willits Water Treatment Plant

Read the rest of
Brooktrails
Over on page 11

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45th annual Willits Classic,
Sunday, February 15

Submitted by North Coast Striders

The 45th annual Willits Classic will take place Sunday, February 15. It will have a 3 Mile (5k) run/walk and a 10 Mile run. The route through Willits' beautiful back roads is a great way to celebrate the coming spring. Registration is online at <https://runsignup.com/Race/CA/Willits/AnnualWillitsClassic> Same day registration by cash or check is available starting at 9 am before the race begins. Start time for both races is 10 am, at Willits Recreation Grove Park.

The net race proceeds are donated to the Willits High School Cross Country and Track & Field teams. Last year the race organizer, North Coast Striders, was able to donate \$2,000 to the program. The Willits High Cross Country team is growing and thriving. This past fall, a Willits senior took home 1st place at NCL League championships, and the team took home 3rd overall. In communities like Willits, where funding may be limited, but grit and determination is high, this support can help create champions.

This race has endured for 45 years because it has a wonderful mix of participants. There are serious competitors, children running their first formal race, and community members shaking off the winter doldrums taking a good long walk. Come join the fun, rain or shine.



Feb 15th 2026
Location:
Willits Recreation Grove Park

45th Annual Willits Classic
10 mile & 5K Run Walk

Day-of-registration begins at 9:00 am
Race Starts at 10:00 am

Entry Fee: \$35 - 10 Mile, \$25 - 5K
25% discount for NCS Members
Check and cash only for day of the event.

Scan the QR code to sign up on [Runsignup.com](https://runsignup.com)

Awards to top three overall male/female finishers for both events





Willits Elementary Charter School celebrates
Unicorn Day

Submitted by Charlene Bredder, WECS director

Willits Elementary Charter School celebrated a "Unicorn Day" last week. What is a Unicorn Day? It is a day to recognize our special traits that we each have and bring to our community. The school has been through a lot of challenges thus far this year, and we have had so many people step up to support us, so we made a special day to thank and celebrate all the talents and specialness each of us brings.

Students designed and planned the day, envisioning

what their "unicorn school day" would be. Classes had movies, games, a treasure hunt, and party decorations. Students in fourth- and fifth-grade complimented each other and received a typed list of all the compliments that the class had for them. The whole school celebrated with a dance party at the end of the day.

Celebrating our specialness and the specialness of others to us made us aware of how connected we are and how we can have fun together.





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Learn more at
AdventistHealthHowardMemorial.org



Adventist Health
Howard Memorial

The rest of
Brooktrails From page 9

4) Maximized Purified Recycled Water for Indirect Potable Reuse at Willits

The first option involved doing advanced purification in Brooktrails and then putting that purified water into the lake. There are other projects like this in other locations across the nation as well as three others that are very large in California.

The second option would be to do the purification in Willits and then bring that water back up to Brooktrails into the lake. Once the water is in the lake it would be extracted and then go to the water treatment plant and finally be blended with the community supply.

Salveson assured the board regarding any concerns that they may have that the "state of the art" advanced purification processes that would be utilized would produce the best possible quality water.

He stated: "This water is equal to and actually better quality water than any water you've ever had in your life. It's extremely high quality, with multiple treatment barriers, monitored to a much higher rigor and regulated by the state of California as well as backed by a number of advisory panels. It's understandable that people may have qualms and that is not (at all) dismissed. Good water is a basic human right and this water is clean and safe, and I stand by that."

Salveson went on to cite and explain in depth some of the technological advances to purify water that have been attained since the 1960s. In the final analysis, he said that a treatment facility

would need to be built and the ideal place that is proposed to build a new treatment facility in Brooktrails is on the site of the old ballfield.

The preferred plan would involve: 1) capturing raw wastewater in Brooktrails, 2) treating and producing purified recycled water, 3) then augmenting the surface water supply at Lake Ada Rose and, finally, treating water as normal at a newly constructed Brooktrails Water Treatment Plant on the site of the existing baseball field south of Brooktrails office location.

Building a water treatment facility is expensive and cannot be done without major grant funding. The expected cost at this time is \$45.1 million. There are opportunities available for low interest loans, but grants are, of course, preferable and Salveson remarked that the state has been very generous in funding these opportunities around California. A new treatment facility will also provide good jobs for qualified individuals.

Finally, Alaniz said: "At this point we have submitted the planning study to the state and we are working with our project manager at the state level and awaiting his and their review. They will come back after the review and provide recommendations for us to begin making decisions regarding applying for a grant, working to secure financing. The board would have additional decisions to make about timelines and applying for grants. We aren't at the finish line. We are in the middle of the process. But, we always need a secure water supply and that is what I'm working toward. I've been very grateful for the Carollo team and for Andy. They have done a wonderful job."

Willits Rain Box	Little Lake Valley rainfall totals (inches)									rainfall since 01Oct25
	Mon Jan 26	Tue Jan 27	Wed Jan 28	Thur Jan 29	Fri Jan 30	Sat Jan 31	Sun Feb 01	weekly total		
Northbrook Way	0.01	0.32	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.35		35.86
Brooktrails Dr @ Sherwood Rd	0.00	0.32	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.32		36.10
Valley Rd	0.00	0.21	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.23		25.62
Canyon Rd	0.00	0.19	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.21		29.42
Pine Mountain	0.00	0.32	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.33		35.05
South Main @ East Oak	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05		35.38
average	0.00	0.23	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.25		32.92

data compiled from weatherunderground (<https://www.wunderground.com>)

December 2025 ended with an average rainfall across the Little Lake Valley of 16.99 inches, very close to the December 2024 total. Precipitation over the first seven days of January 2026 averaged 5.85 inches, exceeding the total for the entire month of January 2025 by more than 2.25 inches. The month then turned dry, with no significant precipitation between January 8 and 26. The weak system that moved through the valley on January 27, brought an average of 0.25 inches, bringing the total accumulation since October 1, 2025 to 32.92 inches. The January dry spell should continue through the first week of February, with current forecasts calling for light rain to return by the weekend.

– Tim Hanna,
Willits Rain Box

The rest of
WFD From page 4

investigation in the 800 block of South Main Street.

7:22 pm: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 1100 block of South Main Street.

December 29

8:22 am: Officers initiated a burglary investigation in the 1600 block of South Main Street.

1:04 pm: Officers responded to a report of suspicious activity in the 800 block of South Main Street.

1:45 pm: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of South Humboldt Street and East Valley Street and issued a warning.

6:03 pm: Officers initiated a theft investigation near the intersection of East Valley Street and Railroad Avenue and issued a citation.

December 30

12:19 pm: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of California Street and South Main Street and issued a warning.

12:59 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 700 block of South Main Street.

7:05 pm: Officers initiated a burglary investigation in the 400 block of Redwood Avenue.

December 31

5:55 pm: MAXFIELD Jr., Charles Dale (51) of Willits was contacted in the 100 block of North Main Street following a theft investigation. He was arrested on multiple felony and misdemeanor charges.

The rest of
Lawsuit From page 1

the County of Mendocino, and the City of Willits.

According to the complaint, Bakewell was unarmed and experiencing a mental health crisis when law enforcement responded to a reported disturbance near the intersection of Bray Road and Hearst Willits Road on the evening of June 5, 2025. The lawsuit alleges that, rather than employing de-escalation techniques, responding deputies and officers escalated the encounter, deploying Tasers multiple times and spraying Bakewell with chemical agents.

The complaint further alleges that Bakewell was handcuffed, placed face-down on the pavement, and restrained while multiple officers applied significant body weight to his back and neck for an extended period. During the restraint, Bakewell allegedly exhibited signs of respiratory distress and difficulty breathing — a well-documented risk associated with prone restraint.

Bakewell became unresponsive at the scene. Despite the presence of multiple law enforcement personnel, the lawsuit alleges that meaningful medical intervention was delayed. Bakewell was later pronounced dead.

In September 2025, a Mendocino County forensic pathologist classified Bakewell's cause of death as restraint-associated asphyxiation, with the manner of death classified as homicide, a medical designation indicating that restraint contributed to the death. The pathologist identified additional contributing health and toxicological factors, and the findings were provided to the Mendocino County District Attorney's Office for review.

The lawsuit alleges that the death of Bakewell was not isolated but the result of unconstitutional customs, practices, and failures in training and supervision related to the use of force, particularly during encounters involving individuals

experiencing mental health crises.

"This case is about accountability and adherence to well-established safety principles," Sayaghi said. "When restraint techniques known to impair breathing are used improperly, the consequences can be irreversible."

"For decades officers throughout the country have been on notice about potential positional asphyxia and sudden death. Mr. Bakewell's tragic death could have been avoided had the deputies and officers followed their training and immediately upon handcuffing him, refrained from placing unreasonable weight upon his body and moved him from the prone position," said plaintiffs' co-counsel Kaveh Navab from Navab Law. "Instead, the deputies and officers continued to place unnecessary and unreasonable force and weight upon his body for well over a minute, causing his death."

The plaintiffs include Bakewell's three minor children, represented by their guardian ad litem, and his mother, Carolyn Bakewell. The complaint asserts claims under federal civil rights law, including 42 U.S.C. § 1983, as well as state-law claims for wrongful death, assault and battery, negligence, and violations of the California Bane Civil Rights Act.

The family is seeking compensatory and punitive damages and has demanded a jury trial.

A copy of the filed lawsuit can be found at this link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ypS1Ho5sDDrRZdNLR2tqWf80SwoDWQk>
Los Angeles-based West Coast Trial Lawyers (https://westcoasttriallawyers.com) is a top-rated law firm. Our partners worked for the largest firm in Los Angeles, and now leverage their backgrounds and legal knowledge to stand up to the corporations they once defended.

The rest of
Potter From page 2

more than 100 years ago, but we will oppose any attempts to retain it. Potential subsequent owners should understand that in addition to necessary and costly structural solutions, retaining these dams will require changes in water rights that are subject to the jurisdiction of the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).

The Tribe, as the beneficiary of senior-water and fishing rights, will oppose any attempts to retain these dams before the SWRCB or in any other legal forum, and will protect our water and fishing rights.

The Two-Basin Solution is not about radical environmentalism or putting fish above people.

Instead, it is a reasonable and measured solution reached by communities in both basins that acknowledges our sovereignty and rebuilds our economy while protecting junior users for at least thirty (30) and possibly fifty (50) years. We welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our history and the devastation the Potter Valley Project has had on our Nation as well as the Two-Basin Solution and why we believe it is a workable solution. Respectfully,

Joseph Parker Sr., president, Round Valley Indian Tribes
"A Sovereign Nation of Confederated Tribes, Located on State Hwy 162, one mile north of Covelo in Round Valley. Tribal Territory Since Time Began."

The rest of
Arrest From page 1

any negotiations or attempts to talk. Throughout the encounter Bell made multiple aggressive and threatening hand movements with the knife, pointed the knife at officers, and swung it through the air.

After an extended period of trying to reason with Bell, he stepped down from an MTA bus stop bench, while holding the knife in his right hand and began walking across the street directly toward a Mendocino County Sheriff's Office sergeant in an aggressive, fighting stance. Due to Bell's agitated state, aggressive behavior, and continued possession of the knife, officers deployed less-lethal devices; however, these measures were initially ineffective.

Bell then fled northbound toward a multi-residential facility, where a brief standoff occurred at the entrance to the complex. Bell subsequently ran back to the east side of North State Street and into the parking lot of 605 North State Street, resulting in a second standoff. During this encounter, Conducted Energy Weapons (Tasers) were deployed and found to be effective. Bell was taken into custody without further incident and transported to Adventist Health Ukiah Valley for medical evaluation and treatment.

During the arrest one officer sustained a minor laceration which required medical treatment. The officer was later cleared and returned to duty.

Bell was charged with the following violations:

- 245(a)(1) PC – Assault with a Deadly Weapon; Other than a Firearm - Felony
- 417(a)(1) PC – Brandish a Deadly Weapon; Other than a Firearm – Felony
- 69 PC – Resist/Delay a Peace Officer by Use of force – Felony
- 1203.2(a) PC – Violation of formal Probation – Felony
- 148(a)(1) PC – Resist/Delay Peace Officer – Misdemeanor

The Ukiah Police Department commends the coordination and response efforts of our allied agencies, including MCSO, CHP, UVFA, and RCS, which led to the safe resolution of this dangerous incident.

As always, our mission at UPD is to make Ukiah as safe a place as possible. If you would like to know more about crime in your neighborhood, you can sign up for telephone, cell phone, and email notifications by clicking the Nixle button on our website: www.ukiahpolice.com

The rest of
Cuts From page 1

from Rohnert Park.

According to the written agenda on the city's web site, Muchmore is being contracted to "create a realistic staffing plan for the city that will enable the city council to budget for appropriate current and future staffing to address the city/community needs." Although this ambiguous description could mean most anything, it quickly became obvious from council members' comments what Muchmore was hired to do.

The city will be paying Muchmore \$85,900 for six months of consulting, three days a week. The city manager, justifying Muchmore's fee, stated: "When you go through a process like this, you really require some high-level skill sets. I want to have her expertise as we wrap things up with the reorganization of the city."

Council member Gerry Gonzalez was more to the point: "When it comes to doing these sorts of cuts we want to be sensitive. These are real peoples' lives we're affecting. Its a hard pill to swallow because we're paying more consultants, but somebody who isn't so emotionally attached and has the professional experience to do it right is important to me."

Mayor Allman added: "You want to be sure employees' rights are being taken care of, and you want to be sure the city is protected from any legal claims, without spending more afterwards for a mistake that might have been made."

Only one person from the public spoke, city employee Nicole Caldwell, who pointed out that Muchmore's consultant fee could have saved at least two employees from losing their jobs.

Not discussed at the meeting, despite prior assurances from the council, was the status of the \$2 million budget deficit, now increased by Muchmore Consulting's \$85,900 fee. City Manager Richardson said that he will have a midyear budget report "right around" the first city council meeting in February.

January 28 finance update

The city council did get a report from Finance Director Manuel Orozco at the second January council meeting on January 28, but all that he reported was how much money is in the bank. Fortunately, there is money in the bank. But otherwise, Orozco only said that he is still waiting for the auditors (the CPA firm that audits the city's annual finance reports) to complete the 2023-2024 audit.

Which did not go over well with Mayor Allman. "We've all been talking about the financial situation the city's in. One of the reasons is that we are so behind getting audits. We haven't even started the 2024-2025 audit."

Orozco replied that he is ready to go on the 2024-2025 audit. "I am pushing as quickly as possible to get that audit started. We have to have this audit [2023-2024] complete before we can start the next one." Allman asked Orozco to get a firm completion date from the auditor: "I'm sure they get audits for other cities done on time."

Allman concluded, "We're waiting for the financial shoe to drop. It's not even funny anymore."

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