





# What do YOU think?

Opinions, thoughts and thank you letters from our readers

## The value of redwoods in our community

To the Editor:

Last week I experienced an unsettling reminder about how easily a powerful non-local entity – in this case Starbucks, based in Seattle – could substantially alter the natural environment of a small town like Willits with nary a whisper that might alert the community beforehand.

Starbucks bought the property at the corner of Highway 20 and South Main sometime in the past year. There had been rumors, but it didn't become apparent to me until the past few weeks when the construction company descended and started transforming the old Jack in the Box site to their specs. I have an office in the building next door where I practice various forms of therapeutic bodywork, and when I arrived on June 28 and heard the unremitting clatter of a jackhammer less than 30 feet away it was disturbing but not that surprising. I walked over to ask whether the noise was planned to go on all day, in which case I'd need to do some quick client re-scheduling. It was, but to my relief the supervisor shifted the lunch break a little to allow for my appointment.

During that exchange it became clear that Starbucks wanted to cut down the two majestic redwoods at the NE corner of the property. My first reaction was shock, then indignation. Why on earth would they destroy them? The trees are over 50 feet tall and look very healthy. Jack in the Box effectively operated a busy drive-thru lane alongside them for years. Maybe the advance team from Starbucks missed the slogan over the south entrance to the downtown area, "Gateway to the Redwoods."

My next question was even more naive: How could this be allowed? I wondered whether Starbucks mentioned the trees in their permitting process. And did they need to? This was the Friday heading into 4th of July week, the construction work seemed to be moving very quickly, and when I wasn't able to find out these specifics through official channels my mental projections went into overdrive: that Starbucks might follow the popular m.o. of "do what you want and say sorry afterwards, if needed."

Several locals I talked to expressed the belief that it was illegal to cut down a redwood, a rumor I'd often heard without ever digging deeper; it turns out to be incorrect.

And when I searched online I was disconcerted by how much I didn't know. Here's a quote from the Save the Redwoods League: "In most cases, people are within their rights to cut down redwoods on their own property." You'll find there are many caveats to that depending on local regulations... What's striking is that there is such murkiness and misinformation surrounding an issue so close to many of our hearts in this town.

These shadowy qualities are what disturbs me most about this overall saga. When there's a lack of transparency and clear communication about change, people's uncertainties and projections will fill in the gaps, and it's easy for mistrust to grow.

I'm sure Willits will encounter more situations like this in the future. There's no resolution here, just a personal acknowledgement of a healthy wake-up call: to take more responsibility for knowledge about what we deeply value in life.

### The Rules: LETTERS

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

Typed letters can be sent to Willits Weekly, P.O. Box 1698, Willits, CA 95490, but email is preferred. Letters and commentaries must be submitted with a name, address and phone number, although only the author's name and city of residence will be published. No letters from an anonymous source will be published, although a request to withhold the writer's name will be considered.

## Willits Weekly

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The rest of the quote from Save the Redwoods League is: "You can contact your local city council or other community organization to try to make a case for the value of redwoods in the community."

I hope those trees make it.

Holly Barnard, Willits

## Thanks to all for supporting VSO

To the Editor:

Thanks. Willits Weekly for printing the article last week submitted by the county Department of Social Services which you appropriately titled "Ukiah Veterans Services moving back 'home' this week." The small house on Observatory Avenue gives veterans a comfortable place with privacy to seek the services they need.

As an aging veteran, USMC 1959 - 1963, I have been helped several times by their small staff. Such as obtaining my entire service record, 120 pages, enrolled in VA health care, free hearing test and hearing aids, small monthly disability award, and even provided the document required by DMV to have the word "VETERAN" on my driver's license.

Thanks also to everyone that took the time to write letters to the board of supervisors as well as letters to newspapers about the unauthorized attempt to move the Veterans Service Office. And thanks to the many local news articles exposing this attempted move including the January 11, 2024 article in Willits Weekly. Jim Shields of the Mendocino County Observer said, "The Brown Act requires at minimum for this matter to be agendized for discussion, public comment, and possible action by the supervisors."

The attempted move to a cold location so the warm comfy small house on Observatory could be rented out and help balance a budget has been corrected. Veterans you again have the respect you deserve.

Bob Wilkinson, Willits

## 'Gateway to the Redwoods' Starbucks

To the Editor:

At the last Willits City Council meeting we heard that Starbucks is coming to our small town, and is remodeling the old Jack in the Box to allow for a drive-through. Two weeks later, notices appeared around town. Someone was paying attention and noticed that the plans to expand included cutting two beautiful mature redwood trees on the northeast corner of the lot.

The note asked that anyone concerned meet at the construction site on the corner of Highway 20 and South Main Street. July 2 at 10 am, when managers would be there to check on construction progress. I made some signs and walked over on July 2, but arrived late and did not see anyone else there.

By happenstance I did get to talk to the manager and pointed out the folly of cutting redwoods. Redwoods provide shade. July 2 was already hot at 10 am, and the 10 degree difference in temperature between the future Starbucks south of the redwoods and the shaded building and porch north of the redwoods was measurable. Anyone can check this out for themselves. Redwoods are also natural air purifiers, absorbing more Co2 from the atmosphere than any other kind of forest. Redwoods also moderate temperature extremes. According to Save the Redwoods, redwood trees produce terpenes that attract moisture and cooling mists to themselves. Among the top three actions we can take to avert global warming is to simply stop cutting redwoods.

I know this from personal experience as well as science. I live behind the Willits Police station in an old house without AC, yet I have managed to stay cool through the heat spells until around 5 pm daily, due to two mature redwoods west of my place and redwoods and other mature trees east of me.

The manager I talked to said that Starbucks wants to be environmentally sensitive. He invited me to come back after the 4th of July weekend and we could talk more. He also reassured me that the trees were not going anywhere in the near future, and in particular, that no one was going to pull a stealth cutting in the middle of the night or without posting public notice in advance. I noted that Willits prides itself on being the Gateway to the Redwoods (we could see the arch proclaiming this from where we stood). Perhaps Starbucks could benefit by proclaiming itself the "Gateway to the Redwoods" Starbucks.

This is a simple action I ask for our community that could have a profound effect in leading the way to moderating the global warming we are coming to know so well. Please make your voice heard to protect these redwoods right on Main Street. Phone me at 707-459-0155 if you'd like to join in further actions publicizing this concern.

Robin Leler, Willits

## Senior Center menu for the week

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

**Thursday, July 11:** Al Pastor Taco Salad

**Friday, July 12:** Western Bacon Cheeseburger, Mac Salad

**Monday, July 15:** Pulled Pork Sandwich, Mac & Cheese, Cole Slaw

**Tuesday, July 16:** Chicken Fajitas, Rice & Beans

**Wednesday, July 17:** Meat Loaf, Mashed Potatoes, Veggies, Roll

**Thursday, July 18:** Chicken Salad Sandwich, Mac Salad

**Friday, July 19:** Tuna Casserole, Veggies, Roll

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

**Pancake Breakfast:** every second Sunday, on July 14 this month, 8 to 11 am. \$10; \$9 center members; \$6 children under 8. Menu choices: 1. Pancakes with eggs

## THIRD DISTRICT SUPERVISOR'S REPORT July 2024 update

By Supervisor John Haschak

Around the Mendocino County, Memorial Day was celebrated. I would like to thank all the veterans, American Legion posts, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and other groups who keep the memory alive of sacrifices made. My father was in the army. He was in Day 2 of the D-Day invasion. He only talked about it one time and that was the only time I saw him cry. I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to serve in the Peace Corps. As we look forward to 4th of July celebrations, we honor those who serve our communities, county, and country through public service, military service, or service making this world a better place.

The Board of Supervisors passed a balanced budget for fiscal year 2024-2025. Like last year, we had to use \$7 million of one-time-only money. We will have to continue cutting costs wherever possible. We do have labor agreements with all the bargaining units. We cut about \$8 million in creating efficiencies and reductions, and we will have to continue cost-cutting.

In projects that I worked on directly, these were some of the savings this year. We were able to save over \$600,000 in a "golden handshake" incentive and \$120,000 in deleting the Cultural Services Agency department head and replacing that position with a County Librarian position who oversees a branch library. The Cannabis Department lowered their county costs by about \$500,000, and offering permit amnesty for Planning and Building Services brought in over 40 new buildings into the tax system. The museum is transitioning to a non-profit agency, which will reduce county costs in the future.

The budget going forward will have two-year projections. This will help in forecasting how decisions made will play out over a longer period of time. The Teeter Plan, which helps provide stable funding for schools and community service districts, is projected to bring in \$1.5 million, which is good news since it was a negative on the budget. County facilities have seen a 10% drop in electrical usage and a 27% drop in gas utility usage. Cannabis taxes brought in \$3.2 million, when it was budgeted at \$1 million.

Unfortunately, the board approved a Master Tax Sharing Agreement without proper analyses done of how it would affect county services and finances. I was the lone dissenting vote. The tax sharing agreement allows cities to annex areas. This can be a fairly simple proposition in an area where there are just residential properties. However, when areas that are in the county have sales tax and transient occupancy tax generating businesses, it becomes much more complicated and risky for the county. Mendocino County projects a loss of \$3 million if, for example, the area north of Ukiah is annexed. This includes Raley's, auto dealers, motels, and many other businesses (14 of the 25 highest sales tax generators in the county).

Yet the county will still be responsible for coroner duties and other law enforcement activities, social services, mental and public health, and other services. This loss of income will affect the county's budget unless there is a huge surge of economic development as the proponents claim.

There will be a Talk with the Supervisor, Thursday, June 13 at 10 am at Brickhouse Coffee in Willits. I am available by email haschakj@mendocinocounty.gov or phone 707-972-4214.

## Savings Bank of Mendocino County receives Blue Zones Project Approval

Submitted by SBMC

Savings Bank of Mendocino County is proud to announce that it has been awarded the prestigious Blue Zones Project Approval, recognizing the bank's commitment to fostering a healthier and more engaged community. This esteemed certification highlights SBMC's dedication to enhancing the well-being of its employees and the residents of Mendocino and Lake counties.

Read the rest of **Blue Zones** Over on page 15



Above, from left: The American Legion float was patriotic with bunting and flags. Adventist Health Howard Memorial took the "Cowboys and Cadillacs" theme to heart, transforming their float into a big pink car. The Sherwood Valley Casino float won first place in the "Best Patriotic" category. Below, left: This entry blew smoke and fire as it traveled down Main Street.



Photos by Maureen Jennison



## Main Street Parade

### Willits shows up for annual Main Street event on July 4, despite toasty temperatures

While the sidewalks may not have been as packed as in cooler years past, there were still plenty of spectators to watch the annual 4th of July Willits Frontier Days parade come down Main Street.

**Maureen Jennison**  
Graphics & Photography  
willitsweekly@gmail.com

Parade winners included the following:

**Best Imagination:** first place went to Affordable Plumbing, and second place went to the Willits Center for the Arts.

**Best Patriotic:** first place went to

Sherwood Valley Casino; second place to All In Heating and Cooling; and third to Windsor One.

**Best Theme:** first place went to Flowers by Annette

**Miscellaneous:** first place went to BC Landscaping; second to Nuestra Alianza of Willits; and third to Mariposa Market.

**Youth Organization:** first place went to Willits Unified School District Transportation; second place to the Willits 4-H Club; and third to the Willits Community Theatre.

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





# Willits Weekly's Puzzle Page

Sudoku, Word Search & Crossword



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

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!

## DOG DAYS WORD SEARCH

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

- |                 |           |              |
|-----------------|-----------|--------------|
| AIR CONDITIONER | DIVING    | MUGGY        |
| AUGUST          | FANS      | OCEAN        |
| BASEBALL        | GARDENING | POPSICLE     |
| BEACH           | HEAT      | SHADE        |
| BOATING         | HOT       | SUMMER       |
| CAMP            | HUMID     | TEMPERATURE  |
| CANOE           | ICE CREAM | THUNDERSTORM |
| CLOUDS          | INDOORS   | VACATION     |

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
13							14					
15							16	17	18		19	
20						21				22		
23						24				25		
26			27	28	29				30			
			31						32			
			33						34			
35	36	37					38					
39						40				41	42	43
44					45						46	
47				48							49	
50				51					52	53	54	
55		56							57			
58									59			

## CLUES ACROSS

- Book size
- Indonesian island
- 'The Sopranos' character
- Plants often found in steams
- Stern
- Atomic #52
- Often seen after a company name
- Silk garments
- Inhibiting hormone (abbr.)
- Type of beer
- Margarine
- Throw lightly
- Explains again
- Raccoon-like animal
- Sneaker parts
- Platforms
- Scored perfectly
- One's essence
- Strikes with a firm blow
- Makes tractors
- Music term
- Lack of energy
- Vestments
- \_\_\_ and feathers

## CLUES DOWN

- About visual sense
- Part of a horse's saddle
- In a way, interchanged
- Rocker's accessory
- Very important person
- It precedes two
- Flavored
- Musical notes
- String instrument (slang)
- Mister
- Fine, light linen fabric
- Absence of bacteria
- Discounts

- Area units
- A description of one's life
- Gazelles
- Plumbing fixture
- Makes especially happy
- One side of something many-sided
- Frosts
- Defunct monetary unit of Guinea
- Female animal species
- School terms
- Written law
- Unpleasant aroma
- Nuclear weapon
- One who challenges
- Opposite of first
- Able to be utilized
- Less interesting
- Implants
- Canister
- Gestures
- After B
- Romanian monetary unit
- Long-term memory
- Cash machine
- The Volunteer State

# WILLITS POLICE DEPARTMENT POLICE LOG

June 24 to June 30

By Danya Davis, Willits Weekly

The officers of the Willits Police Department handled **55 incidents** in this 7-day reporting period.

### Summary of Active Investigations and Arrests

#### June 24

2:47 am: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 100 block of West Van Lane.

8:23 pm: Officers responded to a report of an unwanted subject in the 100 block of East Mendocino Avenue.

10:13 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 1500 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

10:30 pm: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of Holly Street and Magnolia Avenue and issued a warning.

#### June 25

12:11 am: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 300 block of Pine Street.

#### June 26

1:13 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 500 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

4:44 pm: Officers conducted a stop in the 1500 block of South Main Street and issued a warning.

4:53 pm: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of West Highway 20 and Coast Street and issued a warning.

4:59 pm: Officers conducted a stop near the intersection of East Valley Street and South Humboldt Street and issued a warning.

8:16 pm: DEWITT Jr., Kenneth Joseph (43) of Ukiah was contacted in the 800 block of South Main Street. He was arrested on felony charges of transient registration and violation of parole: "Remain under legal custody to return to prison."



Kenneth Dewitt, Jr. of Ukiah.

#### June 27

6:25 am: MILLER, Samantha Nicole (22) of Willits was contacted in the 300 block of Creekside Drive following a disturbance. She was arrested on felony charges of domestic battery.

9:56 am: Officers initiated a theft investigation in the 200 block of South Main Street.

#### June 28

12:40 am: Officers initiated a hit-and-run vehicle collision investigation in the 500 block of Coast Street.

9:42 am: Officers responded to a report of vandalism in the 200 block of East Commercial Street.

## Sheriff's Office names Blue Lake murder victim

Submitted by MCSO

As a part of the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office's continuing investigation into the June 29 murder on Blue Lake Road in Brooktrails, the decedent / victim from this case was positively identified as Roberta Ann McNeil-Wood, a 77-year-old female from Willits.

The decedent's legal next-of-kin was contacted and notified of McNeil-Wood's death. The official cause and manner of death is pending receipt of the final autopsy report and toxicology report.

Suspect Michael Andrew Coleman, 41,

of Willits, was arrested on scene on June 29, and booked into the Mendocino County Jail on a charge of Homicide (187(a) PC), where he is being held on a no-bail status.

Further information related to this investigation will be released as it becomes available. Anybody with information related to this investigation is encouraged to call the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office Communications Center at 707-463-4086. Information can also be provided anonymously by utilizing the non-emergency tip-line at 707-234-2100.

The rest of **MCOE** From page 1

5 days to August 14, 2024 for that incumbent's seat. For a candidate's packet with more information about running for office in Mendocino County, visit [www.mendocinocounty.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/64701/638513900824830000](http://www.mendocinocounty.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/64701/638513900824830000)

The Mendocino County Office of Education held a public Board of Education candidate information meeting on June 25 at the MCOE River Campus in Ukiah. Mendocino County Superintendent of Schools Nicole Gientzer, Assessor, Clerk, Recorder, Registrar of Voters Katrina Bartolome, California School Boards Governance Consultant Jefferson Crain, and current Board of Education trustee Larry Olson (Area 2) presented information and answered questions about the role of the Board of Education and the process of becoming a candidate for trustee.

You can watch the candidate information video on YouTube here: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=51mOrcFWXT8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51mOrcFWXT8)

See the presentation created for potential candidates here: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=51mOrcFWXT8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=51mOrcFWXT8)

Residents of Willits, Brooktrails, Laytonville and Covelo are welcome to send in a letter to the editor. Please email us: [willitsweekly@gmail.com](mailto:willitsweekly@gmail.com)



Above, from left: A cowboy stays focused on the movements of the horse, trying to anticipate its next move and allowing a longer ride during the July 4 CCPRA event. The hand of this cowboy contestant, in red, got stuck in the rigging, forcing the pick-up men and other arena personnel to hop in and free the cowboy. Sliding to a stop is as important as running fast, and this horse knew his job in the tie-down event. Above, from left: 2024 Willits Frontier Days Sweetheart Elena Arkelian smiles from the arena as she helps herd the cattle back to the collection pens. Some dismounts are easier than others – this cowboy hopped right from bronc to fence, much to the awe of the close-by crowd. Rodeo clown Charlie "Too Tall" West got more involved than he'd hoped for during this tie-down event – the calf accidentally clothed the clown, and evaded the cowboy for a few before finally getting caught. At right: This bronc and cowboy busted out of the bucking chutes airborne and ready to go during the July 3 event.

# CCPRA Rodeos

Professional cowboys and cowgirls compete in main event rodeos July 3 and July 4

The Jack Tharp Arena was tilled and ready for cowboys and cowgirls from the California Cowboy Professional Rodeo Association July 3 and 4 when the competitors took to their horses, and tried to hang on to wild livestock for the main rodeo events of the 98th annual Willits Frontier Days.

The CCPRA is a non-profit organization, dedicated to promoting the sport of rodeo and was founded in 1966. Members of the CCPRA compete in rodeos in California, Nevada, Washington and Oregon, and try for about \$500,000 in available cash prizes over the year. Money comes from entry fees and added purses, and the season ends with the CCPRA finals, this year being held in Red Bluff on November 29-30 at the Pauline Davis Pavilion. The 2024 season started April 6, and will include 24 rodeos, each with chances to win cash for the best ropers and riders.

Willits is lucky to have the coveted July 3 and 4 dates on the CCPRA calendar, and Willits Frontier Days enjoys hosting the event year after year. The next CCPRA rodeo

will be on July 13 and 14 in Lakeport.

Results from the Willits events this year are as follows:

In calf roping, cowboys must rope a calf, dismount from their horse, run to the tethered calf, flip it over, and tie three of the calf's legs together – and they must stay tied – to get a time. 19 entrants competed with the top six earning some of the total payout of \$3,106.70 in money for the event, including first-place winner Cody Jones of Ukiah who won \$900.94 for his time of 10.3 seconds; second place went to Lane Wheeler of Turlock, winning \$745.61 for his time of 10.8 seconds; third place went to Emry Selby of Coalinga, winning \$590.27 with a time of 11.9 seconds; fourth place went to Trace Conard of Corning, winning 434.94 with a time of 12 seconds; fifth place went to Zane George of La Grange, winning \$279.60 with a time of 12.4 seconds; and sixth place went to Byars Brown of Wolforth, Texas, winning \$155.34 with a time of 12.6 seconds.

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



Above, from left: A cowboy catches the running calf during the July 3 rodeo. Above, right: The bronc gets the better of this cowboy, tossing him airborne during his ride. This cowboy hangs on to the running steer trying his best to flip the animal over, therefore stopping the clock on his run. At right: Danielle Barry carries the American flag in the grand entry of the July 3 CCPRA event. Below, from left: This cowboy went head over heels, flying over the nose of this horse. On July 4, Nicol Persico Kunka carries the American flag in the grand entry, this time with the pole topped with patriotic-colored canisters which cascaded a lingering ribbon of colored smoke around the arena. This cowboy had to double check this bronc wasn't a bull after coming face to face with his former mount after landing on the ground.



707-459-9116

**T and T TOWING**

Happy Fourth of July!

RADIO DISPATCHED 24 HR TOWING

277 N. Lenore Ave. Willits, CA

**GROCERY OUTLET** bargain market

**SAVE 40-70%\*** on groceries and more every day!

Willits

\*Compared to traditional grocery stores.





Above, from left: The Scout Hut is full of breakfast fun on July 5. Pancakes, eggs, potatoes, and sausage fills this plate. Diners ate inside or outside during the breakfast.

# Lions Breakfast

Biggest breakfast yet for July 5 meal hosted by Willits Lions Club

"You know, I think this was the first time we've ever held the breakfast AFTER the 4th of July," said Willits Lions Club President Skip Lucier, commenting on this year's event being held on July 5. "We were worried a little, were people going to come? But it really turned out to be the biggest one we've had yet!"

The combination of the Willits Frontier Days Junior Rodeo overlapping the breakfast event surely helped with some attendance, but that's usually true most other years, too. The Sweetheart contestants sold around 240 presale tickets, but the rest of the attendees were just walk-ups to the event.

Lucier said that most years in the past, around 250-300 breakfasts are served, consisting of the traditional menu: eggs, pancakes and ham.

This year, the group served around 400 breakfasts. They also started a new menu: This year, sausage links and biscuits and gravy were also offered, and so many people took them up on the offerings, they ran out of sausage mid-event, and had to send someone to purchase more.

"We had to make a run to Grocery Outlet to get more links," said Lucier. "We told them what happened, and they graciously gave us half-price on the meat." Potatoes were also added to the menu. Lucier noted that the crew was able to use some of their potatoes from their own fridges at the new Scout Hut, where the breakfast was held this year, and they decided to griddle up and add to the selection.

They also made 30-40 breakfast burritos



Willits Lions, from left: Ed Scott, Gane Jackson and Erica Kroesen, work together in the kitchen.  
Photos by Maureen Jennison

at the beginning of the day that were brought over to the arena stands and sold to spectators and contestants at the junior rodeo.

"This was the first time we held the event at the new Scout Hut, and not the round hut," explained Lucier. "The kitchen's not quite as spread out here as it is there, but we were well-organized ahead and everyone did such a great job. I'm so proud of all the Lions! They were working hard, giving it their all, and really doing their best to make the event such a success."

Next up for the Lions is the Blues &

Brews event, slated this year for Saturday, August 31. Lucier noted three groups will provide entertainment, including headliner Roy Rogers and The Delta Rhythm Kings, known for his slide guitar talents. Food, vendors and fun are all promised, and the Lions will be featuring wines and beers from Mendocino County for sale at the event.

If you're interested in joining the Willits Lions Club – not just a men's club – women are welcome too! – or are interested in learning more, contact Lucier by calling or texting 707-246-0827 or send an email to willitslions@gmail.com.

Below, from left: Skip Lucier holds a tray for Aliyah Duley, daughter of Lion Dusty Duley, to scoop up potatoes off the griddle. Sharon Baumann serves eggs to hungry diners. Potatoes cook on the grill.



## Willits' Roger Ham wins Legacy Award from American Legion

Submitted by American Legion Post 174

At the opening of the July 4th. Willits Frontier Days Rodeo, the American Legion, Willits Post 174, Color Guard paused their flag presentation to publicly honor one of their own.

Roger Ham, past Post 174 commander and current adjutant and finance officer, is truly considered a Renaissance man. Not just his leadership skills and dedication to the ideals of the American Legion, but his outreach and community involvement.

Ham's motto, "We are here to serve veterans, and the community in which they live."

Following the "center arena" public display of appreciation, Ham was presented with the American Legion "Legacy Award" by American Legion, Department of CA, District One Commander Michael Voight.



Above, left: American Legion's Roger Ham, center, holds his "Legacy Award" for a photo with Legion colleagues at the July 4th Independence Day Parade. From left: Commander Michael Voight, American Legion, Department of CA, District One; 1st Vice Commander Kennedy Cooper, Willits Post 174; Adjutant/Finance Officer and Past Commander Roger Ham, Willits Post 174; Commander Curtis Deshield, Willits Post 174; Dominic Favolora of Sons of the American Legion; Dominic Favolora, Jr., Sons of the American Legion (orange shirt); and 2nd Vice Commander John Frankum, Willits Post 174. Above, right: The American Legion's "Legacy Award," presented to Roger Ham in recognition of his service and enduring contribution to Willits Post 174.

Photos courtesy Vicki Ham

Below: The American Legion Color Guard brought flags (left) into the arena during the 2024 rodeo before Ham's trip around the ring in the ATV (center). Below, right: Roger Ham holds an American flag in front of the Veterans Memorial at the Mendocino County Museum in Willits.

Photos by Maureen Jennison



At top, from left: Andrew Culp, who raises bulls, gives instructions and hints to the bull riders prior to the start. Announcer Ted Dwyer, a veteran of years of rodeos all over California and places beyond, keeps the crowd enthused. Previous Willits Frontier Days Sweetheart Danielle Barry holds the colors during the national anthem, after galloping full speed around the arena. Above, from left: This bull becomes airborne trying to buck the cowboy off his back. It's not simple to dismount off of a bucking bronco. This competitor in the Breakaway Roping competition is trying to get the rope around the neck of the calf at full speed.

# Bulls and Broncos

Young riders try their skills during new Frontier Days event put on by two high school seniors

There were only four events in the Willits Frontier Days Bulls and Broncos competition last Saturday evening, but it was a full slate of excitement and fun for both the audience and the competitors. Although only one cowboy out of the 12 competitors was able to stay on a wildly gyrating bull for the requisite eight seconds, every ride was a thrill ride.

The difficulty only added to the intrigue and the glib comments and blasting music of journeyman announcer Ted Dwyer, which served to pump up the energy and give a memorable show.

"I told the bull riders to stay hydrated and that everything needs to be at a production level," said Andrew Culp, who gave the pre-show pep and safety talk to the bull riders. "They're not just bull riders. They're also part of the production. They are entertainers."

And entertain they did. Whether in the stands, or sitting on the fence helping the next competitor to prepare, everyone seemed to have a great time watching or doing.

The bull riding was the main event and what the people came to see. There was also a bronco-riding portion but with only three competitors. The Mutton Busting contest consisted of kids less than 50 pounds and under 8 years old.

Most of the young ones rode backward on the sheep and most fell off within a couple of seconds, although Stetson Sedita was able to record a ride that was long enough for him to receive the prize. Asked to give a bow to the audience, Sedita waved to the attendees for a long while and had to be escorted off the arena surface in an adorable display of young pride.

The event was an added attraction for the Willits Frontier Days, having been instigated as a senior project by two young veteran cowboys, Clayton Cooley and Kevin Rountree. It grew from the simple beginnings to take on a life of its own and hopefully will be included in the years to come. Cooley was able to compete in the bull riding, but unfortunately Rountree had recently broken his arm riding a bull and was in a cast.

"I've never put on something like this before," said the young Rountree. "It's a lot more difficult than we expected. There are a lot of moving parts to putting on an event like this. I learned a lot. That's for sure. We learned how to put on a rodeo and all the things it takes. It was a good learning experience. I was surprised by how good the community was helping us out."

Another of the crowd favorite events was the breakaway roping competition where the calves got a head start, to be chased by cowgirls who had to get a rope around their necks in the fastest time. The cowgirls included past Frontier Days Sweetheart Danielle Barry, who was able to rope the calf on her second try and was honored to gallop around the perimeter of the arena prior to the national anthem. Kamish Wagner, who had a combined time of 5.4 seconds, won the breakaway roping contest.

Kyle Starkey won the bronco riding as he was the only cowboy of the three to remain on the horse for the requisite eight seconds in both his rides.

"The most important thing to bronc riding is to hold on tight, get a good buck ring, get a good mark out coming out," explained Dwyer. "The buck ring is used for balance. If you have too short of a buck ring, it will pull you over the front end. Take too long, it'll slap you back into the saddle and catapult you out. The buck ring is used for balance to kind of lift and pull yourself back in the saddle. Bull riding is eight seconds and that is trying to hold on tight.

"Tonight, they're going to do 'ranch-style' bronc riding," Dwyer continued. "It's the way they did it years ago. It's a regular saddle, regular horn. The cowboys on the ranch did it. Ranch riders can reach down with two hands and hold the buck ring with one hand and grab a rope with the other which holds them in a little tighter. Their riding deal is a little bit different but if you're out riding about five miles away from the corral, gathering cattle, and the horse starts bucking, you better hold on, 'cause it's a long walk back."

All of the competitions came out of work situations on

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



Above: Prior to the final bull-riding round, all the competitors line up to be auctioned off during the Calcutta event. Below, left: Clayton Cooley was one of the promoters of the event as well as one of the bull riders. Below, right: Having broken his arm riding a bull, Kevin Rountree was not able to compete, however, he promoted the rodeo as his senior project. At bottom: Riding a sheep is harder than it looks for these youngsters.

Photos by Mathew Caine



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Thursday, July 11

A Touch of Mendocino, The Book Juggler: The staff of The Book Juggler, "the Biggest Little Bookstore in Mendocino County" will be at the Willits Library, Thursday, July 11 from 11 am to noon, as part of the "A Touch of Mendocino" series to talk about their business, its history, and its wonderful selection of reading material, a program for all ages. "Located in the heart of downtown Willits, the Book Juggler has been in business for almost 40 years, drawing in lovers of books, instruments, musicians' supplies, LPs, puzzles, games and much more." 390 East Commercial Street. More info: visit www.mendolib.org or contact the Willits Branch Library at 707-459-5908.

Willits Farmers Market: The weekly farmers market is outdoors for the season, Thursday, July 11, at the old Rexall parking lot downtown, 90 South Main Street, 3 to 5:30 pm. Local produce, local meat, farm fresh eggs, delicious meals, tasty treats, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more. Tobin's Tales, story time at the farmers market, from 3:30 to 4 pm, with Library Assistant Tobin Steiskal reading selected juvenile picture books. All are welcome.

Thursday Evenings at the Museum: Mendocino County Museum in Willits revisits permanent gallery exhibits this summer, with new content shared by museum docents and a corresponding art activity on Thursday evenings, from 6 to 8 pm. In July, the exhibit is "The Coli Sisters: Reflections on the Creamery." Thursday, July 11 event is: "Magnet Magic." 400 East Commercial Street. Program attendance is included with regular Museum admission. Info: www.mendocinocounty.gov/museum, museum@mendocinocounty.gov or 707-234-6365.

Friday, July 12

Commonwealth Garden's Farm Stand Opening: The Farm Stand opens Friday, July 12 from 10 am to 1 pm at the Commonwealth Garden, located on Marcela Drive, across the street from Howard Memorial Hospital. The farmstand will be open every Friday after July 12, through late fall.

Stuffed Campout at the Library: "The boys are having a sleepover! Bring a stuffed toy to the library anytime during our open hours on Friday, July 12 (10 am to 6 pm), then visit our Facebook page for updates! https://www.facebook.com/WillitsLibrary Pick up your stuffed the next day on Saturday, July 13 (10 am to 5 pm)." Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. Info: www.mendolib.org or 459-5908.

WCA July Art Talk: Art historian Gary Martin gives the monthly free Art Talk on the fascinating art movement of Post-Impressionism, delving into the works and influence of prominent Post-Impressionist artists such as Paul Cézanne, Vincent van Gogh, Georges Seurat, and Paul Gauguin. Friday, July 12 at 6:30 pm at the Willits Center for the Arts, 71 East

# What's Happening Around Town

Commercial Street, next to the Noyo Theatre. More info: Gary Martin at gtm1950@gmail.com or the Willits Center for the Arts at 707-972-3326

"The Tooth of Crime" at WCT: Sam Shepard's post-apocalyptic rock and roll drama opens at Willits Community Theatre on Friday, July 12 and runs through July 21. In essence a classic tragedy, the play centers on an art and ego dual in a wasteland between an aging rocker and an upstart rap challenger. With a live rock band and a music score by T. Bone Burnett. For mature audiences due to explicit adult language, adult content, nudity and sexual violence. Shows are Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 pm, and Sunday matinees at 2 pm. Tickets are \$20 and available online at wctperformingartscenter.org, or at the door.

Saturday, July 13

Pomo Big Time Celebration: The Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians invite you to their 31st annual Big Time Celebration Saturday, July 13, from 10:30 am to 8:30 pm, at the Sherwood Valley Rancheria, 190 Sherwood Hill Drive. Salmon and BBQ lunch, vendors, dance groups, raffles, and a "commod" cook off.

Craft Saturdays in July: Join the staff of the Willits Branch Library for a variety of fun-filled, creative crafts for the whole family, every Saturday in July, this week, Saturday, July 13 from 11 am to noon. Willits Library Meeting Room, 390 East Commercial Street. Info: www.mendolib.org or 459-5908.

Flourish & Flow Free Walking Group: Flourish & Flow Wellness and Fitness Studio hosts a free walking group meet up every Saturday this summer. "Willits Wilderness Wanderers" is open to everyone.

Saturday, July 13, meet at the Brooktrails Parcourse, 24530 Birch Street at 11:30 am.

Sit-N-Sew: Second Saturdays at the Willits Library, July 13 this month, from 1 to 5 pm. Drop in - bring your sewing project and have fun. 390 East Commercial Street. Info: www.mendolib.org or 459-5908.

"The Tooth of Crime" at WCT: Sam Shepard's post-apocalyptic rock and roll drama continues at Willits Community Theatre on Saturday, July 13 at 7:30 pm. See Friday, July 12 listing for details.

Sunday, July 14

"The Tooth of Crime" at WCT: Sam Shepard's post-apocalyptic rock and roll drama continues at Willits Community Theatre with a Sunday, July 14 matinee at 2 pm. See Friday, July 12 listing for details.

Wednesday, July 17

Willits Stamp Club at the Library: Monthly meeting of the Willits Stamp Club is on third Wednesdays, Wednesday, July 17 this month, 5 to 6:30 pm at the Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. Bring your collection and enjoy time perusing stamps. All are welcome. Refreshments served. Info: talsofam@pacific.net

Thursday, July 18

Willits Farmers Market: The weekly farmers market is outdoors for the season, Thursday, July 18, at the old Rexall parking lot downtown, 90 South Main Street, 3 to 5:30 pm. Local produce, local meat, farm fresh eggs, delicious meals, tasty treats, live music, the new edition of Willits Weekly, and more. Tobin's Tales, story time at the farmers market, from 3:30 to 4 pm, with Library Assistant Tobin Steiskal reading selected juvenile picture books. All are welcome.

Friday, July 19

"The Tooth of Crime" at WCT: Sam Shepard's post-apocalyptic rock and roll drama continues at Willits Community Theatre on Friday, July 19 at 7:30 pm. See Friday, July 12 listing for details.

Clay Hawkins Duo at Shanachie: "Late Night, Boot Stomping, Road Music from the Heart" by slide guitarist and songwriter Clay Hawkins and longtime co-conspirator Andrew Robertson on the upright bass. Friday, July 19 at 8 pm, at Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street.

Saturday, July 20

"The Tooth of Crime" at WCT: Sam Shepard's post-apocalyptic rock and roll drama continues at Willits Community Theatre on Saturday, July 20 at 7:30 pm. See Friday, July 12 listing for details.



Blue Luke at Shanachie: "Blue Luke" Andrews is a prodigy guitarist, born and raised in Dos Rios, Mendocino County. "Imagine a band that takes the soul of the blues, the groove of the funk, the grit of rock & roll and the rich harmonies of jazz to create exactly what you've always wanted to hear." Saturday, July 20 at 8 pm, Shanachie Pub, 50 South Main Street.

Sunday, July 21

Free Sports Physicals, Back to School

Fair: Adventist Health Howard Memorial hosts a free Sports Physicals and Back-to-School Fair for school-age children on Sunday, July 21, from 9 am to 12 noon at AHM's Redwood Medical Clinic located at 3 Marcela Drive in Willits. The event will include free physicals for youth athletes, backpacks and other school supplies for students, along with booths showcasing community resources like Mendocino County Blue Zones, the Mendocino County Library, and Mendocino County Public Health. A sports physical is required by California schools before a child can join in any school sports. Parental consent is required for the physical exam, and forms required should be brought with each parent and student.

The Willits Death Café: a place to talk about death and dying. Third Sunday of the month this month, Sunday, July 21.. 1 to 3 pm. 2351 East Hill Road. Under the Great Oak tree. This is not a bereavement support group. Questions? Email mere.melvin@gmail.com

Free Sports Physicals and Back to School Fair. Sunday, July 21, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. Located at the Redwood Medical Clinic. Adventist Health Howard Memorial logo.

Ongoing Events at the Willits Library. Willits Library, 390 East Commercial Street. Info: www.mendolib.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.

Despicable Me 4. The Story: Gru (Steve Carell) is back. His Minions are back. Chaos ensues. Sure, there's a plot. Gru wants to be the baddest bad guy of all Bad Guys (which never quite works out), but what he really wants more than anything is to have his baby boy love Da-Da. But stubborn baby boy Felonious Gru Jr only loves Mama (Kristen Wiig).

Little Lake Blues & Brews. August 31, 2024 11:00 AM - 6:30 PM. Recreation Grove, Willits, CA. Roy Rogers & Delta Rhythm Kings, Sean LeAhe Trio, Cynthia Deerman & The Light Gospel Ensemble. Beer & wine garden, food & craft vendors. Free event open to all ages.

Calming Coloring at the Library: Thursdays, from 5 to 6 pm at the Willits Library. An hour of quiet with coloring pages. Supplies provided. All ages welcome.

Chess for Teens: On Fridays, from 4 to 6:30 pm. Teens, ages 12-18 are invited; all skill levels welcome. Library staff will be there to help beginners and those who want to learn. Light refreshments provided.

Senior Dance Hall: Fridays from 2 to 3 pm. Seniors ages 55 and older are invited to bring your dancing shoes to enjoy jazz, pop, swing, and ballroom selections. Don't feel like dancing? Please come and enjoy the music, catch up with friends new and old, and share some light refreshments.

Tech Help: Now every Saturday from 11 am to 12 pm: Is your computer on the friz? Want to install a new app? Bring your tech questions and get help from the library's tech savvy volunteer Craft Saturdays: Every Saturday in July, from 11-am to 1 pm, library will host a variety of fun-filled, creative crafts for the whole family. All ages welcome.

Spinning & Knitting: Every Saturday at the library; from 1 to 4:30 pm. All skill levels welcome!

ONGOING EVENTS

WCA July Exhibit: Willits Center for the Arts offers a dual art exhibition featuring the contrasting yet complementary styles of Robert Louis Permenter and Patsy Brixie. "Visitors will be able to immerse themselves in the therapeutic and spontaneous worlds created by these two talented artists." 71 East Commercial Street. Gallery hours are Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 11 am to 5 pm.

Free Food Pop-Ups: Mendocino Food and Nutrition Program's Food Pop-Up in Willits offers two events per month (no distribution on July 4 holiday this month; will resume July 18 from 10 to 11:30 am), first and third Thursdays, at 1250 Blosser Lane. Info: outreach@bfoodbank.org; 707-964-9404

'In the Field' Exhibit: Mendocino County Museum's latest exhibit, "In the Field: Exploring Botany in Mendocino County," celebrates the study of unique plants that grow in our region, reflecting on the pursuits of Mendocino County botanists from past to present, featuring sketches, illustrations, photographs, and pressed specimens. Mendocino County Museum, 400 East Commercial Street, is open 11 am to 5 pm, Tuesday through Saturday. More info: visit www.mendocinocounty.org/museum

Willits Tennis Club: Meets Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 to 11 am at the Willits High School courts. New members welcome. Free. Show up or call 707-484-3385.

Tibetan Buddhist Meditation Group: Meets every week on Mondays, 6 pm, at the Muse in Willits, 30 East San Francisco Street. More info: 707-354-1866.

Willits Drum Circle: Every second and fourth Fridays at 7 pm. At St. Francis of the Redwoods Episcopal Church, Main and Commercial 7pm. Info: Bill Bruneau: 459-3390.

Brown Bag Lunch Program: Sack lunches served at the City Park (or across the street in case of rain) every Saturday from 1 to 2 pm. Come early to be assured a lunch! Provided by various churches and community organizations.

Shuffleboard Sunday at Flying Dog Wood Fired Pizza & Vinyl: "Sign-ups start at 4 pm. Games start at 4:45 pm. \$5 sign-up fee, teams of two, winner takes the pot! We'll have the games on all day. Beer, wine, pizza, we've got everything you need!" Flying Dog Wood Pizza, 65 South Main Street.

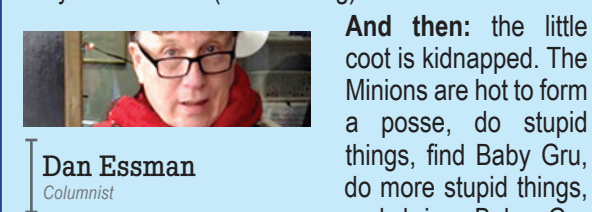
Willits Boules Club, Tuesdays and Fridays at 2 pm: The outdoor boules course is located across the street from the Willits Skate Park. Info: tgregory@saber.net or visit Willits Boules Club on Facebook.

Free Kids Karate Classes at Body Works Gym: Sheriff's Youth Activities League offers free classes for kids at the Willits Body Works Gym, 1511 South Main Street. More info on current classes: call or text Sensei Mike Tobin at 707-354-0565.

COLUMN | AT THE MOVIES

## 'Despicable Me 4'

The Story: Gru (Steve Carell) is back. His Minions are back. Chaos ensues. Sure, there's a plot. Gru wants to be the baddest bad guy of all Bad Guys (which never quite works out), but what he really wants more than anything is to have his baby boy love Da-Da. But stubborn baby boy Felonious Gru Jr only loves Mama (Kristen Wiig).



Dan Essman, Columnist

And then: the little coot is kidnapped. The Minions are hot to form a posse, do stupid things, find Baby Gru, do more stupid things, and bring Baby Gru home. (Sounds kind of straightforward, but with Minions, one is never quite sure that they actually know what it is they are charging off to do.) At the same time more or less, Poppy (her name), the snotty irritating teenage girl in the treehouse next door, is blackmailing Gru. She hankers to pull a heist and knows she can't pull off the caper without coercing Gru's expert help.

So, with all these situations unwinding, the accelerating pace of events hustle this noisy flick through the well-known "three stages of comedy" (which I just made up, and is not really "a thing") from Satire to Slapstick to Farce. At every turn, Gru and the Minions have new adversaries. Chaos gets more chaotic. Battles happen. Gru's Despicable team overcomes all odds, and Baby Gru gets back to Mama. Spoiler-no-Spoiler: Everybody ends up happy and friends.

My Thoughts: Confession: I do love the silly yellow Minions and have to admit I was predisposed to like this movie. I wasn't disappointed. It was completely ridiculous, and I laughed. It's a great thing to be watching on the 4th of July (or the 5th or the 6th... etc.), and especially in an air-conditioned movie house. Enjoy the movie. Enjoy the cool.

Parents: It's a feature length cartoon. The protagonists are all a silly hoot! I think the kids will like it. Willitsian Daniel Essman prefers his reality attenuated by the wisdom of the imagination.

## Sam Shepard's rock and roll drama 'The Tooth of Crime' opens July 12 at WCT

By Steve Helman for WCT

Sam Shepard's post-apocalyptic rock and roll drama "The Tooth of Crime" opens July 12 at the Willits Community Theatre for a two-week run. In essence a classic tragedy in the vein of "Hamlet" or "Death of a Salesman," the play centers on a duel between an aging rocker, Hoss, and an upstart rap challenger, Crow.

Directed by Mike A'Dair, "The Tooth of Crime" opens on the hipster poetry and the monster ego of the aging rock god Hoss, where he rules as undisputed champion in a desert wasteland after some calamity has wiped out any semblance of society.

The only order that remains is "The Game," a confluence of violence and rock music. The combatants are "Markers" who fight to secure vast swaths of territory with different musical styles and weapons. The action heats up with the arrival of Crow, a violent young Gypsy Marker with no regard for rules or the old ways. Crow's goals and tactics violate everything Hoss stands for, and more than just territory eventually hangs in the balance as they duel upon the stage

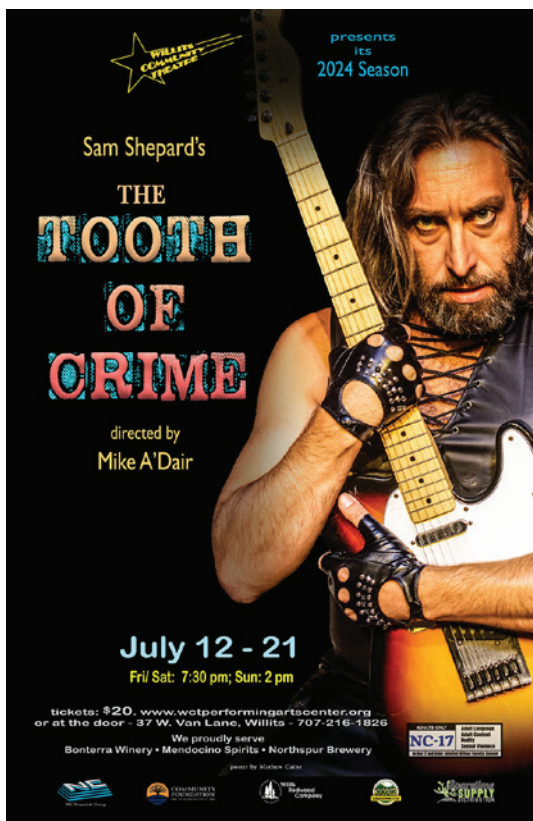
The show features a live rock band to punctuate the drama, with the compelling action set to a music score and words by T-Bone Burnett. The cast features Jeff Shipp as Hoss and Garrett Moore as Crow, along with Rebecca King, Cortlandt Wilson, Mike A'Dair, Schuyler Marcier, and William Hahn.

Director A'Dair says. "In his script the playwright comes to terms with the glorification of rock stars, the illusion of the rock 'n' roll life, and the contradictions that are involved when one bases one's life on image alone and a kind of primitive savagery."

"The Tooth of Crime" runs July 12 through July 21, with shows Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30, and Sunday matinees at 2 pm. Tickets are \$20 and available online at wctperformingartscenter.org, or at the door. The performance is rated NC-17 for Mature Audiences due to adult language, adult content, nudity and sexual violence. No one under the age of 18 will be admitted.

The production is sponsored by Willits Redwood Company, Kim Bancroft and Fred Setterberg. The Willits Community Theatre's 2024 season is underwritten by NC Financial Group and Sparetime Garden Center.

At right: Rebecca King portrays Hoss' girlfriend and manager, Becky Lou. Photo by Mathew Caine



Arts Center for the Arts presents ABIGAIL SUMMERS & JENNY WATTS in the WCA great room. piano-cello performance with pieces by Bach, Vaughan Williams and Faure. Tickets \$20. Online: willitscenterforthearts.org. Sun Aug 4 2PM.

Willits Coloring Book sponsored by Rotary Club of Willits. The Rotary Club of Willits is holding a Contest for Photographs that represent the City of Willits. The winning photographs will be transformed into coloring book pages which will be made into a coloring book. Email Logos, Photos, or Artwork To: WillitsRotaryClub@gmail.com ON OR BEFORE JULY 21, 2024.

Little Lake Blues & Brews. August 31, 2024 11:00 AM - 6:30 PM. Recreation Grove, Willits, CA. Roy Rogers & Delta Rhythm Kings, Sean LeAhe Trio, Cynthia Deerman & The Light Gospel Ensemble. Beer & wine garden, food & craft vendors. Free event open to all ages.

Free Summer Meals in Willits. A healthy breakfast and lunch are provided FREE to children 0-18 years old, whether enrolled in the Willits Unified School District or not, and regardless of income. Breakfast and lunch are available Monday through Friday, through August 9, 2024, at Blosser Lane Elementary School, 1275 Blosser Lane. Breakfast: 8 to 9 am; Lunch: 11 am to 12 pm. Questions? Call: Willits Unified School District Nutrition Services, 707-459-7700, ext. 155

Noyo Theatre Willits, CA. 57 East Commercial Street - Willits 707-459-6660 www.noyotheatre.com. Big News: on Thursday, July 18th, all showings of Despicable Me 4 will be dubbed in Spanish. We are beginning Spanish offerings every Thursday!

Despicable Me 4 (PG13) 1 hr 35 mins. Fri.-Thurs.: 2:00, 4:30 & 7:00 pm. Movie Times for July 12 thru July 18.

Fly Me to the Moon (PG13) 2 hrs 12 mins. Fri.-Thurs.: 1:30, 4:15 & 7:15 pm. Horizon (R) 3 hrs 1 min. Fri.-Thurs.: 2:45 & 6:30. OVER 21 CLUB - Luxury Recliners. Masks Optional.





Above, left: This Canadian jade is worn by Chris Towne of Ukiah. Above, right: Julia Sotomayor wears a Peruvian pink opal at the meeting. Below: The Willits Gem and Mineral Society meets at the Grange on the fourth Thursday of each month. At bottom, left: A sample of citrine is brought by a young mineralogist. At bottom, right: After the introductions, the attendees gather for suggestions, hints and identifications.



Photos by Mathew Caine



## Rock Hounds

Willits Gem and Mineral Society forms, meeting at the Grange on fourth Thursday of each month

A recent meme stated: "Nobody offers to show me a cool rock they found anymore. Adulthood is so dumb." There is a group forming in Willits that is determined to prove this statement untrue. The Willits Gem and Mineral Society held its first "formal" meeting last Thursday at the Little Lake Grange and the interest and turnout were extremely encouraging.

Twenty four enthusiastic rock hounds showed up to share their knowledge and rocks with the rest of the group, rocks that most people would not recognize as anything special, but to the trained eye contain a treasure trove of sparkling jade, amethyst, or other gems that hide in the recesses of their stony surroundings.

Chuck Cully, an over-40-year veteran of gem and mineral groups and Julia Sotomayor, an employee at George's Geodes and Gems, a local purveyor of all things mineral, called the meeting to see if there was enough interest in the community to try and formalize the club and schedule regular periodic meetings.

Spoiler alert: There was. The attendees ranged in age from the very young to older citizens with years of experience. The consensus at the end was to have regular meetings on the fourth Thursday of each month.

"Basically, we're meeting tonight to see if we want to have a permanent meeting place, once a month, where we have people come in and give presentations on different topics and to see how committed people are in doing this, because at some point we're going to have to have leaders of some sort," said Cully. "If this turns into a monthly affair, it would be nice to do a potluck before a meeting and have somebody come in and do a presentation. Maybe have people get together and go off and do field trips."

As with many clubs which consist of like-minded participants, they love to share their knowledge of gems and minerals, stories about the prospecting trips they undertook, where they found the rocks, identifying and processing the gems, the equipment needed to open and polish the stones, what kind of settings to present the gems in, etc. As many of the attendees have been involved in gems and minerals for many years, the knowledge they imparted could fill several books with facts, figures and anecdotes.

At the beginning of the meeting, Sotomayor asked that the attendees go around the room and introduce themselves, tell a little of their background and interest in the field of gemology.

"I'm sort of a rock hound," said an attendee named Chris. "I love jade. I work

with it and polish it. I like seeing whatever else people bring to the club." His mother is a master stone carver, so the interest comes naturally.

"I've been finding stones for a long time," said another attendee named Keith. "I like polishing them. You never know what you're going to find in a creek. I like making jewelry."

Continuing the introductions, Ben commented: "I'm happy to share my specimens at meetings and see all the different varieties. I like seeing what everybody else finds. I'm happy to share my knowledge and learn from others as well."

Abbi said: "My grandfather was a rock hound. He got me started at a very young age. It became an obsession. I learned how to cut and polish and all that stuff." Dave started finding rocks on the shores of Lake Mendocino, which he said, "is like a rock shop."

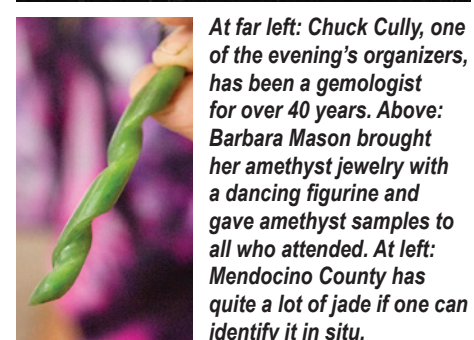
Eddie started by pilfering rocks from a neighbor's driveway on the way home from school. He learned how to process the stones over time and became a jeweler, got his degree, and now works for the U.S. Geological Survey.

Annie made jewelry for about 30 years. "My orientation to the stones was metaphysical. The stones would often talk to me and tell me what to do with them. People would walk by my display and a stone would start to sparkle for them. They had a relationship with that stone that had nothing to do with me. It was amazing that I was able to be the middleman."

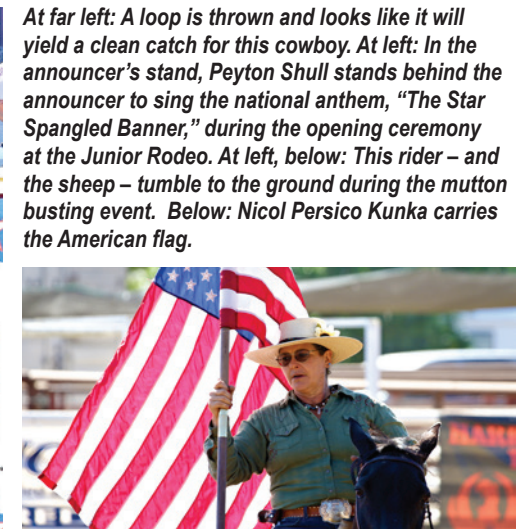
It became apparent that each person had a different reason for their love of rocks and a unique relationship with the minerals.

"I think something that draws me to rocks and gems are all the different aspects of different banks of knowledge to pull from," said Sotomayor. "There's the geology of it, the geography, gemology, how they form molecular structures, different crystallization structures, what they are good for metaphysically. There are tens of thousands of different stones. I'm fascinated by how they form, where they're from. So there are all these different worlds that you can latch into so there's a little something for everybody."

The club would like to find a place to set up a workshop, to set up the necessary equipment to process and polish the gems they find hiding within the rocks. Anyone with knowledge of a space, or who has a question or comment, is encouraged to give Chuck Cully a call at 530-515-5902. The club has a Facebook group page: [www.facebook.com/groups/779633286501985](http://www.facebook.com/groups/779633286501985). More overall information is available at: <https://www.mindat.org/>.



At far left: Chuck Cully, one of the evening's organizers, has been a gemologist for over 40 years. Above: Barbara Mason brought her amethyst jewelry with a dancing figurine and gave amethyst samples to all who attended. At left: Mendocino County has quite a lot of jade if one can identify it in situ.



## Junior Rodeo

Young cowboys and cowgirls compete in youth rodeo during annual Willits Frontier Days events

Before you can get in the big arena, you get in the small arena ... well, it's actually the same physical arena, technically, but the idea of getting practice in as a young rider during youth rodeo events holds true as a path for success when it's time to compete in the big leagues.

The Willits Frontier Days Junior Rodeo is just such a place, where younger riders can compete in a number of events including Mutton Bustin, Single Stake, Goat Tail-Tying, Goat Tail Untying, Tie Down, Breakaway Roping, Steer Stopping, Steer Daubing, Barrels, Bareback and Saddle Bronc, Chute Dogging, Steer Riding, Bull Riding, Team Roping, and Poles.

Junior and senior categories are available in each event, and Young Guns categories included options for the littlest of contestants. Winners received belt buckles, cash and prizes for their efforts.

The overall winners, those riders with the highest overall number of points combined from all the day's events, were brother and sister Lauren and Levi Segura who received saddles along with their other winnings.

At right, top: Young Guns Single Stake and Mutton Busting winner Piper Clouse, left, stands with 2024 Willits Frontier Days Sweetheart Elena Arkelian.

At right: Arkelian smiles with All-around winners, siblings Lauren and Levi Segura, and their new saddles.

Photos by Marcy Barry



Above, from left: This sheep was quick to toss the young rider. A fast dismount is as important as a fast run to make your way quickly down the arena. This cowpoke stopped to give the sweet-mannered goat a little pat. Below: This rider slid off the sheep in style. At right: Chasing the calf quickly gives the best chances for a fast time.



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# Captain Jack Spareribs

Willits Library hosts swashbuckling magic act full of humor and entertainment

At first glance, it may seem like Ace Miles, who inhabits the entertainment persona of Captain Jack Spareribs, might seem to be a Johnny Depp wannabe, with his pirate garb, eye shadow, and braided beard. However, after only a couple of minutes of his show, it becomes obvious that this magician, juggler, storyteller and ventriloquist is his own man, with his own unique act, employing a smooth repartee with the audience of both children and adults and delighting them all, while using the Captain Jack Spareribs persona as a springboard for the fun he brings.

Although Spareribs lives currently in Sacramento, and entertains worldwide as far as Japan, he has a Willits connection in his daughter, M. E. Miles, who has taught kids at the Willits Charter School and is currently teaching third grade in Laytonville.

Spareribs was recently seen last Saturday afternoon at the Willits branch of the Mendocino County Library, with a well-attended show of lucky viewers who were called upon to participate through comments and questions which Spareribs was able to utilize in the production of comedy and mind-bending magic tricks.

"I've been doing magic since I was 5," Miles recounted. "I became a professional at the age of 14 in 1976. I did my first paid show for Data Products. I got married when I was 18 and my wife said she would marry me on one condition, that I would support her with my magic. She didn't want me to give up and get a job. That drove me to get better and to do bigger and more. Then I took a hiatus from performing for a while and became an animator, making video games. I realized it wasn't as fun playing games and I missed performing greatly. I got laid off from Sega and went back to street performing with my daughter, the one who is now a teacher, while she was going to school in [San Francisco] and doing her teacher hours. She would get done and rush down to Pier 39, then hop in a wicker basket and let me stick swords through it. That's how we made our living for a few years.

"During that time, she also helped me build a pirate ship," said Miles. "We turned a trailer into a pirate ship. That got festivals and fairs interested in me and I've been doing it ever since then. I do about 14 big events a year. I leave straight from here and go home to Sacramento where I'll be performing at the state fair for 17 days in a row, coming up in July, with my pirate ship."

Miles loves pirates and the entire culture that is built around these "bad boys." "Before the movie of 'Pirates of the Caribbean' came out, I was just Ace Miles, professional magician, juggler, and ventriloquist. I had a different puppet and a different style of show. As soon as I saw the 'Pirates of the Caribbean' movie, it was it.

"Pirates were the first true democracy," explained Miles. "They voted on the captain. They didn't care where you were from or your color. If you were an able-bodied seaman, you were in. They had the first workman's comp. If you got hurt, you got so many pieces of gold. If you lost an arm, you got more pieces of gold.

"What is so intriguing about pirates? Johnny Depp said it best. They were the rock stars of the day. They were the bad boys. There was something sort of sexy about them, something intriguing. In the movie, a character says it. 'A pirate ship is more than a deck and a hull and some sails. It's freedom.' Many knew they were going to die young. Everyone is after you. But it sure beat getting 'press ganged' into the royal navy where you were certainly going to die. They didn't care about you at all. As a pirate you got a fair share of everything, and you were part of a family. There's the romance of it and there's the reality of it. The reality of it, back in the day, if you were going to be stuck on a ship, it should be a pirate ship. At least you will get to stop at the island, have fun and drink rum."

One of the most amusing sections of the show was the puppet, Maynard the talking monkey, who lived in a suitcase until he was called upon by Captain Jack Spareribs to entertain along with the pirate with some fun and witty verbal back and forth to the delight of both the kids and the adults.

The show was part of a series of programs being produced by Denise Jessie, the branch librarian, who is inviting families to utilize more of the library's services, programs, cooling station, and ample ice water. Upcoming is Richard Jeske of the Farmers Market Band who will be entertaining with songs and stories at noon on July 20. On August 9 at 1 pm, the library will be hosting Wild Things, an animal conservationist who last time he appeared, brought a live kangaroo to the facility. More upcoming events can be found at <https://mendolibrary.org/visit/willits>.

The Willits Branch Library is located at 390 East Commercial Street. It is open Tuesday through Thursday 10 am to 7 pm, Friday 10 am to 6 pm, and Saturday 10 am to 5 pm.

To find out more about Captain Jack Spareribs, visit <https://www.jackspareribs.com>.

**Mathew Caine**  
Features Writer  
willitsweekly@gmail.com

At top, from left: Captain Jack pulls handkerchiefs out of his purse that change colors and have a skull and crossbones. Captain Jack Spareribs balances a sharp sword on his chin to the delight of the kids in the front row. A family enjoys watching Captain Jack Spareribs.

Above: The parents seem to have as much fun as the kids watching the show.

At left: M. E. Miles, Jack Spareribs' daughter, a local who taught at the Willits Charter School and now teaches in Laytonville, hugs her dad, Captain Jack Spareribs.

Jupiter comes up from the audience to assist Captain Jack in one of his magic tricks.

Photos by Mathew Caine

The rest of **Parade** | From page 3

## Autos:

**Decorated, non-year specific:** first place went to Mendocino Railway; second place to Redwood Waste Solutions; and third to Likker for WUSD Board

**1960-1970, original:** first place went to Chris Orr

**1960-1970, modified:** first place went to Steve Quinliven

**Auto/Truck, open/modified:** first place went to Grocery Outlet; second place to LaMere's Plumbing; third place to "The Fun Run" 1988 4Runner

**Group of vehicles:** first place went to 101 Trailer and RV Supply; second place went to Family Tree Service; and third place went to Willits Les Schwab.

**Group of motorcycles:** first place went to the Willits Wild Bunch

**Individual motorcycles:** first place went to Joe Arkelian; second place to Henry Arkelian; and third place to Easton Graves

Parade results provided by Mattie Owen and Willits Frontier Days



Local barrel racing winner Vivian Armtz of Ukiak, left, holds her check and silver belt buckle and stands with WFD Sweetheart Elena Arkelian.



Local team roping winners: Jace Kelly of Upper Lake, left, and Gary Watkins of Ukiah, stand with Sweetheart Elena Arkelian.

The rest of **CCPRA** | From page 5

In steer wrestling, cowboys must slide off their running horse, and hook their elbows around the horns of an also-running steer, using their heels and weight to stop the steer, and flip it over. The cowboy gets help from a "hazer" or another non-competing cowboy on the other side of the steer, trying to help "sandwich" the running steer and keep it hopefully going straight between the two horses, allowing the competing cowboy the chance to catch the steer in motion.

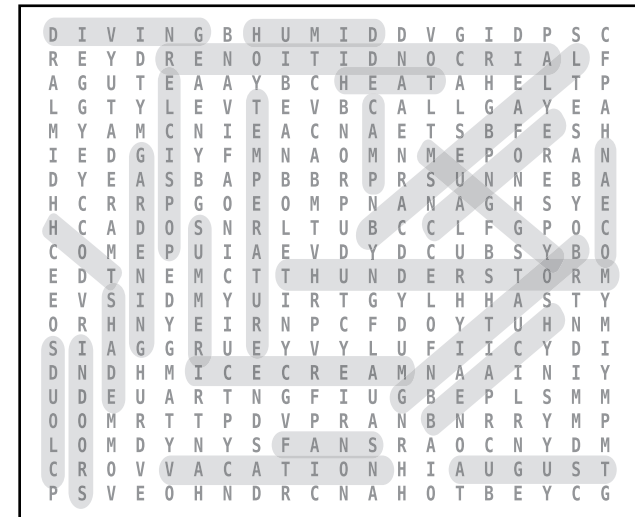
16 contestants competed, and the top six took home part of the event's \$2,838.80 purse, including: Brandon Green of Lincoln with a time of 6.7 seconds, earning \$823.25; second place to Zane George of La Grange, winning \$681.31 with a time of 8.6 seconds; third place to Ryan Wells of Oakdale, winning \$539.37 with a time of 14.4 seconds; fourth place to Ethan Usher of Hollister, winning \$397.43 with a time of 14.9 seconds; fifth place to Mason Polhemas of Escalon, winning \$255.49 with a time of 15.7 seconds; and sixth place to Harrison Orlande of San Ardo, winning \$141.94 with a time of 16.6 seconds.


In breakout roping, cowgirls try to rope the running calf with a special rope that has Velcro attached to the saddle end. When the loop is thrown, and the slack pulled tight by the running calf, the other end of the rope rips off the saddle horn and time is stopped.

There were 49 contestants in the event with a purse totaling \$5,785.70, and the top contestants included: Sienna Radelfinger of Ferndale with a time of 3.1 seconds earning her \$1,330.71. There was a tie for second/third place with both Liz Hirdes of Turlock and Regan Russ of Eureka both earning \$1,070.35, each with a time of 3.6 seconds; fourth/fifth place also tied with Taylor Griffin of Middletown and River Sage Red Eagle of Hollister both earning \$723.21, and both having a time of 3.7 seconds. Sixth place went to Jenni Teasley of Redding, earning \$462.86 with a time of 3.9 seconds; and there was also a tie for seventh/eighth place between Jada Staley of Cottonwood and Kylie Askew of Orland, both earning \$202.50, each with a time of 4.2 seconds.

In barrel racing, cowgirls must race their horses around three barrels in a cloverleaf pattern, choosing to make two left hand turns, and one right, or the opposite - two rights and one left, if preferred. Fastest time, without knocking over barrels, wins.

41 contestants competed for their piece of the \$5,071.30 event purse including top 10 winners: first place went to Jordyn Staley of Cottonwood, winning \$1,064.97 with a time of 17.62 seconds; second to Teegan Hill of Klamath Falls, Oregon, winning \$912.83 with a time of 17.75 seconds; third to Lynn Green of Lincoln, earning \$760.70 with a time of 17.76 seconds; fourth to Alissa Erickson of Shelling, winning \$659.27 with a time of 17.84 seconds;





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fifth and sixth place were a tie between Blair Brown of Hollister, and Susie Gunter of Cottonwood, each earning \$456.41 for their times of 17.98 seconds. Seventh place went to Britney Richards of Red Bluff, earning \$304.28 with a time of 18.07 seconds; eighth place to Leah Roquemore of Gerber winning \$202.85 with a time of 18.11 seconds; ninth place to Maren Powers of Sebastopol, earning \$152.14 with a time of 18.13 seconds and 10th place to Kamish Wagner of Red Bluff, earning \$101.43 with a time of 18.14 seconds.

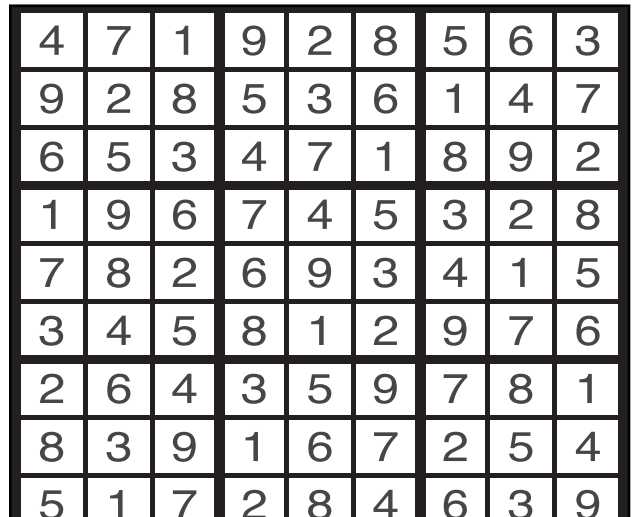
In team roping, a pair of riders works together to catch a running steer. One rider is designated the header, and throws their loop first, hoping to catch the head of the steer. Then it's up to the heeler to catch - ideally, the two back feet of the same steer, slowed somewhat by the minor control given by the header's tether to the steer. One back foot will also count, and the pair has three loops between them, giving one a second chance if there's a miss. The riders must turn and face one another with the roped steer pulled taut between them for the clock to stop. Fastest time wins.

25 teams tried for their pieces of the \$3,360.50 purse; first place went to header Colt Pazzo of Livermore and heeler Lane Wheeler of Turlock who each earned \$974.55 for their time of 6.2 seconds; second place went to header Brad Eppler of Catheys Valley and heeler Kevin Santos of Oakdale who each earned \$806.52 for their time of 6.4 seconds; third place went to header Case Hirdes of Turlock and heeler Joseph Shawngoe of Oakdale who each earned \$638.50 for their time of 6.6 seconds; fourth place went to header Blake Hirdes or Turlock and Mike George of La Grange who each earned \$470.47 for their time of 7.1 seconds; fifth place went to header Tanner Kent and heeler Travis Kent, both of Oakdale, each earning \$302.45 for their time of 7.6 seconds; and sixth place went to header Riley Currin of Clements and heeler Rhett Wells of Oakdale who each earned \$168.03 for their time of 8 seconds flat.

In saddle bronc riding, cowboys must stay on the bucking bronc for 8 seconds with scores being given to the rider and to the animal for their efforts. Of the eight competitors who tried, only one rider, Eyer Morrison of Wells, Nevada, completed the challenge, earning the entire pot available, \$2,199.60 for his score of 67 points.

In bareback bronc riding, the same rules apply as in saddle bronc, although as the name implies, there isn't a saddle to ride in, just a rigging strap and handle allowing the rider to stay atop the horse. There were six contestants who competed for the \$2,002.20 purse; and four managed to secure a score, and money. First place went to Quentin Personeni of Orville who won \$800.88 and earned a score of 70 points; second place went to Riley Gibson of Mariposa who won \$600.66 and earned a score of 69 points; third place went to Remmi Green of Crescent City who won \$400.44 and earned a score of 68 points; and fourth place went to Joey Coleman of Upper Lake who won \$200.22 and earned a score of 65 points.

There were no qualified rides in the bull riding contest. Results provided by CCPRA.



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# LEGAL NOTICES

<p>WW495 <b>Fictitious Business Name Statement</b> 2024-F0276 The following person or persons are doing business as Imagination Station Educational Toy Depot, 262 East Commercial Street, Willits CA 95490; 707-459-8697. Registered owner: Imagination Station Preschool &amp; Childcare Center, Inc., 11 North Main Street, Willits CA 95490. This business is conducted by a corporation. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on June 5, 2024. FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on June 5, 2024. /s/ Saprina Rodriguez, CEO Publication dates: June 20, 27, July 3, July 11, 2024</p>	<p>WW496 <b>Fictitious Business Name Statement</b> 2024-F0268 The following person or persons are doing business as Precious One Beads, 85 North Main Street, Willits CA 95490; Registered owner: Lisa Gay Brown, 33470 Sherwood Road, Willits CA 95490. This business is conducted by an individual. The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on May 30, 2024. FBN statement filed with the Mendocino County Clerk-Recorder on May 30, 2024. /s/ Lisa Gay Brown Publication dates: June 27, July 3, July 11, July 18, 2024</p>
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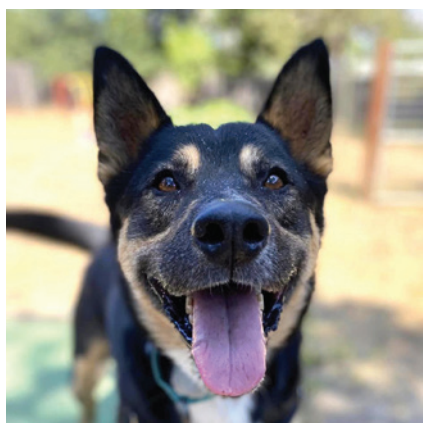
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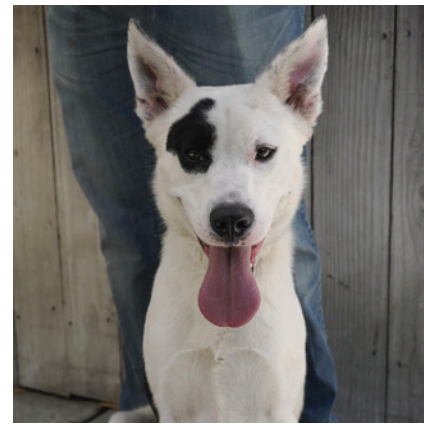


## Family-man Rusty

Hi, my name is Rusty! I am looking for a good home to spend my life in. My favorite things include soft squeaky toys, sleeping in goofy positions, and cuddling with my people. Did I mention I love kids?! I was gentle and patient with the little one in my last foster home. I am a sweet senior boy and still have loads of love to give. Stop by and meet me anytime during open hours.



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



## Clever Captain

Captain is a sweet boy who loves adventures and being with his people! He would do best in a home that can provide both mental and physical stimulation. He would love a home where there aren't many dogs around. We recommend someone who has experience with dogs as he will not be a good fit for first-time dog owners. Ideally home would be in a more tranquil setting ... all he wants to do is please you and

snuggle up next to you while also getting some training.

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

## Mama Dage

Dage came to us with her kittens in May. Her kitten-making days are over now and both Dage and her kittens are ready for their forever homes! Dage is sweet and was happy to get pets. She may need some time to adjust to a new home, but will make a wonderful companion!

The Mendocino County Animal Shelter, located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah, is open to the public from noon to 5 pm Tuesday through Friday and 10 am to 3 pm (closed for lunch from 1 to 1:30 pm) on Saturdays. Make sure to pre-fill out the adoption application available at [www.mendoanimalshelter.com](http://www.mendoanimalshelter.com). Call 707-467-6453 for more information.



## Huffman applauds 2nd District Congressional Art Competition winner

Submitted by the Office of U.S. Rep. Huffman

Washington, D.C. – Representative Jared Huffman (CA-02) welcomed the winner of the 2024 Congressional Art Competition for California's Second District, Tiah Ross-Butner from Ukiah High School, to the U.S. Capitol on June 28 to celebrate her accomplishment. Tiah's piece, titled "Where We Come From – Klamath River," will hang in the U.S. Capitol for one year along with other art pieces by students from each congressional district across the country.

"Tiah's artwork is a powerful representation of some of the most treasured natural and cultural parts of our district," Rep. Huffman said. "It was a pleasure to see Tiah in the Capitol for this celebration; I'm tremendously proud of her work and the many other talented young artists who participated in this year's competition."

Here's Tiah's description of her award-winning painting: "There is a hand sized abalone shell in the top middle half of the painting, with water flowing from it down the canvas into the Klamath River full of salmon. Next to the river on the left-hand side, there is a grizzly bear eating a salmon, and I chose a grizzly bear because this year is their 100-year anniversary of being extinct in California."

"Behind the abalone shell going horizontal across the canvas there is a black, Yurok native American basket design called 'the Sturgeon Back,' which I added to honor my great-grandmother and my Yurok heritage."

As the 2nd Congressional District winner, Tiah received round-trip airfare to Washington D.C. to attend the awards ceremony. You can see Tiah's painting online and zoom into details here: [www.flickr.com/photos/191476959@N06/53816582992/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/191476959@N06/53816582992/)

Other finalists, who will receive a certificate of recognition for their entries: Del Norte: Wautec Hoppell-Thompson, Sunset High School, "Charlie Noble"; Humboldt: Meguire Bartosz, Arcata High School, "The Last Pair"; Sonoma: Redd Plumb, Windsor High School, "Forest Consolation"; and Marin finalist and runner up: Aiden Ding, Bay Art Academy, "Fleeting Bliss"



"Where We Come From - Klamath River," the 2024 winner of the 2nd District Congressional Art Competition, by Tiah Ross-Butner of Ukiah High School.

Honorable Mentions: Del Norte: Christopher Doane, Sunset High School, "Alone, Not Lonely"; Humboldt: Madison Finen, Six Rivers Charter High School, "Bloody Waters"; Mendocino: Marisol Tlelo Perez, Ukiah High School, "What the eyes have seen"; Sonoma: Annabelle Wiatrek Trum, Petaluma High School, "the way i see it"; and Marin: Bellina Zhou, Phillips Academy Andover, "Reflexive"

The visual arts competition has been held by the United States Congress every year since 1982 with more than 650,000 high school students participating in the contest since it first began.

Congressman Jared Huffman represents California's Second Congressional District, which spans the North Coast of the state from the Golden Gate Bridge to the Oregon border, and includes Marin, Sonoma, Mendocino, Humboldt, Trinity, and Del Norte counties. He currently serves on the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

In the 118th Congress, he serves as Ranking Member of the Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife, and Fisheries. He is the founder of the Congressional Freethought Caucus.

## The rest of Blue Zones

From page 2

### Embracing the Blue Zones lifestyle

The Blue Zones Project is a community-wide well-being improvement initiative designed to make healthy choices easier through permanent changes to the environment, policy, and social networks. This approval signifies that SBMC has met rigorous standards that promote healthful living practices, aligning with the project's mission to help people live longer, better lives.

### Community engagement activities

Central to achieving this approval has been SBMC's active involvement in community engagement activities. SBMC believes that a thriving community is built on the participation and well-being of its members. To this end, SBMC encourages and supports its employees in numerous community engagement initiatives, including:

**Volunteer Programs:** SBMC employees regularly participate in volunteer programs that address various community needs, from supporting local food banks to engaging in environmental clean-up projects. This hands-on involvement not only aids local organizations but also fosters a powerful sense of community among employees.

**Health and Wellness Initiatives:** SBMC has implemented comprehensive health and wellness programs for its employees, encouraging participation in local health fairs, fitness challenges, and wellness workshops. These initiatives promote healthier lifestyles and underscore the bank's commitment to its employees' well-being.

**Educational Outreach:** SBMC employees are actively involved in educational outreach programs, offering financial literacy workshops and mentoring students in local schools. These efforts aim to equip community members with valuable skills and knowledge, fostering economic stability and personal growth.

**Cultural and Recreational Events:** Understanding the importance of a vibrant community culture, SBMC supports and participates in local cultural and recreational events. From sponsoring local festivals to organizing community walks and runs, the bank plays a vital role in enhancing the community's social fabric.

SBMC's receipt of the Blue Zones Project Approval is a testament to its long-term commitment to the well-being of Mendocino and Lake counties. The bank will continue to support initiatives that enhance community health, promote active lifestyles, and foster social engagement. By championing these values, SBMC is helping to create a thriving, health-conscious community where everyone can flourish.

"We are honored to receive the Blue Zones Project Approval," said Stacy Starkey, president and CEO of Savings Bank of Mendocino County. "This recognition reflects our dedication to the well-being of our employees and the broader community. We look forward to continuing our efforts to make Mendocino County and Lake County healthier and happier places to live and work."

The public is invited to the Ribbon Cutting Celebration scheduled for July 12 from 10 am to noon at Savings Bank's main office located at 200 North School Street in Ukiah. A fun-filled event with the ribbon cutting at 10:45 am, plus community activities, free food, health and wellness information, and an opportunity to learn more about the exciting community engagement initiatives SBMC sponsors and supports.

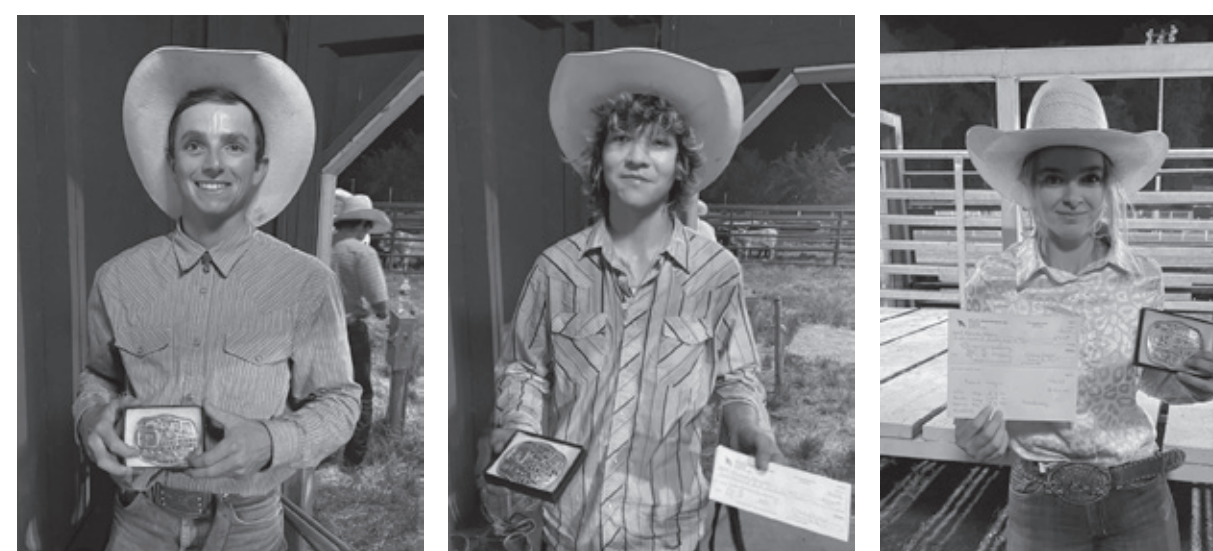
For more information about Savings Bank of Mendocino County and its BZP Approval or the Ribbon Cutting Event, please visit Blue Zones Project | Worksites or contact Michelle Hutchins, BZP Mendocino County, at [michelle.hutchins@sharecare.org](mailto:michelle.hutchins@sharecare.org) or (707)496-9725.

*Savings Bank of Mendocino County, founded in 1903, is a community-oriented bank dedicated to providing exceptional financial services to individuals and businesses in Mendocino County and Lake County. With a focus on personalized service and community involvement, SBMC strives to positively impact the lives of its customers and the local community.*

*The Blue Zones Project is a community-wide well-being initiative inspired by the lifestyles of the world's longest-living people. It helps transform communities across the U.S. into areas where the healthy choice is the easy choice, through permanent changes to environment, policy, and social networks*



## BLUE ZONES PROJECT



The rest of Bulls From page 7

Above, from left: Individual event winners included, Kyle Starkey in Ranch Broncs, Michael Colegrove in Bulls and Kamish Wagner in Breakaway.

the ranch, with the possible exception of the mutton busting. It's difficult to imagine how riding sheep would be a necessity on the prairie, but the kids and the audience loved it, nonetheless.

In addition to the aforementioned events, there was a raffle and a bull rider Calcutta auction where people could bid on a cowboy who they thought might be able to last the distance in the second leg of the contest. Unfortunately, none of the competitors was able to remain on the bull, so no one won the money. The bull riding competition was won by Michael Colegrove of Hoopa, as he was the only one who was able to ride the bull, but only in the first round.

All in all, it was an entertaining, exciting and memorable evening of roping and riding, and one that hopefully is repeated for many years.

## The rest of Finance

From page 1

lic accountant and chief of the Controller Office's Division of Audits.

The state's review did not draw any conclusions, however, about a local criminal investigation into the county's now-suspended auditor and the former payroll manager, who face single individual charges of felony use of public funds filed by District Attorney Dave Eyster against them last October.

"During our review, we became aware that a former payroll supervisor may have received unallowable payments. This situation led to a criminal investigation conducted by county officials. Because this matter is the subject of litigation, we make no conclusions regarding the disposition or allowability of these payments," according to the state report.

The state review clarifies some but not all the elements of what is being described in local legal circles as a "hot mess" heading for public court hearings later this month.

Elected Auditor Chamise Cubbison and former county Payroll Manager Paula June Kennedy deny any criminal wrongdoing in a case laced with local politics. It is set for a preliminary hearing on July 25 in Mendocino County Superior Court.

The 17-page state report was issued by state Controller Malia Cohen's office and limited to the county's internal controls over financial reporting.

Last week the state Legislature authorized a broader audit of all county functions including finances, contracts and procurements, and elections. That expanded state audit will cost taxpayers an estimated \$800,000 over an 18-month-period.

The Controller's Office report is largely supportive of contentions made by Cubbison, former county Treasurer-Tax Collector Shari Schapmire, and other former senior county financial staff who challenged the Board of Supervisors' forced consolidation in December 2021 of the two key county financial offices. The veteran county employees warned then the consolidation, combined with chronic understaffing, would disrupt county finances.

Board Chair Mo Mulheren said Saturday night supervisors and acting Auditor Sara Pierce "take seriously" the state report and will continue to "follow through with making improvements for timely reporting of the county financials."

Supervisors Ted Williams and Glenn McCourty, two board members who have promoted the notion of a new county Department of Finance more closely aligned with county administrators, did not respond Saturday to written requests for comment on the state report.

Delays in financial reporting triggered the political brouhaha, led by Williams who publicly charged the county had three "different sets of books." It mushroomed when District Attorney Eyster filed a criminal case in 2023 accusing Cubbison of using an "obscure payroll code" to allow Kennedy, the former Payroll Manager, to collect \$68,000 in extra pay during the Covid pandemic.

Eyster, who has wrangled with county auditors since 2011 over his own spending practices, specifically targeted Cubbison after they clashed about her questioning his office expenses, including DA-hosted dinners for staff and their guests at a local steak house under the guise of "staff training sessions." An angry Eyster took the unprecedented step of publicly appearing before the Board of Supervisors in 2021 to block Cubbison's appointment as interim auditor when former county Auditor Lloyd Weer retired early and selected her to fill out his term.

Eyster later launched a year-long criminal investigation based on tips from the County Executive Office and board members that Kennedy had allegedly drawn unauthorized extra pay with the permission of Cubbison.

The full Review Report from the Controller's Office can be read at [https://www.sco.ca.gov/Files-AUD/07-2024\\_lga-lgo\\_MendocinoCounty.pdf](https://www.sco.ca.gov/Files-AUD/07-2024_lga-lgo_MendocinoCounty.pdf)

## The rest of Contained

From page 1

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office issued a "situational awareness" alert to Willits residents at 4:35 pm, informing them of "a structure fire in the Willits area," but advising no action was needed.

Responders at the scene did request an ambulance at 5:08 pm, for possible smoke inhalation. The final report showed 100% containment of the 0.18 acre fire.

### Schow Fire

On the afternoon of Friday, July 5, the Schow Fire northwest of Willits did initially draw a full wildland response. The fire, at the 27100 block of Schow Road, was first reported as about a ¼ acre spot fire, spreading in timber at a slow rate of speed, with low potential to grow.

As per the Brooktrails Fire Department Facebook post at 2:44 pm on July 5:

"There is currently a vegetation fire north of Brooktrails. There is NO threat to Brooktrails, however you may smell smoke, hear or see aircraft and fire equipment in the area. The fire is small and contained to the area of origin.

"This was a hefty response by CAL FIRE, Little Lake FPD and ourselves to keep the fire small."

PG&E reported a power outage in the area, affecting 474 customers. Power lines were down, and the dispatcher sent out a safety warning to all responders, who checked back in acknowledging they were aware of the situation with downed power lines.

Air attack and resources not already on scene were called off around 5:20 pm, with reports that the copter had made good progress, with retardant all around the fire, and crews were cutting a fire line to contain the fire.

### Mina Fire

As of CAL FIRE's 7 pm update on July 10, containment on the Mina Fire in Covelo was up to 60 percent, though expected date full control was still unknown. CAL FIRE reports "mop up of 30 to 100 feet occurring on fire perimeter, with mitigation of numerous hazard trees and continued perimeter patrol."

The fire on the 97500 block of Mina Road started July 8, and has grown to 98 acres, with two structures burned, and one civilian fatality, believed to be Dagmar Stankova, 66, who lived at the property where the fire started.

The cause of the Mina Fire is still under investigation, according to CAL FIRE.

The July 10 list of resources working on the Mina Fire included 28 engines, 6 water tenders, 2 helicopters, 10 hand crews, 3 dozers, 10 "other" resources, 8 air tankers, and 2 air attack, with total personnel of 250.

Cooperating agencies include: Redwood Coast Fire Department, Anderson Valley Fire Department, Brooktrails Township Fire Department, Mendocino Volunteer Fire Department, Laytonville Volunteer Fire Department, Ukiah Valley Fire Authority, Little Lake-Willits Fire Department, Hopland Volunteer Fire Department, Mendocino County Sheriff's Office, Mendocino National Forest, California National Guard, California Conservation Corps, and Briceland Volunteer Fire Department.

## The rest of Mina

From page 1

On July 9, 2024 at approximately 2 am, the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office was notified by fire personnel that suspected burned human remains had been located in a structure that had burned during this fire. Mendocino County Sheriff's Office Detectives, along with CalFire Prevention Officers, responded to the scene which still had active fire burning.

Investigators located the human remains and due to the burned condition of the body, investigators were not able to make a positive identification of the decedent. During the investigation, it was determined that Stankova had last been seen adjacent to the residence attempting to protect her home from the fire with a garden hose.

he Mendocino County Sheriff's Office Coroner's Division is actively working to identify the human remains that were located; however the remains are believed to be Stankova based on the investigation and circumstances of the fire. Stankova's next of kin is aware of this case and is assisting with this investigation.

An autopsy for the decedent located during this investigation is being scheduled, and the final cause and manner of death will not be released until the autopsy and toxicology reports are available. The coroner's case for the unidentified decedent is being investigated under Mendocino County Sheriff's Office case #2024-13948. CalFire prevention officers are conducting the investigation regarding the cause of the fire related to this incident.

Anyone with any information regarding this incident is encouraged to contact the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office Dispatch Center at 707-463-4086. Information can also be provided anonymously through the non-emergency tip-line at 707-234-2100.

## The rest of Junior

From page 11

Individual results are as follows:

Young Guns: Barrel Racing was won by Braylenn Bartow; Single Stake and Mutton Busting was won by Piper Clouse; Dummy Roping was won by Layton Segura; and Goat Tail Untying was won by Frank Silva.

Juniors: Steer Daubing was won by Lily Glass; Steer Riding was won by Klint McPherson; Barrel Racing was won by June Mertens; Goat Tying was won by Mason Silva; Breakaway Roping and Steer Stopping were won by Levi Segura; Pole Bending was won by Kinley Bolduc; Junior/Junior Team Roping was won by Lauren and Levi Segura; and Junior/Senior Team Roping was won by Casey Branquinho and Betty Branquinho.

Seniors: Steer Daubing was won by Emry Selby; Barrel Racing was won by Vivian Arntz; Goat Tying was won by Emerald Mueller; Breakaway was won by Klynn Watkin; Steer Stopping was won by Rhett Wells; Poles was won by Rylee Gamble; Tie Down Roping was won by Grady Cooley; Chute Dogging was won by Jace Kelley; Bareback was won by Tryan Hurley; and there were no qualified rides in Bull or Saddle Bronc riding.

Results provided by Willits Frontier Days

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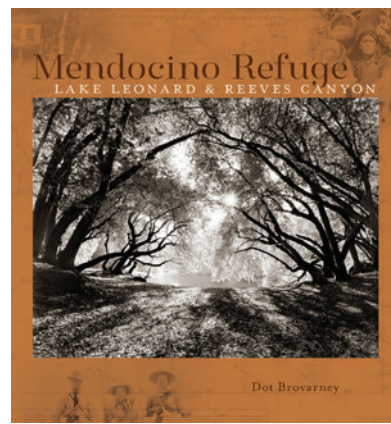
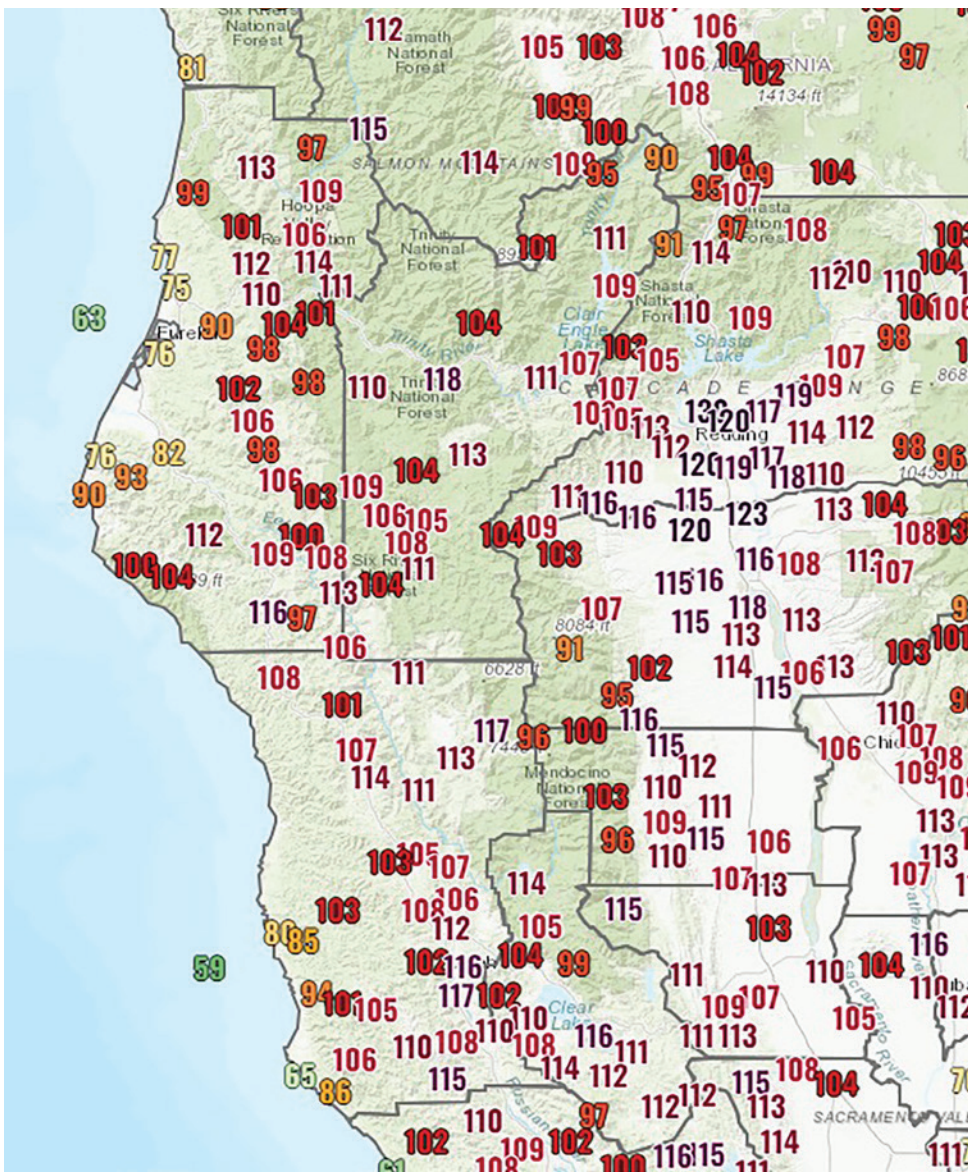


## 'Exceptionally hot' temps on July 6

Thanks to the National Weather Service in Eureka for posting this map and this chart showing highs across northwest California on Saturday, July 6.

"July 6 was an exceptionally hot day," the NWS noted. "Though we have few climate sites across northwest California, there are many RAWs stations with 25- to 30 year records." RAWs are "Remote Automated Weather stations"; they collect weather data, and monitor fire danger and air quality.

Taking a look at those RAWs stations, NWS continued: "Many saw either their 1st or 2nd hottest temperatures EVER recorded. The coast was the only exception. Though some daily records were broken, coastal stations were far below their all-time highs which are almost always set in the fall by strong east wind events."



Local historian Dot Brovarney's book, "Mendocino Refuge: Lake Leonard & Reeves Canyon," is a cultural and natural history, featuring 200 black-and-white and color illustrations, including historic and contemporary photographs and maps.

## 'Women in the Woods' at the Museum, July 13

Submitted by Mendocino County Museum

On Saturday July 13 at 2 pm, Mendocino County Museum hosts a special program that weaves together fine art, history, and music. Local historian Dot Brovarney will provide a presentation on her recently published book "Mendocino Refuge: Lake Leonard & Reeves Canyon," an exploration of the lives of redwoods, wildlife, and human inhabitants in an upper Russian River watershed just south of Willits.

The reading and discussion will highlight efforts by several women who, over generations, were responsible for saving old growth in the canyon and at the lake.

The program also features painter Linda MacDonald who will discuss her long creative engagement with redwoods. A collection of her paintings will be on exhibit in the Museum's Long Gallery. A cappella group Trillium will fill the gallery with music. Lisa Bregger, Madge Strong, and Mary Buckley will perform multiple songs including Buckley's "Trees Speak," a song she wrote that is featured in Mendocino Refuge.

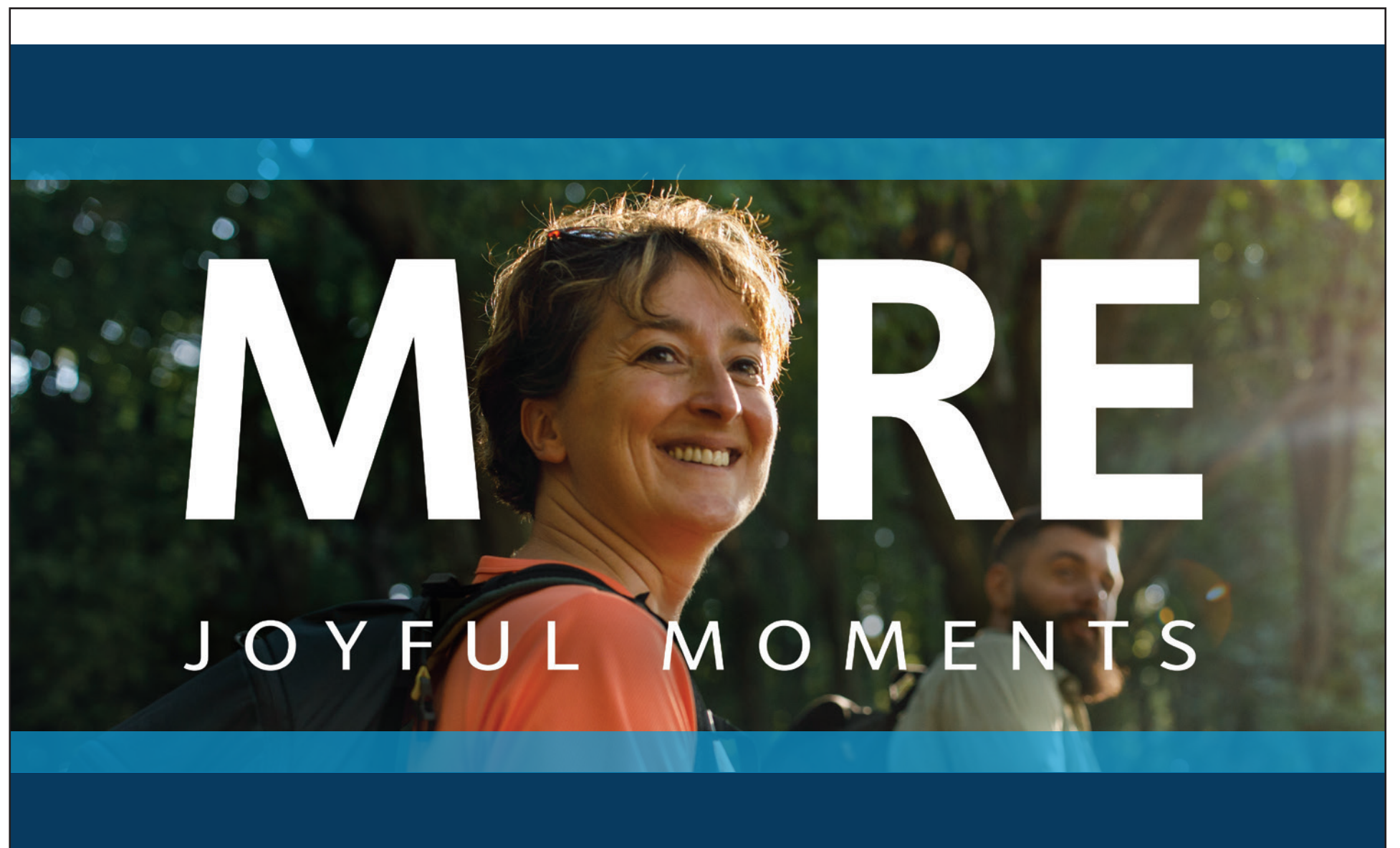
The Book Juggler will be selling copies of "Mendocino Refuge" at the museum at the conclusion of the event. For more info, and to see some of the historic and contemporary photographs and maps included in the book, visit [www.mendocinorefuge.com](http://www.mendocinorefuge.com).

Author Dot Brovarney is a 35-year resident of Mendocino County, where she works as a historian and author. She holds an M.A. degree in History from the University of California, Santa Barbara (1998). Brovarney's background as a professional curator at the Mendocino County and Grace Hudson museums informs her continuing projects as an independent public historian and writer. Through her business, Landcestry, she has developed exhibits, walking tours, and books. Besides researching and writing her latest publication, "Mendocino Refuge: Lake Leonard & Reeves Canyon" (December 1m 2022), she served as contributing editor and publisher of "The Sweet Life: Cherry Stories from Butler Ranch" (2016), and co-authored "Remember Your Relations," a book about Pomo basket weavers co-published in 1996 by the Grace Hudson Museum, the Oakland Museum of California, and Heyday Books.

## July 6th, 2024, NW California's Hottest Day Ever? EUREKA CA

Station	July 6th High	July 6th Temperature Rank	Previous / Current All Time High	Year of All Time High
Gasquet	113	2nd	114	2008
Crescent City	76	36th	95	2020
Notchko	117	1st	117	2015
Hoopa	114	1st	111	2002
Trinity Camp	107	2nd	110	2002
Big Bar	118	2nd	121	2022
Hayfork	113	2nd	114	2002
Eureka	76	> 100th	87	1993, 2017, 2020
Alderpoint	113	1st	112	1998, 1993
Redway	116	1st	115	2022
Laytonville	114	2nd	116	2007
Covelo	117	1st	115	2022
Fort Bragg	69	> 100th	91	1987
Boonville	110	4th	116	2022
Ukiah	117	1st	117	2022
Konocti	112	1st	110	2002, 2022
High Glade Lookout	99	2nd	100	2006, 2022

\*\*Date includes RAWs stations which do not have official NWS climate record data\*\*



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