

# REAL ESTATE SECTION



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Willits Weekly's Selected property feature

## 25280 Poppy Drive, Willits

MLS: 326064129

Offered for sale at: \$343,500

Step inside this inviting Brooktrails home, where vaulted ceilings create an open, spacious atmosphere and a custom stained-glass window serves as a beautiful artistic focal point, filling the living space with colorful natural light.

Eastern-facing windows welcome the morning sunrise, while the open-concept kitchen and main living areas flow seamlessly onto expansive decks, offering picturesque views of the surrounding area. The roof and decks were replaced approximately five years ago, providing a solid foundation for years to come.

The lower level offers its own private entrance, making it ideal for multi-generational living, extended guests, a home office, or potential rental opportunities. This functional space features a comfortable living room, private bedroom, and an updated bathroom with a modern tile shower and stylish built-in vanity.

Situated on a generously sized lot in the desirable Brooktrails Vacation Village, this 1,448-square-foot, 3-bedroom, 2-bath home is tucked back from the road on a private paved driveway with ample parking. The property backs to greenbelt, giving you direct access to an extensive network of hiking trails just beyond your backyard.

Nature lovers will appreciate the close proximity to Lake Emily, the Brooktrails Golf Course, and the Par Course walking trail, while downtown Willits is just 3.5 miles away and Highway 101 is only 4.3 miles from home. Whether you're searching for a full-time residence, vacation getaway, or investment property, this Brooktrails gem offers privacy, versatility, and endless potential.



Property  
feature  
listed by:  
**Tara Moratti**  
(DRE#  
**01420657**)  
Agent of:  
**Coldwell Banker  
Mendo Realty**



Outstanding Ranch Property; Gorgeous custom lodge-style home; 3,500 sq. ft. living area, 3 bedrooms & 3 baths. Large barn & fenced pastures. \$1,499,000

### Very Well Maintained

Clean and tidy manufactured home. Living area is 1,512 +/- sq. ft. with 3 bedrooms and 2 full baths. Spacious living room and kitchen; separate dining room too. Roomy master bedroom suite and bath with his and hers closets, also storage. The utility room has a washer and dryer included in the sale. Refrigerator included. There is a deck with a fenced dog run. New roof in June. Located on a sunny lot that borders greenbelt. \$265,000.



### 80 +/- Acres Tomki Area With Newly Remodeled Farmhouse

2 story home with 2,700 +/- sq. ft. of living area. 4 bedrooms and 3 full baths. The home has PG&E, phone, new flooring, windows, cabinets, trex decking, new paint inside and out. The pond is year round and the property has good spring water. Lovely rolling land with pastures and woods. There is a tool shed with a new roof; barn/workshop 2,050 sq. ft. with concrete floors. There is some finish work to be completed. Owner may finance with acceptable down payment. \$345,000.



True country living with a 2,438 sq.ft. home, and a 2,208 sq. ft. home, each 3 BD / 2BA. Both homes feature lovely interior amenities, custom cabinets, beautiful lighting fixtures, stainless appliances, vaulted ceilings & comfortable living areas. Excellent outside patios for entertaining and enjoying the panoramic valley views & awesome sunsets. There are garden spots, rolling pasture land for animals, and a barn for hay and equipment storage. Each home has its own well and private driveway, minutes to town. This special property could be shared by two families. \$1,675,000.



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# Get it in writing

A few years back I received a letter from a woman who was in a legal mess because she and her life partner made a verbal contract with his son, and according to her, the son did not hold up his end of the bargain. I shook my head as I read her letter, because it brought to mind dozens of examples where things had gone poorly for people who did business on a handshake, which is especially common when it comes to family.



Richard Selzer  
Columnist

The woman shared that her partner removed his name from the deed to their home and put the house in his son's name in return for a loan worth about half the value of the house. The verbal agreement stipulated that when the father repaid the loan, ownership of the house would be returned to him. However, after the loan was repaid, the son refused to put his father back on the deed and then began evicting his father from the property.

Not only is this a legal and financial mess, but it is also a sad story of broken trust and broken relationships. Unfortunately, it's not all that unusual. Many people fall into the trap of transferring their home's title to a loved one, only to end up on the wrong side of the deal.

There are valid reasons to share ownership of your home with a grown son or daughter or to transfer title to them. If you plan to bequeath the house to them eventually, you can make them owners now and mitigate inheritance tax. In some cases, the son or daughter will get better tax benefits from home ownership than you will, so why not help them out?

The problem is that once you share title, you've given another person the right to sell their portion of the property or to borrow against it. Also, any property owner can be sued and required to forfeit their interest in the property if they lose.

A friend of mine now has a new neighbor who throws loud parties late into the night because her old neighbor had to sell his house after his daughter borrowed against the house but couldn't repay the loan.

No matter how much you love your family member (or friend), do not enter a business transaction without a written contract. There are many reasons why a contract is important. Most of all, it protects both parties against misunderstandings. A good lawyer will ask a lot of questions before drafting the agreement – questions that may not have occurred to either party.

Sadly, sometimes people change over time. Other times, people have an idealized version of a loved one; they want to believe the best even with evidence to the contrary. Someone who is in their right mind when an agreement is created may start to suffer from mental illness, dementia, drug or gambling addictions, and other issues that affect their ability to make sound decisions. Also, new family members can change the dynamic. I know a son who was deeded the interest in his mother's house. He later got married but died prior to his mother. The son's widow inherited her mother-in-law's house and forced the mother-in-law to move.

While written contracts cannot prevent every misunderstanding, they can provide some legal protection. Also, agreements drafted by lawyers benefit from the attorney's errors and omissions insurance – legal holy water.

It's fine to bequeath your home to your child. It's even fine to share or transfer title before you pass away. Just make sure you put legal protections in place so intentions are clear and no one can go back on the agreement without serious consequences. Be aware, in California, you can record a deed on transfer of death to assure your son or daughter will become the new owner without having to go through the hassles of settling an estate.

If you have questions about real estate or property management, contact me at [rselzer@selzerrealty.com](mailto:rselzer@selzerrealty.com). If you have ideas for this column, let me know. If I use your suggestion in a column, I'll send you a \$25 gift card to Loose Caboose! If you'd like to read previous articles, visit [www.selzerrealty.com](http://www.selzerrealty.com) and click on "How's the Market."

*Dick Selzer is a real estate broker who has been in the business for more than 50 years. The opinions expressed here are his and do not necessarily represent his affiliated organizations.*



## Where it can rain, it can flood

"Cloudy with a chance of Super El Niño." The only thing scarier than seeing Halloween decorations up in stores this early is the report that all 50 states can expect 90% chance of being impacted by a SUPER El Niño. You can read the NWS Climate Prediction Center's report here: [www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis\\_monitoring/ensio\\_advisory/ensodisc.shtml](http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/ensio_advisory/ensodisc.shtml)

So when the New York Times, San Francisco Chronicle, ABC7 and LAist ask us what this means for homeowners – we tell them:

*Where it rains, it can flood.*

Now is the time to get a quote for flood insurance and add it to your safety net if it's affordable. Damage caused by wind-driven or falling rain that enters your home through an opening is generally covered under your home policy, but damage from rising water/flood damage is not.

You can buy flood insurance through an agent or broker or directly through the National Flood Insurance program.

Getting a quote from the National Flood Insurance Program, aka NFIP, is easy: [www.floodsmart.gov/policy-quote](http://www.floodsmart.gov/policy-quote). You can also enter your address at one of the established flood insurance quote websites like <https://rocketflood.com/> and get options to compare.

Here's what the savvy consumer needs to know about flood insurance and water damage:

- Flood insurance can be an "endorsement" added on to your home policy or a stand-alone policy.
- There is generally a 10 to 30 day waiting period from the date you buy it to the date it kicks in.
- The lower your flood risk, the cheaper the policy will be.
- If you have a mortgage and your home is in a "Special Hazard Flood Zone," your lender will require flood insurance.
- An NFIP policy provides \$250,000 max to repair flood damage to your home.
- An NFIP policy provides \$100,000 max for belongings but not automatically. You have to ask and pay for this additional contents coverage.
- An NFIP policy will NOT cover temporary rent and expenses if you cannot live in your home after a flood.
- Private flood policies may cover temporary rent/loss of use expenses.
- MANY home insurance policies now have water damage "sublimits" that cap what your insurer will pay on a water loss. \$10,000 is common. Shop for a higher limit if you can.
- Check your home insurance policy, and if you don't have sewer and drain backup coverage, we recommend you add it.
- If you file a water damage claim and your insurer denies it on the grounds that the damage resulted from "continuous and repeated seepage and leakage," fight back – learn more at: "Nargizyan v. State Farm" <https://uphelp.org/amicus-briefs/nargizyan-v-state-farm/>

For more information, read our Flood Insurance Buying Tips <https://uphelp.org/buying-tip-type/flood/> Remember: Flood damage to your car is covered under comprehensive coverage – you may need to add that coverage to your auto policy if you want to protect your vehicles from damage caused by

We hope you go the extra mile: Stock up on sandbags and share this preparedness Tip of the Month with a friend or neighbor.

# History lesson

Writing a column called "Journal" is somewhat vulnerable. Who publishes a journal on a regular basis? Well, somehow the real estate column I wrote for many years, 20 or more, explaining the nuts and bolts of the real estate business transformed from that into a column about our community. I've interviewed local people, found interesting aspects about this community, and write about them. At times I've shared personal observations and wonder if I share too much about myself, yet I continue on.

Recently I decided to take a class at the local branch of Mendocino Community College, I think the class is called "Singing For Seniors." So glad I did.

A bit of history: When I was a young boy of about 6 I remember standing on a stage of sorts in a church in front of a full crowd of people. I don't recall the occasion, only that I was petrified and although I was expected to sing I froze up and had to be taken off the stage.

As a boy I sang in the children's church choir. I quickly became the "boy soprano," singing every Sunday in church, often with a solo. Unfortunately, as my hormones kicked in and my voice began to change, I was unceremoniously kicked out of the choir being told that my changing voice made me no longer able to sing. Wow! That was a shock. I didn't really know what was happening, only that suddenly I went from a little star to

"You're out!" Life lesson – There are disappointments and you keep growing.

In the fifth grade I took up the saxophone in my grade school band class. I continued playing the sax through the 12th grade. I learned a lot about music playing in both the band and, when we moved to a small town in the suburbs of Portland called Lake Oswego, I also joined the orchestra and the school choir. Lake Oswego put great importance not only on academics but also the Arts.

I was singing again. We had a very active drama department and I was in every play including the musicals. Every year we did a big production musical. The art department did the sets, the band/orchestra of course played the music. The drama teacher had his favorites and one could always tell who would be cast in the lead roles because they were always his handful of favorites. I was always cast in the chorus. When I was a senior in high school I had already been regularly performing at a large theater in Portland called The Portland Civic Theater for several years. I was regularly cast in show after show.

Our school musical that year was "Oliver." I wanted the role of Fagin. I knew who the favorite was to get the role, but when I auditioned I said that I was only interested in the role of Fagin and if they chose not to cast me in that role then not to cast me at all. Well, long pause and no comment. I went to my refuge, the band room to be by myself. I was cast as Fagin. I emerged from the shadows of my high school years learning to believe in myself.

I went to college at Portland State, but it didn't have a theater department so I quit. I wasn't sure what I would do next but I did audition for and got into a summer stock company in Helena Montana – The Old Brewery Theater. In summer stock you are usually working on two or three shows at a time, and musicals were the bread and butter. As it happened The Old Brewery was doing "Oliver" that season, and of course I was cast as Fagin since I already knew the role.

After that season I returned home to Lake Oswego not knowing what was next when the director of the Portland Civic Theater, Jack Booch, said: "You need to go to The Neighborhood Playhouse in New York. You have to be recommended by someone in the business to even audition, so I'll write to them and suggest you." Jack later became the executive producer of the Theatre Guild in New York City from 1980-1989. As it turned out, after an interview with Sanford Meisner, the head acting teacher at The Playhouse, I was accepted and studied there fulltime for the next two years, then graduated, the equivalent of a bachelor's degree. I'll always be grateful to Jack. He changed my life by sending me to New York. That was an amazing experience that I wouldn't change for anything.

I was young and naïve and still trying to find my identity. I lived in New York for five years. I did some Off Off Broadway work but was struggling and decided to leave New York. Rejection is the actor's constant companion. It takes a very special type of person to deal with it, and if you get a job you're always looking for the next job. It's estimated that only about 2% of actors actually make a fulltime living at acting. About 14% earn around \$14,000. per year in 2026 dollars. Most do something else to actually earn a living, like being a waiter. Living in New York is very expensive. It was time for me to move

on. I needed some security in my life. Goals can change.

I returned to Portland for a short while. I was cast as Jesus in a touring production of "Godspell." I was doing well then, as sometimes happens, the producer absconded with the money from ticket sales and left us stranded in Seattle. I was in my early 20s. I made it back to Portland and became friends with a guy who was starting a branch of a San Francisco restaurant called Hamburger Mary's in Portland. After the Portland restaurant got going, he wanted to move back to San Francisco and since I had little to do in Portland, I moved too.

I did a lot of small theater in San Francisco, some with an improv group I started with my friends Janine Bergeron and Tessa Loehwing. When the AIDS crisis hit in the early 1980s, I became a hospice co-manager for AIDS patients. Joe and I rented a large flat to care for a close friend who was an early victim of that horrible disease. Although I was caring for patients every day I somehow never got AIDS. One of my colleagues, a wonderful and compassionate woman named Fern, went home from work one day and hung herself. It was a tough job. Dianne Feinstein was mayor of SF at the time, and she always made sure we had funds to keep operating, God bless her.

Joe and I were hunting for a house to buy in SF, back when one could still afford to. Example, the large two-flat Victorian with a backyard that we were renting at the time sold for \$225,000, the whole building! I wrote a play called "Nightmare of the Son," which I performed while still working with patients. It was about the decline and eventual death of my friend. The play was a success but I was burning out fast. We decided to change our home search to "the country," and on a whim ended up buying 22 acres in a place we knew nothing about – Willits. Our little cabin in the woods was a true refuge.

I needed a job so went back to school and became a real estate agent, a job I loved! Discovered I was fascinated by business law. Go figure. In 1993 I was asked to direct a play at the Willits Community Theatre. I chose a play called "The Haunting of Hill House," which ran for six weeks to sold-out houses. I ended up directing many more plays and performing in a few including the musical "Blues in the Night." Blues was a big hit, but after that I pretty much stopped singing. I don't know why. I was working seven days a week most of the time for over 30 years and serving on five boards of directors part of that time, which may have had something to do with it.

As for singing, I sang around the house and in the car but that was about it. The vocal mechanism is a muscle and like all muscles you "use it or lose it." When I saw the course Singing For Seniors I decided I'd go for it. At first I was disappointed because my voice is not what it once was, very out of shape and changed with age, yet it's getting better with Abigail's excellent tutelage. I'm nervous about singing in front of others now, even in a class where most of us are a bit nervous; but that's part of the challenge and the fun of it. We're all there to have fun. We're even learning to sing in foreign languages.

As it turns out there's a special notation for singers who don't speak the language they're singing in. So that's how those opera singers do it! I never knew that. Many people are multilingual of course, not me. I always admire people around here who can switch back from English to Spanish and get along just fine. There's even a woman in the class who is a native Russian speaker I think. I admire her greatly. English is not an easy language to learn if you weren't brought up with it. It's even confusing if you only speak English. Just look at a dictionary! Does anybody know all those words?

Anyway, one is always learning and growing. That's the nature of life. That's history – a record of change and how it happens.

*Bill Barksdale has served on the County of Mendocino Tax Assessment Appeals Board, the Board of Realtors, its Legal Affairs Committee and Multiple Listing Service, and a number of other boards and nonprofits. DRE # 01106662 Coldwell Banker Mendo Realty Referral Agent. 707-489-2232.*

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*Thank you*  
for your cooperation  
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# Selzer Realty celebrates 50th anniversary

Submitted by Selzer Realty & Associates Re/Max Gold

Ukiah – Selzer Realty & Associates Re/Max Gold marks 50 years in business on October 1, 2026, having operated under the same owner, Richard Selzer, since it opened in 1976.

Today, the company operates primarily from its office in Ukiah, where it provides real estate, property management, and private loan services. It also has branch offices in Willits and Laytonville.

During its half-century in business, Selzer Realty has handled thousands of real estate transactions and private loans. It currently manages more than 600 rental properties.

“Reaching 50 years in business is a testament to the trust this community has placed in us,” Selzer said. “My father always told me, ‘Take care of your integrity, and your reputation will take care of itself.’ Apparently, he was right.”

Selzer continued, “Since 1976, our core mission hasn’t changed: We are here to provide full-service real estate services to all who need them.”

Selzer earned his real estate license on November 7, 1975, and worked briefly at Stagecoach Realty before opening Selzer Realty in a small office on South State Street on October 1, 1976. In 1980, he bought Burnett Realty. Two years later, he acquired Pennington Realty and moved to a larger building on Gobbi Street. Subsequent acquisitions included Red Carpet Realty, The Real Estate Shop, Realty World Nix Realtors, Less Ryan Century 21, and Pacific Properties.

Selzer also started a private loan business and property management division in 1975, after he sold an apartment complex to a client who asked for help managing it.

Selzer Realty has rebranded a few times, most recently from Realty World Selzer Realty to Selzer Realty & Associates Re/Max Gold, but the ownership has not changed, and neither has its dedication to serving this community with integrity, Selzer said.

Selzer has served twice as president of the Mendocino County Board of Realtors and once as president of the North Bay Association of Realtors. He spent six years on the board of directors of the California Association of Realtors and four years on the California Mortgage Association board of directors, including one year as treasurer.

He currently chairs the Mendocino County Assessment Appeals Board. He also serves on the North Bay Association of Realtors Board, the Advisory Committee for Adventist Health, the Advisory Committee for the North Coast Builders Exchange, and an advisory board for the Community Foundation of Mendocino County.

Selzer has also been an active community member and volunteer. He grew up in Ukiah, earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration with an emphasis in real estate from UC Berkeley, and returned home to raise five children. During that time, he served as district chair for the Yokayo District Boy Scouts of America and assistant scout master, he coached youth soccer, and he contributed significant time and resources to Dolphins Swim Club and Ukiah High School water polo. He has also been an active member of Ukiah Rotary since 1976, serving as president in 1980.

“I believe it’s important to give back to your community. Youth sports is one great way to do that. If you’ve ever attended a youth sports event in Ukiah, Selzer Realty has probably contributed to it: Pop Warner football, Ukiah youth baseball, youth soccer – almost any kid-oriented sport. We’ve also contributed to the Ukiah Christmas Effort, Trinity School, Ukiah Symphony, Ukiah Community Concert Association, Ukiah Players Theater, and many other worthy causes,” he said.

Selzer periodically serves as a guest lecturer at Ukiah High School and Mendocino College.

The longevity of many of Selzer Realty’s employees and associates speaks well of the company. Of the approximately 50 people currently associated with the organization, 10 percent have been there for more than 30 years, with a few folks having worked with Selzer for more than 40 years.

“I can’t think of any other industry or community I’d rather have worked in. It’ll be fun to see how real estate and life in Mendocino County continue to evolve,” he said.

For more information about Selzer Realty’s real estate, property management and private loan services, contact the Ukiah office at 707-462-4000 or visit selzerrealty.com



Realtor Richard Selzer with the sign for Selzer Realty & Associates Re/Max Gold, celebrating 50 years in business this month.

An individual, stand-alone and independent print piece

WILLITS WEEKLY IS PROUD TO CONTINUE THE

# REAL ESTATE SECTION

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