

**KWNE & KMKX News: FFC Reports Q4, 2021**

California will mandate student vaccines for Covid-19 once federal officials fully approve the immunizations for the appropriate age groups. Governor Newsom says the new rules will be an addition to the current vaccine required for common childhood illnesses like measles, mumps, and rubella. They would start in the first academic term after the FDA gives the green light. It means middle and high school students could be under the mandate sometime before the 22-23 academic year. No such requirement for teachers and staff—yet. Predictably, there is pushback. Some Republican members of the assembly say there is no proof kids need the shots. They also argue that the governor has no business using his executive power to order them. The governor acknowledges that parents and educators will have lots of questions, but he promises the eventual guidance will be clear and based on science.

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There is an explanation for that heavy equipment you might have noticed on the banks of the South Fork of the Eel River recently. Not to worry. The trucks and drilling rigs are part of a Cal-Trans project to replace a bridge in the area with one that is earthquake resistant. Mendofever.com reporting that the current bridge isn't up to standards and needs to be replaced. The equipment on the water's edge is testing the soil so engineers can plan the foundation of the new crossing. CalTrans says the work complies with all environmental regulations.

California's unemployment rate is down. That includes Lake and Mendocino Counties. In August, the Lake County jobless rate was 7 percent, while in Mendocino County, it was 6.1 percent. Both are lower than the STATE figure of 7.5 percent. More people were working in Agriculture in Lake County in August, with 24 percent more farm employees than in July. There is still a big difference in unemployment across California. The lowest rate was in Marin County at 4.4 percent, while in Imperial County in Southern California it was 19.4 percent.

Clear Lake State Park is in some select company among all State Parks in California. It is one of just 19 across the state taking part in a new free pass program for fourth graders and their families. Those students can apply for a permit good for admission at no charge to Clear Lake State Park and the 18 others for a year. Park officials call it an opportunity for kids to explore, learn and benefit from California's natural wonders. The website [parks.ca.gov](http://parks.ca.gov) has sign-up information.

Lake County Behavioral Health Services wants more people to understand mental illness. October 3-9 is Mental Illness Awareness Week. Behavioral Health Services says its programs and services are vital to those who experience mental health issues. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, those issues affect one in five Americans. That number could be even higher because of the stigma attached to reporting mental health problems. Behavioral Health Services Director Todd Metcalf says Awareness Week is a good time to focus on mental health and the community resources available for help. He says support is more important than ever as many people are struggling because of the pandemic.

A woman from Fort Bragg who killed a skateboarder in a hit and run car crash faces prison time. Gina Bean was accused of hitting Calum Palido who was skateboarding with a friend on Hwy 1. At the time police said Bean left the scene of the accident in July of 2019 running into Palido on the highway at the intersection with Little Lake Road. Her court dates were rescheduled due to the pandemic. She waived her right to a jury trial, so the court trial started last week and went five days. She's set to be sentenced Dec. 3rd and faces four years in prison or she could get supervised probation for under two years. But state law says she has to serve county jail time, which with credits, may be 45 and 180 days.

The beleaguered Sonoma County Sheriff says he's not running for office again. Sheriff Mark Essick spent almost thirty years in the office, and only one term as the top dog. The Press Democrat reports the Sheriff saying he won't be in law enforcement after his term ends at the end of next year. He says he's mostly leaving due to the pressure it put on him, and his relationships with his family, where sometimes it was job over family. The newspaper characterized his term as tumultuous. He said last year he wasn't going to enforce the stay at home public health order and called out the Public Health Officer. He also had a formal complaint filed by the county supervisor chair for harassment and bullying. There were also excessive force claims made against the office. He says some of the things that have happened, have worn on him.

The Governor has signed a bunch of bills into law, one of them regarding police misconduct. Gov. Newsom signed 8 bills into law yesterday, which include, a higher minimum age for police officers, allowing badges be permanently taken away in cases of excessive force, dishonesty and racial bias, restricting rubber bullet and tear gas use for crowd control, and restricting certain restraint techniques that interfere with breathing. Newsom says he hopes it provides contrast to anxiety and fear by some in the state. But some law enforcement groups were against some of the new laws saying they undermine how they keep Californians safe from criminals.

We've hit the end of the state's COVID-19 Rent Relief Program, but now the state reports getting another \$3 billion or so in assistance requests. There's a website showing the requests, which highlighted over 309,000 applications from tenants and landlords. That adds up to the nearly \$3 billion. Just under 55,000 households have received money already. In Lake County there were almost 800 applications, 777 are done. There could be more programs still to come.

The Public Health advisory not to drink tap water piped or pumped directly in from Clear Lake is still in effect in the Oaks and Lower Lake arms of the lake. A couple weeks ago residents in those areas were told not to use the water after routine tests turned up unhealthy levels of cyanobacteria. They can cause skin irritation or worse, even liver damage if you swim in it. And pets can die if they come into contact with the bacteria. The water can not be treated by boiling it or adding chemicals to it. Residents have been given alternate sources of water for free at fill stations from Golden State Water Company and the Mt. Konocti Water Co.

Two more deaths from COVID19 in the county. The Mendocino County Public Health Dept. reports being informed of the deaths yesterday bringing the total to 84 people lost to the virus. They reported the 83rd patient was a 68-year old man from Willits not vaccinated, and the 84th patient was an 86-year-old Fort Bragg man who was fully vaccinated. It comes a day after 9 other deaths were announced. Eight of which were part of an outbreak at two different skilled nursing facilities, Redwood Cove in Ukiah and Sherwood Oaks in Fort Bragg.

The end of the Water Year shows Ukiah was the second driest on record. The last time it was that dry was almost 100 years ago, in the 1923-24 Water Year, when the city only had 13.09 inches of rain. This year the city got 13.54 inches. The last Water Year was also pretty dry, and was the third driest over the years records have been kept, at 14.75 inches recorded.

Some old abandoned Hazardous Waste Drums are being cleaned up by Mendocino County Environmental Health. The waste on the coast included about 70 drums that had been dumped illegally years ago in Westport. They were reportedly unseen because they were obscured by blackberry bushes that had overgrown. They were just uncovered recently, filled with old black oil and tar leaking out of the old rusty drums, tainting the earth beneath them. So the Environmental Health agency along with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Redwood Empire Hazardous, Westport Volunteer Fire Department and the US Environmental Protection Agency were cleaning it all up last week. The \$100,000 project is being covered by the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund, managed by the United States Coast

10/04/21 Guard.

Congressmen Jared Huffman and Mike Thompson have sent a letter to the US Transportation Secretary asking him to just say no to any federal dollars going to a railway project to move coal along the North Coast. Huffman, the chair of the Natural Resources Water, Oceans, and Wildlife Subcommittee, and a longtime champion of the rails to trails project, and Thompson sent the letter together to Secretary Pete Buttigieg saying with the secretary's strong commitment to climate protection and clean energy, they couldn't imagine his agency would provide financial support for a coal export project. The letter goes on to say they strongly oppose federal funding for the project and urged him to personally ensure it receives no federal support.

A house has been gutted by fire in Lucerne and another heavily damaged. The fire broke out Saturday night around 9:30 p.m. near where 2nd Avenue meets Highway 20. As firefighters arrived they found one home's roof was in flames and the second home had a back room on fire. They were able to take a lot of the items out of that house, but a fence around the first house, spread to weeds and consumed the home. Fire officials say the houses were pretty close together, but the second home was mostly spared. There was also a third structure there, but it was not damaged or touched. Firefighters were there about 5 hours and continue to investigate the cause.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors looking at a possible urgency ordinance to ban water hauling to unpermitted cannabis grows. The Board Chair Bruno Sabatier is asking fellow board members to approve the urgency ordinance, which has been changed since first being approved in August. Now the ordinance includes water hauling to traditional agriculture too, which doesn't rely on water trucks, but could help make the ordinance become enforceable. The board will also hear, as it does every Tuesday, about the latest on the COVID-19 pandemic in Lake County.

A man from Lakeport has been arrested several times after reports of a stolen car, a stolen bike and for drug possession. 36 year old Matthew Wratishlaw was arrested after reports a man was working on a vehicle that wasn't his. Officers say he admitted trying to take the car so he was arrested for tampering with a vehicle and possession of burglary tools. But he was released on no bail because of COVID-19 pandemic bail-related restrictions. He was arrested later for riding a bike without lights or reflectors and found that was not his bike. So, he was booked again and found with meth and meth paraphernalia and burglary tools including lock picks. He was released again, then busted again Friday, recognized by an officer and found with a dirt bike gear bag near a closed business, which reported gear stolen earlier that day. So again he was arrested. This time he was held on \$15,000 bail.

Budget amendments and COVID on the agenda at the Lakeport City Council meeting. They're open to the public and following public safety protocols so you must mask up unless you're vaccinated. Or community members can Zoom in to the meeting. On the agenda the fourth quarter financial statement will get approval for the fiscal year 2021-22 budget. And the city council is looking at possibly asking city staff to do public outreach on coronavirus state and local Fiscal Recovery Funds spending options. They'll also enter a closed session for labor negotiations with unrepresented management employees.

Another expansion has been agreed to in the City of Ukiah for a large cannabis facility in the old Mendocino Brewing Company facility. The facility on Airport Road checked out by city representatives and said to be clean, very well maintained, secure and safe. There were no significant calls to the facility to police, which is one major issue the city looks at. Planning staff is therefore recommending a renewal of the facility's permit, along with a minor amendment to expand by 4,000 square feet for storage and processing within the building. The 3rd request as the business previously asked for an expansion to 15,000 square feet, and again for almost 10,000.

A new report by the Calif. Dept. of Education is looking to help kids with more counseling after some more student misbehavior. After a year of remote learning there's been reports of more mental health challenges for kids. Ed Source reports guidelines have now been released by the California Department of Education to support kids being challenged during the pandemic. Teachers had reported more disrupted classes and challenges for some students with more anxiety and depression. The new guidelines around suspensions, expulsions and other disciplines match goals from a 2020 lawsuit related to literacy rates. Apparently literacy is aligned in early grades with kids needing more discipline.

It's official, the Governor has signed a bill into law to turn over wildfire prevention and safety duties to be managed differently moving forward. Assemblyman Jim Wood's bill creates a new office inside the State Fire Marshal's office that will spend all of their time, only on wildfire prevention, preparedness and mitigation. A bunch of existing programs will all be wrapped up into the new office. They were handled by Cal Fire. The new office will oversee prescribed forest burns, forest thinning and home fire protection and more. Wood says he's seen more wildfires each year he's been in office even though they continue increasing firefighting and resources and prevention took a back seat. The state reportedly spent \$3.4 billion on wildfire protection last year, but it was mostly to put fires out, not prevent them.

A surfer is recovering after a bite on his leg while out in the ocean near Bodega Bay. He was with a group of others off Salmon Creek Beach yesterday morning when he was bitten on his thigh. A friend with him says a wave hit and he lost sight of his buddy, then noticed something else in the water, a dorsal fin. He says then he saw the tail fin, a slow attack, he called it. He then heard his friend yell for help. His friend made it back to shore and people on the beach helped until emergency responders got there. He was flown out to a hospital by a California Highway Patrol helicopter. His injuries described as non life-threatening.

After reports of law enforcement descending on a property in Covelo, it was revealed a body had been found. Apparently social media was on top of the police presence on Mendocino Pass Road where folks noted Sheriff's deputies and State Parks law enforcement were there. The Sheriff's Dept. confirmed to Kym Kemp there was a body in the trunk of a vehicle found in the 27000 block of Mendocino Pass Road northeast of Covelo. There wasn't a lot more info, pretty scant at the time of the report.

PETA, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals has reportedly been in touch with the Mendocino County DA's office regarding the suspect in the Hopkins Fire. The group asked DA David Eyster if he'd also charge Devin Lamar Johnson of Ukiah with animal cruelty for the deaths of several animals in the fire. The letter from PETA's Cruelty Investigations Department notes the "terror and suffering on many domesticated and wild animals and caused them to endure prolonged, agonizing deaths." The group also noted in their letter that past similar actions resulted in an accused arsonist in Oregon being charged with the deaths of a sheep, a canary, a lamb, chickens, a raccoon and a goldfish. Johnson has been charged with two counts of aggravated arson and is being held in the Mendocino County jail on \$2,000,000 bail.

A man charged in the murder of his dad has waived his right to a trial. 30 year old James Whetstone was about to go to trial, then withdrew his not guilty plea and pleaded no contest instead. That's basically admitted the crime. The former Willits resident killed his dad in October of 2020 on his dad's property in Willits after an argument about garbage cans. Police say he strangled his dad with a belt, then buried him in a shallow grave and tried to cover up the crime. Whetstone's now convicted for second degree murder which indicates an impulsive, not pre-meditated murder. He will be

10/05/21 sentenced November 2nd and faces 15 years to life.

A Town Hall is planned online with state Senator Mike McGuire to talk climate change. It'll be livestreamed online through his office too at 630 tomorrow night. Some of the guests include a Climate Scientist at UCLA another from the Union of Concerned Scientists and the director of the Western Region, Climate and Clean Energy Program, of the Natural Resources Defense Council. For more info, visit the Senators Facebook page.

Anyone in the Hopland Fire Protection District gets to vote in their election. It's happening November 2nd. You can pick up a ballot in the elections office, but they were mailed out on Friday. If you don't get your ballot by next Tuesday, the County Clerk Recorder's Office says to give them a call. The polling place on election day is open if you want to vote in person at the Hopland Fire Department – 21 Feliz Creek Rd., Hopland. The last day you can register for Vote by Mail for this election is on Tuesday, October 19th. You are also invited to watch processing of the ballots which the election's office says they normally start to receive about a week after they're mailed out. So the processing would be around Friday, October 22nd at the earliest.

Two more people have died due to COVID19 in Mendocino County. The Public Health Dept. announced late yesterday that 86 people in the county have died from the virus. The 85th death was a fully vaccinated 81 year old woman from Fort Bragg and the 86th was in an unvaccinated 51-year-old man from Ukiah. The public health department shows case rates are down, although 48 new cases have been confirmed. Calif. is also reporting daily cases, deaths and hospitalizations are down. The Governor tweeted Calif. is the only state with a downward trend. Public Health in Mendocino County encourages to get your vaccine, wear a mask and socially distance when outside your home. And the booster is available for fully vaccinated people who received the Pfizer shots, who are over 65, or 50 with certain health conditions.

A bunch of dirt has been spilled along the 101. Yesterday a semi that had several bags of Foxfarm Ocean Forest soil overturned. It happened by milepost marker 39 on the southbound 101 just north of Golden Rule south of Willits on Ridgewood Grade. The semi was filled with bags of the dirt and spilled across southbound lanes. The person in the truck had moderate injuries and the southbound side of the highway was closed a few hours. They opened one lane, then after around 4 hours after the spill, all was completely cleared out and the highway was reopened.

Applications are being accepted by the Community Foundation of Mendocino County for their 2022 Community Enrichment grant program. The program is to support the enrichment of local communities in the county with a lens on: sense of place, environment, healthy communities, education, and arts and humanities. They are distributing grants from \$3,000 to \$7,500 for community projects and have a total of about \$200,000 to give out. They're hosting informational workshops starting next month for free. Organizations are invited to apply at <http://www.communityfound.org> by Dec. 2.

Contact Allison Findley at [allison@communityfound.org](mailto:allison@communityfound.org) or (707)-468-9882 ex

The Mendocino City Community Services District is working on ways to deal with the drought. At their meeting last week the District's board got a report from the Superintendent on drought relief work being done by the County, and considered hiring an engineering firm to get help with grant writing. The county is allowing up to 200,000 gallons of water to be trucked out to the coast per week. 70% of it goes to residents and 30% for businesses. And those hauling the water need to show who they're delivering it to. The state has granted \$2 million to pay for the residential use.

The annual "Dine Out for Hospice" will get donations direct and not from restaurants. The Record Bee reports the event put on each year by the Hospice Services of Lake County won't be getting a percentage of any meals at restaurants due to the strain the last year and a half has put on the businesses related to the pandemic. There will be donation jars set up at restaurants. Before now restaurants participated by contributing a percentage of sales, but this year Hospice is asking customers to donate any amount they want in the donation jars, which they will be relying on. The money helps their Wings of Hope Bereavement program and other special needs of Hospice patients.

At their next meeting, the Lakeport City Council will take up possible spending of Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (FRF). The city got just under \$1,200,000. The first 50% was received in July and the next half comes within a year. The money can be used for jobs, to help small businesses, mental health treatment and COVID-19 testing and monitoring. The money was split up after the US Census report from the American Rescue Plan Act. The money doesn't have to be used until the end of 2024. The City Council meeting is tonight at 6 p.m. in the City Council Chambers. During the COVID-19 pandemic residents can access the Zoom meeting remotely. For more info, visit the city's website.

A woman from Lucerne has been arrested in connection to a house fire Saturday night. The fire burned a home down and damaged another. 36 year old Dallas Darlene Lyons was arrested on Saturday night about an hour after the fire started. The Lake County Sheriff's office reports they're investigating with Northshore Fire and found that Lyons seemed high that night, causing her to recklessly start the fire. So she was hauled off to jail and booked on two felonies, causing the fire of an inhabited dwelling and arson during a state of emergency, and a misdemeanor for being under the influence of a controlled substance. She was allowed to leave though after posting bail of \$5,000 for the drug charge. Her bail was zero for the rest. She's not due back in court until next March to face the charges.

Once again activists who long for logging to stop at the Jackson Demonstration State Forest succeeded. The harvest had to stop because a Cal Fire contractor was injured because the activists were there last Tuesday. Mendocino Voice reports it's the second timber harvest they've shut down for the Soda Gulch plan since June. The info according to the Cal Fire Chief who manages the state parks program. He says they're investigating but asked for the public to adhere to the closure orders because they're in place to protect the public and the contractors during active harvesting, which he characterized as hazardous. The news site reports activists told them the Cal Fire employee and Cal Fire contractors were the ones making it unsafe.

A fuel tanker has closed down the Willits Bypass after a crash into two other vehicles. The CHP reports the big rig collided with the other two vehicles, one a Fed Ex truck, at the north end of the bypass. Apparently the fuel tanker became inoperable and its tank of gas leaked and the road was covered in debris. So the Bypass was closed and traffic redirected through the town of Willits as the cleanup took place. It all happened around 6am this morning and the first estimates were that it would be closed 2 or so hours. No injuries were reported in the crash and the road opened about five hours later. About 100 gallons of fuel spilled onto the roadway.

A partnership between Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) and Southern California Edison and the 211 network as part of National Preparedness Month. 211 will now pickup during Public Safety Power Shutoffs to help those in need. That could include finding transportation and shelters, portable backup power, home meal delivery, food replacement, bill assistance programs, and other support for those who may have physical, intellectual or developmental disabilities. The 211 service is available 24/7 during power downs for calls and texts. 211 is there for those living in high risk areas who are eligible for income qualified help and use life-sustaining medical equipment when the power is on too, to help them connect to

10/06/21 programs to be proactive in case there is an outage.

A domestic violence call ends in the arrest of a man in Willits after a woman is found without pants or shoes on with injuries on her body. Deputies called to a home finding the 18 year old woman in the road. They found that her boyfriend, 20 year old Codiin Tuttle of Willits had assaulted her and prevented her from calling 9-1-1, taking her phone and damaging it. She ran and used a postal carrier's phone to call 9-1-1. The two have a child together and during an argument, it got physical. He was arrested for Domestic Violence Battery and preventing someone from calling 9-1-1 and held on \$25,000.00 bail.

A man from Nice has been arrested after deputies see a camper on Highway 20 in Willits that had been reported stolen earlier that day. The deputy tried stopping Joshua Colcleaser last Friday, but say he took off, stopped, got out of the driver's seat and ran. The deputy ordered him to stop but he wouldn't so backup was called. The truck was confirmed as stolen with items inside including a purse with banking cards in the name of a woman from Ukiah, who eventually got her items back. There was also meth, paraphernalia, ammo, a drone, wallet and hunting license. Colcleaser was found by Willits police and arrested on multiple charges including, Possession of Stolen Vehicle, Possession of a Controlled Substance, Resist/Delay Law Enforcement and 2 arrest warrants. He was being held without bail.

Reports that a teen in Sonoma County died from the COVID19 vaccine are bogus. The Coroner's report for the 15 year old from Santa Rosa listed the death as undetermined. It came after his second dose of the Pfizer vaccine. Social media went wild, but Sonoma County officials say there's no proof to the rumors of a link between the vaccination and the boy's death. A county spokesperson says it's very sad and perplexing that community members and the boy's family would misrepresent facts. The County Public Health Officer Dr. Sundari Mase says there was no relationship between the vaccine and the death. The boy's parents say they feel strongly parents should have their children vaccinated. The county coroner and the state corroborated, no link between the death and the vaccine.

A new bill signed into law by the Governor says recycling centers need to label items. California's Statewide Commission on Recycling Markets and Curbside Recycling says most people think when they see the 3 arrows on blue containers it should be only recycling. But a new list from the state is coming. Some say it may only show eight types of paper materials to two kinds of glass, a pair of plastics and one colored plastic. So the state Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery has until Jan. 1st of 2024 to decide what's actually recyclable per the new law which exempts products and packaging made up to a year and a half after the study is published.

Part of the Eel River has run dry. You can see the pictures online of a section of the largest tributary in California's third-largest watershed, the South Fork Eel River. It's completely pebbles and rocks where it meets the main stem in Dyerville below the 101 in Humboldt County. The drought has left many rivers and streams low, but this is said to be unprecedented. The nearly 200 mile long Eel River flows north from Mendocino to Humboldt County, where it meanders out into the Pacific Ocean about 10 miles downstream from Fortuna. The South Fork is over half that, and goes from Laytonville to Dyerville.



The latest on the cleanup for the Cache Fire in Clearlake is topic one at the next Clearlake City Council meeting. The council will meet tonight and hear the latest update after the police chief swears in new and promoted employees and some proclamations are read out. The city manager will update on fire cleanup. The fire took down 57 homes and 81 outbuildings Aug. 18th. The city council will also consider purchasing a piece of property as part of the future retail center at the old airport. The owners inherited the property and apparently have zero interest in development and called the city to sell it.

A report of shots fired in Ukiah turned out to not be the case. Police say they responded to Marlene Street for a "suspicious circumstance" since they never did confirm a gun was actually fired. The agency says whoever called said there was a truck driving past their house and a passenger window shattered and they thought they heard gunfire. But officers say they found zero evidence of that, nor did they find any bullet holes in any homes or the vehicle described. But Mendo Fever reports there was shattered glass on the road, but cops say it sounds weird that someone would fire inside a car with a window up.

The Ukiah City Council is reportedly considering the temporary use of the old Mendocino Animal Hospital for a "disaster resources facility" for those impacted by the Hopkins Fire last month in Calpella. For their meeting tonight the council will consider a temporary resource facility at 1240 Airport Park Boulevard. The owner of the building has reportedly approved of the temporary use which would normally mean a permit was needed, but since it's an urgent need, an emergency order has been secured. The council will also consider the removal of several trees that are dead or dying outside Grace Hudson Museum. There are a couple others tagged for removal too so city staff says they should be taken out and replaced with other trees. The meeting where both items will be considered is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. Wednesday.

Register for the meeting at: <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/9199312935>

If you prefer to call in, the number is: 632379998

You may view the meeting (without participating) by clicking on the name of t

Over \$140,000 dollars is being given out by the Redwood Credit Union to seven nonprofits. The credit union is giving \$142,500 in grants to support lifesaving and life-changing services of seven nonprofits in Lake County for vulnerable populations in the region. They provide food, housing, health, financial wellness, and workforce development. The executive director of North Coast Opportunities says with the credit union's help they've been able to deliver fresh produce and staples to Lake County Residents. The CEO of Redwood says providing community support is what they're about and the pandemic's impact has underscored the need to help more.

A new report says fire season is hardly over. Even though it's getting cooler because of a change in seasons, the National Interagency Fire Center's monthly report says there's still "above-normal significant fire potential" for fires through November in Northern California. The center based in Idaho watches conditions for the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management and shows Coast Ranges from the Bay Area to Ukiah as an area at risk. The agency says it's mostly due to the drought. At the same time the Governor has signed legislation for more prescribed burning to reduce wildfire hazards due to "extreme drought" or "exceptional drought"

10/07/21 conditions.

The Dept. of Corrections is being investigated after one prison guard killed himself and another died of an overdose after reporting corruption and harassment. 56 year old Sgt. Kevin Steele reportedly kept track of improprieties like other guards framing prisoners with drugs and weapons. Steele wrote to top prison officials in Sacramento also saying that colleagues had forged documents. He was also working on cases with some lawyers who claimed evidence was falsified or covered up. Steele was found dead of suicide in August in Missouri. And a second team member in that investigation who complained of harassment and retaliation, 30-year-old Valentino Rodriguez accidentally overdosed on fentanyl a year ago. Their entire unit has been replaced. They were supposed to be investigating crimes committed inside the prison. Others face disciplinary action.

If you need fingerprints for a background check, or for any other reason, you can head over to the Fort Bragg Police Department once again for "Live Scan" or fingerprinting services starting today. The Hours are Mondays and Wednesdays 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM, Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM and they are closed on Fridays and legal holidays.

[For more information regarding Fingerprinting or Live Scan services please re](#)

The new desalination treatment system is in Fort Bragg. Tomorrow the city's hosting a casual reception and ribbon cutting ceremony for the Aquaclear Desalination-Reverse Osmosis Water Treatment System at the city's Corporation Yard at 2:00 PM. The city bought the set up five months ago so it can provide water during periods of salt-water intrusion in the Noyo River. It can bring in up to 200 gallons/minute of desalinated water, or 288,000 gallons per day. The wastewater treatment plant treats waste with certain bacteria and specialty microbes to clean water, they have to use brine, which is concentrated saltwater. So the amount it brings in is pretty limited, so the desalination system can only be used 12 hours per day for 144,000 gallons per day, about 25% of the City's daily water use.

Money is headed to Lake County Behavioral Health Services. The agency working with the Office of Education received a Mental Health Student Services Act grant from the California Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission. The grant is to incentivize partnerships between Behavioral Health and educational agencies so there's more access to mental health services in locations easily accessible to students and their families. The county says it's a perfect time as students are returning to in-person school after over a year of shelter-in-place isolation. The support is for mental health services on school campuses, suicide prevention services, drop-out prevention services, placement assistance and service plans for students in need of ongoing services.

The Governor in the San Fernando Valley at Cal State Northridge signing a bill into law so college can be more affordable and increase access for those who would otherwise not attend. Newsom says it's to ensure students have access to high-quality education, create change for generations and bolster the state's innovation economy. It will reportedly create easier access to the University of California, or UC, and California State University, CSU, systems for 4-year degrees. The bill also adds \$2 billion dollars for more affordable housing for students and helps to address the student housing crisis.

Applications for the West Business Development Center's Startup Mendocino are being accepted. The campaign started a couple of years ago. Entrepreneurs learn how to develop and pitch their business idea at the Center. Applications for the program next year are being taken now, with a deadline of Monday October 25th. Many local businesses are sponsoring or supporting StartUp Mendocino including the Community Foundation of Mendocino County, the Savings Bank of Mendocino County, the John and Sandra Mayfield Economic Development Fund and Adventist Health. The program is free and supported by the Small Business Administration and State Go-Biz funding.

The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors has their two cents about the old North Coast railroad bringing coal to Humboldt Bay. The railroad has been out of commission for decades, but there have been rumblings about bringing the rail line back to life to move coal from Rocky Mountain states out to Humboldt Bay for international export. But on Tuesday the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors made it pretty clear, they prefer the proposed Great Redwood Trail and oppose any fossil fuel export facilities. They approved a resolution to direct staff to work on a local ordinance to prohibit any "construction of new infrastructure for the transportation, storage, processing or export of coal in Humboldt County".

The Acting Public Health Officer for Lake County, Dr. Charlie Evans says cases of COVID are going down, in alignment with the trends worldwide. Evans was not in person at Tuesday's Board of Supervisors' meeting, instead appeared in a pre-recorded video. He says even though cases are down, we have to still be mindful that it could surge again, and not to "let our guard down". Cases are now in the 17/100,000 people range as opposed to 70/100,000 like over the heat of the summer. He says there's an expectation though that in the winter, it will surge again, because in Alaska currently their infection rate is 150 per 100,000, twice Lake County's peak.

The Middletown Art Center is changing its name. In its seventh year it will now be referred to as MAC For Lake County, the County's premier contemporary art destination. They're celebrating the name change with a launch event this Saturday October 9, 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., with dancing 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. at MAC, or from home on Zoom. They will also announce their Logo art contest winner, have a silent auction with Lake-made art and artisan items, a tour of their 3D Virtual Exhibit Archive, an interactive LED light installation and an exclusive introduction of upcoming Pomo Basket Weaving workshops. Doors open Saturday at 4:30 p.m. the program starts along with the Silent Auction at 5.

A death has been reported after a Sonoma County Transit bus and a pickup crashed into each other outside Guerneville. The crash this afternoon around lunchtime in front of Korbel Winery. The California Highway Patrol reports one lane of traffic had to be closed down and traffic was rerouted to another nearby road to avoid the crash.

The National Weather Service has issued a Fire Weather Watch for late Monday into Tuesday afternoon. Forecasters predict gusty north winds in Lake, northeast Mendocino, and southeast Trinity Counties. The strongest winds will be found on exposed high terrain and north to south-oriented valleys. Those conditions mean any fire that starts will likely spread rapidly because of the low humidity, dry fuels, and gusty winds. The weather should turn more favorable later on Tuesday, but critical fire weather could linger in

10/08/21 some places.

The Mendocino County sheriff's office could see a budget increase. Mendo Voice reports that when the County Board of Supervisors heard from Sheriff Matt Kendall at a special meeting this week, they seemed to agree that the department needed more money. The sheriff says he would use some of it to hire more deputies. He told supervisors that he has to offer competitive salaries and incentives to find the most qualified candidates. The department is also facing higher expenses to cope with natural disasters. The board also discussed the ongoing dispute over funding IT positions in the sheriff's office. Kendall wants to use emergency funds to pay those salaries. A court case about that is ongoing.

Lakeport Police say they have not given up trying to solve a murder inside a downtown business 13 years ago this month. On October 8th, 43-year-old Barbara Gage LaForge was killed inside Wildwood Frame Shop and Inspirations Gallery, a shop she owned on Main Street. There is a \$50,000 reward still active for the arrest and conviction of whoever was responsible. The Lakeport PD hopes this anniversary will prompt tips that will eventually lead to justice for Barbara.

A baseball team from Ukiah is looking to make its way to Iowa to play on the Field of Dreams. The team of 13 and 14-year-olds is raising money to go to a tournament next May in Dyersville, Iowa on the field made famous by the movie. They call themselves U-town, after their hometown. To reach their own Dream, they need to raise around \$15,000. They have already raised \$1,000 by putting on a clinic for younger ballplayers last weekend.

Bars and Restaurants can continue to offer cocktails to go with food orders and offer outdoor dining options under a bill signed today by Governor Newsom. Those to-go drinks were allowed to help establishments during the pandemic, Now they will be legal until the bill sunsets in five years. Restaurants will also get a one-year grace period to apply for a permanent expansion of outdoor dining once the state of emergency is lifted. The governor says the state should do all it can to help bars and restaurants that have been hard hit by the pandemic.

California workers who speak out about harassment and discrimination have more protection under the law. Governor Newsom has signed the Silenced No More act. In addition to race, discrimination based on religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and disability will now be protected for those coming forward with their experiences. The new law applies even in cases where the workers signed a non-disclosure agreement. Those behind the law cited examples of employees who were intimidated or faced legal roadblocks when they complained.

The Clearlake City Council hears an update on the Cache fire cleanup. There was other business too including a proclamation on October being both Domestic Violence Awareness Month and Breast Cancer Awareness Month. There was a briefing on the Cache Fire which devastated an entire mobile home park and damaged another. The fire broke out August 18th, we still don't know why. And it burned over 80 acres and destroyed 138 structures — including 57 homes. The City Manager gave an update saying several city, state and county representatives toured the fire site, and came up with some solutions and future improvements. Staff is working with residents to get 'right of entry' forms to remove debris. They've received 41 rights of entry so far.

After trying desperately to save them, the US Geological Survey and representatives of the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks say we may have lost hundreds of giant sequoias due to the massive KNP Complex fire. It started about a month ago in a dry lightning storm. Some of the more famous of the trees were wrapped in aluminum to save them, but parks reps say the fire encroached on 15 groves and it looks at least two were impacted. The groves known as Redwood Mountain and Castle Creek still need to be assessed to be sure, but reports are that it's likely they were hit by extreme fire behavior. The USGS says observations suggest severe fire effects. The blaze has burned almost 86,000 acres and is only 11% contained.

Unemployment claims down again in California, but still higher than 'before times'. There were 68,200 initial claims for unemployment in Calif for the week ending Oct. 2nd off 10,500 from the week before. The U.S. Labor Department report showed claims are still way above what is considered normal for this time of year in the state. And the benefit claims were over 25% of all claims filed in the country during the same period. Jobless claims across the country were at 326,000 last week, down 38,000 from the week before. In January and February of 2020, the last two months before the pandemic arose, claims were averaging just under 45,000/week in California.

State Senator Mike McGuire has hosted a Climate Town Hall with experts. McGuire had guests with him who are some of the most knowledgeable about climate science during his Wednesday virtual town hall. The guests said in Calif. and along the West, climate change has made it warmer over the last few decades with extreme hit as the norm and the top weather-related killer in the country. They said states in the west were more vulnerable to extreme drought and larger, more destructive and more frequent wildfires. Plus the communities sitting on the coast are dealing with major sea level rise. McGuire represents Trinity, Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino and Sonoma counties.

A plaque that had been removed in Ukiah acknowledging Ladies of the Night is back. The plaque says "To the Ladies of the Night, who plied their trade upon this site" and sits on a rock. But one person living in the building where the plaque was placed 4 decades ago didn't like it, so it was removed. Then last December the rock without the plaque was posted on social media, causing the story to go viral locally. So, former City Council member, now County Supervisor Maureen "Mo" Mulheren of Ukiah went about finding where the plaque was. Apparently a tenant in the building held on to it, because others were still fond of it and now it's back, in its rightful place, but about a ½ block away on the corner of West Church and South State streets.

The indoor mask mandate in San Francisco has been lifted for offices and gyms for the vaccinated. In Sonoma county, the public health officer says masking is working and that health orders, vaccination, outreach and education are adding layers of protection against the pandemic. But in Contra Costa and Santa Clara counties, their health officials told their Board of Supervisors they may be changing protocols after getting some metrics the end of this week. They would be looking at case rates, deaths and hospitalizations before making any moves. In San Francisco they will consider removing more restrictions next week on mask wearing in public places and the amount of people who can safely gather.

The state of California has been trying to find ways to reform the juvenile justice system placing inmates closer to their communities, instead of at youth prisons run by the Department of Juvenile Justice. But it's been quite the challenge. They're supposed to be put in place after the Governor signed a bill into law last year requiring state youth prisons to close by 2023, by not sending juveniles to the facilities as of this past July. But the state's counties have to each figure out what local facility they can send the kids to. Children from 15 to adults up to 25 can be sent there are have been living there for some time for serious or violent crimes. There are about 750 youth confined in the state.

More controversy related to the logging that had been taking place at the Jackson Demonstration Forests' Soda Gulch Site. On Wednesday, the Coyote Valley Tribal Chair Michael Hunter was there to see for himself that no logging was actually happening. But Hunter saw and heard on video and audio recordings there indeed was logging going on. He was asked to leave by loggers while there and refused. Citizens monitoring the forest say there is active logging going on, no matter what Cal Fire contractors say. Reports say they were stopping while activists were there, and that's no longer the case. No activists have been arrested, but say they've been harassed, as do the contractors.

The Lake County Health Services director has resigned ahead of being terminated. The Board Chair Bruno Sabatier reported Denise Pomeroy had resigned. Sabatier says out of respect, they will not announce why the director quit. She was appointed 5 years ago as the interim director then became the permanent director 6 months later. Her job is already posted now on the county's website with the application deadline of October 20th at a pay rate of between \$126,000 to \$152,000 per year. The County Administrative Officer Carol Huchingson will now take over as the interim Health Services director.

A new law is taking affect after so many police protests. Senator Mike McGuire drafted a bill to protect journalists and the Governor just signed it into law. SB 98 focuses on first amendment protections for members of the press who are at protests or other events. Senator McGuire says Calif. now has some of the toughest protections for journalists over any other state. He says it comes after a surge in acts of violence and obstruction against members of the press nationwide. There were more than 600 reported acts of aggression against reporters in 2020 including the use of rubber bullets, tear gas, and reports of jailed journalists too. The new law prohibits cops from obstructing, detaining, assaulting, or otherwise preventing the press from fulfilling their constitutional mandate in reporting on these events.

10/11/21

An autopsy on a man whose body was found in the trunk of a car near Covelo shows he was murdered and not from our area. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office reports the body was found in the vehicle on the 27000 block of Mendocino Pass Road October 3rd, a week ago Sunday. The Sheriff's office reports the next of kin for the man have not been notified yet and they're investigating in locations outside of the county too. The body was found in the trunk of a car parked on the side of the road by a Fish and Wildlife Warden.

The Governor has signed another new bill into law from Assemblymember Jim Wood regarding expanding Broadband infrastructure. Assemblyman Wood says the lack of broadband availability has been a serious problem all along but got way worse during the COVID-19 pandemic. The new law maximizes broadband with the 'dig once' policy used by many other states. It means when conduit for telecommunications infrastructure is set up, and broadband will start to be added. So workers don't have to dig up an area again. The law requires the Dept. of Transportation to make sure construction includes the installation of conduits capable of supporting fiber optic communication cables and that the Public Utilities Commission will see to the maintenance and updates of a publicly accessible interactive map showing the accessibility of broadband service in the state.

A community meeting is set for possible improvements to Mt. Konocti County Park. This Wednesday the Lake County Parks & Rec Dept is hosting a community meeting to get public input on changes to the County Park. The meeting at the Kelseyville Elementary School Multi-Use Room with COVID-19 protocols. The Lake County Public Services Director says "Mount Konocti is not only one of our County's most definitive landmarks, it offers extraordinary opportunities for outdoor recreation".

Lake County, but not Mendocino, has another public safety power shutoff. At the same time the National Weather Service in Eureka has called for a Red Flag Warning. It was a fire weather watch, then meteorologists upgraded it because of gusty northerly winds and a passing cold front, with low humidity, and dry fuels across the area. The windiest, will be tonight, as breezes turn to gusts in the upper slopes and ridgelines of Mendocino County above 1,500 feet, then shift to Lake County to the east tomorrow morning. All the while, PG&E is shutting down power in Lake and several other counties statewide, but so far, not in Mendocino County. Glenn, and Sonoma Counties are included though.

If you have to travel through Sonoma County in coming weeks, be alert, the 101 widening project in Petaluma is on. This phase will be on the southbound side again, where the highway will be totally demolished between East Washington Street and Corona Road. So there will be temporary lanes in the center median. The demolition is happening on weekdays all month, but workers say it's not likely to cause traffic congestion. Caltrans crews are taking out a stretch passing the Sonoma-Marin Rail Transit tracks. The work being done at a time no SMART trains are expected.

Another way to cut pollution in Calif. By 2023, you won't be able to buy a new gas-powered leaf blower or lawn mower. The Gov. signed the new law Saturday ordering a permanent ban on the sale of new gas-powered equipment with small off-road engines. That includes generators, lawn equipment and pressure washers. The new law starts next year, but the new rule doesn't go into effect until January of 2024, giving regulators time to work on the plan. Calif is the only state allowed to regulate air quality like this, as part of a federal law back in the 1970s. Other states cannot come up with their own regulations, but they can do what Calif. does.

25,000 customers in over a third of California's counties will be without power due to a red flag warning. PG&E has notified customers in 23 counties they will be part of the latest public safety power shutoff that started at 4 a.m. today. Just over 4,000 customers in Lake County will be impacted, but none in Mendocino County. Over 300 in Lake are in the so-called Medical Baseline program, mostly in the south county or north of Clearlake Oaks. The utility company blames dry, offshore winds that were expected overnight with gusts of up to 50 miles an hour this morning. There are 24 community resource centers in over a dozen counties for folks to charge medical equipment and electronic devices, get up-to-date info about the PSPS, and water, snacks and other essential items.

The homecoming for Willits High happens just like in before times. Students, staff and community members at the rally, junior varsity and varsity football games and a dance. The events were over last week, from Sept. 27th – Oct. 2nd. The rally in honor of some senior athletes of volleyball, girls' and boys' soccer, football and cross-country teams. The Homecoming court was of course, also introduced to the crowd. The kids also enjoyed spirit week, the week before the main weekend celebrations.

A fire has quickly been corralled in Mendocino County. The Sheriff's office reported the fire contained within about an hour after first reports Sunday after a car near Shady and Biggar Lanes in Covelo was in flames. They were calling the fire the Shady fire for a minute. There was also a Nixle alert sent to residents to warn of fire activity and to steer clear of the area yesterday.

It's been a busy year so far for the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority who responded to almost 170 fires. The Fire Dept. reported about 70% of the 168 fires were found to be arson caused. The dept. says 113 of the fires were intentionally set which wasn't helped by extremely hot, dry and windy weather conditions. We all know about the Hopkins, probably the largest in the county. It started Sept. 12th in Calpella and burned several homes. Then there was another arson fire, the Highway fire, which jumped the Russian River. 102 fires were also connected to homeless encampments and homeless activity, so human caused, but not necessarily arson. There was no suspect in the Highway fire, but there was an arrest in the Hopkins.

In the Mendocino County Public Health Officer's latest public comments, he said he wants people to be healthy and happy. Dr. Andy Coren has been hosting the Friday meetings weekly for months. Last Friday he said as cases wane, he would love to see people plan carefully for upcoming holidays, starting with Halloween. Coren says about 40% of the population has not been vaccinated, so you should still mask indoors and outdoors in crowds. Restaurants have signs up too, to let you know if the establishment has vaccinated staff or not so you can make your own informed decision about whether to enter. He's also urging flu shots like last year, so we don't have a twin pandemic. Many clinics are offering both Covid-19 and flu vaccines at the same time, which is considered safe. As of last Wednesday about 70 percent of eligible county residents were vaccinated and 61.4 percent of the total population had been vaccinated.



Northlake Fire Protection District is getting an infusion of cash. The Board of Supervisors has agreed to the Chief Mike Ciancio's request for a wildland fire fuels crew. It comes after the Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake bequeathed \$662,000 to cover payroll and benefits for the project's first year for a fire captain and 10 crew members. The department would need about the same from the county for the first year to get to the total cost of about \$1.2M. The other half goes to equipment and operating costs. The 3 supervisors offered up discretionary funds to fund it along with money from the Cannabis Tax Committee for the rest. The fire chief said after the board meeting he was shocked he got what he needed.

A man in custody for several months accused of threats on his girlfriend looks to be pleading not guilty by reason of insanity. Morgan Matthew Jack in court for a settlement/ trial readiness conference where his lawyer requested a new hearing for the not guilty by reason of insanity plea. They will be back for that next week. He's held on no bail after three witnesses testified on his behalf. He was being held since June for assault with a deadly weapon (other than a firearm), exhibiting a firearm/deadly weapon, resisting arrest, and exhibiting imitation firearm and assault on a peace officer. Deputies say in May he threatened to kill his girlfriend in Lakeport, she got away before deputies got there. He barricaded himself inside and a SWAT team had to extract him. A police dog took him down finally. Jack was previously tied to the murder of a taxi driver in the Big Valley Rancheria for which he pleaded no contest.

The Public Safety Power Shutoff has hit over 6,500 customers. Pacific Gas & Electric Co. shut off power this morning in Sonoma, Lake and Napa as powerful winds expected to gust across the region, hit. The power down was, as in the past, to reduce the risk of wildfires in the area where PG&E equipment could spark a fire. The National Weather Service issued a red flag warning in the North Bay and Northern California through tomorrow night. The power downs started this morning before 6a. The power wasn't turned down in Mendocino County, but it was in Lake, to over 4,000. The Press Democrat reported this is the 3rd power down this season.

Another new bill signed into law by the Governor so that children can sign their parents up on their health insurance. The health exchange created under President Obama, the Affordable Care Act allows kids to be on their parents insurance plans until they're 26, some states even extended that to 30 years of age. The CA Insurance Commissioner says the Parent Healthcare Act will help families take care for their parents the way they cared for them. Adults have to rely on their kids though for at least 50% of their total support to get on their plan.

A man busted by deputies as they look for someone else. Deputies say they went to a home in Willits to serve a warrant on Steven Ramier for evading and instead found Jewel Dyer standing near the driveway to the home holding a plastic bag of illicit drugs. Deputies also found he was on parole and high on something. They then found Ramier, but he ran so they had to chase him down. He was finally taken down, then both he and Dyer were arrested and booked into Mendocino County Jail. Ramier was held on

10/12/21 \$135,000.00 bail and Dyer was held without bail due to a Parole hold.

Deputies say at least 100 residents had their mail ripped off by a couple, one of them arrested in Potter Valley. The Sheriff's Office reports Sharon Smith of Potter Valley and Charles Maxfield of Willits were seen in a suspicious vehicle near some mailboxes. A witnesses said they thought the pair were stealing mail and approached their car, but they sped away. Deputies saw the car and only saw someone in the passenger seat, but thought they heard activity in the bushes nearby. They say they found the driver there, Charles Maxfield who was on Post Release Community Supervision for mail theft in the past, but he ran away and they couldn't catch him. At the same time they found a massive amount of mail and documents in the car, none in Maxfield or Smith's name. Smith was arrested and booked into the Mendocino County Jail but not held due to the pandemic. Maxfield is still on the run.

A man from Ukiah has been arrested after reports of people possibly camping in and vandalizing the Little Lake Cemetery in Willits. A deputy saw a car there and looked inside, finding Steven Lawson who was on parole with an active pick up arrest warrant, so he was held. His car searched and deputies found a meth pipe, a fixed blade knife and a small canister of pepper spray, none of which he's allowed to have while on parole. He's charged with violating his parole and for possession of tear gas by a prohibited person and held on no bail.

A man from Southern California visiting Clear Lake reportedly disappeared after going paddling in his kayak. The 28 year old was identified as Dylan Flanagan was at the lake Sunday afternoon and vanished. The Lake County Sheriff's Office reported sending out a Marine Patrol unit and finding a kayak, but no sign of Flanagan. A relative says they saw him paddling away from the Clearlake Oaks Boat Launch around 5:00 p.m. Sunday. A search by deputies on land and in the Lake turned up nothing. He's described as 6'1" about 170-190 lbs with brown hair, brown eyes, and a distinctive brown mustache/beard combo. He was last seen wearing a navy Hawaiian shirt, black sunglasses, a straw hat, and tie-dye boardshorts.

The tall trees in the Muir Grove of Giant Sequoias are still very much in danger from two fires. The unrelenting flames have been threatening the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks for weeks. Some of the taller trees at the gate to the parks were wrapped in aluminum and retardant has been dropped on the trees by an airplane. Something never done before. The KNP Complex fire started in lightening a month ago. Along with the Windy Fire which is also burning nearby, they've already burned 26 groves of the trees and blackened over 184,000 acres combined. Some of the scientists working along with firefighters say most of the fighting they're doing is experimental. The Windy fire is 85% contained, but the KNP Complex is only 20% contained.

A fire that started in Clearlake has been stomped out quick, with the help of an off duty firefighter who jumped into action. The fire, called the Box fire was reported around 1:30 yesterday afternoon near Jack in the Box. Firefighters descended on the area pretty quick after the fire quickly grew to two acres between Dam Road and Highway 53. Lake County Fire and Cal Fire along with a chopper and other air resources started working on the fire as someone driving by jumped in and stopped, Tommy Scalfaro. He was driving by with his girlfriend when they saw the flames and stopped. He's a Cal Fire firefighter. He grabbed tools from his truck and ran to the fire before the on duty firefighters arrived. 2 other drivers stopped to help. The fire broke out during the red flag warning which remains in effect today.

PG&E has notified customers in nearly 2 dozen counties of the all clear after the latest public safety power shut-off. But not so fast, as the energy company announced they were turning power back on, they said they may have to turn it back off tomorrow due to another weather system moving through the area. Lake County had 4,000 customers impacted. 20,000 others were also in the dark, but not in Mendocino County. Meteorologists with the company says there were wind gusts recorded at 55 miles an hour in Butte County, 52 mph in Shasta and 47 mph in Tehama County. They have not said when power would be turned back on because they're still checking their equipment.

A new law in Calif. says you cannot harass people if they're going into a vaccination clinic. The Governor signed the law into place Friday, which already went into effect. It's just a misdemeanor though for harassment, intimidation, injuring or obstructing someone who is trying to go get their Covid-19 or any other vaccine, and it's punishable by a maximum \$1,000 fine and/or up to six months in jail. Free speech experts said it was probably unconstitutional, but language was then removed from the bill. But they say it still violates the First Amendment.

Community clinics who are already pretty low on funds say giving the COVID-19 vaccines has resulted in a major cash flow problem. The clinics here and in other states are reportedly awaiting money from the federal government for administering so many doses since January, about a million here in Calif. Some of the clinics report not billing for the shots because it's too confusing. They also say they're owed tens of millions. Federal data shows these health centers have administered almost 15 million vaccine doses.

The Governor has signed the majority of the bills on his desk into law from the 2020-21 legislative session. Some of the action includes providing immediate relief for those hardest hit by COVID-19, taking on the homelessness & housing affordability crisis, transforming public schools as gateways for opportunity, building infrastructure for the next century and fighting wildfires & taking on climate change. It's all part of his agenda for the California Comeback Plan. He commented Saturday during signing that he was thankful for the efforts from the Legislature, with that and his Plan, they're hitting fast forward on the state's recovery from the pandemic. Some of the legislation signed was from State Senator Mike McGuire.

A woman in Mendocino County says she and her toddler and grandma were chased by someone driving nearby. The woman, who was anonymous on the Red Headed Blackbelt site woman says she was with her two-year-old daughter and grandmother at the South Fork of the Eel River near the Peg House when the driver seemed to try to hit them on purpose, over a concrete barrier, through a wooden fence and then a little to close to them. She said they were on the river a couple hours and were walking to their car off Hwy 101 when it happened. She described it as a light blue sedan who crashed and barreled towards them. She called 911 and were met about a half hour by law enforcement. The Mendocino County Sheriff's says they reported there after getting a call to help from State Park rangers.

California hits a grim COVID19 milestone more than 70,000 dead. The data emerged on Monday as the state reports having the lowest infection rate in the country. The most recent surge in cases was over the summer due to the delta strain, which mostly hit those unvaccinated. California has now had the most deaths of any state, just barely passing Texas and Florida. But the state's per capita death rate of 177/100,000 is in the bottom third for the U.S. Over 70% of California residents have been fully vaccinated and 8% more have initiated their shots.

The Assistant Superintendent of the Ukiah Unified School District Nicole Glentzer has received the 2021 Ray Curry Award. The award from the Association of California School Administrators is given yearly for an outstanding human resources administrator in California. The Superintendent of schools said Glentzer is a "remarkable leader and human being", inspiring us daily by confronting difficult situations with a kind heart. The president of the Association bestowing the award on Glentzer says she worked closely with her and was impressed by her "knowledge, care, integrity, and ability to deal with the most stressful situations". Saying she's always kind and solution oriented.

10/13/21

The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors is not doing a vaccine mandate for County employees. The agreement yesterday after four hours of lively debate. There are reported to be 2,400 unvaccinated County employees. The board did however issue new protocols, calling for weekly testing and screening for unvaccinated staff. One supervisor disagreed with the singling out of the unvaccinated, calling for screening all employees. The public health officer at the meeting said it was unnecessary, as far as CDC standards, to test vaccinated individuals who were not exposed or have symptoms.

[The fire restrictions on the Mendocino National Forest are over. They ended t](#)

Sonoma County has announced reaching its 400th death due to COVID19. The bleak landmark as two more deaths were reported. At the end of 2020 there had been 194 deaths, which occurred over about 9 months. About the same this year. The latest deaths were both unvaccinated. One a man between 70 and 80 who died Aug. 21st at a hospital; and the other was an unvaccinated woman between 40 and 50 who died Oct. 1st, also at a hospital. The two both had underlying health conditions.

The Skunk Train is reportedly negotiating with Georgia Pacific to get some land at the Mill Site to expand. Last night at the Fort Bragg City Council meeting they were discussing acquiring the rest of the Georgia Pacific Mill Site land to cleanup as required by the Department of Toxic Substances Control. After cleanup of the land, restoration of the Mill Ponds, tributary creeks and estuary, development of new housing. But the Skunk Train wanted part of the land, but the city decided it wasn't in the best interest of the community. So the Skunk Train filed suit to acquire the land anyway by eminent domain. Georgia Pacific said they don't have the power to do that, but the case has not been settled and the City is still negotiating to get the land.

A woman in Fort Bragg says her brother in law was hit by a car that took off. The Fort Bragg Police Dept. posted on Facebook that Grace Potter reported her brother was hit and had injuries to his face, shoulder, and multiple broken teeth. The police department is trying to find out who hit the 39 year old man. The woman says the vehicle was a gray/light-colored SUV heading South. Police want anyone who may have seen something to report it.

After 25,000 PG&E customers just got their power back after the last intentional power down in fire weather, there could be another around the corner. The utility giant says it's getting ready for another potential public safety power shutoff starting early Thursday. 4,008 in Lake County were without power including over 300 medical baseline customers. Lake Co News reports a spokesperson with the utility company says PG&E crews patrolled the area of the latest power down in Lake County and showed at least four instances of weather-related damage and hazards including vegetation on power lines. The company reports monitoring the weather which may include dry offshore winds for Northern and Central California. And that they'd give 2 days notice to about 29,000 customers in small stretch across 19 counties and four tribes.

Cannabis on the docket at the next Lake County Planning Commission meeting. Some routine business first at their meeting tomorrow then they will consider a major use permit for High Caliber Farms. They're asking for three medium outdoor cultivation licenses and a self-distribution license for commercial cannabis cultivation and distribution. Their business has almost 37,500 square feet of canopy on a 78-acre property in Upper Lake. The commission will also consider a major use permit by Lake Vista Farms for 15 acres of outdoor commercial cannabis canopy in five fenced growing areas in Clearlake. Plus another cultivation request on 15,000 square feet in Kelseyville.

A new grant from the federal government for the CHP so they can continue looking out for dangerous driving behaviors. The patrol's Regulate Aggressive Driving and Reduce Speed, or RADARS, VI grant is to help bring down the amount of car crashes due to speed and the amount of people killed and injured in the crashes. The CHP commissioner says reckless driving is a major threat to everyone on Calif. roadways and the grant will help provide "focused education and enforcement" targeting speeding and aggressive driving, including street racing and sideshow activities, which she says will help prevent crashes resulting in death or injury.

The Willits Police Chief is asking the city council for permission to reach out to the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office for help getting fill-in dispatchers temporarily or part time due to a staffing shortage. Apparently there's an agreement in place already, but there's only a maximum budget of \$6,000 and Chief Lizarrago says he needs \$25,000. There are only two dispatchers in the department so they need outside help. They have one possible new hire and are trying to find more and are training other staff to pick up the slack. If approved the Sheriff's office dispatchers would continue working from the communications center in Ukiah and would be provided by the county on an overtime basis.

Could there soon be a U-Haul facility in Ukiah's future? The Planning Commission will consider a plan for a three story building at 675 N. Orchard Avenue. But the plan was panned by the city's Design Review Board, who wrote to the planning commission that it doesn't match the character of any Ukiah neighborhood. The Board also said it'll block views of the Eastern Hills, and views of the city from the highway. The plan now is for a 40-foot high, self-storage box, 325-feet long. The Design Board said it should instead be in a mixed use area near places like auto part or tire stores like on Airport Park Boulevard. But city planning staff liked it for the proposed area.

Lake County still does not have a permanent Public Health Officer as Dr. Gary Pace resigned in the spring. Then the county also lost the health services director so the Board of Supervisors has to fill both spots during a pandemic. Dr. Pace is the interim officer and Dr. Charlie Evans and Dr. Evan Bloom are also alternates when Pace is unavailable. The County Administrative Officer, Carol Huchingson is acting as the interim health services officer. After several interviews for a new Public Health Officer, Supervisors directed staff to renew their recruiting effort. But the recruiter says she's not confident she'll be able to find someone in the final months of the year due to the holidays.

Just as thousands got their power back on Tuesday, Pacific Gas and Electric Co. announced yet another PSPS again. The energy company powered down 25,000 customers across parts of the state at the beginning of the week and say they'll end the business week the same way. Early today, maybe already, many people will wake up with no power. Over 4,000 Lake County customers lost their power Monday, but this time around, PG&E has plans for way less customers. They said they'd give a 2 day advance notification, which would have come the same day customers just got their power juiced back up, but it was only one day instead. Again, no customers in Mendocino County will be impacted.

10/14/21

The owners of Johnson's Beach in Guerneville announced they were selling their riverfront property and just like that, it's reportedly sold. The Press Democrat reports a private company bid on the land and it's already in escrow. The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors reportedly bid on the land and were rejected. Apparently another local businesswoman was also turned down. The property was listed at over three and a half million dollars. The current owners bought it in 2014 and made several changes. The property has availability for 38-tents on its campground, a four-bedroom, two-bath lodge and 10 vintage cabins from the 1920s.

The mandate for all prison workers to be vaccinated has been blocked by a judge. The judge in Kern County has issued a temporary restraining order to prevent the mandate's enforcement related to guards and peace officers. The mandate was supposed to start tomorrow but the injunction won't affect non-unionized staff who work at prisons with health care facilities. 240 inmates and 39 prison employees have died due to complications of COVID19. The group who went to court is the California Correctional Peace Officers Association who is against mandates for its members.

Nursing programs at community colleges across the state are packed and students are challenged to find a program. The student senate of the California Community Colleges is trying to ban the lottery system preventing some from entering the programs. There are about 80 nursing programs at 115 community colleges, and some have waiting lists that last years. The schools all differ though, some use a screening process that looks at a potential student's background before accepting them, the others are first come, first served, a modified random selection, prerequisite courses or random lottery. Meanwhile there's been a massive shortage of RN's in Calif. which started way before the pandemic.

The City of Fort Bragg is no loner taking water from Ukiah. After recent rains came down, the city also reduced its Stage 4 water crisis down to Stage 2. Now businesses and residents can slightly ease up on the strict water conservation measures. The city says it can meet its own demand without the City of Ukiah dragging water all the way over by truck. The City Council voted unanimously on Tuesday to downgrade the water emergency. So the conservation efforts should be around 10 to 20% of what was used in a non-drought year instead of 30 to 40%.

Mendocino Coast Clinics in Fort Bragg is receiving a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The \$2.5 million dollars over five years goes to support and grow the Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) program for people to get off opiates. The County has the second highest drug overdose death rate of all California counties with it nearly doubling in the last five years. And Mendocino County's OD death rate is over twice the state's rate and nearly double the rate in the entire country. And Mendocino Coast is the only health center on the coast providing the program to treat those who suffer from opiate use disorder.

A man from Covelo busted by Tribal Police has been jailed after a high speed chase. Round Valley Tribal Police called the Sheriff's office for help stopping Curtis Bettega, who Tribal Officers had lost sight of during the chase. He ditched his car after driving it into a ditch, leaving it with its engine still running. He was caught hiding near the car which had been reported stolen from Ukiah. Deputies found a loaded rifle, with characteristics classifying it as an assault weapon, ammo and nearly 25 grams of meth. Because of his background he cannot own or possess weapons or ammunition, plus he was out on bail from another recent arrest. He was booked again and held for various crimes on \$113,500.00 bail.

The Mendocino County Public Health Office has been awarded a half million dollars for home visits. The grant from the Dept. of Health and Human Services from the Home Visiting Program Innovation State General Fund for work through June 2023. The money to help with outreach and the implementation to better reach, recruit, engage, serve, and retain rural Latina women. It's part of "Healthy Families Mendocino County" Home Visiting Program. Mendocino County was one of a handful that won the Innovation fund award and will now be able to offer free, ongoing strength-based one-on-one visits.

A man has been arrested for assaulting another man with a rock in Ukiah. Police got a call to Adventist Health Ukiah Valley after the victim went to the Emergency Department. Officers say he had head injuries after being attacked by Orr Creek near N. State Street. He says he didn't know the suspect and turned over all his personal belongings to him, which included cash, rings, his shoes, backpacks, banking cards and wallet. He gave cops a description including the suspect wearing very distinct shoes. Officers followed the trail of blood by the hospital and found Jason Kreuz wearing those same shoes. He admitted he was in an altercation, and since he was on probation he was searched. They found all of the victims items and arrested him. He was held on \$100,000.00.

A man by the Great Redwood Trail called police to say he was attacked. When they arrived, they found him with a head injury, bleeding and with swelling on his head. He says he was walking along when another man on a bike followed telling him to leave the area, then punching him. He says his eyeglasses broke and thought the suspect had something in his hand, but didn't see what it was, and then he was hit with the guy's bicycle. He provided a description and declined medical treatment. Alden Larvie was found by Safeway with the bike that matched the victim's description. He had three warrants for his arrest, so he was held. He admitted the altercation and was arrested for the three warrants, all misdemeanors and held on \$30,000.00.

[Any help needed due to the drought is available from the California Department of Water Resources](#)

A man accused of killing his partner in Upper Lake was back in court after the 2017 event. Willy Tujays Timmons was charged with the murder of Vanessa Niko. He's charged with murder, inflicting corporal injury with a prior conviction within seven years, causing permanent disability, and torture. They were talking death penalty a few years ago in the case, but that never came to be. He's been in jail ever since. In July he asked for a so-called Marsden Motion, looking to fire your court appointed lawyer. It was granted. And he has a new lawyer.

The Eel River Cleanup has a date. One week from this Saturday at nine. You can meetup with others at the Pioneer Bridge over the Eel River, five miles north of Potter Valley on Eel River Road. There the Mendocino Solid Waste Management Authority, Potter Valley Tribe, Solid Waste of Willits will be on hand as they sponsor the Cleanup again. They're working on a 12-mile section of river from Van Arsdale up to the Lake Pillsbury Dam in Lake County. They will be serving lunch this year and practicing social distancing. They will have all the needed gear and hand washing stations.

For more information, call the Potter Valley Tribe at 462-1213 or Bebe Ware at 743-1525.

Still no sign of the man who went missing after taking off in his kayak from Upper Lake onto Clear Lake. The rescue or recovery is now focused on the Clearlake Oaks area after items believed to be Dylan Flanagan's turned up there. His kayak was found right away, now reports that the Lake County Sheriff's Marine Patrol also located a paddle, shoe and life jacket. He disappeared after taking off for a paddle on Sunday. He's been working in the San Francisco area, but hails from Southern Calif. and was staying at a vacation rental in Clearlake Oaks for his 28th birthday and a job promotion.

A woman from Clearlake Oaks in court pleading not guilty to charges of murdering her boyfriend then leaving town. Tammy Sue Grogan-Robinson was in court via Zoom yesterday from the Lake County Jail related to the murder of Charles Vernon McClelland of Rohnert Park. She initially said he raped her so she shot him, then she left town and had to be extradited back. The two reported in an on again off again relationship, but on when he was killed at her home in July. After her claims of rape were debunked police charged her for the unjustified and premeditated shooting death. She pleaded not guilty yesterday and denied special allegations against her. She also waived her right to having her preliminary hearing within 30 days of her plea entry. She's due back in court November 17th.

Two more meetings are planned in Lake County to talk about new maps for Board of Supervisor districts. The meetings for citizen input will be on November 2nd and 30th. The final map must be ready to go in time to meet the December 15 deadline. Like other government bodies, the board is using data from the 2020 US Census for redistricting. Once the lines are drawn, they will stay that way until sometime after the next census in 2030.

The board of supervisors has more on the redistricting process and the

10/15/21 upcoming hearings on its website.



If you live in Lakeport, you'll have a chance to get rid of all that junk that has been piling up this weekend. The City and Lakeport Disposal are holding a Community Cleanup day on Saturday from 9 am to 2 pm in the public parking lot near the fifth street boat ramp downtown. They will take Household trash, televisions, specified appliances, electronic waste, mattresses, household furniture, unusable clothes/blankets/towels, and similar materials. They won't take Hazardous waste or construction debris. You'll have to show a photo ID and a copy of a city utility bill to get in. Covid-19 protocols will be in effect.

Automotive repair students at Ukiah have something new to work on, thanks to a donation from CHP. The bright yellow 2011 Camaro was recovered stolen and could never legally be driven again. It COULD, however, be donated to an educational institution. That's where CHP Lt. and Ukiah graduate Dan Fansler stepped in. The Daily Journal reports he arranged for the car to go to the school shop, where the students can now tinker with it to refine their repair skills.

A lot of California State Workers seem to be bucking Governor Newsom's vaccinate or be tested order. According to the state Human resources department, almost 40 percent of those on the state payroll have yet to get a Covid shot. That compares to 28 percent of the overall state populations that remain unvaccinated. Some departments have a higher vaccination rate than others. Caltrans rate is 70 percent, while employees of the California Highway Patrol have a rate of 52 percent.

A man in Willits has been arrested after reports of a bloody crime scene behind the Grocery Outlet at the Evergreen Shopping Center. Willits police say they first got a call of a man down with blood all over, but when they arrived they found the person to be a 61 year old woman, bleeding and unconscious. She was taken to Howard Memorial, then flown to UC Davis due to the seriousness of her injuries. They say she had been severely beaten and sexually assaulted. They identified her attacker as 23 year old Jose Perez who was arrested yesterday afternoon and charged with attempted murder, attempted rape, kidnapping with bodily injury and violating probation. He's held on \$500,000 bail.

The body of a missing kayaker we've been telling you about, has been found. Dylan Flanagan of San Francisco had been staying in Lake County at a vacation rental celebrating his birthday and a job promotion. When he went out kayaking on Clear Lake last weekend, he disappeared. The Sheriff's Office Marine Patrol and a private helicopter, volunteers and the Sheriff's office all looked for Flanagan since Sunday. His body was reportedly found along the shore in Clearlake Oaks. An autopsy is set for next week. There were extremely windy conditions when he went out on the lake, including a red flag warning.

The Mendocino County Assessor and Clerk-Recorder reports sending out the Vote By Mail Ballots (VBM) in the Hopland Fire Protection District for the election next month. The ballots went out two weeks ago, on Friday, October 1st. You can also pick one up at the Elections Office if you didn't receive it. This is for the November 2nd Hopland Fire Protection District election. The office says if you normally vote by mail and have not received your ballot to call them for a replacement.

[The Mendocino County Public Health Officer, Dr. Andy Coren has met with th](#)

Ukiah police warn against viral school related challenges surfacing on Tik Tok. The dept. sent out a notice they are partnering with the school district to watch out for the challenges that can include monthly themes around stealing school property, assaulting a teacher, vandalism, and even to the extreme of committing sexual assault. The School Resource Officer has already investigated multiple related crimes from the TikTok challenges including theft, vandalism, and inappropriate videos. They're asking parents to watch out too if their child uses the social media platform and to talk to them about the challenges and remind them they can have long-lasting legal implications.

After two people are accused of alleged mail theft in Potter Valley, one arrest was made. The driver, Charles Maxfield reportedly got away but his possible accomplice, Sharon Smith was arrested. The mail found in the car they were in together was from all over Mendocino County including Ukiah, Potter Valley, Redwood Valley, Reeves Canyon and Willits. There were blank checks, a laptop and portable printer. Smith has been charged with conspiracy to commit a felony and acquiring false identification with intent to commit fraud. She pleaded no contest to being an accessory after the fact this week. She was offered 12 months probation and 20 days in jail as part of a plea deal.

A woman from Nevada has been arrested after a fire along Highway 29 in Kelseyville. The CHP's Clear Lake Area division says 38 year old Nickelina Rose Williams of Fallon was arrested Wednesday afternoon after the fire broke out near Bottle Rock Road. Several people called 911 to report the fire spreading in a field. CHP officers reported to the area just after a group of drivers had stopped and tried to put the fire out. The CHP reports Williams was walking on the Highway near where the fire started but denied any knowledge of a fire. But officers say she had a lighter and ignition items on her matching what had been found at the fire's ignition point. She was arrested on suspicion of arson and booked into jail. She's charged with arson and for having two misdemeanor warrants for her arrest and held without bail. Her arraignment was set for today.

The latest public safety power shutoff that was supposed to impact folks in 10 counties has been canceled. Apparently PG&E saw a change in the forecast and canceled just days after another power down that impacted thousands in Lake County, but none in Mendocino County. The PG&E spokeswoman says the winds that were forecast were trending weaker. There were still several customers that could possibly see a power down in So Cal including in Kern County.

Break out the Great Pumpkin as PumpkinFest is back in person. The fall tradition for so many years was canceled last year, like many events because of the pandemic. But the city of Ukiah did however host the Great Pumpkin Weigh-off. It was a drive thru event and the winning Pumpkin weighed in at a stealthy 866 pounds. The organizers say they're looking forward to hosting the festival in person this weekend. The weigh off is tonight from 4 to 7 p.m. at Alex Thomas Plaza. Tomorrow is the parade at 10 am from Redwood Empire Fairgrounds to past Alex Thomas Plaza.

A hearing that was supposed to take place on a proposed U-Haul facility in Ukiah with the Planning Commission has been postponed. The city's director of community development told the Planning Commission on Wednesday that high winds came through last weekend and knocked down the sign for the project hearing, so they wanted to reschedule so the public hearing was well attended. There is no new date set yet. We told you about the 3 story facility being not well-received by members of the city's Design Review Board recommending the Planning Commission scrap the plan, at least for that location.

A retired firefighter and former colleagues on their toes as a controlled burn on his property in the Santa Cruz mountains got away from them. The retired Cal Fire battalion chief had more than a dozen current Cal Fire firefighters on his land supervising the burn, when sudden gusts of wind sent embers flying. The former chief says he and his son tried to help, but there were so many spot fires, hundreds of other firefighters had to be brought in to help. Firefighters from Mendocino County joined along with others from Placer County. There were also four air tankers and four helicopters on the fire Saturday. In the end the fire burned 148 acres near the Santa Cruz-Santa Clara county line. They reported it was under control

10/18/21 yesterday, but only 35% contained.

It's walnut harvest time and of course this time of year, a warning unharvested trees may be vulnerable to freeze damage as they still recover from last spring's damage. Irrigated trees actually do better than trees that are dry, experts say and as the harvest is in full swing, some older orchards don't have enough crop to harvest. Across the state walnut advisors have offered farmers advice on the freeze after last year. They have a survey regarding freeze damage so University of Calif. Cooperative Extension can get a better idea what's happening statewide. And they're having a webinar in the next couple of weeks with a panel of UC experts on the best practices for freeze mitigation and recovery. At the same time, the UC has received 32 million dollars from lawmakers to hire more advisors and staff, 2 will be in Lake and Mendocino Counties in Lakeport and Hopland.

More than 2 billion dollars has been set aside by the Calif. Transportation Commission to repair and improve transportation infrastructure across the state. The Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 is a large part of the money, \$696 million of it. The Cal Trans director says the money is going to local and regional transportation projects "that carry significant community benefits". \$960 million to more than 600 cities, counties, and regional agencies, including 1,100 new projects/year. There are also 15 repair projects to extend the life of 76 bridges, prevent future costly repairs, and improve ride quality for the public. Two projects in Mendocino County include nearly a million in pavement work, barrier replacement, upgrading drainage and signs and lights on Route 1 north of Willits. The other is pavement and guardrail improvements on highway 101 near Willits.

A call to the Sheriff's office leads to the arrest of a woman in Ukiah after a domestic dispute. Deputies say they found a man and Lateefah Glover at the apartments Friday, the two had been living together. Apparently an argument between the couple got physical and Glover was arrested. Deputies say she threw books at the man, and hit him with a metal rod several times, causing him visible injuries. She was arrested and held on \$25,000.00 bail.

A wrong way driver has reported caused a crash on Highway 29. Mendo Fever reports hearing on the scanner it happened in Lakeport at Hill Road and 2 people were killed. Two other people apparently had major injuries too. The accident last night closed the highway down as an air ambulance was brought in, but could not land, due to the weather. Early reports say one of the people in one of the crashed cars was trapped inside of it, another was ejected out. One of them was pregnant. No other information was immediately available.

Reports of a snake infestation under a home in Northern Calif. have gone viral. The photo of a pile of snakes after a woman called to say she saw a bunch of rattlesnakes under her house, 90 to be exact. The home in Santa Rosa visited by Sonoma County Reptile Rescue. The story made it to Associated Press National headlines. The rescue company crawling underneath the home finding the snakes. The company says they were at the home about four hours October 2nd. They say they took out 22 adult rattlesnakes and 59 baby snakes underneath the home in the Mayacamas Mountains. They came back again, finding 11 more snakes, and a dead cat and dead possum.

In the High Valley area of Lake County, County Supervisors consider a marijuana operation. The Lake County Supervisors are listening to an appeal of the project tomorrow morning from the Lake County Planning Commission for Sourz HVR Inc./Aviona LLC. The company owns the High Valley Ranch in Clearlake. A 1,640-acre piece of land that used to house PSI World. They want to put 80 acres of cultivation in, as well as a spot for processing and distribution on 649-acres of the ranch. The Planning Commission approved it already, but some neighbors are not into it, saying there's potential problems with grading, air quality, odor, water availability and too much more to list here.

The Ukiah City Council is considering banning the sale of nitrous oxide canisters. The cans are sometimes used by folks to get high. The gas is used to sedate people getting medical procedures or dental work. But you can buy small canisters over the counter. There was a presentation for the council last month from the Ukiah Valley Youth Leadership Coalition. The hits of the nitrous oxide are referred to as "Whipits". Some of the negative effects include breathing issues, dizziness and possibly a weakening of the heart muscle, and a Vitamin B12 deficiency which can block nerve impulses and cause paralysis.

Water and Sewer rates could be going up in Lakeport. The City Council is set to review rates at their meeting tomorrow night. They're also meeting a new police officer and declaring October 2021 Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The public hearing for the rate increases will come after the other issues and could take effect as soon as Nov. 1st. But the full increase wouldn't be felt until five years from now when an average single family residence would pay nearly \$20/more per month. Later in the meeting the city manager will bring a proposal to the council for a one year lease for the Clear Lake Environmental Research Center to use the Carnegie Library building to develop an environmental research center along with labs and offices.

A bunch of new police dogs to be on patrol across the state with the Calif. Highway Patrol. The ten new K-9 teams were sworn in Friday. The ceremony happened in Sacramento for the teams after 400-600 hours of training. The CHP Commissioner said after weeks of "rigorous training", the new teams were ready to get out on the streets. Commissioner Amanda Ray said the dogs were a huge asset to the department and are credited with improving safety and the effectiveness of their human partners and save time and money for the agency. All of the handlers have been CHP officers with at least four years of experience.

The graduating teams now are part of 48 canine teams deployed throughout the state.

As we've been hearing nationwide from Public Health Officers and even the federal government, get your vaccinations, for flu and COVID. Now the California Department of Public Health is urging residents to get your shots now to protect yourself and your friends and families. They are warning that the flu could cause a twin pandemic which could be devastating to Californians. Flu season generally starts in October and goes out until May. It generally peaks in late November or December. The vaccination generally takes effect about two weeks after the jab. So getting shots now is the best time to protect yourself, family and the community. They recommend the flu shot for all who are six months of age and older.

Absences aplenty in the Bay Area as parents and some teachers against vaccine mandates walked out. The sit-out was pre-planned after the mandate was first announced for in person learning. The vaccines for kids and adults have been approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and millions have received their shots. There's a Parents of Freedom group on Facebook with all sorts of comments on the mandates, nationwide, many saying they didn't appreciate the government co-parenting with them. The Gov. Gavin Newsom says our mandate won't be in effect until the U.S. government has formally approved the vaccine for kids 5 to 15 years old. So it could mean students in 7th to 12th grade won't need to be inoculated until next July.

Some people in the North Bay without power as a rainstorm barrels thru. PG&E reported nearly 12,000 were without power in multiple counties of the Bay Area this morning. Over 215 in the North Bay. The outages occurred last night about 7:30 p.m. with crews out overnight and into early this morning. At one point 20,000 customers were in the dark. The energy company said the rain caused fires to start on electrical poles and that shut down the power. They had workers out at multiple sites last night.

Kaiser Permanente has put thousands of workers on unpaid leave due to their vaccination status. It's a nationwide mandate for staff to be fully vaccinated. They made the announcement in August and gave workers and doctors 2 months to get their inoculations across the country. The rate then went up from 78% vaccinated, to 92%. But as of today, there were still 2,200 workers nationwide who had not responded to the mandate. The healthcare company placed them on unpaid administrative leave until December and if they don't comply, they will be laid off. The San Francisco Chronicle reports the company saying they hoped none of their employees would choose to leave their jobs, but they won't know for sure until December. They also said they'd continue working with staff to address any concerns about the shots and to avail them time to educate themselves.

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Crowds of people gathered on the front steps of the Capitol protesting the state's vaccine mandate for kids to go to in person learning. The mandate won't officially start until vaccines receive full FDA, not emergency, approval. So probably next year. Still thousands of parents protested yesterday across the state shouting, "mid kid, my choice". Many parents brought their kids with them too, keeping them out of school to make the point. The governor's restrictions are some of the harshest in the country. He ordered the first stay home order after the pandemic first struck in March of 2020. He's also requiring health care workers and state employees get vaccinated. Those against the student vaccination order were egging other parents on to stay home yesterday and sit out the day of school.

A man from Ukiah's been accused of tossing Molotov cocktails into a home saying the victims in the home confronted him after his car broke down on Highway 101. Francisco Tafolla-Rivera is charged with attempted murder, arson and animal cruelty and possessing methamphetamine. Police say Tafolla-Rivera was told he had to move out of a home in Covelo because of suspected drug use, but then he went back to the home last week and tossed the explosives inside where eight adults, a 3-year-old and an infant were living. They say he was on the 101 when his car broke down by Willits and while waiting for help, he was approached by two of the men from the home and they got into a fight. So he called 911. One of the people from the home also reported the highway altercation. Tafolla-Rivera's was arrested and held on \$250,000 bail.

A man from Covelo's busted after a probation search of the guy's home turns up drugs and a gun. The Mendocino County Sheriff Dept reports contacting Luiz Gonzalez who they say seemed to be under the Influence of drugs. They also found a gun without a serial number on it. He was arrested for being in possession of a loaded firearm while under the influence of a drug and possession of a firearm by a prohibited person and held on \$15,000.00 bail.

The state had its driest year in 100 years. Experts at the Western Regional Climate Center say average precipitation reported at each of its stations found under 12 inches of rain and snow fell in California in the 2021 water year which is about half what they say we should have in an average water year. The center looks at rainfall by measuring precipitation at the end of a water year, from Oct. 1st to Sept. 30th. So this is the second driest year since records were kept. The last time it was this low in 1924. And the hottest summer on record, was this year.

A body that was found in the trunk of a car along Mendocino Pass Road northeast of Covelo has been identified as a man from Mexico, Marco Antonio Barrera Beltran. The Sheriff's office says he was a 51 year old man from Ceres, Calif., who hails from southwest Mexico. Deputies have not said why he was in Round Valley and they continue investigating. His body was found in an abandoned vehicle October 3rd. Detectives in Covelo searching for information that may have been connected to the death. The Sheriff's office described the case as a "body dump type of murder."

Police in Fort Bragg say there was a vehicle of interest in the case of a hit and run case, but not a lot more info. Police investigating the case of Brandon Brazor hit on October 12th and receiving serious injuries. The vehicle of interest was called a white car, but then Sunday they said they no longer considered that car involved. Damages on the vehicle were reported to be "consistent with the hit and run collision" but officers spoke to the driver and will continue to do so. The sister in law of Brazor says he's home from the hospital after four hours there and most of the injuries were to his head and face. The Fort Bragg Mayor has set up a donation account with the Savings Bank of Mendocino for Brazor's medical expenses.

A car that crashed off Highway 101 has burst into flames outside Hopland. The CHP reports it was a solo car crash north of Hopland on the 101 about 2:30 p.m. yesterday. The car caught fire and spread to surrounding brush. The driver was reportedly critically injured. Firefighters put the fire out and an air ambulance was called for the victim. No other info was made available.

Economic development is on the agenda at this morning's Mendocino County Board of Supervisors meeting. West Business Development Center and the Economic Development Financing Corporation will be at the meeting this morning. West Center has a proposal for the county which outlines that over a third of the county's small businesses closed in 2020 because of the coronavirus pandemic. So they're working on post-pandemic recovery and resiliency in case there are more economic downturns in the future. The board will also consider the budget for the Sheriff's office to add a full time employee in information technology.

Congressman Jared Huffman has co-hosted a town hall with Californians and New Yorkers along with Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio Cortez. The two touted the President's \$3.5 trillion infrastructure bill, Build Back Better and talked about how it can help address climate change. Huffman said it could be the last time in our lifetime we can do something historic about the changing climate. Huffman said there's a false narrative about how his party is handling the negotiations. He says his colleagues, including Ocasio-Cortez, are fully behind the bill and there's not a huge divide among Democrats. Although there are reported holdouts including West Virginia's Joe Manchin and Arizona's Kyrsten Sinema. Huffman said they're standing in the way of doing something "really transformative".

A man accused of carrying a firearm has pleaded no contest in a plea deal. Michael Anthony Dore was in court in Lakeport and entered the plea, admitting a special allegation. The court accepted the deal which now goes to the probation department for a sentencing suggestion. They will all be back in court next month. He was charged with carrying a loaded firearm in a public place, occupant carrying a concealable weapon in vehicle, maliciously shooting from a vehicle at a person and assault with firearm on person, all but the last charge were dismissed. This is the case where another man said guns were stolen and that Dore shot at someone at the Highland Springs Reservoir in Sept. of last year. He's no longer in custody and will be back in court November 15th for formal sentencing.

Consideration of lifting the mask mandate is being mulled in eight counties of the Bay Area. At the beginning of the pandemic, the Mendocino County Public Health Officer said she had been following along with what the counties were doing. But no such announcement has been made. Just the same Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara and Sonoma have set protocols for when they will fully lift the mask mandate, with Marin the closest to hitting the requirements. The county has one of the lowest COVID-19 case rates and the highest vaccination rates in the region. The earliest they are considering is Nov. 3rd if things stay status quo. They have to be in the CDC's yellow or moderate tier for three weeks to move forward. San Mateo is in yellow after Marin. The rest in Orange and Napa in red.

A white van that had several tanks of Nitrous Oxide aboard has overturned on Hwy 101. The accident at mile marker 75.9 north of Laytonville crashed into an embankment. The California Highway Patrol reports the driver left the scene but ended up somehow at the Leggett Fire station where he was then arrested for a DUI. There was one way controlled traffic in the area as Mendocino County Health went to the scene to evaluate and the vehicle and its chemical contents could safely be removed from the crash site. The van was seen off the side of the road and traffic was creeping through the area. The CHP is still searching for someone they tried to stop on the northbound 101. They say the driver took off, driving too fast through roads and ended up crashing into a tree in the 6000 block of Branscomb Road near Laytonville. The car was reported stolen from Walnut Creek. Witnesses say the suspect went into a wooded area. He was described as a Black man with a bald or shaved head, about 6 feet tall, in his 20's, wearing a navy blue hoodie, blue jeans and tennis shoes. The California Highway Patrol reports local residents were notified to lookout for the guy as he's still on the run.

Two people traveling in Redwood Valley have crashed and burned a jeep. The pair in a 2017 Jeep Cherokee headed north on West Rd west of [Zahadom] Way when the driver lost control and hit a tree. The CHP reported due to the fast speed and impact, the jeep burst into flames. A passing motorist got out of their car and helped the passenger out of the jeep, but because of the intense heat from the fire, they couldn't rescue the driver. Firefighters came to the scene and put the fire out, but the driver died. The crash was being investigated and the name of the driver was not released by the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office until their family was notified.

A woman from Lake County has been arrested in Jenner after driving a stolen car down an embankment then sleeping inside a stranger's home. The CHP reports searching for the woman Sunday after a stolen Mazda 6 was driven off the side of Highway 116 along the Russian River. They say she got out and ran to the river. The Monte Rio Fire Chief jumped into help find the woman who they say was hiding in some bushes. They called off the search Sunday night. But the next morning someone found her asleep in their home in Jenner. She was identified as Miranda Swint and was arrested on a vehicle theft charge, but the homeowners didn't pursue a trespassing charge. She was checked at a hospital, then booked into the Sonoma County Jail.

The driver of a car that hit a man in Fort Bragg last week has been identified. Police say it was a 91 year old man who hit Brandon Bazor in a crosswalk, but he said he didn't know he hit anyone. The driver reportedly hit Bazor and left and Bazor ended up in the hospital with face and head injuries. Witnesses gave varying descriptions of the car. Surveillance video from over a dozen nearby businesses eventually showed three vehicles, unfortunately, all looking alike. The elderly driver was eventually connected to the accident, finding it was also a Chevy Bolt. The man said he was in the area the time of the crash, so the car was taken for evidence and the man's driver's license was revoked. His name was withheld with permission from the victim. Police have given the case to the DA's office for further processing. There's also a donation account set up for the victim at the

10/20/21 Savings Bank of Mendocino County (referencing Account #04254355).



The Gov. has declared a statewide drought emergency. The action yesterday along with a statement urging residents to reduce their water usage as the state had its second driest year on record. Gov. Newsom asked individuals, families and businesses to cut back by 15% in July, but the state only saw a 5% reduction in water use. The proclamation also means local water suppliers will further implement water shortage contingency plans. The two largest reservoirs we count on in Calif, Lake Mead and Lake Powell, are at record low levels. We also get water from the Colorado River which had its first ever water shortage. Next year Arizona, Nevada, and Mexico will all have to cut their water use.

The Mendocino County Public Health Office has released a study for the Board of Supervisors on the current state of the pandemic. It shows the county's testing positivity rate was 4.4%, down to 200/100,000/day. There were nearly 14 new daily cases/100,000. And right now we have 9 residents in Mendocino hospitals. 5 Mendocino residents are in out-of-county hospitals for a higher level of care. 4 are in Intensive Care Units. So far 87 people have died from the virus. There are also currently 2 outbreaks, one at a skilled nursing facility, and another in Round Valley. As of Thursday about 80.5% of residents 12 years and older had received at least one dose of the vaccine. The summer and early fall surges are slowing.

There may be some mask guidelines changing in Sonoma County. Public Health officials are considering a plan to lift the indoor mask mandate for vaccinated groups, as the Bay Area plans to do the same by the end of the year. The Public Health Officer gave an update to the Board of Supervisors saying the mask rule may be changed for "stable cohorts of fully vaccinated individuals." That would include offices and workplaces, gyms, fitness centers, employee commuter cars, religious gatherings, college classes and other groups meeting regularly. It would be for groups of less than 100, all vaccinated and gather on a regular basis.

Snow and rain coming which is a good thing, but it could be a headache in burn areas where water would flow over scarred earth. As much as 6-to-8 inches of precipitation could continue through early next week which would end fire season. But the drought would continue, because what's forecasted won't really help restore supplies as the ground is so dry, the rain will just be absorbed. Any that does accumulate as runoff will barely feed streams, rivers and reservoirs. There is no flash flood warning. The first of the two storms was due yesterday into today, with another due tomorrow into Friday, enough to reduce fire risks. Another Saturday and Sunday will bring an atmospheric river — the first one since January, with another 3 to 5 inches of rain in some of the wettest areas.

They voted unanimously to raise the sewer and water rates in Lakeport. The city council unanimously voted yes last night. They also voted to lease part of the Carnegie Library and approved a new crisis intervention program putting police together with a local nonprofit. There was a public hearing on the proposed water and sewer rate increases for city residents with zero protests. The city needs to use the money for debt and capital utility projects. So within five years the average residential customer would pay about \$30/month more. As far as the police department and the nonprofit, that's Lake Family Resource Center for a Crisis Intervention Responder Program which the council also approved to provide help for people in crisis.

The proposed cannabis farming and processing business in High Valley is on hold. The Lake County Board of Supervisors rescheduled a hearing on the proposed operation for next month. The Lake County Planning Commission approved Sourz HVR Inc./Aviona LLC's major use permit in July for the 1,640-acre High Valley Ranch, the former PSI World property, in Clearlake Oaks. But neighbors quickly complained about the smell, water usage and more. The appeal was supposed to be heard yesterday, but the board chair tabled it because some records on the matter had not arrived. Plus the supervisor whose district the proposed business would be in was absent. The hearing was therefore moved until November 2nd.

Another death has been reported from COVID19 in Mendocino County. The Public Health Office reported on the 87th death last night. They say the death was in a fully vaccinated, 80 year old woman with multiple underlying health conditions. The Public Health Office reminded about precautions to take for those vaccinated and not and that those who were not vaccinated to consider it, and those in the eligible group for the booster, to consider that. They also reported there was a positive case reported at the Home Depot in Ukiah. They say anyone who visited the business between Thursday, October 14th and Saturday, October 16th, that you may have been exposed to COVID-19, and should get tested if you're unvaccinated, or be tested if exhibiting symptoms while vaccinated.

The Russian River water supply may stay low as a powerhouse that diverts water from the Eel to the Russian is offline. Pacific Gas & Electric says the Potter Valley Project will keep providing enough water for Potter Valley residents and the Russian River watershed. After the company claimed bankruptcy it said they no longer wanted to run the hydroelectric plant, so a regional partnership formed to explore buying it. PG&E says the powerhouse will take a year and a half to two years to be repaired. A spokesperson says it could cost as much as \$5-10 million to fix. And since we're in extreme drought conditions, the powerhouse wasn't running this summer because PG&E couldn't divert enough water to generate power.

During routine maintenance early last summer, they found the transformer needed to be replaced.

An emergency plan has been approved by the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors to block debris from the Hopkins Fire from getting into the Russian River during upcoming and current rain. A staff member presented the supervisors with information on an imminent "public health and safety threat" to the watershed. And to nearly a dozen homes near the ignition point of the Hopkins. There's been no mitigation work at the properties to keep hazardous materials, contaminants or debris flows from going into the watershed which could then impact hundreds of thousands of water users relying on the water out of the river in Mendocino, Sonoma and Marin counties. The supervisors approved a plan for immediate action at a cost of

10/21/21 \$48,000.

The driver of a jeep that crashed and burst into flames has been identified. 18 year old Giovanni Leon was the driver in the Jeep that crashed Monday in Redwood Valley. The CHP reports Leon's 2017 Jeep Grand Cherokee crashed into a tree just after 11 p.m. after he lost control. There was a 21 year old man with him, identified only as being from Covelo. A passerby helped the passenger out, but the flames were too intense for them to also reach Leon.

More personal protective equipment has been donated to the Mendocino County Library and County Museum. The City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB), Dharma Realm Buddhist University (DRBU) and their parent company, Dharma Realm Buddhist Association (DRBA) donated the 6,000 surgical masks, 120 bottles of hand sanitizer and 10,000 vinyl gloves to the of library and museum staff and visitors. For the Library, all branches will receive the gear in Ukiah, Willits, Fort Bragg, Point Arena and Covelo and their Bookmobile. The president of the organization said they were honored to help.

After the US Census last year redistricting of political boundaries is taking place, but also for the Mendocino-Lake Community College District. They're redistricting their seven trustee area boundaries and are inviting the public to help. You can go to a public meeting on the matter, the first is this coming Monday at the North County Center in Willits at 5pm. Another opportunity is October 28th at the Lake County Center in Lakeport, also at 5pm. And finally November 2nd at Mendocino College and November 3rd at the Coast Center in Fort Bragg.

[For more information about the background of California Community College](#)

\$50,000 is being gifted to rural communities hit by catastrophic fires from Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) and the affiliated, Golden State Finance Authority (GSFA). The two agencies are working with the California Fire Foundation for the wildfire emergency relief for fire victims to buy needed items. The money in the form of gift cards for food, temporary housing, or clothing. There are 200 gift cards being distributed.

[More info is available on the SAVE program is available at http://www.cafirefc](http://www.cafirefc)

Sonoma County has a plan to vaccinate 25% of all 5-11 year olds after approval of the Pfizer vaccine from the FDA. The county's vaccine chief happens to also be a pediatrician. Dr. Urmila Shende says many parents are eager for their children to receive the inoculations, especially parents of children with chronic medical conditions. The FDA's final approval is expected the first week of November. The federal government has promised to ship vaccine doses to as many as 25,000 pediatric or primary care offices, thousands of pharmacies and hundreds of schools and rural health clinics across the country as soon as the approval comes through.

Prescribed burns are planned by the Bureau of Land Management during fall and winter. The burn piles and broadcast burns in Humboldt and Mendocino counties as the weather and conditions allow. It's all part of the BLM fuel management program using mechanical, biological, and chemical tools, and prescribed fire. The burns on up to 100-200 acres at a time locally. Projects on the Lost Coast Headlands west of Ferndale in the King Range National Conservation Area, and the Mike Thompson Wildlife Area, South Spit at Humboldt Bay. There are 55 fuel projects for the fiscal year 2021. So far the BLM has worked on almost 26,000 acres across Calif. to reduce hazardous fuels, modify wildfire behavior, create fire resilient landscapes, and protect communities and critical infrastructure.

Water infrastructure is getting a needed upgrade in Mendocino County since precipitation patterns are changing. County supervisors are working to modernize infrastructure and are trying to find money to do so. At their meeting this week, supervisors told staff to negotiate a contract of up to \$25,000 with an environmental consulting firm. The same firm put the groundwater sustainability plan for the county together too. The Mendocino Voice reports grants could be available but they would go first to shovel ready projects. That's where the consulting firm comes in. The payment to them will come out of the Pacific Gas & Electric disaster settlement funds the county got.

A couple of new cell towers are servicing Round Valley. State Senator Mike McGuire along with District 3 Supervisor John Hashak and the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office worked with US Cellular to upgrade the network due to spotty coverage. The new towers in the Mendocino National Forest on Big Signal Peak were approved nearly a year ago. Senator McGuire's office put out a statement about the upgrade saying for the last few years Round Valley has been hit hard by wildfires and had no cell service, making emergency response a challenge. He says the inconsistent and at times, inoperable cell service needed to be addressed. So two 150-foot towers were built by the Round Valley Indian Tribe and Spy Ego Media. McGuire says the project was a team effort and is now complete. He says neighbors will also have clear access to 911.

A 74 year old woman from Clearlake has been reported missing. Police say Katherine Jackson did not return after going out for a walk yesterday afternoon. She apparently didn't say where she was headed when she left her home around 1:30 p.m. Police say she was last seen in a plaid cape, a red and black shirt, and black pants, walking with a cane and carrying a cloth bag, possibly with shoes in it.

The Governor has signed an executive order to prohibit price gouging for communities recently impacted by wildfires. The order goes through the end of the year in areas where he had previously declared a state of emergency. That was for the Fawn fire, Cache fire, Caldor fire, McFarland and Monument fires, Antelope and River fires, Dixie, Fly and Tamarack fires and the Lava and Beckwourth Complex fires. The state also wrangled grants from FEMA in response to the massive Dixie Fire, the Caldor, Monument, River and Lava fires.

A woman accused of lighting three fires in Clearlake has to be evaluated for mental competency. Kayla Renee Main's lawyer told the court at her preliminary hearing he doubted she was competent to stand trial. Main faces charges of arson of property, possessing material/device for arson and unlawful fire. Plus she was on probation at the time for resisting an executive officer, violating probation and vandalism. The whole case is now on hold while a doctor checks her out. She's due back in court November 9th. She was already checked out once, this will be an additional evaluation as the court found she was competent last time.

Ukiah has a new police chief. Current police captain Noble Waidelich has been promoted to the job to replace former Chief Justin Wyatt. Waidelich had been interim chief since September 19th. City Manager Sage Sangiacomo says the new chief has what it takes to lead the department and will bring in new ideas about how law enforcement can best serve the community. Waidelich has worked his way up the ranks since joining the force in 2005, serving as a sergeant, lieutenant, and captain. He says he is honored to lead the UPD and promises to work together with the city staff, community partners, and residents to keep Ukiah safe, pleasant, and prosperous.

Police say a man from Clearlake who died last week was assaulted. Police Chief Andrew White tells Lake Co News that 44-year-old Steven Chrisman was found unconscious behind the Burns Valley Shopping Center on Olympic Park Drive last Saturday night. He was pronounced dead at the scene. Detectives are looking at the case but they aren't saying much yet. If you have any information about what might have happened to Chrisman you can contact Clearlake PD

The Middletown Unified School District has a new superintendent. Tim Gill will take over the top spot after the School board let go former Superintendent Michael Cox last month. Gill is currently the assistant superintendent of the Kelseyville district. He has ties to Middletown. His first education job was in Middletown, where he taught middle and high school math from 1990 to 2001. His sons are also graduates of Middletown High. New superintendent Gill's first day in his new office will be next Wednesday. On September 27th, the school board voted in a closed session to terminate its contract with Michael Cox after a performance review

The Cal Fire Mendocino Unit plans to lift the suspension of burn permits. Unit The National Forest Service is getting ready for some controlled burns in the Mendocino National Forest over the next few weeks. The goal is to burn off dry vegetation and manage the risk of UNCONTROLLED fires. No specific dates for planned fires just yet because officials say it is a complicated process to get just the right time, depending on conditions like wind, air quality, moisture, and the availability of crews. So far, the Forest Service has identified two locations for the prescribed burns on National Forest Land: The Howard Mill Piles and The Pine Mountain Piles. You can get the latest in real-time through the national forest's Twitter and Facebook accounts.

A story we told you about yesterday has a positive ending. Clearlake police say 74-year-old Katherine Jackson has been found and is safe. She had been missing since she walked away from her home Wednesday. A passerby recognized Katherine from a Nixel alert and called the police on Thursday morning. Police say she apparently got lost after taking a bus ride.

You'll get another chance to have your say in new political maps in Mendocino County based on the 2020 Census. The five-member Community-based Advisory Redistricting Commission has been working for the past several months on that complex process. Now, members will hold another input session next Wednesday at 6:15 at the Board of Supervisors office in Ukiah. The county got the census data late, so time is getting short. The county has to turn in its redistricting plan to the state by December 15th unless the legislature gives more time. The county website has all the specifics about what's been done and what comes next.

The Ukiah City Council is moving ahead with an ordinance to ban small canisters of nitrous oxide, known as whip-its. The gas has a legitimate use as a propellant and for anesthesia, but some people inhale the gas for a quick high. That can be dangerous. The Daily Journal reports that council members told staff at this week's regular council meeting to write a measure to outlaw selling the containers within city limits. City Lawyers say any law would have to be specific and aimed at stores like smoke shops that sell nitrous over the counter. The stick could be a threatened loss of a store's tobacco license. Officials admit getting whip-its online is easy, but a step to keep them out of the wrong hands is a step in the right direction.

If you have unwanted prescription medicines at home, you'll be able to safely get rid of them this weekend. Several police agencies, including Lakeport PD, will take part in the DEA's National Drug take-back day Saturday from 10am to 2pm. The drive-up location is on the west side of the police station on Main Street. Covid safety protocols will be in effect. Law enforcement holds these take-back events twice a year as a way for people to get rid of unused meds so the drugs don't fall into the wrong hands or make their way into the environment. There are a few rules. Pills have to be in a clear Ziploc bag so the medicine can be identified. Police will also accept vape pens or other e-cigarette devices from individual consumers only after the batteries are removed. The take-back will NOT take back street drugs, needles, inhalers, or aerosol cans.

Governor Newsom wants tougher rules on oil and gas wells near schools, hospitals, and homes. The governor says the rules are about public health and dignity for people who live and work near those wells. His plan is just a draft. It will get a review through the regulatory process and is subject to public comments. Some groups are already weighing in. The western states petroleum Association says the governor's proposal is not based on science and could lead to higher energy costs. Others say it is a good start linking oil and gas well locations to social justice. The draft plan would impose a 3,200 foot limit between oil and gas development and sites like schools, hospitals, and nursing homes. Around 2 million Californians live in areas that could eventually be considered too close to oil and natural gas wells.

The US Geological Survey is out with a scary warning about what might happen to cell service after a major earthquake in California. The USGS says a big quake could take down communication for days or even weeks near the epicenter and beyond, complicating access to 911 and delaying the response to fire and EMS calls. The report says cell towers could fall, and the electricity that powers them could go out. A worst-case scenario says only 7 percent of mobile calls would get through. The report specifically looked at risks along the Hayward Fault south of us in the San Francisco Bay area, calling the fault a tectonic timebomb. The USGS says a cell service meltdown is just one of many vulnerabilities it found studying how the big one anywhere in California could affect the whole state and even the rest of the nation for a long time.

Congressman Mike Thompson will hold a virtual town hall next week. His office says he will take questions from fifth district constituents online next Wednesday from 6 to 7 PM. There is a limit of 500 participants so if you would like to take part, you'll need to contact the congressman's office. Since the pandemic started, Thompson has held 20 similar sessions.

Massive downpour has triggered a flood warning for the Russian River near Hopland. The warning was extended to this morning after several inches of rain fell across the county. The National Weather Service in Eureka reported the most rain in Yorkville in the county with nearly 13 inches as of around 11 pm last night. Redwood Valley was the next highest. Several roads are closed as the Russian River flooded over its banks, on State Route 175 near Hopland. The Navarro River was not forecasted to go over its flood level of 23 feet. Around dinner time last night Highway 1 was closed because the Garcia River was flooding. Yesterday afternoon the Sheriff's office sent out a nixle alert for residents to prepare for possible flooding saying there were falling trees and debris, car accidents or vehicles off the road in Mendocino, Lake and Humboldt counties.

10/25/21

Prison guards on the staff of Calif. facilities in a health care setting have to be vaccinated. A judge in Kern County allowed the mandate for some, not all prison guards and staff. It comes after a public health order for guards and other prison and jail employees working in correctional health care settings, to get vaccinated. The Calif. Correctional Peace Officers Association is against the mandate. The judge is considering the order for other guards, but not other employees, so that could potentially also go into effect, or be tossed. The judge said the union's arguments didn't hold because something had to be done to address the global pandemic.

Over ten thousand trees have to be felled due to the catastrophic fires this summer. Add in the drought, disease and age and the hazardous trees don't stand a chance. It also means the closure of a road known as Generals Highway as the trees could fall on people there to see some of the tallest sequoias. The announcement by the Sequoia and Kings Canyon national parks Friday the highway will be closed because of the KNP Complex. It will be blocked off after the fire is officially declared contained as crews cut down the trees and trim branches. The highway is where the Giant Forest comes off of which features the General Sherman Tree, considered the world's largest by volume.

Investigations into unpermitted Cannabis grows ended up in hundreds of plants eradicated in Mendocino County. Code Enforcement officers were in Redwood Valley, Willits, Ukiah and Hopland. Any cannabis cultivation that was deemed more than the Medical or Adult Use exemption limit was considered to be commercial cultivation. And so at those locations, they were found in violation of Mendocino County codes. In all 436 plants were abated by those responsible from growing them.

Homecoming events for the Konocti Unified School District had to be adjusted as Lower Lake High's football teams were in a modified quarantine due to possible exposure to COVID-19. Lower Lake High's homecoming events usually occur on a weekend, but since both of their football teams were in quarantine with some who tested positive, they're in the middle of contact tracing. They ended up quarantining 60 students on the football teams. They're allowed to go to school, but cannot go to any after school events. The modified quarantine per the state is for students who have not been vaccinated but came into contact with positive cases. The homecoming rally happened, but the dance and football games are postponed.

A resident of Caspar has sent out an open letter to fellow community members. The letter from Jim Tarbell, an active member of the Mendocino County community published on MendoFever.com. It's about political boundaries that are considered every decade, after the US Census report comes out. Tarbell says his neighbors need to act now to stop a "well-organized, Mendocino-town based effort to have the Mendocino Redistricting Advisory Commission move the boundary between the Fourth and Fifth Supervisorial Districts from... Russian Gulch north to Caspar Creek". He says it will damage community rebuilding efforts for the last twenty years. He says the community needs to remind the Redistricting Advisory Commission the move would damage the integrity of the Caspar community.

A new report says there are some Mendocino County governmental agencies operating surveillance drones. The report by the Mendocino Voice says at least six unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) or surveillance drones per the Atlas of Surveillance, a project of the Electronic Frontier Foundation. The report says the Foundation aims to "document police tech in our communities with open source research." The report is entitled Public Safety Drones and comes from the Center for the Study of the Drone at Bard College. It's not aimed at Mendocino County per se. The news site reports the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office has five drones which the agency says they use for search and rescue missions. The DA's office also reportedly has one, also for search and rescue.

Mendocino College says they're going to be offering more classes, like they used to, before the coronavirus pandemic. They say they will continue their "safety first" approach with more in person classes after a year and a half of almost all online classes. The spring 2022 term starts January 18th and school officials say it will look a lot more like it did before COVID. But they will still have a lot of online and hybrid classes for those who like that better or who cannot attend in person for other reasons. They will require masks indoors. They have put in stronger filtration systems, air purifiers and are updating with touchless fixtures. They will also have enhanced cleaning, hand sanitizing stations throughout building entrances, and provide masks and wipes in offices and classrooms. There will also be an all-new Director of COVID-19 Response position. While vaccines are not mandatory, they are offering \$100 gift cards for those who get their shots.

Both Cal Trans and the Mendocino County Transportation Dept. report being out at accidents and helping remove debris from roadways due to heavy rain and flooding. Flood warnings were issued by the National Weather Service last night for the potential for small stream and urban flooding through last night, but it was extended to this morning for the Russian River at Hopland, the Navarro River and possible flooding also on HWY 175 and HWY 128. Highway 1 was closed near Garcia River at post mark 17.5 – 18.5 due to flooding. The agencies remind not to drive through flood waters and if you see a downed power line, assume it is energized and extremely dangerous, so don't touch it or try to move it and report it immediately by calling 911. You can also call PG&E emergency numbers. The company is working to restore power as it happens.



The state attorney general has reportedly won a victory in court to get a Trump administration rule regarding the Clean Water Act tossed. Attorney General Rob Bonta argued the Trump-era rule illegally curtailed state authority under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act which provides states their own authority to approve, impose conditions on or deny certification for federally permitted projects so they would comply with state law. But the Trump Administration moved to restrict that authority in California, Washington, and New York, which all went to court to challenge that rule, and won. The District Court vacated the rule which basically went against the Clean Water Act.

The Lake County Public Health Dept. is reminding there's still a pandemic. The agency says during the second week of October the daily Case Rate was 15.4 cases/100,000, which is way lower than over the summer, but still twice as much as the Purple Tier which meant closure of many businesses. The department also reported 41 deaths from the virus since the start of summer, which was almost half the amount of total deaths from the pandemic in Lake County. Public Health reminds to get tested, especially during cold and flu season if you think you may be sick. And that getting vaccinated is the best available defense, and approved COVID-19 vaccines are safe and appropriate for almost everyone.

There are numerous opportunities to access vaccination and testing in Lake County. The most current information is available at:

<http://health.co.lake.ca.us/Coronavirus/Vaccines.htm>

<http://health.co.lake.ca.us/Coronavirus/Testing.htm>

If you want to get vaccinated, and are facing barriers, call 707-263-8174.

There's a movement to get the Potter Valley Project managed locally, and now a petition to go with it. The Farm Bureau is trying to get talks going with Congressman Jared Huffman who they contend, is not behind the project. A former Mendocino County Supervisor has also written an opinion piece on the matter. The petition is circulating featuring a letter to Congressman Huffman who they say supports the decommissioning of the Project. Former Supervisor Michael Delbar says the project supplies water for fish in two river systems, green power, fire suppression, and water for over a half-million people in Mendocino and Sonoma Counties. Signature gathering is going on until Thursday to get meetings going with Huffman and North Coast Congressman John Garamendi.

In his regular Friday address, the Mendocino County Public Health Officer says the summer surge of COVID19 seems to be waning. Dr. Andy Coren said there were some new cases which impacted the county's daily rate at 15 new cases/day, up from 13, as of October 22nd. He also talked about more cases being seen in kids between 5 and 11 and a new strain in the United Kingdom called Delta-Plus, which Dr. Coren says looks to be spreading amongst children. But there are no cases of the variant in Calif. Coren also spoke about more hospitalizations than last year's winter surge. After his talk Friday, the county announced 19 new cases and 11 hospitalizations, including two in the Intensive Care Unit.

A search and rescue continues for a man from Humboldt County believed to be in Covelo. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office and Mendocino County Search & Rescue are looking for 48 year old John Davis who they say disappeared in the area of Highway 162 at the 8-mile bridge Sunday morning. He was reportedly out camping and hunting with family members. His dog was found, but he was nowhere to be seen. They describe Davis as a White man, 5 foot 11, 220 lbs with brown hair and blue eyes. He was last seen in a Camouflage Rain Jacket and Neon Green pants with a reflective stripe.

More information is being gathered by the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office into two deaths in the Blue Lake area. However investigators released some info and say they're not sure the deaths, that happened a month apart, are related. But since they were close to each other, they're not ruling it out. The first on September 11th, a man was found near a trail in the Trinidad area. Eugene Steven Segal had been known as a local transient, who deputies say was murdered. The second death, 29 year old Harold Hernandez Howard, who was found October 10th, also murdered, and found near the Mad River Levee. He had been living as a transient in the Blue Lake Area. The cause of death in both victims was withheld due to the ongoing investigations.

Police in Clearlake say a man has been found dead behind the Burns Valley Shopping Center. The body found a week ago Saturday night in the rear parking lot of the shopping mall. Police and Paramedics were sent to the area, finding the man down and tried to give him CPR, without luck. He was identified later as 44 year old Steven Chrisman of Clearlake, who had been assaulted. Detectives are investigating. No word on a possible suspect or motive.

A woman in Lakeport has been reported missing. Police say Shirley Schield left her Northport Trailer Park home on foot very early yesterday morning, during the storm. The 75 year-old was last seen in a light blue / pink sweater with light blue pants carrying a dog leash. They say she may have dementia and respond to "Carol" or "Shirley". She's further described as a White woman, about 5' 6" and 130 Lbs with blue eyes and short white hair.

Congressman Jared Huffman is on the lookout for a Wounded Warrior to apply to be a Fellow in his offices, in either San Rafael, Petaluma, Ukiah, or Eureka. It's the first time his office is accepting folks into the program. The Fellowship program provides veterans a way to use their unique skillsets from service and helps them with a new career in Congress to start, and possibly beyond. Congressman Huffman says he's "incredibly honored to be able to participate in this program and welcome a former servicemember to our district team". The program is to offer jobs to veterans in the US House of Representatives. It's a two-year fellowship which is offered in congressional Member District Offices nationwide.

Another death has been reported in a Mendocino County resident who contracted the coronavirus. The Public Health Dept. reported an 81 year old unvaccinated woman from Willits was the county's 87th death. The agency continues to ask residents to consider ways they can protect themselves and their families from COVID-19. They say vaccination, masking, and social distancing remain the best tools for combating COVID-19. Those over 65 who are fully vaccinated may be able to get their booster shots too. And those over 50 with certain health conditions, also. Visit the Public Health website at:

<http://www.mendocinocounty.org/covid19>

Some homeowners in Ukiah were out before the rains, clearing out a culvert so they didn't have to deal with flooding after finding out city crews couldn't get out there until the rain was over. The citizens near their home on Lorraine Street Saturday after receiving a Friday Nixle alert about the potential for flooding. There was a Flood Watch issued by the National Weather Service saying the heavy rain and saturated ground would possibly flood some areas. And that low lying areas, creeks, streams, culverts, and parts of urban areas could experience flooding due to heavy rainfall. The neighbors told the Daily Journal they called the non-emergency line at the police station to report blockage of the culvert but was told city crews would not respond until Monday.

A man and his dog had to be pulled from Orr Creek due to fast moving flood waters. The Ukiah Valley Fire Authority reports getting a call to the Ford Street Bridge early Sunday morning for a man and his dog stuck in the creek bed. Apparently, he was asleep in a tent and awakened to find two feet of water. The water was reported to be rising rapidly to four feet high in some areas. He was taken to the hospital to be checked out. The fire department was warning people to stay away from waterways during heavy downpours and said they will be checking under bridges that they know people sleep under and tell those there to leave in heavy rain.

The final results are in for the Recall Election, showing a pretty identical showing as the 2018 General Election, Gov. Newsom winning with over 62% of the vote. The Secretary of State's office released the certification results for the Sept. 14th special election this week. Almost 8 million residents voted to keep the Governor in office and 4.8 million wanted him out. Republican Larry Elder, a radio talk show host was ahead of all the other Republicans vying for the position. He won over 3.5 million or 48.4% of the votes. The second place winner just behind Elder was a Democrat, Kevin Paffrath. Former Olympian and Reality Show star, Republican Caitlyn Jenner was 13th with 1% of the vote.

A restoration project is planned in the Mendocino National Forest. The U.S. Forest Service announced the massive project on about 2,000 of 600,000 acres of forest land that was scorched by 2020's August Complex Fire. Phase 1 of the project will be felling dead and dying trees on 2,163 acres to reduce hazards from possible falling trees, mostly near roadways; reduce the potential for more wildfires and recover any potential economic value from selling the fire scarred timber; and study the short- and long-term impacts of salvage logging.

The Gov. says developing new oil and gas leases near schools, hospitals and homes could create health issues. Last week he spoke about it in Wilmington, a town where there's a lot of oil business. A proposal by state regulators to prevent new oil and gas wells was by the Department of Conservation's Geologic Energy Management Division, but it could be revised. The Gov. says it's about "morality... environmental justice and economic justice, public health, safety and dignity". The president and CEO of the Western States Petroleum Association says the move is "an activist assault on California's way of life, economy and people". And environmentalists say it's a "strong step in the right direction", but doesn't go far enough.

Fort Bragg will be selling lease revenue bonds to restructure some pension debt and buy part of a mill site. The city council approved selling the bonds to raise \$11 million. The city intends to use the cash to restructure debt with CalPERS, and acquire the southern end of the Mill Site. The city's going to investigate its General Fund credit rating in the next few weeks then begin the selling of the bonds. After that they'll first dive into the CalPERS debt, which, if you didn't know is the pension for California's public employees. Fort Bragg owes \$11 million, but it's been discounted to somewhere between \$8.4 and \$9.8 million, so around \$7.5 million in bond proceeds will go to that debt.

Once again Butte County is suing PG&E due to a fire. First it was the Camp Fire, which devastated the town of Paradise and killed 85 people. Now Butte and four other counties are suing the utility company because of the Dixie Fire. Plumas, Lassen, Shasta and Tehama are Butte's co-plaintiffs. The same court has also heard cases for the North Bay, Kincade and Zogg fires. This lawsuit demanded the utility company pay the counties damages for injuries to public resources, natural resources, lost revenues, increased expenses, lost assets, injury to infrastructure, and more. The Dixie Fire burned over 963,300 acres and was just contained yesterday due to the rain.

Since we got hammered by rain in Northern California, Cal Fire announced the Dixie Fire, California's second-largest fire in history, was fully contained. The fire burned 963,309 acres, that's over 1,505 square miles. It was the state's single largest fire, not a complex of merged fires. It straddled Butte, Lassen, Shasta and Tehama counties after starting July 13th pretty close to the Camp Fire ignition point. Those counties are all suing PG&E for the fire. The utility had already admitted they believed their equipment may have been to blame. The Dixie destroyed over 1,300 structures, including more than 700 homes.

An epidemic of business closures due to low staff or companies refusing to adhere to the state's vaccination rules. This time in Contra Costa County. Public health officials indefinitely closed the In-N-Out Burger in Pleasant Hill for ignoring continued warnings to verify customers dining inside could prove they were vaccinated or were tested for the COVID 19 virus in the past 72 hours. Two other locations did the same and were warned or fined in Contra Costa too. In-N-Out continues to blow off the requirements, putting out a statement that they won't be the "vaccination police", calling it "unreasonable, invasive, and unsafe". The In-N-Out in San Francisco was also shuttered for a few days for the same reasons.

10/27/21

Lakeport Police have formally partnered with Lake Family Resource Center to offer help to those dealing with mental health challenges and help the department with de-escalating certain situations. Last week the City Council approved an intervention responder program and gave the Police Chief and City Manager permission to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Lake Family Resource Center. That means a community crisis intervention specialist will be funded by Lake Family Resource Center and assigned to the Lakeport Police Department. They're currently finalizing the memo and look to start the program officially Monday.

A man from Humboldt County we told you about who went missing on a camping and hunting trip near Covelo is still gone and his family is asking for help finding him. John Davis vanished on his trip Sunday morning. There's a meetup to search for him this morning at 10 a.m. at the 8 mile Bridge on Highway 162 west of Covelo. He was reportedly out with his son and dog, who were found. Davis is described as a 48 year-old white man with brown hair and blue eyes, 5 foot 11, 220 lbs. He was last seen in a camouflage rain jacket and neon green pants with reflective stripes.

A man wanted for three warrants in Ukiah has been arrested. Police say an officer on patrol saw a car with an equipment violation and stopped it. The driver gave a phony name, but was identified eventually as Jesse Lucas, who had 3 misdemeanor warrants for his arrest. He was found with two others, a female named Nicole Sanderson and a man who was not involved in any wrongdoing. Lucas was detained after being found with suspected Fentanyl, then 131 grams of suspected methamphetamine and Fentanyl packaged for sale. There was also paraphernalia for their use. Sanderson was also detained but released with a citation for having a pipe. Lucas was jailed on \$22,000.00 bail.

Police say they've arrested a man for driving a stolen car from Georgia in Ukiah. They pulled the guy over in a 2021 Nissan sedan for driving well over the speed limit on S. State St. Two people in the car were removed. Charles Christian was found to be on parole for a felony. He said the car was rented from Enterprise in North Carolina, but he apparently never brought it back. He was arrested and held on no bail. The passenger was not found to be involved and released at the scene.

Police in Ukiah at the Jack in the Box on Airport Park Blvd., earlier this month for reports of a fight. A 911 caller said two men were in an altercation. One named, David Calvo, was found with a concealed fixed blade knife and detained without incident. Another man had visible injuries on his head and face and told police Calvo, an acquaintance of his, accused him of stealing his jacket, and he punched him trying to take the jacket off him. A witness yelled to stop. Calvo was also found with a glass pipe to smoke meth out of, and he had an outstanding misdemeanor warrant. He was arrested and held on 62,500.00 bail. The victim was checked out by medics and released.

Lake County officials have put out a statement after finding out the California Citizens Redistricting Commission had released potential District-based boundaries, which would alter all of Lake County's present alignments. It happens each decade after the US Census, but the county was against the materials being seen by the public. Their press release said the proposed overhaul would be a great disservice to Lake County at a critical time. So the Board of Supervisors submitted a Letter of Opposition to the Commission, and is encouraging concerned Lake County residents, to make their voices heard too.

To submit comments, visit <https://www.wedrawthelinesca.org/> and scroll down

The Fort Bragg City Council has put caps on business permits for cannabis dispensaries in the central business core. There is not a cap outside the area in the city though. They've capped it at three dispensaries, which will be given permits on a merit-point system instead of first-come-first-served. The council is looking to put local businesses first. Right now there are two cannabis dispensary business permits approved, one of which is in the central business district, but there are more pending. The city council is also looking to keep any dispensaries at least 100 feet away from youth centers.

It looks like the Employment Development Dept. is putting the scandals behind them and catching up with the scores of backlogged claims from when the pandemic first surfaced. The agency has admitted there may have been as much as \$31 billion in fraudulent payments made and hundreds of thousands of backlogged claims for weeks at a time. Lawmakers took a meeting on the matter this week. The state auditor had a report from back in January that found EDD was unprepared for the pandemic. The head of the agency, appointed by the Governor around the same time says the department is "being transformed". She also said the department has been working its way through 21 recommendations by the state auditor.

The yearly Lake County Burn Ban has been lifted. Cal Fire allowed for the move due to the lowered wildfire risk after recent rains. The Lake County Air Quality Management District says you must have a burn permit in order to burn outdoors and you can pick them up at your local Fire Protection District.

The water emergency in the city of Fort Bragg is over and at least one of the city of Mendocino's wells has recovered. The well looks to be in recovery mode after severe drought that caused a trio of wells to run dry this past summer. The Mendocino Voice reports the town got over 4 inches of rain Saturday alone and the October rainfall total is over 8 inches, just shy of the ten inches the town needed for recovery in 35 wells that were either dry or underproducing. The news site also reports at the city council meeting in Fort Bragg on Monday, they rescinded the water emergency where the Noyo River was flowing nicely over normal for this time of year. Some areas of the county got between 4-13 inches of rain from the atmospheric river that dumped on us this weekend and Monday. There's also a chance of rain today, but slight. And another system is expected Sunday into Monday.

Crews came out as the rain fell to protect the Russian River from debris that could have flowed from the Hopkins Fire burn area. After the National Weather Service forecasted four to six inches of rain for the Ukiah valley, the county moved to protect the river. The Board of Supervisors agreed to allow work around the burn scar for about \$50,000. The California Conservation Corps jumped into help. The Russian Riverkeeper nonprofit also helped, bringing supplies along. The crews reported to the Mendocino Voice news site they were able to curtail as much as 95 percent or more of the debris out of the river. The Board of Supervisors got a status report Tuesday after the rainstorms moved out, finding a small section of the riverbank collapsed but most of the work helped.

The Small Business Administration has approved a request by Mendocino County for a disaster declaration for the Hopkins Fire. So residents impacted by the fire can now apply for low interest disaster loans. They have until December 27th to apply for a loan and for an economic injury

10/28/21 loan, that's next July 26th.

Apply online at <https://disasterloanassistance.sba.gov> or reach out at [FOCWAssistance@sba.gov](mailto:FOCWAssistance@sba.gov) or (800) 659-2955

The public is getting access to the three day meeting of the California Citizens Redistricting Commission. The meeting was posted online as it occurred in Los Angeles yesterday. It's a day after the commission released so-called "visualizations" of how they see new maps playing out, something the Lake County Board of Supervisors was vehemently opposed to. The visualizations are the new boundaries for Congressional, State Assembly and the state Senate districts could be. They covered the State Assembly Districts for the North Coast region, that includes Lake, Mendocino, Humboldt, Del Norte, Trinity, and parts of Siskiyou and Sonoma counties. Lake has asked to be paired with Sonoma County. The meeting continues today.

The state has put out guidance on the COVID-19 vaccine booster and the shots for the younger age groups. Shots could become available for youngsters as soon as next week. The secretary of the Calif. Health & Human Services Agency, Dr. Mark Ghaly and the state epidemiologist, Dr. Erica Pan spoke on the boosters, which was followed yesterday afternoon by the Governor getting his Moderna vaccine booster at an Asian Health Services' clinic in Chinatown in Oakland. The public health team said cases are stabilizing, except for those not yet vaccinated, who are nearly 7 times more likely to become ill, and 12 times more likely to end up in the hospital, and 18 times more likely to die.

A man accused in the shooting death of another man in July at a marijuana cultivation site in Laytonville will be held over for a jury trial. 23 year old Oscar Alvarez Ruiz had his preliminary trial where the judge found enough evidence to go to trial. Ruiz is accused of killing 27-year-old Edgar Alejandro Becerra-Almaraz last summer. He was seen running away from the scene and a third person, thought to be involved was freed. Ruiz was eventually caught and held on one million dollars bail for murder, but it was reduced to \$800,000 bail, but he's still in jail.

You might expect such torrential rains would end the drought, but not so fast. Even though Lake County's season rainfall is now already, way above average, 300% to be exact, Clear Lake is up a nudge only. The Lake County Department of Water Resources reported the level had improved. But alas, more rain is on the way. Showers and possible thunderstorms are forecasted tomorrow and Saturday, then a whole lot more by Monday and into next week.

The body of a woman from Lakeport reported missing earlier this week has been found. The Lake County Sheriff's Office reports 75-year-old Shirley Schield left her home early Monday morning. Her body was found yesterday, only about a quarter mile from her home at the Northport Trailer Park. They say they don't think there was any foul play and an autopsy is planned. Schield was also known as Carol. Her family told deputies she may have had dementia. Deputies set out with Search and Rescue crews and Kelseyville High School K-Corp looking for her. Then yesterday morning the Marin County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue and the California Rescue Dog Association joined the search.

State Senator Mike McGuire's bill for seasonal firefighters to enjoy the same workplace laws as full timers is now the law. McGuire's bill protects these 1,600 seasonal workers under the Firefighter Bill of Rights. McGuire says they're doing the same back-breaking work as their full time counterparts and put themselves in harm's way fighting the biggest fires in the nation's history on the front lines, so it's time they get equal protections for equal work. The first Firefighter Bill of Rights, passed in 2007, and this updates it so that seasonal firefighters are taken care of after their first year of work.

Sonoma County looks to be over the COVID Delta strain surge. The Press Democrat reports the virus's highly transmissible strain seems to be dying down. Last month 6 residents passed away though. But there were 38 in August and 25 in September. There are still several hospitalizations, but they're way down too, to 20. Still the Public Health Department reported similar trends to last year with the peak in August, but hopefully it won't also peak again in January since we have the vaccinations. As of this past Tuesday the daily rate was just about 8 new daily cases per 100,000 residents, the lowest since July.

Cal Fire says even though we had a lot of rain, the wildfire season continues. The agency says we're still in peak season for dry, northerly winds and low moisture that follows with moisture out of forests and grasslands. And in Southern Calif., it's the time of year where Santa Ana winds usually hit. The Mendocino Unit Chief for Cal Fire says it could just take one windstorm to whip up another fire. Cal Fire is also still fully staffed and probably won't release seasonal firefighters for another couple months.

Clearlake Police have posted some disturbing information on Facebook about free distribution of glass smoking pipes. They say the group Any Positive Change (APC) is distributing the pipes, as they do with needles for IV drug uses. Police say late last year they posted something to get feedback on the proposed renewal of the syringe exchange program authorization for Community Outreach Matters (COM) and from the state Department of Public Health (CDPH). But the community was concerned. Police say the state also expanded the supplies given to include glass pipes, foil and copper wire filters for smoking meth, crack cocaine and heroin. The needle exchange program ended this past April, but Any Positive Change was still exchanging the items. Police say they will be in contact with them, the City Council, Board of Supervisors and Public Health Officer about the expansion of the program. Meanwhile the Facebook post had gone viral and has hundreds of comments.

The wet weather trail closure in the Mendocino National Forest for the Grindstone District has ended. Forest officials have issued new a wet weather trail closure though, this one started this morning for the Upper Lake and Covelo Ranger Districts. Temporary wet weather trail closures start if there's two inches of rain within one 24-hour period or if the soil is saturated. The wet weather off-highway vehicle (OHV) trail closures restrict the use of OHV trails when conditions are too wet to sustain use without causing soil loss, impacting water quality, damaging trail tread and putting public safety at risk. The closure stays put until there's no measurable precipitation for 48 consecutive hours.

The license for the Potter Valley Project is up for grabs as PG&E doesn't want to manage the project. Earlier this week we told you about a petition to get a meeting with Congressmembers Jared Huffman and John Garamendi on the project, as there's a goal to close the Two Basin Partnership deal by April 2022. California Trout, Humboldt County, the Mendocino County Inland Water & Power Commission, the Round Valley Indian Tribes and Sonoma County Water Agency have asked for an extension on the license transfer application to work out how to remove the dam and restore the Eel and Russian river basins. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, commonly known as FERC, said no last month. Huffman told the Times-Standard, that wasn't the end of the world and working toward the April date could be a better way to get there. But he also says if the partnership doesn't get enough money for all the work and the application, the Potter Valley Project could be decommissioned.

The California Department of Toxic Substances Control plans to begin Phase 1 cleanup for properties impacted by Hopkins Fire on Tuesday. The Department, along with their contractor and Mendocino county staff, will perform assessments and remove household hazardous waste, bulk asbestos, and e-waste from the affected property. The job should take until the end of the week.

10/29/21

The Lake County Board of supervisors will hold the third of four 2021 Redistricting Public Hearings next week. Ahead of the meeting, draft maps have been prepared to show five potential sets of supervisor district boundaries. Those maps take into account feedback from the last redistricting hearing earlier this month. The upcoming session will feature a presentation from the consultant the county hired to help in the process. They will outline the pros and cons of the maps as drawn thus far. The meeting will be at 6:00 pm on Tuesday at the Board of Supervisors office. It will also be virtual on Zoom. The county government website has the information about signing up.



Wine Enthusiast magazine has nominated Lake County as one of its wine regions of the year. The magazine says outstanding high-elevation vineyards, simmering seismic activity, and one of the top 10 bass-fishing lakes in the United States make Lake County what it calls a unique wine region and travel destination. No surprise there, according to the Lake County Winegrape Commission. President Debra Sommerfield says the nomination affirms Lake County's reputation as a premium wine-growing spot. This is the first time Lake County has been nominated. The other nominees are Santa Barbara in California, along with growing regions in France, New Zealand, and South Africa. The winner will be announced next month, and get a full spread in the magazine's year-end issue.

A plane crash at the Ukiah airport has ended in one death. The National Transportation Safety Board tweeted about the crash last night saying they were investigating the Cessna 172 light plane crash. The fire department was on the scene after 1 pm and police were also reported to be at the crash scene. There was a report that one person died, but there were no immediate details to support that.

A federal contract to give permanent access to federally controlled water to the biggest agricultural water supplier was tossed out of court. Environmentalists said the deal for Westlands Water District from the fed was to benefit corporations not the environment or taxpayers. The deal was made during the Trump Administration by the Interior Secretary, a former lobbyist for that water supplier.

A Halloween warning from the state Attorney General Rob Bonta. Bonta says to beware of certain cannabis-infused edibles packaged to look just like regular versions of popular food and candy products like Cheetos, Oreos and Fruity Pebbles. The illegal and unregulated edibles could have dangerously high-levels of THC in them. Bonta asks you to report any of these your children may receive while out trick or treating, and to go thru their items to be sure they didn't get any. He says it may seem harmless and fun, but there are dangers associated with unregulated and untested cannabis products.

If you encounter lookalike cannabis-infused edible products, please file a complaint with our office at [www.oag.ca.gov/report](http://www.oag.ca.gov/report) and with the Department of Cannabis Control at <https://cannabis.ca.gov/resources/file-complaint/> or at [complaints@cannabis.ca.gov](mailto:complaints@cannabis.ca.gov).

The US Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing protection of over one million acres of habitat space for the Humboldt marten. The proposal for the North Coast in Del Norte and Siskiyou counties and in Oregon in Coos, Curry, Douglas, Josephine, Lane and Lincoln counties. The proposal would add over 1,413,300 acres of habitat for the tiny creature that lives in old growth Redwood forests. The Center for Biological Diversity has been pushing for the move. The Humboldt marten is a member of the weasel, mink and otter family, which are endangered due to logging practices and wildfires, rodent poisons from growing cannabis and being run down by cars.

After a Wednesday search for a missing Humboldt County man in Covelo, deputies say there's still no sign of him. The Sheriff's Office and Mendocino County Search and Rescue Team went out again Weds. in the area of Highway 162 at the 8-mile bridge in search of 48 year old John Davis who was out hunting and camping with his son and dog. A missing persons report was taken Sunday when he didn't return to the campsite. Mutual aid Search & Rescue came in from across the region with no luck. He's described as 5 foot 11, 220 pounds, with brown hair and blue eyes, last seen in a camouflage rain jacket, and neon green pants with a reflective stripe.

3 Redwood Credit Union employees have been elevated to regional vice president. Jana Beaty-Andresen, Jose Alvarez, and Jenniffer Collins will oversee branches and their employees. Beatty-Andresen has been with credit union for 26 years. She'll lead in Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Rohnert Park, and Sebastopol. Alvarez has more than 15 years of local banking experience and will oversee the Cloverdale, Lower Lake, Point Arena, Ukiah, Windsor, and Sonoma branches. And Collins has extensive experience in teambuilding and customer service and will be in charge of American Canyon, Napa, Novato, San Francisco, San Rafael, and the Mill Valley branches.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors has supported an agreement for the exchange of property the county owns in Clearlake for the Lakeport Armory, for the new sheriff's office headquarters. They've been working on the deal almost three years. The Armory is next to the county jail, and has been excess state-owned property. The swap for a piece of land on 18th Ave. in Clearlake for a 100-unit affordable housing project. The property was supposed to be for veterans housing, but that plan fell through. It's right near a big shopping center, hospital and college campus. There will also be a new transit hub there to service the Bay Area to Shasta County.

Congressman Mike Thompson says President Biden's Build Back Better deal includes a piece of his legislation, the GREEN Act. Thompson says it will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change. He says he met with the President to get an update on the infrastructure deal, saying it's "a direct investment in the middle class" to support education for children, cut taxes for working families, help people get jobs if they're still without and make a historic effort to address climate change. He says the GREEN Act will support renewable energy and decarbonization. It provides: Universal preschool, childcare, an expanded child tax credit, clean energy tax credits and investments in clean energy technology, manufacturing, and supply chains and more.

The first ever after school hub is being launched by Hope Rising in Lake County. The Smart Start | Bright Future initiative started earlier this month at Burns Valley Elementary in Clearlake for in-depth, enriching experiences for K-7th graders. They officially launched the campaign this past June working with First 5 Lake County to help parents and caregivers with services and programs for eligible children. They say they support youth in Lake County from birth to graduation and beyond.

It was a fire in an underground utility vault that caused some Clearlake residents to lose power. The Clearlake Police Chief Andrew White says the fire Wednesday happened in the Pacific Gas and Electric electrical vault. Two people walking by saw smoke and called 911. The Chief says they sent officers out, along with Lake County Fire and PG&E. The fire triggered a power outage on Lakeshore Drive and the surrounding area. PG&E told Lake Co News the power was off for almost 2,800 customers.

After reports of a gun at a home in Willits, deputies make an arrest. It happened October 21st near 1 am that the Sheriff's office had a report of shots fired. A witness told them Carlos Taylor-Lopez shot a rifle in the front yard of his home, but in the direction of his neighbors' homes. Deputies found a live rifle cartridge and an expended rifle cartridge casing in his driveway. After they got a search warrant, they saw him being driven to work and stopped the car and arrested Taylor-Lopez. They searched his bedroom and found the rifle and ammunition. Since he was on probation, that was a violation. He was being held after his arrest on \$15,000.00 bail.

11/01/21

The Lake County Board of Supervisors needs applicants from the Public to become a member of the Countywide Redevelopment Successor Agency Oversight Board. The voluntary Board took over years back when Redevelopment agencies across the state were dissolved. You can apply in Lake County at the County Administrative Office or online. The Oversight Board ensures “assets and properties of the former Redevelopment [Agencies]” or transferring owners is in the interest of the former Redevelopment Agencies. There are two members of the public on the Board.

If you see a helicopter in the sky in Lake County, there are geophysical surveys being done this month. Right now, weather permitting, they’re expected next week. It’s to check on groundwater resources and in support of local sustainable groundwater management efforts. They collect data on the missions through a large hoop under the choppers. They can only be done in daylight hours and will not fly over businesses, homes or other inhabitable structures, or confined animal feeding operations.

For more information about the surveys, visit the California Department of Water Resources <https://www.water.ca.gov/>

Please email [Water.Resources@lakecountyca.gov](mailto:Water.Resources@lakecountyca.gov), or call the Lake County VPH Office at (530) 435-2200. The Lake County Public Health Office says there continues to be modest improvements in coronavirus in the county. They say though that the daily rate is still higher than the state average at nearly 20/100,000 people as opposed to about 12/100,000. The agency says that’s the highest rate since any period besides the winter surge last year into the start of this year, and last summer’s Delta strain surge. So far 106 Lake County residents have died due to COVID-related illness, with almost half since July 1st. The office also says the vaccination rates are behind the state rate too, with 62% of Lake County residents fully vaccinated, and 8% partially vaccinated. Almost 73% of all Californians are fully vaccinated, and 80.7% have received at least one dose.

A Mendocino Deputy walking out of Safeway in Ukiah reportedly found a woman down on the ground unconscious. The deputy reported the 36 year-old female was not breathing and had just a faint pulse and found drug paraphernalia in the immediate area. Fearing the woman had overdosed on opioids, he grabbed NARCAN, the overdose reversal drug and administered two 4MG doses. There was no change, so when a Ukiah Police officer came as backup, they administered a third dose and she started to recover. She was taken to the hospital for further treatment.

A man from Laytonville is in jail after a series of domestic violence calls against him. The report that Robert Bell was abusing his mom and daughter, then violently resisted arrest. It comes after a psychiatric episode in August where the same man was found naked, covered in blood. The Willits Police Chief says Bell’s mom called for help and they found him “aggressive and combative” so they had to taser him twice. He’s charged with various felonies including, elder abuse resulting in great bodily harm, cruelty to a child resulting in possible injury/death and resisting/threatening an officer. He was subsequently charged with some possible arsons near his home on Spy Rock Road.

A fire reported at the Eel River Campground is reportedly out. Mendo Fever reports hearing on the scanner last night a home was on fire at the Campground on Mendocino Pass Road east of Covelo. A trailer was reported on fire, but apparently the reports were not true and there was a car on fire, that was empty and no trailers, homes or other structures were threatened.

A boil water notice has gone out for residents in parts of Cloverdale. The Press Democrat reports residents have been told they should boil their tap water or use bottled water for drinking and cooking after a water main broke. They didn't say where it happened, but the State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water, the Sonoma County Health Department, and the city of Cloverdale Water System sent the advisory out yesterday afternoon. They warn if residents don't follow orders, they could risk stomach or intestinal illnesses. They say it should all be resolved by Wednesday.

The CHP reports a white car has rolled and driven down an embankment on Highway 101 south of Hopland near the Geysers exit. Firefighters and medics were on the scene last night with one person sort of out of it after the crash. They had to be removed from the vehicle and an air ambulance was called but couldn't make it due to weather, so a ground ambulance came in to whisk the victim away.

A firefighter who died during the Dixie Fire fight died of COVID19. New details have emerged about fire engine operator Marcus Pacheco's death. He worked for the US Forest Service and died last month from the virus. The Wildland Fire Lessons Learned Center, an interagency organization that promotes firefighter safety reported the 53 year old was assigned to the Dixie fire Aug. 10th, and was exposed a few weeks later, then died Sept. 2nd.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors will consider giving a raise to In-Home Supportive Services workers. And after a post on the Clearlake Police Dept. Facebook page, the board is also discussing a syringe exchange program that's now giving out glass pipes. The board is also discussing the redistricting after the US Census.

The Lakeport City Council is honoring the retiring Public Works director. At their meeting this week, they will also pick up on the redistricting issue and consider a mutual aid agreement with the Lakeport Fire Protection District. Public Works Director Doug Grider has been working for the city for 17 years. He will be honored at the meeting tomorrow night ahead of his retirement. But before he leaves, he will be asked to approve the agreement between the city of Lakeport and the Lakeport Fire Protection District who have not had a mutual aid agreement until now. A federal contract between the Westlands Water District and the Bureau of Reclamation has been rejected. The judge out of Fresno Superior Court said there was not appropriate public notice and the agreement was also missing terms related to payment for environmental restoration of Northern California waterways— including the Trinity River. The Hoopa Valley Tribal Chair says their fishery has been a casualty for years and contractors have not wanted to pay for restoration costs. Apparently money owed, to the tune of \$400 million dollars as part of the 1992 Central Valley Project Improvement Act was never collected. So a new contract will likely need to be redrawn.

A judge in California backs top drug manufacturers after local governments sue for promoting opioids. The judge in Orange County issued a tentative ruling saying there was no evidence the manufacturers of the drugs were deceptive in their marketing efforts to get prescriptions out unnecessarily. Nor did they create a public nuisance. Plus he said how can we know more prescriptions were not the result of a medically appropriate provision for pain medications for patients in need. Los Angeles, Orange and Santa Clara counties and the city of Oakland claimed the companies misled doctors and patients and downplayed the risks of addictions, overdoses, deaths and other health complications, and overstated the benefits for long-term health conditions.

11/02/21

After almost two weeks of rain in the North Bay, at least in Santa Rosa, the city's fire dept. said fire season was over. It started there May 17th. Plus PG&E is tabling their fire prevention plan that shut down power for fire-prone areas whenever something touched a power line. The Public Safety Power Shutoffs worked but customers complained there were more this year, and they were longer.

The Mendocino County's Public Health Officer's mandate for restaurants to put signs up so customers know the vaccination status of employees is now in place. It's been about a month since Dr. Andy Coren implemented the health order for businesses who serve food or drink indoors to have a red, yellow, or green sign displayed. Green means all who work there are vaccinated, and only customers who are also vaxed can come in. Yellow means some are, some are not and everyone can come in anyway and Red means, they don't know whether their employees have taken the shots or have recently tested negative.

The man from Humboldt County missing after a camping and hunting trip with his son is still gone. 48 year old John Davis vanished a week ago Sunday while in the area of Highway 162 and the 8-Mile Bridge. The Sheriff's Dept. says they believe he may have been swept away in the rising waters of the Eel River. Deputies say Davis and his son woke to find water in their tent and his son went back to sleep in their car, while Davis said he would move their tent then go back to sleep too, but he was never seen again. The Sheriff's office sent out crews and volunteers joined for four days with no luck.

[The new 30-foot buffer zone so that protestors are held back at coronavirus v](#)

The health exchange is open. It's open enrollment for the Affordable Care Act. Next year's policies are reportedly cheaper because of expanded federal subsidies. Yesterday was the first day to enroll or change your insurance under Covered California. You can go online to signup or give them a call. You can also sign up in person at one of several offices statewide. But call before you show up as many may still be limiting in person contact due to the pandemic.

Another person in Mendocino County has died from coronavirus. The Mendocino County Public Health Office reported last night a fully vaccinated 74 year-old woman from the Ukiah area became the 89th person in the county to die of COVID19 complications. The office says the woman had severe comorbidities.

Christmas tree permits are available from the Mendocino National Forest. It's just \$10/household starting today. You can get your permit in Covelo, Upper Lake, and Willits at one of the Mendocino National Forest offices, or from local retailers. You can also even get one this year by mail. You have to use your permit this year as trees are only allowed to be cut from certain areas. Permits are limited and will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

PG&E has finally decommissioned its Humboldt Bay Power Plant. Pacific Gas and Electric Co. along with the Power Plant filed a request with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to terminate the license. The nuclear officer for the company said they spent hours for a safe and successful decommissioning. The Humboldt Bay Power Plant was a 63-Megawatt electric boiling water reactor. It has been turned off actually since 1984 after operating for 13 years. Since it's in a seismically active region when it was shut down for refueling and upgrades it stayed closed. Then too many regulatory changes were made for the reactor operation and design so they decided not to turn it back on and decommission it.

Lake County gets to hear from consultants working on redistricting. There's a hearing tonight in the Supervisors chambers in the courthouse with consultants from the legal firm who have five drafts of possible boundary alignments. The maps come after community input along with the BOS during a hearing Oct. 2nd. The presentation will be on Zoom or in person, for those interested. The last redistricting public hearing will be November 30th during the regular BOS meeting.

A missing woman and her dog who were on a solo road trip after the death of her grandfather have been found dead in Del Norte County. 33 year old Courtney Bryan, a Patagonia employee in Reno took time off to go to the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Her sister appeared on Dateline and said Bryan went to Hunt Hot Springs, outside of Redding. They reported her missing Sept. 27th. A hiker reportedly found her car in an embankment off Highway 101 and called police. The woman and her dog had both died in a car crash. Her sister confirmed the same on the social media platform, Tik Tok.

Once again the commercial Dungeness crab season is delayed. This is the third year in a row due to endangered marine animals feeding off the coast in large numbers. They could get trapped with the crabs if the crabbers pots are allowed to be set out. The season is supposed to start November 15th but they won't discuss the issue again before November 22nd, just days before Thanksgiving. Then they will see if there are any endangered whales and sea turtles still in the area where the commercial fleet sets out.

You still have time to vote in the Hopland Fire District election. You can go right to the Hopland Fire House to cast your confidential ballot. If you are in Ukiah, go to the Elections office on Low Gap Road. Measure L for a new special tax to keep fire services going is listed on today's ballot. If you want to bring in your mail in ballot, you can place it inside the drop box at the County Administration Building in Ukiah. You can mail it as long as it's postmarked today, you can bring it to the elections office or drop it off at your Polling Place tonight before 8 pm.

PG & E and the California P U C have agreed on a settlement related to the 2019 Kincade Fire. Under the agreement, the utility will pay 125 million dollars to resolve the case. The payout from shareholders includes a 40 million dollar fine that will go to the state's general fund plus another 85 million to cover the cost of removing abandoned transmission equipment throughout the utility's territory. The PUC has to sign off at its meeting on December 2. Investigators found PG & E violated safety rules and failed to maintain its infrastructure before that fire that burned almost 78,000 acres and prompted hundreds of evacuations near the Geysers Geothermal field in the Mayacamas Mountains in late October 2019.

11/03/21

You may face another ballot question about legal sports betting in California in 2022. A report in the Sacramento Bee says several Native American tribes are backing a proposal giving them exclusive control of sports betting in the state. That would block card rooms and big players like Draft Kings and Fan Duels from getting in the game. California is a huge prize in the sports betting world and allow it here, voters will have to amend the state constitution. There are now at least four potential proposals that could be decided on next year—one has already made the cut with enough signatures to qualify for a referendum. Other tribes, the online sites, and gaming locations all say they want a stake in what would likely be billions of dollars of action every year. Around 20 states allow those legal bets under a 2018 supreme court ruling. California is by far the most populous state that doesn't.

The Ukiah City Council will look into the future at its meeting this evening. The council is scheduled to have a workshop to talk about eventual capital projects and how the city could pay for them. A staff report ahead of the meeting says those projects would cost 30 million dollars for street and utility work, 10 million for the city corporation yard, and another 15 million dollars for electrical capital replacement and improvements. Three possible payment options include using revenue as it becomes available, using savings, or using financing. City officials say there are pros and cons to each. The discussion is part of the regular virtual council session starting at 6:00. You can see the agenda and find a sign-up link on the city website.

Clearlake Police Chief Andrew White is looking for guidance from the city council about a group that offers needle exchanges and glass pipes for drug use. His concerns are part of the agenda for this week's city council meeting. He says the group called Any Positive Change has been running that needle swap and has recently started distributing the pipes, which can be used to smoke meth. The Chief has posted an update on the police department's Facebook page which generated more than 600 comments. Many asked for the council to look into the matter. Among the options, he will suggest—doing nothing, writing an ordinance dealing with a potential public nuisance, or enacting a moratorium on such exchanges pending further study. Also on the council agenda, an update on recovery from the Cache Fire earlier this fall. The council will meet at 6:00 Thursday in the council chambers at Clearlake City Hall. The meeting will be broadcast live on the city YouTube channel. Community members also can participate via Zoom or can attend in person. The city website has the full agenda.

An 84-foot white fir from the Six Rivers National Forest is on the way to Washington to be the centerpiece of the US Capitol Christmas celebration. The tree called Sugar Bear is making a few stops in California before it is trucked east—it was in Ukiah on Sunday. The tradition of picking out a tree from a National Forest has been going on since 1970. The last tree from California was a white fir from the Stanislaus National Forest in 2011. Sugar Bear arrives on the West Lawn of Capitol Hill on November 19, where it will be decorated and lit up in time for the holiday. You can follow its journey at [uscapitolchristmastree.com](http://uscapitolchristmastree.com)

Mendocino County's five-member Community-based Advisory Redistricting Commission will hold its' last public workshop. The deadline to receive draft maps has passed, but tonight the ARC will narrow down the maps that have come in. Next step—a presentation to the Board of Supervisors Meeting for further discussion on November 9. The final maps will be published for approval on November 11 with subsequent meetings leading to eventual approval at the regular board of supervisors meeting on December 14. That ends the process until the next census-based re-draw in ten years. Tonight's session starts at 6:15. You can find out more on the county government website.

The Lakeport City Council has decided NOT to decide on voluntary Covid 19 testing for City employees. The Record-Bee reports that the council voted to continue with various Covid-19 protocols, which have so far been successful at keeping any workers from getting sick. City manager Kevin Ingram says the city takes employee health seriously and will monitor for any potential outbreaks, with no need for a vaccine mandate. The vaccination rate in Lakeport is around 70 percent. Also at this week's regular council meeting, members continued their discussion of how the city will end up in new political maps based on the 2020 census. Several public input sessions are planned before the council decides which proposal it favors.

The State Water Resources Board continues to monitor levels in Northern California's major reservoirs after last week's rains. Officials agree that the so-called atmospheric river HELPED, it did not come close to ending the drought. The state's biggest reservoirs — Hetch Hetchy in Yosemite National Park and Lake Oroville in Butte County — each saw dramatic gains in water levels. Other supplies saw increases as well, but not as impressive. It can take several days for rainfall to make its way through watersheds to eventually replenish the reservoirs. That means we may not know just how beneficial the rain was for a while.

The Middletown Unified School District is taking names of people who want to serve on the school board. There is a board vacancy because trustee LaTrease Walker resigned last month, effective immediately. Because Walker's term isn't up until next December, board rules call for a special election or provisional appointment. The board has voted to go with the provisional appointment, so it is looking for community members who want to serve. Applicants must be a US citizen, live in the district trustee area 3, be at least 18, and be registered California voter. The Deadline is 4:00 pm on November 15. The board will hold public interviews on November 17 and could make its decision that night. You can contact the district for more information and an application. Walker had been a board member since 2018. She announced her resignation after a contentious meeting about mask mandates last month.



PG&E says the US Attorney's office in Northern California is looking for documents related to the utility's role in the devastating Dixie Fire earlier this fall. PG&E made that announcement the same day that more than 500 state and federal lawmakers issued a letter to President Biden demanding answers from PG&E about the fire and how it is responding to climate change. PG&E told regulators on Tuesday that the Dixie fire will cost at least 1.5 billion dollars—maybe lots more—when its finances are out. The PUC says PG&E has not done enough to explain how it could have prevented the huge fire and how it is handled planned power outages during fire season.

The California State Fair will introduce some new blue ribbons next year for cannabis cultivation. The awards for cannabis quality will be given out at the state fair for the first time in the exhibition's 166 year history in July. Entries will be accepted until March 30 and are open to all state-licensed cultivators. 70 different categories will be tested and judged. While the winners will be on display at the fair, sampling will NOT be allowed. The state fair website has details about the competition. You will have to be 21 though to visit that page.

After the CDC approved the COVID19 vaccine for kids 5-11, the incentives flew. There were scavenger hunts and blow-up animals at clinics statewide as children got the first of the two, kid sized doses. The vaccine is being rolled out for 3.5 million children in the age group at school clinics, pharmacies, pediatrician offices and county sites. The state is expecting 1.2 million doses to begin with. Santa Clara County has already begun administering the shots and reported appointments quickly filled. The state reports one of the highest vaccination rates in the country.

11/04/21

A protest hearing has been planned by the Mendocino Local Agency Formation Commission regarding the Ukiah Valley Fire District's annexation of the city of Ukiah. The commission approved the move last month but will take public comment. The Daily Journal reports the commission noted some of the reasons were to strengthen the partnership between the fire district and the city, find money in a fair way to keep fire and emergency response stable for the long term. It also would mean landowners in the city would be taxed, so they can protest that at the hearing Monday.

A man wanted for the murder of another man in September of 2009 has been caught. 52-year-old Raul Delara Ruiz was beaten to death by three men at a cannabis farm in Hopland. Now the Sheriff's office reports one of the men, 30-year-old Eduardo Albe Cardenas Salvarado was arrested for murder and false imprisonment. A sheriff's office spokesperson says at the time Ruiz and the three others had been working at the cannabis grow and got into an argument. Ruiz and his wife were beaten and the suspects took off with much of the growing marijuana.

The man known as the Redbearded Burglar has been arrested in Albion. William Evers had been on the run since he fired shots at Mendocino County deputies in a remote area last spring. Since then, people reported seeing him breaking into some homes and stealing from a vegetable garden. Earlier this week deputies say someone spotted him again, with his pants down, literally, defecating by the side of the road in Albion, where he has now been was picked up

A heads up if you travel Highway 101 in the Ukiah area. CalTrans is improving a bridge deck so there will be some lane closures from time to time there could be some minor delays, so plan accordingly. The job is going on around the clock because of weather delays. CalTrans hopes to have the project done by the middle of next week

A new chipper hauling truck is coming to the county. The Mendocino County Fire Safe Council reported buying the truck for their Community Chipping Program through the California Coastal Conservancy. They gave money towards the Mendocino County Fuels Reduction Capacity Building Project which paid for the truck. The truck is with the Hopland Band of Pomo Indians as part of their partnership with the Fire Safe Council.

[To learn more about the free Community Chipping Program services, visit MC](#)

If you need bulk item pick up in Lake County, Caltrans is offering an option. On Saturday, November 20th, Caltrans will reimburse the county for disposal costs to take the items to either the Eastlake Landfill or the Lake County Transfer and Recycling Facility on Large Item Dump Day. They will be accepting furniture, tires, mattresses, TVs, appliances and other big, bulky items. They cannot take hazardous waste, household trash, business waste, construction debris and yard/landscape debris.

Lake County has finalized a new deal with the In-Home Supportive Services workers' union. It was only briefly covered it at a meeting Tuesday. The Board of Supervisors — sitting as the In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority Board of Directors — all voted yes on the new agreement with SEIU Local 2015 Union. The workers will get .65¢ an hour over minimum wage. So for this calendar year they will get \$14.65 an hour, but next year the minimum wage increases to \$15 so they will get \$15.65. It will last until Dec. 31, 2023 with a wage cap of \$20. They will also get \$5,000/year for protective personal equipment that will be managed by the union.

The court case continues against Lake County by the Center for Biological Diversity and Calif. Native Plant Society against the Maha Guenoc Valley resort near Middletown. The California Attorney General's Office supports the case against the resort on part of the 16,000-acre Guenoc Ranch for 1,400 residential estate villas, 400 hotel units and 450 resort residential units. Those who filed the suit say the environmental impact report failed to follow the California Environmental Quality Act, consider wildfire risk, impacts on species of concern, water, greenhouse gas emissions and roads.

The Yuba Community College District Governing Board is about to change with the redistricting after the latest US Census. The last board meeting, the Governing Board heard about changes seen since the 2010 Census. The board will have to redraw the trustee area boundaries just like they do for political districts. So at their meeting next Wednesday, the Governing Board will review and consider new maps, which will then need approval by Feb. 28th.

A case of COVID has been confirmed in a staff member at Slam Dunk Pizza. The Mendocino County COVID-19 Department Operations Center has confirmed the case at the restaurant in Willits. They warn community members who may have been to the restaurant last Wednesday October 27th and Friday October 29th that they may have been exposed to COVID-19. You are advised to get tested if unvaccinated, or if you have symptoms while vaccinated. Slam Dunk management responded quickly. And the Public Health Office says they only publish business names because it's impossible to identify everyone in the public who could have been exposed.

We are finding out more about the arrest of a man known as the Redbearded burglar. William Evers spent almost 6 months on the run after the Mendocino County Sheriff's department says he fired shots at deputies in a remote area on May 21st. He apparently survived by breaking into homes and foraging through gardens. Now, Evers has been arrested in Albion, not far from where he was spotted crouched along the roadside earlier this week. Deputies got a call about a possible prowler on Albion Ridge Road on Thursday morning and ran into Evers as they searched through the brush. Evers was eventually arrested, but not before officers say he kicked a police K-9 and tried to run off while in handcuffs. He was eventually restrained and taken to jail where he is being held without bail.

11/05/21 He faces several charges.

Mendocino county has recorded its 90th death from Covid 19. The Health Department says the latest victim was a 56-year-old woman from the Fort Bragg area who had not been vaccinated. Officials again say vaccination status makes a big difference between surviving Covid and getting seriously ill or dying. They are also urging those who have been vaccinated and fall into high-risk groups to get a booster shot.

Lake County residents are talking about a big increase in their property tax assessments that came in the mail. Some have gone to social media while others have gone right to the county assessors office to complain. For some property owners, their assessments have almost doubled since last year. The county says a staff shortage left assessors unable to assign a proper value. The Record-Bee reports that the county says it is also bringing values to where they should be after a temporary reduction in 2008. Whatever the reason, some landowners say the bills will be hard to swallow, coming on the heels of Covid and fire emergencies.

Not all businesses in Mendocino County seem to be complying with a directive to post signs about their Covid vaccine policy. The Daily Journal reports less than half of the businesses it visited in Ukiah had that information for customers to see. County Public Health Officer Dr. Andy Cohen says the signs provide consumer choice and protection. Some of the business owners say while they support choice and protection, it is tough to comply with rules that could cost them business. The county hasn't said if it will be checking to see if the policy signs are up.

The Ukiah Design Review Board will look at a proposal for a new car wash and a proposal for a cannabis facility next week. The car wash—along with office space and an apartment— would go up on some long-vacant property on South State Street near Observatory Avenue. Plans call for the retail cannabis facility to go up on South State near Talmage Road. That meeting is virtual. The county website has the signup information.

The Clearlake City Council has picked a new member of the planning commission. Lake Co News reports Council members interviewed several candidates Thursday night. When they were done, they unanimously selected Terry Stewart for the job. His term goes until March 2025. Former commissioner Kathryn Davis resigned in September. Stewart told the board in his interview that he is optimistic about the direction that Clearlake is going. He also said he would like to keep Clearlake's small-town feel but make it more welcoming. Also at Thursday's meeting, the council heard more about the draft county, state, and federal redistricting maps now being circulated. They took no action on that.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors has sent a letter to the state, asking that the county stays in a congressional district that includes Sonoma and Napa Counties. The state commission working on that redistricting proposal has put out a potential district map, which puts the county in a new district along with Marin and Solano Counties with Lake County. It shows Sonoma in another district apart from Lake. Supervisors say the two counties have a natural alignment. They call Sonoma a critical disaster and energy resiliency and economic development partner with similar concerns. The commission drawing the maps based on census data says it is a complex job that requires a fairly equal population in each political division. They have a June 2022 deadline to come up with the redrawn congressional, state senate, and assembly districts.

The US Geologic Survey confirms its seismographs picked up a small earthquake in northern Mendocino County earlier this week. The epicenter of the 4.1 magnitude quake was 19 kilometers—or about 12 miles—northwest of Covelo. Only a few people reported feeling anything—just a light shake at most—around 5:30 Wednesday afternoon. There were no reports of any damage.

Hazard removal work is underway in the Jackson Demonstration State Forest, which will have part of the forest CLOSED until February for safety. That work is near some power lines that cross the forest roughly parallel to Highway 20. Signs about the closure are posted in the work area. CalFire is also closing another area of the forest for tree cutting. Operations have started in the Parlin 17, Chamberlain Confluence, Red trail, Carspa 500, and Soda Gulch timber management plans. You can find maps and more information on the CalFire website.

Clearlake is looking for public input about the proposed Burns Valley Sports Complex and Recreation Center. The city is holding a meeting to gather those comments on Monday afternoon from 3:30 to 5:00. It will be at the Council Chambers at City Hall. Officials are hoping to get feedback about the design of the center and what features and amenities it should offer. The comments will be used in the application for a state Rural Recreation and Tourism grant. Those grants come from the California Department of Parks and Recreation and are intended for projects that provide economic, tourism, and health-related benefits. There is already an online survey you can take to express your opinions. Those results will help guide Monday's discussion. There is information about the hybrid session on the city of Clearlake Facebook page.

Three Members of Congress from California have introduced legislation to change federal response to wildfires and give more resources to affected communities. One of the sponsors, Congressman Jared Huffman, calls the bills a two-pronged approach to help FEMA deal with challenges associated with climate change. The so-called FIRE act would reform fire response and give more help to survivors. A companion bill called the Disaster Equity and Fairness Act would specifically help disadvantaged communities at risk for fires brought on by climate change. Backers, including the California Association of Counties and local officials, say the bills are overdue and address the federal role in wildfire response.

California farmers are facing a new challenge getting their crops to the world market. The ongoing supply chain crunch is keeping cargo ships stuck at anchor offshore without a place to dock. Farmers worry that if the backlog goes on much longer, they won't be able to ship out their vegetables, fruits, and other cash crops. That could lead to shortages in the US and worldwide—and to a big dent in their bottom lines. California agriculture accounted for 16 percent of all US exports in 2019. Farm organizations say their members are already reeling from the ongoing drought and the high cost of staying in business.

It's almost time for holiday happenings and plans are already well underway for many of them. Ukiah will hold its annual Parade of Lights on the evening of December 4th—just five Saturdays from tomorrow. Parade organizers are looking for participants—organizations, teams, and businesses—to apply for a spot. There is a fee. Signups are due by November 30th. The best entries will get prizes. The Parade of Lights is expected to draw hundreds of people to the route on State Street from Low Gap to Mill Street.

Two more people from Mendocino County have died from Covid-19. The victims were an 88-year-old man from the Ukiah area and a 94-year-old woman from the Fort Bragg area. Neither had been vaccinated and both had serious underlying medical issues. They were the 91st and 92nd people to die of Covid since the pandemic started.

11/08/21

The first two free FLU clinics of the season are planned this week in Lake County. The drive-up clinics will be tomorrow and Wednesday from 1:30 to 3:30 at the Public Health Division on Bevins Court in Lakeport. You can make an appointment online at [mvtturn.ca.gov](https://mvtturn.ca.gov). Two more clinics will be held in the same place at the same times on Wednesday and Thursday, November 17th and 18th. Flu shots are also available at places like pharmacies and your doctor's office. Flu prevention depends on good and hygiene and covering your nose and mouth if you sneeze. The symptoms of the flu include a temperature of over 100 degrees F combined with a cough, sore throat, body aches, headache, and a lack of energy. If you are ill the health department urges you to stay home to keep from infecting others.

The Mendocino County Sheriffs' office has arrested a man from Laytonville who was wanted in Texas. Deputies say they found 52-year-old Daniel Cook at a place in the 59-000 block of Bell Springs Road in Laytonville after a tip on Saturday. He was on the run from Texas, where he had a warrant for a prostitution-related crime. Cook is now at the Mendocino County Jail without bail, waiting to be sent back to Texas.

Firearms and drug charges for a man from Covelo. The Mendocino County Sheriffs Office says 30-year-old Lawrence Freese was picked up when deputies served a search warrant at a home in the 100 block of Agency Road in Covelo on Saturday afternoon. The officers say they found two 9mm pistols and a bag of meth inside. They also say Freese was under the influence. He was booked into the Mendocino County lockup and accused of felony armed drug possession and two counts of illegal gun possession. He was booked into the Mendocino County Jail, where the judge set bail at \$25,000.

A survey of families with children in Lake County suggests paying utility bills and job difficulty were the biggest problems from the Covid-19 pandemic. First 5 Lake County put out a survey in June. 269 people answered and the results are back. The survey asked about 11 different areas of need in the county caused by the outbreak. Lake Co News reports 44 percent of the respondents cited utility payments, followed by trouble with employment as their biggest difficulties since the pandemic began. Also among the top concerns: childcare and paying rent or mortgage. While the survey comments pointed out individual struggles, they also found words of hope and gratitude for how others responded to the crisis. First 5 Lake Executive Director Carla Ritz hopes the results will lead to improved support services for families and children who need them. First 5 has the survey findings on its website.

The Mendocino County Health Department is reaching out to anybody who went to the Rite Aid on Main Street in Willits between October 29th and October 31st. A confirmed positive case of Covid 19 is reported there, so the department wants anyone unvaccinated to get a test. Those vaccinated should watch out for Covid symptoms. The department says it only names locations with positive test results when it would be hard to find everyone who had been there. Rite Aid says is cooperating with the investigation.

Watch for high winds over Mendocino County today. The National weather service predicts gusts of more than 65 miles an hour at times. Those gusts could cause damage. Most like to get the wind— higher coastal ridges and interior mountains, as well as portions of the coast. The wind will die down by Tuesday.

You aren't alone if the time change on Sunday threw off your sleep. Experts say the clock changes can have an impact on our BODY clocks, sometimes for days. CHP says you should keep that in mind on the roads. Disrupted sleep patterns can lead to drowsy drivers, with impairment similar to being under the influence. This is National Drowsy Driving Prevention Week, so CHP says it is a good time to watch how ALERT you feel behind the wheel.

19. Monoclonal Antibodies only work if administered within the first 10 days of infection, but health officials say many people are getting the treatment too late. Health officer Dr. Andrew Coren says there are sites in the county where Monoclonal Antibodies are available. He cites the case of an elderly woman who missed that narrow window to get the infusion and was in the hospital for two weeks with severe Covid. You can find those locations on the Mendocino County website.

The Ukiah City Council will pick up where it left off this evening. The council's last meeting on Wednesday was cut short because of a technical problem with streaming the session on cable channel 3. Council members say they want to make sure everyone has access, so they will reconvene at 6:00 via zoom. The city also says it will improve its YouTube feed as well. When the gavel falls again, the agenda will start with public comment on several items, including discussion of money the city wants to spend on several capital projects. 30 million would go to streets, right of way reconstruction, and utility projects. Another 10 million would be used on the city corporation yard, while 15 million more would be set aside for electric capital replacement and improvement. The council will look at options to PAY for the projects. The options include doing the work when the money is available, dipping into savings, or borrowing.

the Ukiah Safeway The Zoom Training is on Wednesday at 4pm. Participants will get Narcan when the session is over. The sheriff's office has more on the virtual training—and other resources about the opioid problem in Mendocino County.

rate increase so that new revenue is going to expenses related to the current drought.

A woman accused of setting a fire last summer that damaged or destroyed several buildings in Clearlake Oaks is being sent to a psychiatric hospital for treatment. The Record-Bee reports Tori Brannon will have to start that involuntary treatment within the next 60 days. The fire she is accused of setting on Hoover Street in July did more than \$600,000 damage to 5 structures and 6 outbuildings. Brannon was arrested in the area the next day. At the time, reports say she threatened to burn down even more buildings.

is an inconceivable relief to have the new place. Habitat continues to offer help through its first-time homebuyer program. You can stop by their office on Lakeshore Drive if you would like more information.

A crash in Clearlake Oaks has left one man dead. CHP says the 67-year-old victim was heading west on Highway 20 near Raven's Landing when his Mini Cooper ran off the road and into a ditch. An officer and firefighters arriving at the scene tried CPR but were unable to save him. The road was wet around the time of the crash at 5PM on Monday, but the driver may have had a medical emergency. His name has not been released as the

11/09/21 investigation continues.

boxy to fit into the neighborhood, suggesting it might be more appropriate at an industrial site. The board also raised traffic, noise, and pollution questions. The Planning Commission will consider the application at a virtual meeting starting at 6pm on Wednesday

The Lakeport Economic Development Advisory Committee is hoping to find new members to fill three positions that expire in December. The current members will talk about recruitment at a virtual meeting tomorrow morning from 7:30 to 9:00. They will also get an update on the Lakeport Strategic Development plan and hear about projects going on in the city. The city website has more information about the LEDAC positions and the meeting on its website.

**They're still counting ballots in for a proposed special tax in the Hopland Fire Protection District. The Mendocino Voice reports that of the 343 votes counted so far, the measure has just under 61 percent support. It needs 2/3rds to pass. There are another 83 ballots to be counted. Mail ballots will count until today. If it passes, the district would use the money to add staff. The County Website has the latest totals.**

Mendocino County is reporting 50 new cases of Covid 19, along with two deaths. Both victims were elderly and had serious health problems as well. Neither had been vaccinated. 28 of the new infections were in the Ukiah area, 13 in the North County, 7 in the North Coast, and 2 were in the South Coast. The most cases—17—were in people 35 to 49 years old, while 10 were in children under 18. 4 more people were hospitalized. The new numbers put the total cases at 7,847 since the pandemic started. The county says 54,100 people are fully vaccinated. Of those, 517—or slightly less than 1 percent, have tested positive after their shots.

on Sunday. Among the new regulations—a limit of 10 traps that have to be checked at least every 9 days. All traps will need a California Department of Fish and Wildlife recreational validation. They cost \$2.25 each. CDFW also has new buoy requirements to prevent the entanglement of Humpback Whales and Sea Turtles. Meanwhile, the Department of Public Health says crabs caught south of Mendocino County to Point Reyes in Marin County might not be safe to eat. They could have high levels of Domic Acid, which makes the crabmeat toxic. [Wildlife.ca.gov](http://Wildlife.ca.gov) has the rules and warnings.

Mendocino County cannabis applicants to re-submit their license applications. That portal from the Mendocino County Cannabis Program allowed a 90-day submission window starting August 2. Now, the Daily Journal reports applicants have been told that any application unfinished by the November 2nd deadline would be turned down without an explanation. They don't think that is fair because they were told at first the information would be reviewed after the deadline. The Mendocino County Cannabis program says it created the portal to streamline the application process and centralize all related paperwork.

The Mendocino County Behavioral Health Advisory Board is planning a meeting next week. The board, which provides guidance to the county on mental health issues, will meet on Wednesday, November 17th between 10 and noon via Zoom. The group is encouraging people with an interest in mental health issues to take part with questions or to offer information. There is information on the meeting and the board's work on the county government website.



It is the third anniversary of the beginning of the state's deadliest and most destructive wildfire. When it was over, the Camp Fire killed 85 people, destroyed thousands of buildings, and devastated the small town of Paradise in Butte County. Governor Newsom marked the occasion on Monday, announcing that 100,000 damaged trees have been taken away, along with debris from around 11,000 properties. He says it is a milestone on the long road to recovery for those affected by the fire. Those in the area say it is still painful to look back on November 2018. While some rebuilding has occurred, many lots in Paradise are still vacant—a reminder of the fire's a terrible toll. PG&E has pleaded guilty to dozens of involuntary manslaughter charges for its role in starting the blaze. The company says it is committed to understanding and applying the lessons it learned from the Camp Fire, and others.

The state has awarded nearly 1 million dollars worth of grants to help watersheds affected by illicit cannabis growing. The money will go to 4 projects. Among them, the Lost Coast Forestland Flow Enhancement and Habitat Restoration program in Humboldt County. That project will get almost \$278,000 for capture and store runoff and augment dry season flows on 938-acres near the headwaters of South Fork Eel River. The Department of Fish and Wildlife says illegal cannabis growing is having a major impact on the environment. Lawmakers created the Cannabis Restoration Grant Program in 2017 as a way to address that problem.

**The Lakeport Planning Commission will talk about some changes to the Municipal Code at its meeting this week. The proposed amendments would require recycling and/or salvaging at least 65% of nonhazardous construction and demolition materials from residential and nonresidential projects. Municipal codes must include that provision to comply with California Green Building standards. Communities must also have a Water Landscape ordinance under that Green Building code. The open commission meeting is at 5:30 Wednesday in the council chambers at Lakeport City Hall. The city website has the agenda and how you can attend the meeting virtually**

An increase in Covid cases has Potter Valley High School closed to in-person instruction. Public Health Officer Dr. Andy Coren telling the Board of Supervisors that 10 percent of the student body recently tested positive, leading to the decision to go back to distance learning. None of them had been vaccinated. Coren says closing the classrooms was the right call because of the number of cases and also because of what he called —non-compliant — families and the risk of confrontations between the masked and unmasked. Potter Valley Community Unified School District Superintendent/Principal Nicole Odell says distance learning will continue this week with students back on school grounds next Monday. Coren says there has been a recent surge in the average daily case rate to a higher level than it was this time last year, before the winter surge.

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Two more Covid-19 related deaths in Mendocino County. County Public Health reports both men were from the Willits area. One was 62, and the other was 63. Neither had been vaccinated. They were the 93rd and 94th victims in Mendocino since the pandemic started and the 3rd and 4th this week.

The state says anyone who got a Covid shot at least six months ago and thinks they would benefit from a booster should get one. California Health director Dr. Mark Ghaly says that guidance is in line with CDC recommendations about boosters. He says there are plenty of shots available and that the state is working with health care providers and drug stores to make sure anyone who WANTS a shot can get one. He suggests getting both a Covid booster and a flu shot before the Thanksgiving and winter holidays bring more social gatherings. State officials are worried that close contact about another surge of infections unless more people are vaccinated.

The Lake County Sheriff's office has released the name of a man who died earlier this week in a crash. The office says 67-year-old Lloyd Minor of Clearlake Oaks was alone in his Mini-Cooper when it ran off Highway 20 east of Clearlake Oaks just before 5 on Monday afternoon. A CHP officer and firefighters did CPR, but they couldn't save him. While the road was wet at the time, Minor may have had a medical emergency, but the investigation is ongoing.

A boil water advisory in the Willow County Water district remains in place but will likely be lifted today. General Manager Jared Walker tells Mendofever.com that the alert went out Friday afternoon as a precaution when a mechanical problem forced the district to switch to a backup water supply. That well had elevated bacteria and so, under state law, the advisory went out. Since then, the equipment has been fixed and tests from the primary well have come back clean. Walker says the advisory will end once another test comes back ok—probably later today.

Mendocino Local Area Formation Commission has approved adding Ukiah into the Ukiah Valley Fire Protection District. The commission says bringing Ukiah into the larger district will help establish a fair and equitable funding source for fire and emergency response services for all Ukiah Valley residents. The commission also thinks the annexation will open up fire district special funding to the entire valley, leading to more staff and better equipment. Fire Chief Doug Hutchinson says the annexation is a step in the right direction that will boost a vital community service.

The Clearlake Planning Commission has approved a plan to use a 21-acre site on Ogulin Canyon Road for a commercial cannabis operation. Ogulin Hills Holdings wants to put up two 5,000 square foot buildings for manufacturing and processing and a smaller building for distribution and office space. The facility also will have 10 greenhouses, water storage tanks, and a trash enclosure. Lake Co News reports members were satisfied with answers to questions about water and neighboring residential properties so the commission said yes to the plan with a 4 to 0 vote. Also at that meeting, new commissioner Terry Stewart was sworn and voted Lisa Wilson was selected to be chair and Robert Coker to be vice-chair.

A woman found in a rental cabin that SHE hadn't rented near Philo is facing charges. Hendy Woods State Park chief Ranger Loren Rex tells Mendofever.com that the people who actually reserved the cabin came across Jennifer Barr staying inside on Saturday. Rex says Barr wouldn't leave, got into an altercation with the rightful renters, and then took off. A ranger spotted Barr driving around the park, but Barr drove away. That chase ended when police did what they called a high-risk traffic stop. After she was finally arrested, Barr was booked into Mendocino County jail, accused of resisting and evading police and petty theft.

The assistant principal at Lucerne Elementary School is among 44 leaders honored by Congressman John Garamendi. Megan Grant of Upper Lake was singled out by the congressman for his Woman of the Year award. He says all of them have made a difference in their community and deserve to be recognized. Grant was the only person from Lake County in Garamendi's 3rd district to be named to the list. She was nominated by Lucerne Principal-Superintendent Mike Brown. Brown says Grant works tirelessly on behalf of her students and to improve the lives of others. The Women of the Year event was held in person this year after it was virtual last year because of the pandemic.

A Free Large Item Dump Day is coming to Lake County later this month. The Clean California program is sponsoring the event at the Lakeport Transfer Station and at the Clearlake Landfill on Saturday, November 20 from 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM. They will take big items like furniture, appliances, mattresses, and even those old tires that can sometimes be hard to get rid of. They won't take hazardous waste, regular household or business trash, or any construction and yard debris. Caltrans' says its Clean California program invests \$1 billion in litter collection, community engagement, and education to reduce litter and keep communities clean.

CHP is hoping to convince teenagers that distracted driving can have serious or even deadly consequences,. CHP is joining traffic safety groups in a new outreach program that will take officers to schools and community events to promote attentive driving. Nearly 44,000 young drivers were involved in crashes in California in 2019. 231 of them involved fatalities. Police say many of those crashes happened because the drivers were using a cell phone, eating, adjusting a radio, or chatting with friends. CHP Commissioner Amanda Ray says those common distractions, along with driver inexperience, are a dangerous mix that can lead to tragedy.

An annual Cannabis Small Farms Initiative started in Northern Mendocino County is taking applications for this year's award. The Emerald Cup will take those submissions until November 13. The entry criteria include a valid growing license, a farm size limit of 10,000 square feet, either practicing certified farming or participating in a third-party certification program. New this year—the Emerald Cup Ball at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds on December 11th and 12th. Organizers call the Emerald Cup a friendly contest that reflects growing societal acceptance of the cannabis plant. It has been around for 18 years. The website is [theemeraldcup.com](http://theemeraldcup.com).

Governor Newsom is out in public again after being out of sight since October 27th. The Governor skipped that big climate summit in Scotland last week and that had many people asking where he was. His office cited family issues at the time. Now, the governor says he just wanted to get off what he called the damn treadmill and go from crisis to crisis. So he said he decided to send Lt. Governor Eleni Kounalakis to the summit instead, while the Governor stayed in California to go trick or treating with his kids, attend a soccer tournament, and attend the high society wedding of J Paul Getty's great-granddaughter over the weekend.

A warning about a scam targeting renters in Lakeport. Police say they have received several reports of someone posing as a landlord, telling potential tenants they got the place, but need to put down a security deposit via a cash app. It turns out the landlord a PHONY who doesn't even own the property for rent. Police say one victim reported losing more than \$2,000. Police say you should be careful, know who you are dealing with and get everything in writing before handing over any money in a way you can trace. Lakeport police are investigating. If you have any information that help

11/11/21 therm stop the scammer, you can contact detectives.

There could soon be additional prescribed burns in Mendocino National forest. Mendovoice.com reports the U S Forest Service has come out with a draft environmental impact statement about those intentional fires. It suggests moving ahead with plans to clean up fuels left from past fires or setting new fires in areas that have not been burned at all yet. The state has ordered the forest service to conduct prescribed burns on at least one million acres every year. The environmental impact study outlines a strategy for just under 690,000 acres in the Mendocino National Forest. You can see the report and comment on it though November 22nd on the Forest Service Website.

The Yuba Community College District is taking a time out in its search for a new chancellor. The Board of trustees voted to pause the search after a motion by member Bill Roderick, who represents Lake County on the board. Roderick says extending the search for another 6 to 12 months will give the school time to address HR and financial issues that have come up since the search began. Douglas Houston left at the end of April, and in June the board appointed Dr. James Houpis interim chancellor, effective July 1. Houpis can stay as temporary chancellor until next June but he can't apply for the permanent position. Not all trustees agreed with Roderick, saying the search should move ahead, but Lake CO News reports the majority took Roderick's side, temporarily slowing the hiring process into next year.

This is Veterans Day. It is a Federal and State holiday, which means Government Offices and schools are closed. There is no mail, and banks are closed. Businesses will be open. Mendocino Transit has some holiday modifications today. There will be no Dial A Ride service, and transit routes 5, 60, and 75 will not run. Route 95 WILL run, but Route 65 is on a Saturday Schedule. Meendocinotransit.org has the information. Several local communities will hold observances. One of them is in Fort Bragg, where the American Sequoia Post 96 will have a Veterans Day Service at 11 am at the Fort Bragg Veterans Hall from 11 to noon. Today is the 110th anniversary of the armistice that ended fighting in World War 1

The court case against a man from Lake County accused of child sexual abuse is on hold after his lawyers raised doubt about their client's ability to stand trial. 71-year-old Bert Tino Besio was arrested in Clearlake and charged back in July 2019 on several counts of molestation of two victims under 13. Now, The Record Bee reports Besio's legal team wants a judge to decide if Besio is mentally competent to be tried. A psychiatrist will now evaluate Besio and report back by the end of the month. The case has wound its way through the legal system since Besio's arrest and has been postponed several times.

A woman from Fort Bragg has admitted that she set a fire in South Willits the last summer. The Mendocino County DA's office says 39-year-old Jennifer Smith pleaded guilty to arson charges filed after the fire in early August 19 behind the Burger King on South Main Street. Surveillance video quickly led police to Smith, who denied setting the fire. She isn't denying it anymore. She'll be sentenced to four years on December 9. If she earns good time behind bars, she will be out in two. Smith's case is one of a record number of arson cases filed in Mendocino County this year.

A new website is pushing a name change for Fort Bragg. The site [changeournamefortbragg](http://changeournamefortbragg) is looking for support for a new name because they say the city's namesake, Colonel Braxton Bragg was a slave-owning traitor who fought against the Union in the Civil War. The group not only objects to the BRAGG part of the name, but to the FORT part as well. Members say that refers to the forced military removal of native populations. Fort Bragg City Council created an Ad Hoc Name Change Commission in 2020. Members are expected to report back to the council. The issue is also a lightning rod on the east coast. The huge Fort Bragg military base in North Carolina could get a new name as soon as next year.

The latest report from Mendocino Public Health shows 15 new Covid-19 cases. 11 were in the Ukiah area, with 1 each in the North and South coasts and two in the North County area. The number of people in isolation was down 13, to 162, while the number of people in the hospital remained at 12. Mendocino County has recorded four new Covid related deaths since the start of the week.

A warning about a scam targeting renters in Lakeport. Police say they have received several reports of someone posing as a landlord, telling potential tenants they got the place, but need to put down a security deposit via a cash app first. It turns out the supposed landlord is a PHONY who doesn't even own the property for rent. Police say one victim reported losing more than \$2,000. Police say you should be careful, know who you are dealing with and get everything in writing before handing over any money directly, not with an app or on a gift card. Lakeport police are investigating. If you have any information that might help them stop the scammer, you can contact detectives.

The US Geological Survey is reporting a small earthquake east of Willits. Seismographs recorded the 3.1 magnitude quake centered at a spot about 4 miles outside town at 8:09 on Wednesday evening. About half a dozen people on the USGS website reported feeling a light shake.

Sonoma Sheriff's deputies have searched the home of former Windsor Mayor Dominic Foppoli. The Press Democrat reports the search Wednesday came as two more women came forward with allegations that Foppoli sexually abused them. He has denied all of the accusations dating back to 2002. He resigned in May. Foppoli is reportedly out of town—way out of town. A tenant at Foppoli's home in Windsor says the former mayor told her he would be staying at an ancient family-owned castle near Milan Italy for several months. Local authorities say they have no idea where he is.

Governor Newsom is denying a report that he was out of sight for several days late last month because of a bad reaction to a Covid booster. He calls the story in the Daily Mail online fake news. Newsom says he had absolutely no side effect except for a sore arm from a flu shot he got at the same time. The online article quotes an anonymous source saying the governor bailed on the Climate Summit in Scotland because he was sick. Newsom says he stepped away to get off what he called—in his words—the damn treadmill.

A new report shows there is a LOT of roadkill on California Highways. According to the Road Ecology Center at the University of California, Davis CHP counted more than 44,000 traffic incidents involving animals between 2009 and 2020. That doesn't include the 65,000 or so reported via the California Roadkill Observation System phone app. More than 400 different species ended up dead on the highway. The study authors say their findings are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the ecological and economic damage done in vehicle-animal collisions. The worst spot to be an animal trying to cross the road—or a driver—I-280 around the Bay Area

A drinking water health advisory for individual household intakes in the Lower and Oaks Arms of Clear Lake has been lifted. The County Public Health Department says changes in the weather have led to lower levels of potentially harmful Cyanotoxins, caused by bacteria in the water. High levels prompted that warning in September. The advisory did NOT cover public water systems. Health officials say those with private intakes should continue to monitor their drinking water and have it tested regularly for cyanotoxins, and also coliform, and nitrates.

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Californians struggling with energy costs this coming winter will be able to get help after Washington sends almost 180 million dollars to the state. Congressman John Garamendi says that money from the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program – LIHEAP – will keep thousands of residents safe and warm over the next few colder months. The LIHEAP money is in addition to more than 200 million dollars allocated earlier this year for energy assistance under the Covid 19 American Rescue Plan. The California Division of Community Services and Development administers LIHEAP in the state. Nationwide the LIHEAP program will spend 33 BILLION dollars to help low-income families with their heating bills.

As it often does, California has the dubious distinction of leading the country in the price of gas, Triple-A reports the average price in the state is 4.65 a gallon. That is just 2 cents off the record and about \$1.25 more than you will pay on average in the rest of the country. In Lake County, a check with gasbuddy.com this morning shows a range of prices from just under \$3.95 Middletown to \$4.69 in Lakeport. In Mendocino County, your fill-up will cost between \$4.28 a gallon in Fort Bragg to \$4.49 in Ukiah. Station operators say don't get mad at them. The gas they sell isn't really a moneymaker, and in fact, in some cases, they LOOSE when the pump clicks around. If you are wondering, gas is the cheapest in Oklahoma. Sooners are paying about \$3.05 for a gallon.

The Community Foundation of Mendocino County has awarded more than \$300,000 in local grants through its Nonprofit Relief and Field-of-Interest Programs. That money went to more than 50 different groups. The Foundation says those grants will help the nonprofit organizations continue to offer vital services to the community. Since October 2020, help totaling \$558,000 has gone to 107 community groups. IF you would like to know more about the grants and who has received them the website is [communityfound.org](http://communityfound.org).

Look for some roadwork in Fort Bragg that could affect your drive today. Paving and rehab requiring traffic control and partial street width closures will take place between 7:30 this morning and 6:00 this evening at the intersection of McPherson at Bush. The city says there will be no through traffic there and no parking. The best bet would be to find another way around that area if you can.

The Chief of Staff at Adventist Health Mendocino Coast Hospital says he is worried about the fate of a local privately owned nursing home in Ft. Bragg. In a press release, Dr. William Miller says the Sherwood Oaks Home faces serious challenges with staffing and its infrastructure. He says license holder Joe Redding owns doesn't own the property, which has made the situation even more challenging. Dr. Miller says the man who owns the building and land is in sales talks with a large nursing home chain. The Doctor thinks any new owner would have to make a significant investment to address deferred maintenance issues. The current property owner has not commented on Dr. Miller's release.

There could be even more legal trouble for PG&E. A district judge says the utility may have violated federal probation because of its role in last year's deadly Zogg fire in Shasta County. PG&E is already on probation for its actions leading to a massive natural gas explosion in the Bay Area community of San Bruno in 2010. The Shasta County DA's office charges that PG&E lines sparked the Zogg fire, which killed 4 people. That could be a probation violation and mean additional sanctions for the 2010 incident. 8 people died in their homes when an overpressurized gas line blew up. PG&E was convicted of several felonies.

New maps showing California's proposed political geography are out. The California Citizens Redistricting Commission had the job of figuring out just where the lines would fall based on the 2020 Census. The maps include Congressional, State Senate, State Assembly, and Board of Equalization Districts. It has been a challenging process because California is LOSING a seat in congress because of population changes. The commission says its work is not final and wants public input. You can see where you may end up on [wedrawthelinesca.org](http://wedrawthelinesca.org). You can suggest YOUR map at [drawmyca.org](http://drawmyca.org). The whole process must be done by next June so the districts can be used in the 2022 election next fall.

Real Estate prices and listings are UP in Lake County, while sales are DOWN. The latest figures from the Lake County Association of Realtors show the median price of a home in the county was \$372,000 in September, up from \$335,000 in August. 251 properties were listed, compared to 228 the month before. Sales dropped from 93 to 70 between August and September. A community breakdown shows the highest median price—half cost more, half cost less—was in Lakeport, at \$435,000 in September. The lowest median was in Clearlake, at \$255,000.

A woman from Laytonville has been arrested after a traffic stop found her with several warrants. Denise Hluchy was found to have three outstanding Mendocino County warrants, one for car theft. She was arrested without

11/15/21 incident and held on \$20,000.00 bail.

The latest remapping of political boundaries in California has Congressman Mike Thompson gaining more of Lake County. If approved in its current redrawing, the redistricting for U.S. House Districts approved last week has Thompson getting all of Lake County. Right now the District 5 has only the west side of Clear Lake and not the town of Clearlake itself. It could also snatch up Vacaville, Davis and Fairfield, but lose Vallejo and a small piece of Contra Costa County. This redrawing does away with an earlier version that had some of Congressman Jared Huffman's district, including his home county of Marin cut. But the new maps have his district, pretty much intact.

A man pulled over during a traffic stop was found to have a warrant for his arrest for possessing drugs and a loaded firearm. Rafael Govea-Lopez was pulled over Thursday in Willits. The deputy found ammo on him so he was arrested for the outstanding warrant. Deputies went to his house later, knowing there had been calls for shots fired there previously. They found Harold Knight and Alberto Morfin and more than 100 pounds of processed marijuana, a .45 caliber pistol and several hundred rounds of firearm ammunition cartridges. Plus Knight was a registered sex offender and is prohibited (felony) from cultivating or possessing marijuana for sale. Those two were also arrested and held on \$15,000.00 bail and Govea-Lopez was held on \$35,000.00 bail.

A delivery truck hauling propane has overturned, closing Highway 162 for almost two days. Cal Trans tweeted the main path to Round Valley was closed after the truck with 2,600 pounds of propane overturned, then started to leak just above Outlet Creek last Tuesday. The driver also had minor injuries and was not charged with any crimes. By Thursday morning the road reopened.

Human remains that were found in May in a forested area in Mendocino County turned out to be that of a 69-year-old man who had disappeared back in 2006 in Albion. The Sheriff's office reports David Neily was last seen in late March or early April of 2006 and was reported missing that July. Vehicles belonging to him were found in Westport. The partial remains were found in Branscomb and were sent to a forensic odontologist, state Assemblyman Jim Wood of Ukiah.

A man from Covelo's been arrested after a traffic stop found he was wanted for an out of county felony warrant. Round Valley Tribal Police stopped the driver, Lawrence Lawson and called for backup. They saw a gun in his car. A deputy responded and found Lawson was wanted and could be searched. They found a Glock 19 semi-automatic handgun and live 12-gauge shotgun shell. The Glock was also loaded with 14 live rounds. It was reported stolen out of Napa. He was also found with meth and arrested for Possession of a Firearm by a Felon, Possession of Ammunition by a Felon, Possession of a Stolen Loaded Firearm and Possession of Controlled substance while armed with Firearm.

At the next Mendocino County Board of Supervisors meeting they'll be going over the redistricting maps. The board will also take public comment on the matter tomorrow morning and review, then approve the final maps. You can catch the meeting on the Board's YouTube channel or attend in person.

After the so-called Red Headed Burglar was finally arrested he pleaded not guilty to several charges against him. William Evers was busted finally after being elusive since early spring, he was found Albion. He was found in the "Doughnut Shop" area of the Salmon Creek Forest after over 6 months on the run. He was wanted for firing a gun at a sheriff's deputy after a burglary and was seen several times before and after that.

A judge in San Diego County has tossed a lawsuit challenging the state's school mask mandate. The judge ruled the Governor indeed has the legal authority to enforce universal masking. The group Let Them Breathe filed the suit. They were fighting the mandate on behalf of parents across the state. They also wanted to overturn rules regarding COVID testing at schools and quarantines if students are exposed to someone who tests positive for COVID. The Governor, his Health and Human Services Secretary, state Public Health Officer and the state's Safe Schools for All team leader were all named in the case.

The family of a woman in Ukiah say she's still missing after not being seen for over a month. 30-year-old Tia Higgins was last seen in San Francisco October 12th. Mendo Fever reports Tia's mom, Jenny Higgins, says she spoke to her the same day Tia also called her boyfriend's mom. There was an official missing person's report filed with Ukiah police. She's described as a Native American woman with ties to the Round Valley Tribe, who is 5' 2", 160 lbs with green eyes, brown hair, often dyed and tattoos on her left forearm, another on her chest, neck, and right hand.



The Lake County Board of Supervisors is having a public hearing on a commercial marijuana cultivation operation in Clearlake Oaks after it was tabled last month. The meeting tomorrow morning on Zoom and in person. The public hearing portion of the meeting is continued from Oct. 19th after an appeal was filed against the project at the 1,640-acre High Valley Ranch. The site of the old PSI World. Some neighbors of the ranch are appealing the approval by the Lake County Planning Commission, for a bunch of reasons including air quality, cultural resources and water availability.

As with the county and across the state, the Lakeport City Council takes on the redrawing of political boundaries for the State Assembly, State Senate and the U.S. Congress districts. The meeting tomorrow night in council chambers is open to the public, but those not vaccinated must wear a mask. You can also Zoom in, if you can't make it in person. Lake Co News reports city staff will present redistricting considerations to the council so that Lake County stays aligned with its strategic

agricultural and economic partners of Sonoma and Napa counties.

The Governor announced the state is joining the Beyond Oil & Gas Alliance. Newsom made the announcement this weekend about the alliance which launched at the COP26 gathering. The first of its kind alliance was led by Costa Rica and Denmark to get states and nations to phase out oil and gas production and work instead to a clean energy economy. Newsom said the state is a global leader in fighting climate change but said we can't do it alone. It comes after the Governor announced last month the state would move to stop new oil drilling near homes and expand health protection for Californians as the state phases out fossil fuels.

As the state continues to deal with more catastrophic fires, there could be a lot more prescribed burns. Last year the Governor agreed to work with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) for prescribed burns on a million acres of the state's land annually. Half of that, or 500,000 acres is on state land, the other half on federal land. But we're nowhere near that goal so far. The US Forest Service released an assessment last month on a proposal to prescribe fires on nearly 690,000 acres in the Mendocino National Forest. A forest supervisor tells Mendocino Voice, they've been doing prescribed fires for years, but nowhere near what they need. Public comments are being accepted on the draft assessment until Monday.

The chief of Cal Fire has announced he is leaving the agency. Thom Porter is retiring December 10th after three years as the chief, some of the toughest years for the agency. He emailed all employees saying he's going to go back to San Diego to spend time with his family after about 22 years with Cal Fire. He took over after the fires of 2017 and 2018 which included the Camp Fire. Then culminated in PG&E claiming bankruptcy the following

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year. The Governor put out a statement thanking him for his leadership. The state attorney general says Calif. has settled a case with Amazon for hiding real COVID-19 case numbers. The company has been ordered to pay \$500,000 to better enforce state consumer protection laws. This is the first case under the new "right to know" law so companies are forced to improve workplace safety during the pandemic. The Atty. Gen. Rob Bonta ordered monitoring of Amazon so the company has to improve how they notify workers and local health agencies of COVID cases. The case came about after a complaint the company didn't tell its warehouse workers and local health agencies of COVID-19 cases throughout the pandemic.

A man in Covelo's been arrested after a traffic stop turned up drugs. Deputies stopped Foley Azbill Friday and found a pipe for smoking marijuana, processed marijuana and the odor of marijuana wafting in the air. A search was conducted and the guy had a bunch of meth and more packaged for sale. He was booked into the Mendocino County Jail on \$50,000.00 bail.

A man has been arrested in Willits after a traffic stop finds he's wanted for a warrant while on Post Release Community Supervision. Freddy Sepeda was pulled over November 7th near Highway 101 and Reynolds Highway. The deputy found he had three outstanding warrants out of Kern County, two for stealing a car, the other for grand theft. He's booked on \$75,000.00 bail.

A man pulled over for making an illegal turn in Willits ends up getting arrested. A deputy noticed Lawrence Ortiz turn on a red light so another driver had to stop so there wouldn't be an accident. The deputy tried stopping Ortiz, so he drove in a gas station parking lot, then onto the wrong side of the road into oncoming traffic to try to get away from the Deputy, while other cars swerved out of the way. There was a short chase, but Ortiz was finally arrested. The deputy gave him a field sobriety test and found he was high. And that he was on probation and his driver's license was suspended/revoked. He's booked on \$20,000.00 bail.

A major donation has been given by a Native American Tribe in Lake County for certain legal services. Lake Co News writes the donation is a first of its kind to help with inadequate and underfunded legal services associated with the Indian Child Welfare Act. The \$100,000 donation is going to the Calif. Tribal Families Coalition to launch the Legal Council of Tribes from the Habematolel Pomo of Upper Lake. The news site reports the Legal Counsel for Tribes was formed because tribes are unrepresented in court at times, and they aim to reverse that trend.

A large cannabis operation is being reconsidered by the Lake County Planning Commission near Hidden Valley Lake. The commission will also consider a bunch of other marijuana related projects. The meeting Thursday morning on Zoom and in person. Plus you can watch on the county's website or Facebook page. The commercial cannabis operation got approval before but neighbors appealed. So the owner of the land for We Grow LLC is reapplying. It's a massive grow that would mean pulling 100 blue oak trees. The other cannabis items include modifications to ongoing projects.

A 30 year old woman from Ukiah reported missing for about a month in San Francisco is home. Tia Higgins family reports she was found in San Francisco Sunday by her mom. Mom went to the city and put up posters and met with police. Now she says she's back home in Mendocino County. Mendo Fever reports her mother said the story was shared on social media hundreds of times and she was thankful to those who spread the word.

It looks like the planned removal of the Klamath dam is moving forward after all. The old PacifiCorp dams along the Klamath River would mean another 420 miles of salmon spawning habitat, improved water quality and lowering critical temperature conditions that have been causing disease and death in fish. The slow down last year came when the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, or FERC, only approved a partial transfer of ownership to the Klamath River Renewal Corporation, requiring PacifiCorp to stay a co-licensee. But they were supposed to be removed and Calif. and Oregon were to be added. That finally happened this past June. And dam removal is set to start in early 2023.

A Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade of "A" has been awarded to Adventist Health Ukiah Valley. The president of the hospital in Mendocino County says "patient safety is most important and top of mind". It's their sixth consecutive "A". The president said even through the pandemic, with all of its challenges, staff still made sure patient safety was their highest priority and he says their dedication to exceptional patient care was a true testament to every person's work at the hospital.

The Governor has extended an emergency proclamation related to the pandemic for another six months. The first executive order that started March 4th of 2020 now extends to March 31st of 2022. It includes allowing the hiring of out-of-state health care workers and waiving some licensing requirements. Newsom says his extension is in advance of a potential new surge in cases and the continued staff shortages at hospitals. There are some opposed to the governor's continued emergency powers and there are still factions resisting mask wearing and vaccines.

A cellphone company says they're opening more access to some without internet aimed at students. UScellular has a new "After School Access Project" that features free mobile hotspots and service to nonprofits with after school programs. It's an expansion of other hotspot donations to increase connectivity needs during the pandemic. They've now pledged as much as \$13 million for hotspots and service to connect up to 50,000 youth in 2022. The company says so far this year they've donated 2,800 hotspots and service to 33 Boys & Girls Clubs across the country, at a worth of about 2.6 million dollars.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors has reportedly approved outside counsel for the Sheriff. Reports say the board approved a law firm from Los Angeles to represent the Sheriff who was not in the room at the time. A local reporter for the Anderson Valley Advertiser says it was a unanimous vote even as the Undersheriff suggested the board wait a week so the Sheriff could be there. The Sheriff for his part has wanted to hire a local law firm, but the board has not approved of the move.

The Lakeport City Council working on the redistricting maps after the 2020 US Census. At their meeting last night the city council considered maps released by the California Citizens Redistricting Commission who redraws the State Assembly, State Senate and congressional districts every 10 years. A couple weeks ago the city council asked the city manager to send a letter to the commission to support the latest ideas on redistricting, but new changes came before the letter even went out. Lake County is now with Colusa, Glenn, Napa, Tehama and Yolo counties for the State Assembly, and with Del Norte, Humboldt, Marin, Mendocino, Sonoma and Trinity for State Senate. And for Congress, Lake County is proposed to be bundled

11/17/21 with Napa, Solano and Yolo counties.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors has once again gone around the Planning Commission allowing for an appeal of a major cannabis operation, the High Valley Ranch. In a marathon session this week the vote was split, 3-2 in favor of the appeal by neighbors against the project at the old PSI property in Clearlake Oaks. The Planning Commission gave it the green light this summer, but some neighbors appealed because of the potential for dust, odor, traffic and water usage. Some of their ideas for drying the crops didn't meet county code.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors has jumped into the fray, telling the state to get involved in management of the Jackson Demonstration State Forest. The Board is asking the state to consider the way Cal Fire has been managing the Forest related to the ongoing climate crisis. It was a lengthy discussion with plenty of public comment, ultimately ending with a unanimous vote to send Governor Newsom and the state Natural Resources Agency a letter to review the practices at the Demonstration Forest.

A Sheriff Dept. raid at the home of the former mayor of Windsor, accused of sexual impropriety and possibly rape. Sonoma County sheriff's investigators at former Windsor Mayor Dominic Foppoli's home gathering electronic devices with a search warrant. Apparently they were searching for two images that may be connected to the case against the disgraced public official. One of the photos of a Jane Doe #1 in 2002 and another of Jane Doe #5 from 2017. Deputies took about ten items from the home, including a couple of laptops, a cellphone and three tablets.

A woman who police say started a wildfire that gutted over 100 homes in Redding has been found incompetent to stand trial. Two court-appointed psychologists found Alexandra Souverneva would not be able to understand the proceedings so the judge said she should be further evaluated for possible placement as an outpatient at a state hospital. She's accused of starting the Fawn Fire in Sept. near Shasta Lake.

A woman from Nevada arrested for an arson in Lakeport has been found to be incompetent to stand trial. Nickelina Rosa Williams was arrested by the CHP last month after a fire started along State Route—29 in Lake County. Officers found others trying to extinguish the fire as Williams was seen walking away from the fire's ignition point. She had a lighter and ignition materials on her. Her lawyer told the judge she didn't understand what was going on so the judge ordered her to be evaluated for mental competency. The doctor's report is due back after Thanksgiving.

A pair of virtual job fairs are being held to find firefighters by the USDA Forest Service. They're happening Tuesday, November 30th, from 1 – 3pm and again on Wednesday, Dec. 15th from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. They will go over the job openings, training programs and how you can get hired. Following that, the Mendocino National Forest will also have a hiring event next January, followed by basic fire training in February and March.

Participants can register for the program and job fair at <https://bit.ly/MNF-fire->

The virtual job fairs will be held online via Microsoft Teams at <https://bit.ly/MN>

A longtime teacher in the Ukiah Unified School District has thrown her hat into the ring to be the next Superintendent of Schools. The current Assistant Superintendent, Nicole Glentzer has put out a statement to announce she'd like the job. She says teachers, parents, and administrators from across the county asked her to consider running for the job. Glentzer touts her 26 years of teaching experience as a bilingual paraprofessional, teacher, coach, and administrator. She's been the Assistant Superintendent of Ukiah Unified School District since 2014.

Ukiah Police say a couple of kids walking to school were hit by a driver who's vision was obscured by the sun. The accident yesterday morning before school started at the intersection of Oak and Harold Streets. The two kids were treated at the scene, with one being taken to the hospital with moderate injuries. The other child was released into their parent's custody. Police say the driver stopped after the accident and was cooperative.

A new report says PG&E intends to take down 50 old growth Redwoods near Boonville. Friends of Faulkner Park report seeing giant black X's marked on the trees by PG&E crews to reduce wildfire risk. The trees are in a 40 acre park and are said to be some of the only remaining old-growth Redwoods in the county. A local architect tells the Daily Journal some of the trees marked to be felled are as much as 8 feet in diameter, and some are centuries old, and as high as 250 feet into the air. Friends of Faulkner Park are requesting PG&E not cut the trees, and instead lay down one-quarter mile of underground wire. Supervisor Ted Williams is talking with PG&E about the plan.

We're still in a drought and a new report shows most Californians aren't meeting the moment. The Gov. had asked residents to conserve water by 15% this year, but it was under 4% in actuality. That was for September, down from about 5% in August. In all residents have reduced their water consumptions only 3.6% since July. State officials were looking at monthly improvements on conservation, but instead reports say none of the state's "hydrologic" regions met the 15% threshold.

Gas prices may start to go down. The International Energy Agency's last market report showed supplies were up 1.4 million barrels/day in October. That's globally, and the United States accounted for half that increase due to damage caused by Hurricane Ida in August. So there should be another 1.5 million barrels/day this month and next, but the agency said there should be a reprieve coming, but not until next year when the average of 300,000 barrels/day in the US goes down to 200,000.

A man in Garberville's been arrested after being seen acting suspiciously near a car reported stolen out of Fortuna. The Humboldt County Sheriff's dept. reports seeing Raymond Smith taking items out of the car, parked along the side of the road. Deputies contacted Smith, finding he was a sex offender, who had failed to register. He's booked into jail for possession of a stolen vehicle and failure to register as a sex offender.

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The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors said no to an amendment with NaphCare, a healthcare and mental health provider inside the jail. The company had a representative at the Board meeting Tuesday with a presentation about their work, but no matter, the board voted unanimously to hold back nearly \$3.5M for services through the end of 2022. The Board wants more information to see how the company will handle complaints the county's received about how inmates in crisis are being treated. The CEO of the company was at the meeting and said he would provide more information later, but that they've been successful saving lives.

A special election is being held in Point Arena for two open city council seats. The election isn't until February. Two other councilmembers have resigned, thus the special election. Those interested have to be a registered Point Arena voter, be at least 18 years old by Election Day, February 22, 2022 and must live in the city while serving. You can pick up application papers at the city clerk's office.

The state of California is in the money. A new report says there's quite the budget surplus, even after money spent on the pandemic. It's also possible there's enough so that citizens can get some of the cash as the state meets constitutional limits on state spending. The state's independent Legislative Analyst's Office released the "Fiscal Outlook" yesterday for the budget year beginning July 1st showing a \$31 billion surplus for the 2022 budget. It remains to be seen, but the Gov. and state lawmakers may have to cut taxes, spend more on infrastructure or give rebates back to taxpayers and spend more on public schools.

A woman who was charged with a misdemeanor for cruelty to her German Shepherd still has an appeal pending against her. Mendo Fever reports Katie Rhiannon Smith of Caspar who got out of a jury trial with a plea agreement for felony animal abuse for the injuries to Thunder the Wonder Dog. Her case made headlines after charges were reduced to a misdemeanor, but there's an appeal pending. The appeal filed in August, but there were more charges against her earlier in the year and the judge was removed from the case. Last week Smith was ordered to pay fees to the Humane Society and others. Her probation ends next month due to a new state law.

A fire spotted in Fort Bragg has been quickly put out. Mendo Fever reports the vegetation fire was under the town's Hare Creek Bridge. A pedestrian was reportedly fingered for starting the fire that scorched an area about 20 feet wide. The California Highway Patrol, Mendocino County Sheriff's Office, and State Parks Officers reported to the scene. No word on any arrest.

A group of hikers had to be rescued in Redwood Valley. Mendo Fever reports the Sheriff's office reported they were stuck in the Tomki Road area. The organizer of the hike reportedly sent a drone to track the missing hikers. The Sheriff's office tells the news site the hikers were able to get themselves out as deputies got to the scene. They were reported to be two men and one woman who were out all night earlier this week.

A man from Upper Lake is going to prison after being found guilty in the beating death of his longtime girlfriend. Lake Co News reports Willy Tujays Timmons was convicted for the 2017 torture and killing of 35-year-old Vanessa Yvette Niko. There were other charges too, inflicting injury resulting in a traumatic condition and aggravated mayhem, with several special allegations found to be true. Niko was a member of the Habematolel tribe and of Samoan descent and a mother of six. A mural of Niko was dedicated in downtown Upper Lake to bring attention to missing and murdered Indigenous women.

A woman from Clearlake Oaks is going to trial for the shooting death of her former boyfriend before she left town. The judge in the preliminary hearing of Tammy Grogan-Robinson found there was enough evidence to try her for the death of Charles Vernon McClelland of Rohnert Park. She first said he raped her. But police later said that was a phony story. She left town and was arrested in Missouri. She was extradited back to Lake County in August. She's due back in court November 30th.

They're finally taking out the hazardous waste from the burn area created by the Hopkins Fire in Calpella. County staff gave a report to the Board of Supervisors this week. The county's Disaster Recovery Field Operations Coordinator says they've cleared debris from several properties after the September 12th fire which has been deemed arson. They've taken out Household Hazardous Waste with the state on 35 properties. And now will start the Phase 2 cleanup, weather permitting. They're accepting Right of Entry forms for the work unless a property is using a private cleanup crew.

Lake Family Resource Center is accepting donations to West America Bank for their yearly holiday food giveaways. Lake Family says the donations go to residents in the county and are 100% funded by other community members. Donors can also write a dedication with their donation which is then printed in the Record Bee newspaper and online. Their holiday program this year is drive through only. You can donate at Foods Etc. in Clearlake, or Bruno's Shop Smart, in Lakeport. For those who want to receive, you have to bring in a photo identification and proof of physical address. All participants must wear masks, no exceptions.

A man from Texas whose car was found along the side of Highway 101 in Leggett appears to be missing. The Austin Police Department says Zachary Manuel Velasquez has not been seen since October 12th at his home, and nobody has heard from him since October 16th. His car was found along the 101 at Mile Post Marker 86.75 near Highway 271 earlier this week, triggering a search of the area. No evidence Velasquez was ever there was found and local hospitals and medical service agencies didn't turn anything up either. He's described as a 30 year old man, 5 foot 4, 150 pounds, with short black hair, short black goatee and brown eyes.

19 New cases of Covid-19 reported in Mendocino County. That brings the total in the 20 months since the start of the pandemic to 8,032. Of the new cases, Ukiah reported 12 while there were 5 new cases in the North County area and 1 in the South Coast. Hospitalizations have dropped by 18, to 137. Also, the number of people in quarantine has dropped by 7 to 123. Officials continue to urge boosters for those who have completed the first series of

11/19/21 shots and shots for children between 5 and 12.

The Ukiah City Council has voted to form a committee to look over the city streets policy and recommend how new roadwork can take the needs of pedestrians and cyclists into account. City Manager Sage Sangiacomo says the goal is to develop more educational material for discussion. He says the committee will also give the council direction about making bicyclists and pedestrians as important as drivers when redesigning a street or planning a new one. Council members Mari Rodin and Douglas Crane will sit on that special committee. Mendovoice.com reports the council meeting this week was quick—only 19 minutes. The council's next regular meeting on December 1st has been canceled. Members won't meet again until December 15th for a regular session and the Mayor's annual holiday reception.

A draft groundwater sustainability plan for the Big Valley area of Lake County is out. Lake Co News reports the plan, is now available for review and comment until December 3rd. The deadline for final plan submission is January 31st. The state requires such a sustainability proposal under an act passed in 2015. There are several ways you can comment, including mail, e mail and at the Lake County Water Resources Department on Forbes St. in Lakeport. The department has more information about the plan and how you can weigh in. Deputy Water Resources Director Marina Deligiannis says Big Valley Basin groundwater is listed as a medium priority by the state Department of Water Resources.

The Mendocino County Executive Office is having a town hall regarding the Hopkins Fire cleanup. The County's Prevention, Recovery, Resiliency, and Mitigation Division is hosting the virtual meetup for victims of the fire this summer. You will have an opportunity to write in with questions and county representatives will be on hand to provide resources and answer questions and address community concerns about fire recovery programs, including Small Business Administration Loans and Debris Removal. It's happening Monday at 4:00 pm.

**How to attend:**

To join via Zoom, click the link: <https://mendocinocounty.zoom.us/j/83783059196>

To join via phone, dial: +1 669 900 9128 and enter the webinar ID: 837 8305 9196

If joining via phone please use \*6 to Toggle mute/unmute & \*9 to Raise hand

The webinar will also be streaming live on the County's YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...>)

How to submit your questions and comments:

[E-mail questions and comments in advance to: disasterrecovery@mendocino.gov](mailto:disasterrecovery@mendocino.gov)

Phase 2 of the Hopkins Fire cleanup has been approved by the State of California. But those impacted must fill out a Right of Entry form for the work to begin, unless you are using a private company for the work. The forms are due into the county by December 10th. CalRecycle is managing Phase II which is basically taking out whatever burn debris has been left behind. Debris removal bids are being accepted until December 3rd with cleanup set to start by the middle or end of December.

A former college professor in Sonoma County has been indicted for starting four wildfires in Northern Calif. A federal grand jury indicted Gary Stephen Maynard for fires that started in July and August near the Dixie Fire, the second biggest fire in Calif. history. Federal prosecutors blame Maynard for starting the Cascade and Everitt fires in July and the Ranch and Conard Fires in Aug. He became a person of interest after getting his car stuck near one of the fires then similar tire tracks were seen near another fire. The former Santa Clara University and Sonoma State University professor has denied any wrongdoing.

And just like the pandemic never happened, the Northern Nights Music Festival is back in full force. Next summer, the outdoor festival will return again to the Redwood Forest at Cook's Valley Campground in Piercy, on the border of Humboldt/Mendocino counties. The festival includes music, cannabis programming and other activities along the shores of the Eel River.

A man armed with a knife has been arrested at Van Damme State Beach. Reports the guy was making "stabbing motions" ended with Matthew James Gibson of Fort Bragg being hauled off to jail. He's charged with brandishing a deadly weapon and threats to commit a crime resulting in death or great bodily injury. A Parks Ranger at the scene with deputies and Fort Bragg police say it's not their first encounter with the man over the last couple months, as some transients have been staying at the state beach for up to a month at a time.

Parents at the latest Willits Unified School District Board of Director's meeting have once again broached the mask mandate for their kids. The Willits News reports parents in person and over Zoom asked the board to reconsider mandatory mask wearing. One parent had a petition, they also work for the school district, it asks for the board to take another look at outdoor masking as other regional schools do not mandate that, nor does the CDC. Others on hand were in favor of keeping the requirement in place. The School Board President said there could be room for compromise while continuing to keep community members safe, as far as the outdoor masking goes. And the school superintendent said they could end the outdoor mandate in February.

A man from Concord has been arrested by police in Ukiah after he was found with a car stolen from Sacramento. Emil Redzic was reportedly wanted for multiple crimes. The car's GPS technology tracked it to its spot after it was reported stolen. It was at the McDonald's in the 1300 block of North State Street that the guy was pulled over. He was ordered out of the car at gunpoint and arrested. There was also a woman in the car with Redzic who was detained, but ultimately released. Redzic is charged with possession of the stolen vehicle, possession of a controlled substance, and displaying false license plates in a vehicle. He was also wanted for a domestic violence incident earlier in the month and was on active probation in Contra Costa County.



The Lakeport City Council has unanimously approved a settlement in a massive opioid case. The deal with several Big Pharma companies with the city reportedly getting a piece of more than a two and a quarter billion dollar settlement with 431 eligible counties and cities. Lake Co News reports the city manager confirmed the city council had to vote on the settlement terms to take part. There was another settlement too that the council had to take action on. Both settlements were in closed session and both were voted unanimously.

If you're looking for a Thanksgiving meal, the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Bragg is serving Turkey and all the fixins. It's for coastal residents from Westport to Albion for the 25th year in a row. Event organizers say they're expecting a record-breaking year, with as many as 1,000 meals to be distributed. Just like last year, the meal is a picnic-style box which can be picked up at the church or delivered directly to homes between Westport and Albion on Thursday, Nov. 25th. Reservations are required by 11 a.m. next Wednesday.

[For more information or to download the meal reservation or volunteer forms,](#)

The Mendocino County Public Health Officer schooling the public at the latest Board of Supervisors meeting about rumors swirling around about the pandemic. Dr. Andy Coren says some of the worst misinformation out there is about the vaccines to scare people out of getting them. Dr. Coren says they have had to correct people to say the vaccines are an effective treatment against a very deadly disease, and that people are not dying from the vaccine. He says there is no scientific evidence to prove not getting the vaccine is a better way to deal with the virus, then getting the shots. Some people called into one meeting to say people, including children are dying from the vaccine, for which Coren and some supervisors asked for evidence of that, which was not produced.

After the Infrastructure Bill was passed in the house, Congressman Mike Thompson set a press conference on the matter. Along with Thompson this afternoon Lake County Board of Supervisors Chair Bruno Sabatier, Supervisor Tina Scott, Chief Administrative Officer Carol J. Huchingson, Lake County Superintendent of Schools Brock Falkenberg, Lake County Public Works Director Scott De Leon and Lake County Planning Council Representative Lisa Davey-Bates will also be there. They're discussing the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act from 2-2:30 today at Ackley Bridge

11/22/21 Over Manning Creek in Lakeport.

Grace Hudson Museum is getting back some of its namesake's work. A prized collection of artist Grace Hudson's paintings will be at the museum as part of an agreement with the Palm Springs Art Museum in Southern California. 16 Hudson works are coming to Ukiah, as well as a long-term loan of two other oil paintings. Apparently the Palm Springs Art Museum staff contacted the Grace Hudson Museum about the possibility of gifting the collection last May.

[In order to attract more substitute teachers to Ukiah, they've upped the ante.](#)

[All adults in Mendocino County are now eligible to get a COVID booster vaccine](#)

Gunfire erupts in Redwood Valley. Seven people reportedly called 9-1-1 and police quickly got there and cordoned off the area. Security cameras caught the action. Mendo Fever reports neighbors on Road B heard the gunfire. Police went to the area, searching a cannabis garden where folks said the gunfire may have been coming from. But deputies said there was no evidence of a shootout. A neighbor also told the news site there was a local family maybe doing some target practice.

Forecasts show those taking water from the Russian River won't have to curtail their intake. The Division of Water Rights had announced a temporary suspension of the curtailments due to all of the recent rain and upcoming forecasts. The temporary hold is through December 15th and could go through the entire month. They will make another announcement by around December 15th about when the cutbacks will resume. Right holders are supposed to be monitoring the Russian River Drought Response website on their own until that time.

A hiker reported missing in Covelo has been found safe. Mendo Fever reports the Sheriff's dept. was called to the 3000 block of Airport Road this weekend to a female hiker out mushroom hunting with a friend who lost sight of each other. A few hours after the dispatch report deputies reported finding the hiker before temperatures were forecasted to get near freezing overnight.

The Lake County BOS is reportedly considering sending a letter to the state Public Utilities Commission against a proposed rate increase for Pacific Gas and Electric Co. The Board was set to take up the matter last week but tabled it until tomorrow. The rate increases were reported related to wildfire mitigation efforts by the utility company. The 4.9% rate increase is opposed to especially for the most vulnerable residents and because of poor energy reliability in recent years. The board's draft letter to the PUC cites hundreds of outages this year, over 200 alone just at the Middletown Substation.

The Governor has granted pardons to two California Indian Tribe members. One from the Koi Nation of Northern California and the other from the Resighini Rancheria. The Governor's Office reported being in touch with the tribal leaders who supported the pardons. They're also happening at the same time as Native American Heritage Month. The pardons for Koi Nation member Robert Morgan of Lower Lake for assault with a deadly weapon, and Frank Spa-ghe Dowd, a member and elected leader of the Resighini Rancheria, based in Klamath, also for assault with a deadly weapon.

A mountain lion has reportedly attacked a couple of goats at Boonville High School, killing them. An administrator at the school says they're concerned about the safety of students after the attacks. The superintendent for the Anderson Valley Unified School District called into the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors saying last week the goats were killed, and a third was injured and all she got was a hazing permit, allowing her to try to scare the lion off, if it reappears. Experts in the field, said keeping the goats safe was paramount, not finding a way to scare off the lions.

A man from Lakeport has pleaded no contest, essentially admitting, he had child pornography on him. 59 year old Jeffrey Scott Cramer of Lakeport was not held in jail due to the pandemic after entering his plea back in March. He's due to be sentenced December 15th in the case after a September court appearance. The court has also asked for more evidence after Cramer was charged with two counts of possessing obscene matter of a minor in a sexual act and another was tossed with a special waiver. The case stems from social media accounts with child pornography uploaded from them in Cramer's name. He's the former owner of Main Street Bicycles, which has new owners.

The Ukiah City Council has put together an ad hoc committee during their regularly scheduled meeting for complete streets. The complete streets policy so that bicyclists and pedestrians are a priority like drivers of vehicles on city streets as the city considers a redesign, or a new street. The city manager said they were in support of forming the ad hoc committee and there will be more educational materials, and maybe a workshop too.

While the commercial Dungeness crabbing season can begin along the Sonoma/Mendocino County line, it's still on hold off the shore of Monterey, San Francisco and Bodega bays. Tests came back for the area north of Sonoma County so the December 1st date holds. So that some who like to have crab for their holiday meals will get their wish. But the Central Coast, which typically starts ahead of Thanksgiving is delayed until at least December 15th so marine animals don't become entangled. The last five years has been bumpy for the industry since a lawsuit was filed by an environmental group after some whales were ensnared, including

11/23/21 endangered humpback whales.

As Calif. continues to see some of the lowest COVID rates in the country, public health officials are staying alert to the possibility of surges due to holiday gatherings. Over the last week the state's rate was at less than 2% positivity. The Governor was at a vaccination clinic in San Francisco yesterday urging the shots as more than 2 dozen other states have started to see at least a 10% increase in cases over the last week. Last winter Calif. had a massive surge in cases and deaths. Looking ahead, Santa Cruz County has reinstated a mask mandate.

NBC TV in the Bay Area is running a series where they've alleged Mendocino County deputies and officers with the Department of Fish and Wildlife swiped cash and marijuana from farms. Growers along Hwy 101 say raids at their farms were illegal, including at a couple sites in Mendocino County. There's been a lawsuit filed against a couple of officers who claimed the farms had illegal water diversions. The growers say there's no proof or documentation that thousands of pounds of marijuana were ever destroyed.

After a man driving in Covelo wouldn't stop for CHP officers, and there was a struggle, witnesses surrounded the situation yelling at the officers to let the man go. Reports say the 65 year old driver Douglas Dale Lincoln, Sr. wouldn't yield to officers for a traffic stop and when he finally did, he resisted officers. The CHP says the driver continued slowly into oncoming traffic and when he finally emerged, he yelled at officers who say they tried to de-escalate, then called for backup. Officers described the situation as a "minor use of force". The man was taken to a hospital and cleared. Inside his car was a loaded semi-automatic pistol, and he had a suspended license for DUI and drug and firearm offenses. He's charged with several crimes and held in jail.

The CHP's Maximum Enforcement Period is on for the long Thanksgiving holiday weekend. Starting tomorrow evening at 6:01 p.m. and lasting through Sunday at 11:59 p.m., officers will be looking for drunk, drugged or distracted drivers, seat belt violators and speeders. The commissioner of the agency says before you get behind the wheel, to make sure everyone in your vehicle buckles up and to always avoid distractions. According to AAA, Thanksgiving weekend is typically one of the busiest travel times of the year. Last year in Calif. 33 people died in crashes, half did not have on their seatbelts.

A man accused of driving drunk earlier this month is facing gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated charges. Kyle Stephen Pinckney of Fort Bragg's passenger died in the November 6th crash just before 11 pm. The CHP reports his vehicle hit a tree and his passenger died at the scene. Pinckney was arrested that night and charged, not only with DUI causing bodily injury, but for possession of an assault weapon and carrying a loaded firearm. They've added gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated charges as alcohol is suspected as a factor in the crash.

A new high speed internet project has been announced by a couple of North Coast lawmakers. State Sen. Mike McGuire and Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry say the Middle Mile project in Lake County will be one of many high speed internet projects to be funded in Northern California. The project includes high-capacity fiber lines that can carry large amounts of data at higher speeds over long distances between local networks. It will cover 80 miles in Lake County along Highways 20, 175 and 29. It's one of 18 projects Gov. Newsom announced last week to fill missing infrastructure paths that can bring broadband to all.

As with many other statewide jurisdictions and school districts, the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors has announced the final boundary lines for the county's supervisorial districts. Unless there are legal challenges, the maps will stick after the Redistricting Advisory Commission announced the final vision. The commission got a lot of public feedback. Some of their challenges including in District 3, which apparently grew a lot since the last US Census and District 4 shrunk. There are almost 95,000 residents in Mendocino County which had to be split evenly amongst five districts. The board is expected to finalize the maps at their meetings next month.

After the state was hit with severe drought, Mendocino County hired a consultant to help make sure water systems could withstand the drought before next summer. Mendocino Voice reports the consultant is also reportedly helping the county potentially create its own stand alone water agency, or re-establishing the Mendocino County Water Agency (MCWA). The goal is to get the agency online by May 1st. The consultant hired reportedly has expertise in getting grant writing to the California Department of Water Resources because right now there's no funding for the water agency. The water agency was folded into the Planning and Building Services Department over a decade ago to save money.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors has issued a proclamation at their latest meeting, to recognize National Native American Heritage Month. The recognition goes all the way back to 1915. And the first American Indian Day was the following May. Then President Gerald Ford proclaimed Oct. 10-16 of 1976 was Native American Awareness Week. Then in 1986, then President Ronald Reagan proclaimed Nov. 23-30 as American Indian Week and it continued annually until President George H. W. Bush signed a law designating the entire month of November as the first National American Indian Heritage Month (now known as Native American Indian Month).

Protestors want a new name for Squaw Valley. They've been trying for a year to get the Fresno County Board of Supervisors to change the name and revisited the idea this week. It was a tad acrimonious at their meeting this week as many spoke out about the name which some find to be racist and misogynistic. One supervisor said it was up to Squaw Valley residents. A coalition of residents and local tribe members and other stakeholders has been formed. More than 3,500 people live in the area. And 18,000 signatures are on a petition to change the name.

The Rotary Club of Clearlake is hosting their annual Community Christmas Dinner again. After a year away at the height of the pandemic, the 28th annual community Christmas Dinner and Celebration will happen Dec. 11th at Burns Valley School. The last public dinner, 2 years ago was attended by 1,300 people. This year will be in person, to pick up only. So those receiving will get a takeout option. Separately Meals on Wheels is also delivering meals to 200 registered recipients.

The top dog for a major California Cannabis company is threatening to withhold tax money to the state unless they change rules on how the taxes are paid. Kym Kemp is reported Michael Steinwetz, the CEO and founder of Flow Kana wrote an opinion piece on Medium about how the cultivation tax rises with inflation at the same time cannabis prices can go down. His op-ed came out after the state announced the tax surplus and a higher cultivation tax. So Steinwetz is urging other cannabis businesses to withhold taxes too

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as the industry struggles with lower profits and higher taxes. Motel vouchers are being offered in Fort Bragg for the unsheltered as we hit freezing overnight temperatures. The Hospitality House doesn't have a winter shelter this year, so instead the city's offering motel rooms to those who qualify. A contract was reportedly approved by the city council earlier this month for the vouchers in extreme weather for those needing a place to stay. They are available through March 31st and come directly from the Police Dept. They will also be distributed when all emergency shelters are at capacity. The vouchers will only be given out the day the weather is considered severe due to heavy rains and/or lower than normal winter temperatures.

Cal Fire and FEMA are reminding about holiday fires. Like if you leave food unattended in your kitchen. FEMA's National Data Center says cooking is the leading cause of Thanksgiving Day fires and over half happen during daytime hours when folks are preparing their Thanksgiving meal. The Cal Fire director says Thanksgiving Day is one of the busiest days of the year with home cooking fires, saying many things can happen as you prepare your meal and can become distracted near hot appliances. Unattended cooking is one of the leading causes of cooking fires and Thanksgiving sees four-times the average number.

Lake Family Resource Center is doling out hundreds of food cards this holiday season. The agency is distributing 400 food cards that were donated by Foods, Etc. in Clearlake and 400 more that were donated by Bruno's Shop Smart in Lakeport. A drive through event for Southshore residents is happening Saturday, Dec. 4th and for those on the Northshore, Friday, Dec. 17th. The Resource Center took the lead after the Hunger Task Force stopped back in 1995 as members retired.

Agreeing with state government, a federal judge is mandating all California prison employees must be fully vaccinated with the COVID vaccine by Jan. 12th. Since the pandemic started, there have been many outbreaks. At the four youth correctional institutions, 255 youth and 278 staff members have gotten infected with coronavirus. A federal report blames the outbreaks on employees. The judge's order comes after the California Correctional Peace Officers Association requested a postponement of a vaccination mandate for prison staff.

A Mendocino County winery has been awarded Climate Neutral certification. Bonterra Organic Vineyards, in Hopland says they worked with a nonprofit to tally all of its sources of greenhouse gas emissions from when the wines start to when they get to the consumer, "cradle to consumer." Last year the company says most of its emissions were in packaging, materials and shipping, and another 33% from farming and grapes, and just 5% from employee commuting and travel. So they offset their footprint through "responsible, third-party sourced, nature-based" carbon credits.

The Redwood Credit Union reports donating tens of thousands of dollars to local nonprofits as part of the International Credit Union Day. The credit union donated almost \$41,000 to 10,000 Degrees and North Bay Children's Center. They donated 25 cents to local nonprofits supporting children and youth development in Sonoma, Napa, Marin, Lake, Mendocino, and San Francisco counties each time members used their RCU Visa debit or credit card on Oct. 21st. The theme this year, the Credit Union says, was "Building financial health for a brighter tomorrow".

A company in San Francisco working with PG&E to install mountaintop cameras to spot wildfires in the North Bay. The company, Pano, installed the stations using high-definition cameras and artificial intelligence with certain computing hardware so it could see, 360-degree views at 10 miles out at seven locations in Sonoma, Napa and Lake counties. Four were put up along the Alexander Valley south to Windsor, two in the Napa Valley and one on the east side of Clear Lake. And others were also installed in other Western states. The company says the pilot program had about 90% accuracy in detection which then feeds 911 dispatch centers.

A coronavirus testing lab in California is not facing any penalties after state officials found "significant deficiencies" after a whistleblower report. The Valencia Branch Laboratory reportedly did have issues in training and record-keeping but the whistleblower report which said the lab destroyed data or documents couldn't be verified. The laboratory opened in October of 2020 and a preliminary report showed only a fraction of 1% of over 1.5 million tests processed had problems. PerkinElmer reports working with the state and addressing all concerns. The state found they were in "full compliance". The lab has since sued the whistleblower for ignoring a confidentiality agreement and the lab is being investigated by the federal government.

Almost one million Californians may have to pay back some benefits. The EDD says new federal rules require individuals show proof that they worked, planned to work, or were self-employed before the pandemic. That's for anyone who filed a claim to get the federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance boost after December 27th of 2020. Those affected by the rule change were notified this past summer. Anyone who doesn't respond to the notice could be barred from receiving PUA funds this year and may have to repay money from 2020.

Mendocino Railway has finally finished the buy of the former Georgia Pacific millsite in Fort Bragg. Last Friday the acquisition was complete. The site has sat dormant for about 20 years. The CEO of the Sierra Railroad Company, who owns Mendocino Railway says the railroad and old millsite both fell on hard times after the railroad was sold off and they've been working on getting it back online ever since. He says the railway has record ridership now and they're working to reopen Tunnel #1. Mendocino Railway has been working with the City of Fort Bragg for next steps for the millsite, possibly including a community theater and marketplace, train station and visitors' center.

The City Manager in Fort Bragg for about the last four years is leaving. Tabatha Miller announced last week that January 22nd will be her last day on the job. The mayor says Miller has done a great job and will be missed. Miller told Mendo Fever she's most proud of getting city finances out of a deficit cycle each year, increase in tourism taxes and hiring a branding agency. She also reflected on the pandemic and the drought, but thanked the citizens and local businesses. The mayor says they're looking for Miller's replacement and until then city staff will fill the void.

Someone at the Ukiah Jack in the Box had to get a dose of Narcan, the opioid overdose reversal drug. Mendo Fever reports hearing on the scanner this week that medics reported to the fast food restaurant on Airport Park Boulevard for someone overdosing. The report said the individual was conscious and denied medical aid. Dispatch reportedly got a report from first responders the person was standing up on their own.

The state says commercial Dungeness Crab fishing will start on the coast north of the Sonoma/Mendocino County line to the border with Oregon beginning December 1st. Humpback whales have migrated out of Fishing Zones 1 and 2 and crabs there have passed quality testing, meaning fishermen can once again take to the water. Other offshore zones to the south will remain closed because of the number of whales still in those areas. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife says the opening the season on Wednesday will allow crabbers to get to work so fresh caught Dungeness will be on tables and menus by the time the year is out.

11/26/21

Lake County is getting 80 miles of new high-speed fiber cable to expand broadband internet service to more people. State Senator Mike McGuire says the build-out is one of the first 18 projects funded under California's largest in the nation high-speed project. The new cables will run along Highways 20, 175 & 29. McGuire says the Covid pandemic highlighted disparities among California's small towns, urban cities, and rural counties about the lack of reliable internet service. Work should start in the next few months.

Mendocino College says there will be more in-person classes when the new semester starts in January. The school says there will be a more normal looking schedule with safety in mind as classes move away from the online model that has been in place since the pandemic started. Officials say when the spring 2022 term begins Jan. 18, the schedule will look similar to how it did pre-pandemic. Superintendent/President Tim Karas many events and activities will also return allowing campus life, and community engagement to feel much as it did before. Even so, Karas says the Mendocino County College will operate with safety in mind. Beginning January the college will require all students and staff to show proof of being fully vaccinated before coming to campus. Those who do not show proof of vaccination will have to provide weekly negative COVID-19 test results. All employees, students and guests will also required to wear masks while indoors on campus. There is information on the website [mendocino.edu](http://mendocino.edu). Registration for next semester classes has already started

The Lake County Board of Supervisors has gone on the record opposing a proposed PG&E rate increase to cover costs associated with wildfire mitigation and Covid-19. Lake Co News reports that the board unanimously approved a letter to the state Public Service Commission this week, outlining its opposition to the planned 4.9 percent increase. The board's letter says higher bills would hurt people least able to afford to pay them. It also says PG&E service is unreliable, with more than 200 long outages in the county since the start of the year. The utility has already sent out bill inserts notifying customers of the planned increase. PG&E wants it to take effect as soon as next fall, but the PUC says the request is so complex, proceedings could take 18 months or more. The PSC website is accepting public comments. Of the comments so far, all have been OPPOSED to the higher rate.

A routine traffic stop leads to drug charges and charges of impersonation against a man from Clearlake Oaks. The Mendocino County Sheriff's office says 53-year-old Alan Crow was a passenger in a car they pulled on Highway 101 in Ukiah. Crow told the deputies the car was his, but because he had been drinking he let a friend drive. When deputies searched the Buick they found drug paraphernalia and what they suspected was meth. Deputies started to question Crow's story and eventually concluded he was giving them a fake name to avoid arrest on a felony warrant from Lake County. After they got his real name, officers took Crow to Mendocino County jail where his bail was set at \$30,000.

A man from Covelo is accused of resisting arrest after Mendocino County Sheriff's deputies showed up at his door to take him in on a felony violation of parole warrant. They say Fox Blue Hoaglin struggled and made a move for a knife hidden in a couch as they tried to cuff him. Eventually, they got Hoaglin under control and took him to the county lockup. He is being held without bail on the felony violation charge.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's office has charged a man from Covelo with domestic violence battery. Deputies say Pervinder Lai is accused of pushing a woman against a wall during a fight in the 24000 block of Foothill Boulevard. She suffered what the deputies call a visible injury. Lai was taken to the Mendocino County Jail, where his bail was set at \$25,000.

A woman described as a person of interest in a theft investigation in Fort Bragg is in the Mendocino County jail without bail. Deputies say 41-year-old Summer Mascott was already wanted on a felony warrant from El Dorado County, leading to the no-bail detention.

Felony Domestic Violence and other charges against a woman from Ukiah. The Mendocino County sheriff's office says 31-year-old Sandra Ibarra got into a fight with her boyfriend, threw his cell phone across the room, hit him with a board, and with a frying pan. They say that blow was so hard that it bent the pan. Officers say the couple's two children were home and saw the fight. In addition to the domestic violence charge, Ibarra is accused of assault with a deadly weapon and child cruelty. When she was booked, Ibarra had bail was set at \$25,000.



When the Clearlake Rotary last hosted a Christmas Dinner in 2019, about 1,300 people showed up. Now, after a year off due to Covid, plans are taking shape for this year's dinner on December 11th. It will be the 28th such meal but this dinner will be different than the others due to safety protocols. The meals will be takeout, with a drive-up or walk-up option. The meals will be served at the Burns Valley School starting at 10 AM and going until the food runs out. The dinner will also include food for more than 200 people in the Meals on Wheel program, delivered on the same day. Rotary officials say while the format may be different, they're glad to be bringing the event back to help people in the community. No holiday celebration would be complete without SANTA. He will be there, riding in a fire truck and handing out toys and candy to good boys and girls as he passes by.

The City of Ukiah is looking for people who want to deck out their homes with holiday lights. The city is repeating its Holiday Lighting competition called Let It Glow again this year. Organizers say they want to light up the Ukiah Valley in a fun, yet safe way. There will be prizes for the top three homes and businesses in the city and the surrounding areas. The city website has entry information and will have an online map so you'll know where to find the displays.

Governor Newsom wants more security around high end stores that have been hit with a series of bold robberies in the past couple weeks. There more such thefts around the state the day before Thanksgiving, including one in Santa Rosa. In that case, 4 young men ran into an Apple Store, scooped up \$20,000 worth of stuff and bolted out the door. Police think the motive is to quickly fence expensive merchandise then quickly fence it online.. Store employees say they're terrified and that those robberies could easily turn violent or even deadly.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office has reported to an apartment complex in Ukiah after reports of a stabbing. Deputies on scene yesterday reported one man down with life-threatening injuries and multiple suspects who were no longer there when they arrived. Any more details on the event

11/29/21 have not been released.

A house on fire reported south of Ukiah. Multiple emergency responders on the scene Saturday night on Blue Oak Drive south of Ukiah. The home was reportedly saved by responders. Hopland Fire Protection Chief Mitch Franklin told Mendo Fever the home's garage and a chunk of the kitchen were destroyed. They have no cause yet. Joining Hopland at the scene, the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority, Redwood Valley/Calpella Fire Department, Potter Valley Fire, and Cal Fire.

A man on a bike with a machete reportedly disappears into the night. Mendo Fever reports hearing on the scanner this weekend deputies called to a Mexican restaurant to a Hispanic man with a machete on a bike. But by the time they arrived, there was no sign of the guy.

Several people reportedly called 911 to report hearing gunshots in Ukiah. Some of those reporting said they saw a black truck speeding on Empire Drive. Someone else said they thought the gunshots were coming from Low Gap Road and North State Street. Police rushed to the scene, but no word if they found anyone.

A college student has been appointed to a commission on student aid by the Governor. The Mendocino College Superintendent announced Leonardo Rodriguez would represent community college students on the California Student Aid Commission. The commission is in charge of the state's \$4 billion portfolio of student financial aid programs and services and is the go-to for policymakers and community members on college affordability and financing. 20-year-old Rodriguez is also the 2021-2022 Student Trustee at Mendocino College where he has been a student since 2019. Even though we've had quite a bit of rain this fall, it doesn't necessarily mean we're out of the woods as far as the extreme drought goes. The National Integrated Drought Information Center, part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reports we have less than a 40% chance of water supplies getting back to normal after winter. Even more, they say there's a 50% chance or higher, the state's drought will even get worse. The report goes on to say, water levels at the state's major reservoirs are still way below normal with La Nina conditions bringing a greater change of a drier, warmer winter than usual for some parts of the state.

It's not out of the ordinary for major traffic jams on holiday weekends. Yesterday the Regional Transportation Commission in Nevada reported cars barely creeping along the California-Nevada border as people traveled between Las Vegas and Los Angeles. There were backed ups 19 miles long reported on Saturday on the southbound I-15. Yesterday there was another 13 mile long jam up on the border. A 15 minute drive was taking 90 minutes.

Public health officials in Calif. say they're keeping a close watch on the new COVID19 variant called Omicron. The director of the state Dept. of Public Health, Dr. Tomas Aragon said the state has not identified any cases yet and that vaccines are the best way to protect against serious illness. He also said those fully vaccinated should consider getting their booster, and that all Californians have "access to safe, effective, and free vaccines that can prevent serious illness and death". The new strain was first identified in South Africa.

Sales of second homes across Calif. are at such record levels, multiple offers and outrageous bids now seem to be the norm. The company Redfin reported second-home sales across the country were up a whopping 70% in October from pre-pandemic levels. And the second home market was up last January with sales nearly doubling from a year before. The online brokerage company used their mortgage reporting data to track sales. They reported second-home sales in California up 54% in 2021. And that as many as 35,000 vacation and second homes will be sold this year. The wine country and Bay Area are popular spots for sales of second homes.

A grim reality in Humboldt County. After nearly two years of the pandemic, the county has confirmed almost 10,000 cases of COVID19. That's about 1 in 13 of Humboldt's 134,000 residents. As of Saturday the county was at 9,963 positive cases, under 40 away from the milestone. The Humboldt County Public Health director said there may actually be a much higher number of cases because of more at home testing. The state is in a much better place than a year ago, but so far this year, we've seen more cases that we did last year. Humboldt has more people in the hospital this year, then last too. The 7-day average was 11 hospitalizations compared to 3, a year ago.

A California labor union says a strike by some Kaiser Permanente staffers might have been the largest in over a century. And members of the hospital giant reported being impacted by the staff shortage too. Some Bay Area residents told local media they got automated messages when they called saying the hold time would be several hours. Others say they had calls to cancel medical procedures, screenings and even surgeries. The Sacramento Bee reports Kaiser executives sent the newspaper a letter for community members as an apology for "any inconvenience" (members) may have experienced during last week's strikes.

A lawsuit has been filed by a shareholder advocacy organization against a new law mandating Calif. corporations appoint people of color or LGBTQ leaders to their boards of directors. The National Center for Public Policy Research is suing to get the new so-called "diversity quotas" tossed, claiming they injure the right for the plaintiff to vote for the candidate of their choice, free of a government-imposed race, sex, and sexual orientation quotas. The conservative group reportedly invests in more than a dozen California corporations they say would be impacted by the law, including Apple, Facebook, Netflix, Tesla, Twitter and Wells Fargo.

A special meeting's being held by the Lake County Board of Supervisors where they will put the finishing touches on their supervisorial districts and decide if they should send a letter to the state about mask mandates for indoor sports in schools. The meeting's at the regular time, 9 am tomorrow morning at the courthouse. The new boundary maps will be presented to the board for the five supervisorial districts. Then they will discuss the letter that the board chair is asking for the board to send to the State Dept. of Public Health Secretary regarding mandatory mask wearing for indoor basketball players and referees after some schools contacted the board. The schools consider the mask wearing unrealistic and possibly even dangerous while they exercise. Instead they want twice weekly testing and no mask wearing.

[A new website is online for North Coast Opportunities. The website was put t](#)

The deadline is looming for wildfire survivors in California for the state's Consolidated Debris Removal Program. At the same time contractors report making a major dent in removing debris for property owners filled out those Right of Entry forms and enrolled. So far in Lake County related to the Cache Fire crews have taken out burned metal, concrete ash and contaminated soil from 458 properties. The state also reported 64 site assessments and 64 asbestos assessments were done and 40 asbestos abatements. But the 458 properties were only about a third of nearly 1,500 in 10 counties in the debris removal program. Homeowners in Alpine, El Dorado, Kern, Lake, Lassen, Mendocino, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Siskiyou, Tehama, Trinity, Tulare and Tuolumne counties have until tomorrow to sign up for the program.

The town of Oroville says they would like to fend for themselves and declared itself a "constitutional republic". The city council voted 6 to 1 to approve the declaration early this month, the mayor saying the Governor's vaccine mandate for kids was the "last straw". Mayor Scott Thomson telling the LA Times the government had no right to tell him or his children what they could put in their bodies. The declaration says any state or federal government order would not be enforced by the city. It comes after the city took millions in aid after the failure of the Oroville Dam a few years back. The LA Times report cites experts who say the declaration is mostly symbolic.

11/30/21

A man from Willits has been arrested in connection to reports of a possible domestic violence incident. Deputies got a call to the home finding a woman and a witness who said the woman was in a relationship with John Knight and they had kids together. They say he came over Friday, knocked on the garage door, then the front door and when the woman tried to talk to him, he grabbed her by the neck and tried strangling her, then forced his way inside. She says he knocked her onto the couch, so she hit him back to get him to stop. Deputies say he drove away but they pulled him over, finding he was on Post Release Community Supervision. He was arrested for violating that and domestic violence battery and was held on \$25,000.00 bail.

A man from Willits has been arrested after an assault on another man on Thanksgiving. Deputies say they got a call Thursday morning from a man who says he was confronted in front of his home by Christopher Cochran who took a softball sized rock and threw it at him, hitting him in the back. Cochran was found at a different location and arrested for assault with a deadly weapon other than firearm and booked on \$32,500.00 bail.

3 more people in Mendocino County have died due to COVID19. The Public Health Dept. reports we are gaining on 100 deaths in the county. The 95th death was in a 66 year old woman from Ukiah who was not vaccinated. The 96th, also in a woman. The 78 year old from Willits was fully vaccinated with severe comorbidities. And the 3rd, the county's 97th death, was a Willits man who was 76 years old, and not vaccinated. They remind you to be careful as you put yourself in situations where you could be exposed to the virus.

Congressman Jared Huffman says even though a traditional infrastructure bill to fix roads and bridges has made it to the president for signature, it won't mean a lot unless the Build Back Better Act is passed with it. The infrastructure bill passed November 19th which included money for more broadband internet access, and other benefits such as 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave, climate crisis work, including forest management to prevent catastrophic wildfires and making water systems more resilient to drought. But Huffman says some of that was tossed after the Senate started working on the bill. He says the twin, Build Back Better act will include climate change work, like adding more electric vehicle charging stations and updating the electrical grid.

A new Utility Bill Assistance Program has been approved for people living in the City of Ukiah due to the pandemic. The money comes from the state Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program put together for low and moderate income households still having problems making ends meet because of the pandemic. The payments are for those who cannot pay utilities so they're not turned off and has to be paid directly to a utility or service provider up to \$1,000

Applications and more info is available at the city's website at [www.cityofukiah.com](http://www.cityofukiah.com)

State Senator Mike McGuire is having a virtual town hall on the Great Redwood Trail. The meeting tonight to discuss updates on the project, its current timeline, and the latest on train construction, wildfire prevention, security, and master plan. The meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. To join live reach out to the Senator's office.

[If you want to add an in law or granny apartment, the City of Ukiah has new e](#)

Clearlake has a newbie business in town... Starbucks. The new coffee giant has opened its doors locally, next to Carl's Jr. on Dam Road Extension, next to the Walmart shopping center. The mayor says there are more than 2 dozen good paying jobs at the coffee house which opened Monday. The City Manager reported several delays with the new store which was supposed to open two months ago after breaking ground in May. Lake Co News reports there's competition coming, Mudslingers, another coffee business has been approved by the planning commission for drive-thru and walk up service. No word when they'll open.

New leaders are being chosen by the Clearlake City Council. At their meeting tonight the council will also meet in closed door session to discuss a lawsuit in process against the county and the treasurer-tax collector, negotiations for some local properties and a drug company. All that starts at 5 pm, then the regular meeting at 6 at City Hall. A closed door session summary will be announced at the start of the public session. The council will get an update as well on the cleanup efforts of the Cache Fire, then appoint a new mayor and vice mayor.

A new law in Calif. says insurance companies must shorten the wait times patients wait for mental health care. It was almost a unanimous vote by the state legislature calling for state health insurers to cut wait times for mental health care to no more than 10 business days. It follows a handful of other states with similar laws to limit wait times, including Colorado, Maryland and Texas. The Calif. Healthcare Foundation surveyed residents late in 2019 with half responding they waiting too long to see a mental health care provider when they needed one.

Thousands of Cal. State Univ. students might lose options for affordable housing this year due to an error in the fine print of new state student housing program. It sounds like fiction, but CalMatters reports the error was admitted to by Cal State officials who say some paperwork to get some of the \$2 billion Gov. Gavin Newsom set aside for student housing, didn't make an October 31st deadline after school officials didn't understand how to spend the grant funds. The mistake, CalMatters says, could impact as many as 3,000 students.

The State Public Health Dept. says so far there are no cases of the new COVID-19 variant in California. But they're keeping a close eye in case the omicron variant pops up. It first surfaced in South Africa but has not made the list in Calif. of variants of interest. There are also no cases at all so far in the U.S. as a whole. The president addressed the public on the new strain yesterday saying it was of concern, but not to panic, urging citizens to get their vaccines and booster shots.

Shots fired reported by a gas station on Main St. in Willits. But complaints are pouring into police officials saying it took several calls and as much as two hours for officers to get to the scene last Friday morning. Mendo Voice reports the gas station owner complained that officers should have been there sooner. The police chief admitted there was a communication breakdown and acknowledged officers "should have gotten there sooner." The shooting by AM/PM Friday morning where a handful of people in different groups had a verbal altercation which ended in shots fired. Nobody was injured. Officers arrived around 8 am. The chief says he felt the incident was downplayed by the reporting caller, and they felt it wasn't urgent.

12/01/21

Tis the season... Adventist Health Ukiah Valley has a free ice skating event for the holidays. The Community Ice Skating Day is this Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Ukiah on Ice is at Alex Thomas Plaza and includes a DJ, refreshments, face painting for the kids and the Blue Zones team will be on hand too. Other local organizations will be on hand with live entertainment, free dance lessons and more. Adventist Health is inviting all to come out for a fun day to kick-off the holiday season.

At the same time the state considers banning gas-powered vehicles and oil drilling, a pipeline that was supposed to be replaced may be reconsidered. The pipeline ruptured a couple months ago near Huntington Beach releasing as much as 25,000 gallons of crude. Plains All American Pipeline is expected to consider replacing that pipeline. A spokesperson for the company says they had safely transported 90 billion gallons throughout North America last year and they're committed to designing, constructing and maintaining lines in a safe, reliable manner. There's also a class action lawsuit against the pipeline after the rupture.

PG&E says they're looking at ways to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to spot wildfires. The utility company's Wildfire Safety Operations Center is testing AI and machine-learning capabilities in its high-definition camera network across the state, working with ALERTWildfire. There are almost 140 HD cameras across High Fire-Threat Districts in Central and Northern Calif. 46 of those have the new technology. The company reports one of its cameras on Howell Mountain in Placer County saw smoke a minute before fire dispatch got a call and was soon the River Fire.

It's pretty ironic. Over the Thanksgiving holiday week, there were over 60 calls for power outages around the Ukiah area... it turned out to be wild Turkeys that flew into power lines. The calls over the last week in the Deerwood Drive area. PG&E says the power outages were short and caused by "turkey activity". Apparently there were between 60-70 turkeys roosting or living in the area. The first outage was reported on Thanksgiving morning. PG&E says a Turkey flew into a line and died. The customer lost power for an hour.

The North Coast Commercial Crab Season is set to open. It's been years since it opened on December 1st due to high acid levels in the crabs, migrating whales and pricing. One area along the coast seems to always open on time, in mid-November because they don't have the same quality testing, but this year whale migration delayed it. Demand is reportedly high this year so fishermen negotiated a higher price of \$2.00 a pound more from last year.

The California Attorney General says it was a good move for the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals to uphold the state's ban on Large Capacity Magazines (LCMs). Atty. General Rob Bonta appealed a lower court ruling and won with the Ninth Circuit voting in favor 7-4 to reaffirm the state's ban. Bonta called it a victory for public safety in the state, saying gun violence is an epidemic. This type of magazine can hold over 10 rounds of ammo. It's been against the law in Calif. to manufacture, import, keep or offer for sale, give, or lend LCMs since 2000.

A law firm in Sacramento is asking for the public's help to identify any loved ones or others they know of who have been buried in the Russian River Cemetery District where there are several unmarked graves. The graves are at the Historic Redwood Valley Cemetery in Mendocino County which are part of a land dispute between the cemetery and a vineyard owner close by. The lawsuit filed by the vineyard owner is looking to get the remains of people buried at least 100 years ago moved out of part of the cemetery the vineyard owner says is on his land.

The City of Fort Bragg is just saying no to rehabbing the Mendocino Railway. The city council has agreed to send a letter to the U.S. Department of Transportation asking the agency to say no to Mendocino Railway's application for a 31 million dollar Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Financing loan to fix the collapsed tunnel between Fort Bragg and Willits. The city says it's a stunt so Mendocino Railway can develop land in Fort Bragg. It comes after word the company wants to develop Mill Site land for tourists.

There's a new Health Services director in Lake County. The Board of Supervisors has voted for Jonathan Portney who has a master's degree in Public Health, to be the new director after the last one resigned instead of possibly being fired. After the appointment the board also gave kudos to County Administrative Officer Carol Huchingson who's been the interim Health Services Director for two months.

Portney will officially start Jan. 10th. At the same time the county's looking for a permanent Public Health Officer as Dr. Gary Pace quit in April. He and a couple others having been filling in as interim officers.

Santa is seeing visitors this year in person at the Pear Tree Center in Ukiah again. Santa will be there this Saturday at noon and see kids for pictures each weekend until the 19th of December. The Pear Tree Center is partnering with Toys for Tots this year asking for visitors to bring in a new unwrapped gift for kids who otherwise would not get any presents for the holidays. There will be horse drawn carriage rides in the JC Penney parking lot too.

No word so far how the state plans to handle the latest COVID19 "variant of concern". After the president made public remarks on the omicron strain, the governor didn't comment. He did tweet Saturday reminding residents to get vaccinated and boosted, if they're eligible. But some local jurisdictions and school districts were taking matters into their own hands as they already had vaccine mandates in place. Some school districts with staff shortages are even paying teachers or other staff to get vaccinated.

The Salvation Army in Lake County continues to raise money with Virtual Red Kettles. The virtual or online fundraisers are in addition to the traditional, in person bell ringers with the IRL red kettles. The nonprofit is looking to raise enough money to help the neediest during the pandemic. The Virtual Red Kettles first happened last Christmas. They say they're hopeful folks will continue to give to help keep families stay sheltered this holiday season.

The Mendocino Board of Supervisors have had yet another redistricting hearing. It was the fourth meeting on the matter which has to happen each decade after the latest US Census report. It means the five districts must be evenly distributed with residents. The supervisors appear to be near the end of the redistricting process, asking staff to bring back a resolution to adopt the final map. The law requires there must be at least four public hearings. The fifth is coming on Tuesday where the Board is expected to complete the process. The meeting will be livestreamed on the county's YouTube page.

12/02/21

For more information, contact the Executive Office at: (707) 463-4441 or [redistricting](https://www.mendocinocounty.org/government/executive-office/redistricting).

Lake County is doing the same, each of their five districts will have 13,633 residents or be within 10% of that number. There will be some juggling with some folks moving districts, but not large chunks of the population. The board also told staff to bring them a resolution to accept the new maps ahead of the Dec. 15 deadline.

A man from Kelseyville who was arrested in connection to a standoff with police has been arrested again, for threatening others. Joshua "Buck" Brown was arrested yesterday morning after a search warrant was served at his home because of a report of elder abuse and criminal threats. It comes four years after the standoff with a SWAT team. Another SWAT team came to serve the warrant with officers this week because of past interactions with authorities and former county supervisor Rob Brown related to a rail being installed near an illegal road access. He's due in court today.

Plans are well underway to convert hundreds of miles of crumbling railroad from Sonoma to Humboldt County into the rail trail. At a town hall last night, State Sen. Mike McGuire touted the plans and what's been done so far to get the area in shape. He says the state has earmarked \$10.5 million in this year's budget to start the master planning process. That will outline the plan to construct the nearly 300 mile trail and say how it will stay secure after it's done, especially in back country areas. McGuire says the community will be front and center in the entire planning process. He says some of the trail is already being put together in areas like Willits and Arcata.

A man that disappeared while on a hunting trip with his son five weeks ago has still not been heard from. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office says they have a couple of new plans about how they will search for John Davis after new evidence was found in an aerial search last week. They say they will have teams on the ground even as the family continues their foot search. But the Sheriff's office says some of the area around Highway 162 is private property so civilians won't have access. The family for their part says they've been searching for the last two weeks without any Sheriff's dept. help. The family is looking for a home to rent in Covelo so they can continue searching. The Sheriff's office says they think Davis disappeared into the Eel River during a heavy storm in swift moving water.

Watch out for CHP officers in an enforcement operation in their Northern Division. They'll be out in force on Highway 101 today in an effort to reduce the amount of injury and fatal traffic crashes on the 101 after hundreds of crashes the last two years in Mendocino and Humboldt counties. The CHP reported over 1,500 crashes causing 535 injuries and killing 32 people. They pegged the cause of most of the crashes on speed, reckless driving, unsafe lane changes, unsafe timing movements, following too close, distracted driving, and DUI.



A case of the new Omicron coronavirus strain has surfaced in Calif. The White House made the announcement yesterday as new restrictions were put in place for travel to and from South Africa where the strain first turned up. Dr. Anthony Fauci announced the Calif. case yesterday saying the person had traveled from South Africa back to Calif. November 22nd and tested positive on Nov. 29th. Still pretty sketchy info on the strain so far, just that it has multiple strains within itself.

Two more people in Mendocino County have died from coronavirus. The Mendocino County Public Health Office put out a statement last night that the 98th death was that of an 87 year old woman from Ukiah who had not been vaccinated, and the 99th death was in a 64 year old Ukiah man, also unvaccinated with severe co-morbidities. As with all other deaths from the virus in the county, public health is again reminding to be careful where you go, as you may be exposing yourself to the virus. They also remind you can get the vaccine and those over 65 years old should consider getting the booster shot.

Due to the drought the Dept. of Water Resources is issuing no more water to agencies in 2022. Further, the agency noted if conditions continue to be this dry, there could be mandatory cutbacks. The State Water Project which delivers water to 29 districts have the maximum they can ask for. They get adjusted each winter and spring after we see how much snowpack and rain we get. But 2020 was the second driest in the state ever. And those districts allocations dropped from 10% in December to 5% in March. The 0% allocation has only happened once since 1996, in January of 2014, during the last drought.

The Bureau of Land Management is asking the public to speak up on some wildfire mitigation efforts in high risk areas on public lands. The agency is seeking public comment on the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) fuels treatments programmatic Environmental Assessment (SWFT pEA) in Calif. and Northern Nevada. There were over 8,000 wildfires in Calif. this year that blackened almost 2.5 million acres. The public comments are being accepted through the end of the month: <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2016583/510> or by email: [blm\\_ca\\_swft\\_ea@blm.gov](mailto:blm_ca_swft_ea@blm.gov). For additional project information, contact the BLM at the email address above.

The Holiday Lights Parade is happening in person in Fort Bragg. This Saturday at 6 pm the mayor will speak briefly then light the Christmas tree, then at 6:30, the parade gets underway. Nor Coast Rodders is coordinating the parade, the Lyme Timber Company is donating the tree, and PG&E was apparently involved in where to place the tree. They say they still need volunteers for traffic control to help police at crosswalks and with road closures.

Interested volunteers should contact Acting Sergeant Anthony Welter at 707-961-2800 ext. 168 or at [awelter@fortbragg.com](mailto:awelter@fortbragg.com).

Questions regarding this information should be directed to the Community Development Department at (707) 961-2824 Ext. 111.

Police dispatch reports in Covelo of a black truck with two people inside firing a gun. Mendo Fever reports there were two incidents, the first last night at about 6:05 pm, someone called saying they were near the 2300 block of Henderson Road when the black truck drove by playing loud music with one person inside in a light shirt and another person, with one of them firing a gun three times then taking off toward Round Valley High School. The other incident about a half hour later, someone called police to say the black truck had someone inside fire a shot in the same area of Henderson Rd. One person also got out of the truck.

Hundreds of healthcare workers will be ousted from their jobs for not being vaccinated against COVID-19. The mandate the governor put in place in Calif. earlier this year covers all staffers in healthcare settings. The deadline was at the end of September and Kaiser and Sutter Health started suspending people, but still gave them time to comply. Now Kaiser said this week they'll give the workers another extension of the December 1st deadline, for one week. Santa Clara Valley Medical Center starting firing people in October., Sutter was giving until mid-October, but no word if they fired anyone. And word is that John Muir Health in Contra Costa County put 5 dozen workers on leave and fired 19 eventually.

The stage 4 drought designation continues in the City of Mendocino. The Mendocino City Community Services District Board of Directors supported the Superintendents recommendation to continue the Stage 4 drought designation because it didn't hit the required 12 inches of rain in October and November. They were close, but no cigar, at 11.2 inches last month. They're meeting next, December 20th to discuss the designation. They also hired consultants to help them with grant applications of over \$3 million dollars to upgrade their recycled water treatment plant.

A new mercantile store is opening at the Shannon Family of Wines company in Kelseyville. On Saturday, the company from Lower Lake will open the old Steele Wines business complete with a wine bar. Their offerings include grass-fed lamb, organic olive oil, and free-range eggs from small, local producers. They also boast a pet-friendly lawn and picnic area where food and wine lovers can hang out. They'll be open Thursdays through Mondays and reservations are not required.

Mendocino County Sheriffs Office is investigating a shooting in Albion early this morning that seriously injured one person. A Nixle alert went out around 3:00 AM asking people in the area Around the 28000 block of Albion Ridge Road to stay inside because of police activity. That advisory was later lifted with two suspects said to be in custody. Initial reports on Mendofever.com said the victim suffered life-threatening injuries. No other information has

12/03/21 been released.

Two new members of the Middletown Unified School District Board of Trustees. Educator Annette Lee and businesswoman Allison Berlogar joined the board this week. They will replace former Board members La Trease Walker and Thad Owens. Walker resigned after a heated board meeting in October over the issue of Covid-19 related mandates. Walker opposed those requirements. Owens did not give a reason when he notified the board he was leaving. The board members who voted to appoint Lee and Berlongar say the pair will bring knowledge of the school district community and education policy to their new positions.

Commercial Dungeness crab season is underway, and it appears to be off to a slow start. Mendocino Voice reports that among crabbers it spoke to, the first couple of days of the new season were disappointing. Noyo Harbor harbormaster Anna Neuman says last year was what she called an atrocious season. That means prices are high at stores and restaurants. Neuman sees signs of hope. She says many crabs in the water now are too small to keep and could grow enough to make the grade in the future.

Some GOOD news about nature. Researchers say the Monarch Butterfly may be making a comeback in California. They have counted up to fifty times more butterflies this season than last, which they call a very encouraging sign after years of declining populations. The scientists aren't sure why the numbers have made such a dramatic rebound. They hope the trend continues in the long butterfly migration in 2022.

Pacific Gas and Electric penalized again for another fire. This time it's the 2019 Kincadee fire. It burned almost 78,000 acres after being ignited by the electric company's transmission equipment in a remote area of The Geysers. Calif. regulators voted to fine the energy giant \$125 million dollars. That means shareholders will have to fork over \$40 million for California's General Fund and \$85 million more to remove abandoned equipment. Nearly 200,000 Sonoma County residents were evacuated after the fire started and it destroyed 174 homes and about 200 other structures.

Reports of a crashed gyroplane along Clear Lake confirming the pilot died. The Press Democrat reports the crash was either in or near the water in south Lakeport. The newspaper reports the Federal Aviation Administration said it was a Vortex Gyroplane that crashed yesterday morning with one person inside. The Lake County Sheriff's Office confirmed one person died at the scene. A coroner was investigating but didn't release any more information. The National Transportation Safety Board was investigating, which is standard operating procedure.

The outgoing city manager in Fort Bragg reportedly sent an email to city staff about an oil spill on the Skunk Train tracks, but it wasn't made public, it just leaked out. The internal email by City Manager Tabatha Miller reported the oil spill on the tracks at the Fort Bragg Depot yard and said the Skunk Train staff were not allowing Mendocino County Environmental Health staff inside saying since it has a federal rail designation, they didn't have to. The Mendo Fever news site and Red Headed Blackbelt site both had pictures from a local man showing the oil spill left behind on Thanksgiving Day. Environmental Health's Hazardous Materials Operations reported a six foot by four foot spill.

A meeting of the Joint Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Forum and Quality Improvement Committee has been scheduled if the public's interested. Next Wednesday, from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm the joint meeting to discuss Behavioral Health and Mental Health programs in Mendocino County. Members of the public, consumers, family members, service providers, and community agencies are encouraged to attend and ask questions, share ideas, give feedback and recommendations for improving the Behavioral Health system of care in the community.

For more information about QIC, or to have the Zoom Link emailed to you, please contact Caitlin Colby, by emailing [CoblyC@mendocinocounty.org](mailto:CoblyC@mendocinocounty.org) or by calling (707) 472-2369.

For more information about MHSA, or to have the Zoom Link emailed to you, please contact Rena Ford, by emailing [FordRe@mendocinocounty.org](mailto:FordRe@mendocinocounty.org) or by calling (707) 472-2724.

A young woman in Ukiah is missing. The family of 23-year-old Kelly Erickson reported not seeing or hearing from her since last Saturday. Her sister said it was unusual for them not to hear from her and that she had last texted a friend saying she was going to her parents in Sebastopol. But she's been unreachable. She was last seen in Ukiah November 23rd. She's described as tall and thin, 5'10" tall with short black hair. Her sister told Mendo Fever she is on the Autism spectrum.

A fire that broke out at a home in Ukiah was arson. That's the word from the Ukiah Valley Fire Authority Battalion Chief. The home on Gibson Street burned, then a 31 year old man from Redwood Valley was arrested. Police say Travis Humphrey was charged with arson of inhabited structure and arson during a state of insurrection. Apparently, it's not his first dance with the law either. He has records of being arrested for drunk in public, trespassing and kicking another man in the head while lying in front of a laundromat in Ukiah. The home that burned was reportedly owned or rented by Redwood Community Services for substance abuse/behavioral health services.

Three men accused of child trafficking by the California Highway Patrol (CHP) were found to be driving family members to work, according to their lawyer. The charges in August of trafficking children "for the purpose of forced labor at a marijuana cultivation site" but their lawyer says the kids were theirs and they were not holding them against their will. The court documents released at a preliminary hearing yesterday in Ukiah where the charged men failed to show up. Avertano Diaz Martinez of Modesto, Fernando Francisco and Abraham Suman Cassilas from Santa Rosa were all arrested on the 101 south of Laytonville. Two teenage boys 15 and 16 were turned over to Child Protective Services and the men were booked into Mendocino County jail.

The Clearlake City Council is staying with who they have. At their final meeting of 2021, the council voted to keep the mayor and vice mayor in their jobs for another year. They voted unanimously for Dirk Slooten to continue as mayor and Russell Perdock as vice mayor. The two were praised for their work. There was some back and forth discussion about keeping the status quo, but ultimately they decided it was the right move ahead of next year.

Cal Fire is transitioning to winter in the Sonoma, Lake, Napa, Colusa, Yolo and Solano county region. As of Monday, Dec. 28th, which is about a month earlier than last year. They will maintain staff in case of any threats and move staff to areas where there is still a higher threat of fire. At the same time state, federal and local land management and fire agencies are also doing wildfire mitigation work, like prescribed burns to improve forest health on private and public lands, following the state's Strategic Fire Plan and localized unit fire plans.

A home intruder was the report from a woman at a home in Covelo after the man is shot and stabbed. The woman called dispatch yesterday morning saying a man was in her home and did not have her permission. Then the dispatcher hears her yelling at the person and tells the Sheriff's dept. there's an active burglary. Someone nearby apparently called to say they heard gunshots and saw a man without a shirt on nearby, trying to flag down passing cars. Someone else called to say they saw a man laying in the road with a "gunshot wound to his stomach." After emergency responders arrived they found head injuries and stab wounds too.

12/06/21

Emergency workers and rescuers were out along the Eel River over the weekend near where a missing man and his son had gone hunting, the man never returned. The latest from the Sheriff's office was they thought John Davis disappeared into the swift water of the river after a heavy storm. The search went on for several days after he vanished November 23rd. They went out again this weekend, even though his family and others have continued their search. No sign was found of Davis again. Some debris was found though in an aerial search which deputies now say was unrelated to Davis, but trash bags commonly used by Caltrans for roadside trash removal.

The Lake County Public Health Office is out with some information and caution to residents after the new COVID19 variant, omicron surfaced in Calif. The variant, the office says, had replaced Delta as the dominant variant in South Africa and that it has the potential for increased transmissibility, and notably, possibly more breakthrough cases of coronavirus. But Dr. Charlie Evans with the agency says they're not sure of any of that yet, and that tests are ongoing globally. He says getting vaccinated is the first line of defense as they have proven to be very effective at preventing hospitalization and death.

#### [Vaccine recommendations are in place for everyone 5 years and above. Boc](#)

More info on the arson fire at a rehab facility in Ukiah. A man has now been arrested in connection with the arson, 31 year old Travis Humphrey. Police say they got a call to the fire last week at a home, finding the first room bedroom with smoke. Everyone inside evacuated themselves out and Humphrey was seen watching the fire from outside as firefighters arrived. Officials say the fire started at Redwood Community Services in Humphrey's room. A staffer said he had previously made suspicious statements leading them to suspect he lit the fire. Arson investigators found an accelerant and later connected Humphrey. He's been arrested and charged with arson, arson during a state of emergency and violating his probation and held on over \$102,000 bail.

After a call about a possible domestic disturbance in Covelo, deputies made an arrest, but not without something of a struggle. Deputies say Jesse Davidson had thrown pool table balls at his wife and threatened to kill her. Deputies say the woman was upset to find Davidson in her home uninvited, and finally got him outside. Deputies say the house looked like she explained with pool balls all around and chairs and other items tipped over. Davidson had active warrants and apparently tried running from arrest and attacked a police dog and deputies before they finally nabbed him. He's held on \$150,000.00 bail

After reports of a man and woman fighting at a Ukiah apartment complex deputies responded. They say they had been to the same apartment no less than 15 times over the last several months. Deputies could see inside before entering, things strewn about and a man yelling at the woman, identified as Lateefah Glover. She would not open the door for deputies who held a window open. They say she then threatened them with a rock. And the man Glover was arguing with came out with a scratch and blood on his face, then opened the door. Glover was arrested for ignoring police and brandishing a deadly weapon, the rock. She was being held on \$15,000.00 bail.

New emergency regulations are being proposed by the Department of Cannabis Control for license fee waivers for equity applicants and licensees. The agency wants the public to know about the waivers for qualified equity businesses across Calif to help anyone impacted by the nation's War on Drugs after they started to operate a cannabis business. They're going to begin accepting fee waiver requests beginning January 1st for the waivers for those who've been convicted or arrested, lost income or their home in an area disproportionately impacted by past criminal justice policies. The state Legislature would give \$30 million toward the equity fee waivers and deferrals.

A man accused of having ghost gun parts shipped across the country, including in Willits is going to prison. Jonathan Cuney of East Greenbush, New York got 87 months in prison and 3 years of supervised release, for unlawfully possessing firearms including "ghost guns," and ammunition. Separately he pleaded guilty in 2019 for illegal gun trafficking in NY. Then in June of this year he admitted he bought parts from online retailers and shipped the stuff to NY, Willits, where he has a home and to Providence, Rhode Island, then made ghost guns from the parts in Rhode Island. He's also had fake FBI gear when he was arrested.

They're picking new leaders in Lakeport. At the next city council meeting, they'll vote on mayor and mayor pro tem. The meeting is online and in person tomorrow. Currently Kenny Parlet and Stacey Mattina are mayor and mayor pro tem. The council will also get an update on the All Children Thrive Youth Governance Council and discuss a resolution to allow the City Manager to apply for Permanent Local Housing Allocation funding over two years at just over \$206,000. The police chief will also ask for almost \$164,000 for new police radios with encrypted technology to meet state requirements.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors has some end of year business to wrap up. At their meeting tomorrow morning, the Board will consider filling advisory and oversight board seats. There's not that much other business to cover besides, considering appointments to the Redevelopment Agency Oversight Board and the Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Advisory Board.

The first ADA-compliant community garden in Fort Bragg has opened. The open house was Sunday, November 14th next to the CV Starr Center. There are twenty, fifty square foot plots and another six, wheelchair-accessible raised beds for folks with mobility issues so they can still get involved in community gardening. The plots are only \$25/year, including the cost of water. You have to spend about fifteen hours to help maintain the garden. Just about half of the plots have been taken.

To inquire about a plot, volunteer or for other information: <http://www.gfcgardensfortbragg.org>.

Thousands of people out on the street in Ukiah for the Truckers Light Parade. The yearly gathering on State Street of vehicles decorated with lights. The Ukiah Mayor, Executive Director of Visit Mendocino and Mendocino Sheriff were judges for the event. Many vehicles had groups of people inside them. The winners were , First place and "Grand Champion"- Granite Construction, Second Place and "Best of Show"- Greater Ukiah Business and Tourism Alliance, Third Place and Honorable Mention- Hernandez Electric and the Best of the City of Ukiah- the Rudolph Truck.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office reports administering NARCAN, the overdose reversal drug twice at the county jail in a week. The first time was last Thursday that jail staff gave NARCAN to someone just arrested by Ukiah Police. The 26 year old was mumbling, then collapsed so a nurse gave him the NARCAN dose. Another dose had to be given, then a third. They were taken to a hospital after. Then Sunday, another incident where medical staff had to administer NARCAN to a 36 year old from Covelo. After two doses for this arrestee an ambulance was called and the man was

12/07/21 taken to a hospital for further treatment.

A shooting reported in the Albion Ridge area had residents sheltering in place. Last Friday police responded to a home and searched for suspects they say were involved in an early morning shooting. Residents had to stay inside for seven hours as cops looked for Jose Morfin Aguilara of Santa Rosa and Roberto Jesus Chavez Sousa of Redwood Valley. The two caught near the crime scene and face charges of attempted murder and conspiracy to commit a crime, and additionally Aguilara faces a 20-year enhancement for using a weapon in the crime.

After a suspected robbery at a convenience store in Cloverdale, Mendocino County law enforcement jumped in to search for the vehicle that was identified in the crime. Mendo Fever reports they were looking last night for a Hispanic man in a white, boxy sedan, possibly an Acura. He was described a 6' tall, 250 lbs, possibly armed, wearing a brown hoodie, jeans, a black mask, with a noticeable mole under his left eye and light brown hair.

Some folks in Fortuna are looking to dedicate part of Highway 101 to a fallen Police Officer. Former officer Ray Mills was the only Fortuna Police Officer to ever die in the line of duty. It happened in March of 1967 while he was helping another officer with a traffic stop and was hit by an alleged drunk driver. There's now a fundraising campaign to get the money to buy signs to honor Mills, potentially near where the incident happened on the 101, just north of the Main Street onramp. State Senator Mike McGuire is reportedly supporting the project, but apparently no state money can be spent on these types of signs, thus, the fundraiser.

Raffle tickets are being sold by the Konocti Women's Service Club to raise money. They say they have eight beautiful gift baskets with items for men, women, children, others that bring Christmas joy, a gardener's delight, and even one for pets. The money they're raising goes for scholarships for Lake County students. They're selling them at Riviera Market in Clearlake Riviera this weekend and the winning tickets will be drawn Sunday. You don't have to be there to win. Over the last five years the Konocti Women's Service Club has presented \$15,000 in scholarships.

Even though there's reported to be a lot of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, the gas is in short supply for those working at breweries, wineries and others in the health care industry. It came with the pandemic as ethanol plants shut down. For example dry ice is a form of carbon dioxide, it's used during wine grape harvesting. Thousands of brewers in the nation use the gas too. They also produce it in their products. The product is also used by the cannabis industry as well as candy distributors, carbonated beverage makers and more.

Contra Costa County reports not all restaurants are following their COVID guidelines. Fines range from \$250 to \$750 for restaurants who don't comply. The Contra Costa County Health Officer says they try to educate first over giving fines, but they have been leveling penalties for repeat offenders. Contra Costa, San Francisco, and the City of Berkeley started to mandate restaurants, bars, and gyms check for customers' vaccine or testing status before they enter the establishment. And Contra Costa County has fined In N Out Burger in Pleasant Hill for purposefully not checking anyone's status.

Two more cases of the omicron variant of coronavirus have been confirmed in California. Yesterday, health officials in Los Angeles County confirmed there was a college student who had been to the East Coast recently and another had just returned from a trip to West Africa. There are now nine confirmed cases of the variant in the state. Six were detected in the Bay Area, and the other three were in L-A County.

The Governor is traveling to promote his new book for kids on dyslexia. Governor Newsom has the learning disability himself. It makes it hard for him to read and says it became more obvious as he noticed some of his own children struggling to read. So he started to look for picture books on the subject and said he was surprised there weren't a lot so he penned one himself. "Ben & Emma's Big Hit" came out today. It's about a young boy named Ben who uses baseball to cope with his dyslexia, with the help of a caring teacher and a friend. Newsom says he'll donate all proceeds to the International Dyslexia Association.

It's getting real in Calif. Anyone caught during the drought doing any one of several things that are going to be outlawed could be fined up to \$500. Some of the offenses include, hosing off a driveway, watering lawns within 48 hours of a rainstorm or washing a car without a shut-off nozzle. The Newsom administration is coming up with statewide rules to ban the flagrant wasting of water. The State Water Resources Control Board says it's similar to previous droughts, common sense wasteful uses of water they want to prohibit. The agency is taking public comment on preliminary rules until Dec. 23rd then will vote on them Jan. 4th.

The state is getting ready in case there's another winter surge of COVID, especially with Delta, which isn't going away, and the new omicron variant. The San Joaquin Valley is preparing as their hospitalization rate, while lower than it has been, is still triple the amount of Los Angeles County. Officials are watching nursing home facilities closely in Los Angeles County too. The Department of Public Health ordered all skilled nursing facility residents, workers and contractors to test weekly if they've been vaccinated or not, between Dec. 15 and Jan. 31.

12/08/21

They've begun the second phase of construction of the Mill St. Improvement project in Point Arena. The city manager says they're installing a new storm drain system in the middle of the street today so traffic will be impacted during school hours, from 7:00am-3:30pm Monday-Friday for about 2 weeks. They're only letting emergency traffic through and are urging residents to find other ways around during construction. They also remind there won't be parking places in the work area, but sidewalks will be open to access businesses and homes.

There's new leadership in Lakeport. At their last city council meeting of the year, they chose a new mayor and mayor pro tem, Stacy Mattina and Mireya Turner respectively. Mattina was the mayor pro tem five times until taking the top spot for next year, her third time as the mayor. And Turner was the mayor pro tem twice before and mayor for one term. The council did other business too, including approving over \$200,000 for a Permanent Local Housing Allocation funding. And the police chief got the approval of nearly \$164,000 for upgrades to radio equipment to meet state requirements.

In Lakeport the school district's board is considering some job assignments. The Board of Trustees is appointing a president and clerk, but more importantly, they're discussing a possible vaccination mandate for students and staff against COVID19. The meeting tomorrow night on Zoom or in person. Dan Buffalo is expected to be named president of the board and Phil Kirby, clerk. The vaccination mandate consideration after the Governor announced the same in October, but it was verify or test. The Lakeport school resolution says they're struggling to hire people so the vaccine requirement could create more open jobs.

Reports of thefts related to rental properties in Lakeport continue. The police dept. reports getting a bunch of calls about thefts where someone pretends they're a landlord for properties in or near Lakeport, saying the victim was approved for the rental property and to pay up on a Cash App. Police say to be careful and not fall for the scam, and not to approve of payments online, especially large sums of money. They also say if you've not met the landlord in person, and have not seen legit paperwork on the property, you should be wary. They say to call police if you are at all skeptical.



California is entering the last of the redistricting process as civil rights groups press the state's redistricting commission to prioritize racial equity. The commission is holding public meetings on draft legislative maps almost every day. And the maps are expected to be approved Christmas Eve. Kathay Feng with California Common Cause says communities of interest need to examine the proposed maps closely.

:12 "We should be looking really hard about whether the proposed lines are drawn in a way that maybe they inadvertently or intentionally hurt a community, but they're drawn that way in order to help an incumbent."

**Tag: Advocates say they want voting districts that avoid pitting minority groups against each other and keep communities of interest together. The California Redistricting Commission is taking public comment on the draft maps at its meetings and on its website.**

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**Second Cut: Brandon Jessup with the nonprofit State Voices says advocates need to delve deep into the census data and press the state commission to consider where communities of color are likely to grow.**

:11 "We need to also say that in the next five years, this community will now be a minority-majority community – and therefore, we have to give them the agency to elect folks that look like them, that reflect their interests."

**Tag: Some groups say they're also preparing to sue under the Voting Rights Act if they deem the final maps are unfair.**

The Festival of Trees to benefit Hospice Services of Lake County takes place in Kelseyville and it's something of an adventure. The event on Saturday included 21 Christmas trees for the auction. This was the third year, and in person, as last year was online. Tickets sold out way before the event, which took place on Kelseyville Lumber property. The proceeds benefit hospice patients, many of which are below the poverty level. Trees auctioned for between \$100 to \$1,000, and one of them went for \$2,200. All of the money for the "Patient Needs Fund."

The Hotcakes for Heroes event is coming to bring money for the Operation Tango Mike organization. The organization along with the Kelseyville Lions have the event this Sunday with breakfast featuring hotcakes, of course, and a choice of sausage, eggs, biscuits and gravy. They will also have juice and coffee. It's from 8 to 11 a.m. at the Kelseyville Lions Club with a suggested donation of \$8. The money goes to help ship monthly care packages to deployed military personnel.

The Ukiah Planning Commission is considering a car wash. At their meeting today, the "Ukiah Car Wash" will be considered for Enrique Espinoza, who's reportedly been working in that industry for more than two decades. He says he's outgrown his current leased space. He wants to buy a couple of undeveloped parcels on a long-vacant property at Observatory Avenue and South State Street. The Design Review Board recommended the project as the site's been empty for almost twenty years. City planning staff is recommending the business be approved. But the proposed owner will have to apply for a review and approval by the Director of the Community Development Department for a 'Final Landscaping Plan'. The meeting tonight on Zoom at 6.

The Sheriff spent some time with a group of county jail inmates discussing bee keeping. Sheriff Kendall met the group last week as part of the jail's garden project. The Sheriff used cooled smoke to calm the bees down along with project participants Bobby Hayes and Daniel Kowalski. They then checked each hive to see how the bee population was doing. Apparently, they had more bees than the last time they met. They also checked the honey stores and brood patterns to make sure they were strong enough to make it through winter. And the Sheriff treated each hive with essential oil of Thyme to protect against mite infestations.

Water conservation is supposed to be an ongoing effort in California by residents, but apparently they haven't stepped up. That's the word from the State Water Resources Control Board who say folks need to prepare for the worse case scenario as they've only cut back by about 13% compared to a year ago. Total water usage is also only down 6% since last July compared to what the governor was looking for, 15%. Northern Calif. did better though, even with all the rain we saw we were down 22%, but southern California was only down 12% in October compared to last year. Some of the water suppliers are urging their customers to conserve more.

Fire killed and fire injured trees can be removed from the August Complex fire zone covering about 2,000 acres in the Covelo and Grindstone Ranger Districts. The Mendocino National Forest Supervisor released a draft decision that there would be no significant impact for the Plaskett-Keller August Complex Phase 1 environmental assessment. The areas where the trees would be removed were mostly dead after the massive Gigafire. The trees to be mulched into biomass so they could be used for energy, saving money and reducing the fuels so they couldn't ignite again in another massive fire. Those who want to object have until January 21st of next year.

After the Fort Bragg City Council held a three-hour closed session regarding the lawsuit over the Skunk Train and the resignation of the city manager, they only announced accepting the city manager leaving. City Manager Tabatha Miller announced last month she was leaving for personal reasons. The closed door session also about Mendocino Railway, the owner of the Skunk Train, taking over part of the millsite with eminent domain to build more rail facilities. City officials had development plans on that site though and have said the Skunk Train should not have public utilities privileges, thus the lawsuit.

There was also a rally about the issue this past weekend. Folks unhappy about what the expansion of the Skunk Train could do to air quality and the railway company being allowed to develop the area without community oversight. The CEO and co-founder of Mendocino Railway's parent company, Sierra Energy, said they didn't do anything wrong because the city had not moved forward in several years with development and they had the ability to acquire the site.

Meanwhile, the Mendocino County Environmental Health Department has issued a notice of violation after a small oil spill on the Skunk Train property. As part of their agreement with the county, they have to comply, but apparently have not allowed the health dept. on the property. They're warned to set up an inspection immediately and come up with a plan to remove any hazardous material and replace contaminated soil, then provide proof of the same.

Sen. Mike McGuire says he's going to be introducing legislation, so the cannabis industry's cultivation tax is reduced. He says the tax is "crushing small farmers" on the North Coast. He says the way it's calculated doesn't fit how the economy works so he's planning to get the tax cut entirely, but get the excise tax, which is tacked on during point-of-sale-transactions, raised. He says he'll tackle the project next year and will ask the Legislature's Legal

12/09/21

Counsel to investigate what's allowable under state statute. A man and his son have been arrested in connection to the Caldor Fire which destroyed over 1,000 homes and other buildings last summer around the Lake Tahoe area. 66 year old David Smith, and his son, 32 year old Travis were accused of reckless arson after the fire burned over three counties and decimated the small town of Grizzly Flats. Tens of thousands of people had to evacuate South Lake Tahoe and five people had injuries. Apparently, dad is an electrician, his son called to report seeing flames. But there is not a lot more info on how officials think they may have set the fire. Their lawyer says they're 100% innocent.

California is prepared to become a sanctuary for women who want abortions if the U.S. Supreme Court overturns Roe Vs. Wade next year. Some clinics in the state with allies in the state Legislature say they have a plan to help women seeking reproductive care, maybe even paying for some travel, lodging and the procedures themselves. The California Future of Abortion Council has come up with a list for the state to look at with 45 recommendations. The Governor apparently started the group which will be included in his budget proposal next month.

A woman found guilty of a hit and run that killed a man over two years ago in the town of Mendocino is going to prison. Gina Rae Bean was convicted for the crash in October, that left Calum Hunnicutt dead. She's been sentenced to 210 days in county jail and has to surrender to the court in January. Hunnicutt was killed in July of 2019 at the intersection of State Route 1 and Little Lake Road. Bean had a green light and Hunnicutt was on his skateboard and was supposedly at fault for the crash, but Bean left the scene, thinking she hit a deer. She was eventually arrested. She will be on probation after her release and has to do 200 hours of community service and pay restitution.

[A draft Community Wildfire Protection Plan is being released by the Mendocir](#)

The head of the state Dept. of Forestry has reportedly asked for a new management plan for the Jackson Demonstration State Forest to make sure Native American cultural resources are protected. The plan would also include access to and co-management of the State Forest (JDSF). The info from the Coyote Valley Tribe of Pomo Indians who met with the Jackson Advisory Group last month. The head of the Forestry Dept. wrote a letter saying the management plan was quite old and was asking for a review. The Tribe also put out a statement thanking the governor for tribal co-management of the forest, and they're calling for a moratorium on logging while the new management plan is being crafted.

Reports of more graffiti in Ukiah from residents and police. Mendo Fever reports police and the Sheriff's Dept. say the local taggings have risen, and that there was an increase in gang related graffiti over the last month. Police say the graffiti may be tied to the Norteños and Sureños criminal gangs. They say they don't know exactly what the tagging means, but just a sign that a specific gang is in that particular territory. Also that it could precede crime or come after a gang-related crime.

A boat has caught on fire in Fort Bragg. The Fire Dept. reports getting a call early yesterday morning to the Dolphin Isle Marina upriver from Noyo Harbor for the fire. They say a sailboard was engulfed in flames when they arrived, but they quickly snuffed it. They had to come back a few hours later after the fire re-started, then the boat sank. They also noticed a gasoline sheen around the boat, but say it was only about 10 gallons worth. They say the fire probably started in the cabin of the boat. The Coast Guard was also coming to the scene to help along with the Fish and Wildlife Dept.

A note left at Pomolita Middle School had some on edge as they were concerned about a possible threat at the school. The principal said they were investigating the note left last week and involved police. They found no evidence there was a direct or specific threat and didn't say what the note contained, just that a teacher found it and gave it to the school resource officer. But the police dept. is continuing to investigate and encouraging the community to share any info of any threat to student or school staff's safety in a timely manner. If you see something, say something.

Smoke and a bunch of felled walnut trees on fire reported on Highway 29 between Kelseyville and Lakeport. That came as the Lake County Air Quality Management District LCAQMD lifted the burn ban. Permitted burns started on a 12 acre walnut grove after the ban was lifted in late October. They're supposed to continue for almost two weeks. But if the smoke becomes too much they may have to stop the burn operation. Smoke management plans are required for burns that go more than a day, continue overnight, are standing vegetation burns, whole tree or vine removal, burns over 20 acres, and any other that could send significant smoke into the air.

They had quite the turnout for Thanksgiving at the First Presbyterian Church of Fort Bragg. It was their 25th year sponsoring the free dinner for those in need on the coast from Albion to Westport. This year 1,000 free meals were distributed, a record over last year's also historical 800 meals. They also gave out meals to folks, regardless of finances, who may not be able to have a traditional Thanksgiving meal. They followed COVID guidelines and distributed the meals in boxes or delivered them to homes with 18 volunteers.

They don't want a vaccine mandate in the Konocti Unified School District. That's the word from the School Board who voted last night for a resolution to ask the state not to impose the mandate. Many parents on hand urging the board for the move to ask the state to recommend, but not require the vaccine. The Governor had said the vaccine would be added to the list of others a student needed to attend school in person and the "verify-or-test" requirement for school staff would instead change to the vaccine mandate. In Lucerne the Elementary Board of Trustees was supposed to consider the same, but no word if that happened.

Cal Fire has nearly a quarter million dollars to distribute in grant money for Fire Prevention and Forest Health. The agency is asking for applications for projects that can help prevent catastrophic wildfires, protect communities, and restore forests to healthy, functioning ecosystems, but at the same time find ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The agency is looking to award as much as \$120 million for local projects in areas that have been threatened by fires in the past so they can protect the areas. They will do hazardous fuels reduction, wildfire prevention planning and wildfire prevention education while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

They're still trying to find a new Public Health Officer in Lake County. The Board of Supervisors had a closed session on the matter at their meeting this week. The board also filled some positions and approved a resolution for Lake County Behavioral Health to raise the rates for Substance Use Disorder Drug Medi-Cal services. After all that business the board took the closed session to discuss replacing Dr. Gary Pace, the Public Health Officer who left in April, but had been filling in ever since. There was no action taken.

Lake County's First 5 Lake Commission is holding a special meeting to consider appointing a new Executive Director. The special meeting is a closed session, but on Zoom. They will also consider approving a resolution to continue teleconferenced meetings before the closed sessions along with other items of community interest.

Join via Zoom: [https:// lakecounty.zoom.us/join](https://lakecounty.zoom.us/join) Meeting ID: 954 6407 3613, Password: 725336 or join by phone: (669) 900- 6833.

A motorcyclist is dead after a crash in Fort Bragg. Mendofever.com reports that the rider died at the scene near East Pine and North Cory streets around 11:00 on Thursday night. The bike ended apparently collided with another vehicle and ended up crashing into a house. Witnesses reportedly told police that the rider was speeding moments before the crash. The

12/10/21 person who died has not been publicly identified.

The Lakeport Unified School board wants the state not to impose COVID-19 vaccine mandates on students and staff. Lake Co News reports the board has passed a resolution, opposing Governor Newsom's proposal to add the Covid shot to the list of required vaccinations for school-age kids. The mandate would also apply to school staff. Lakeport joins the Lucerne Elementary School Board and the Konocti Unified School District Board, which have adopted similar resolutions. The potential mandate is also on the agenda for the Middletown Unified board meeting next Wednesday night. The Lakeport Board vote to approve the resolution was 4 to 1, with Trustee Jennifer Hanson casting the only NO vote.

Veterans will get a chance to get help with housing issues next week in Clearlake. Lake County Vet Connect Volunteers are holding their quarterly mobile Stand Down on Wednesday from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at American Legion Post 437, on Austin Road in Clearlake. Organizers say the stand-down is a chance for vets struggling to find a place to live to access resources that might be available to them. Those resources include veterans' services, housing, and homeless assistance, legal consultations, behavioral health help, employment assistance, and more. There is more information on the Vet Connect Hookup Hub on Facebook.

New rules for big rigs on California roadways. The state will now require all heavy trucks—even those not registered in the state—to be tested 4 times a year to ensure they meet state emission standards. Roadside monitors will be set up to catch the trucks that do not meet the requirements for particulate matter and ozone pollution. It is the latest move by the state to cut carbon emissions. The California Air Resources Board has now approved banning the sale of gas-powered small engines—the kind that runs lawnmowers and leaf blowers – manufactured after 2024. Current gas engines will be grandfathered in, and stores can still sell them as long as they were manufactured before that cut-off date.

A man arrested after an armed robbery last week in Cloverdale is connected to the 2017 murder of a Mendocino County woman. An unknown person came into Nicole Smith's home on the Manchester Reservation and shot through a wall, injuring another person and killing her. At the time, Ramon Soto was arrested, but released due to insufficient evidence. But after a convenience store armed robbery in Cloverdale last week, Soto was arrested again. He was found with evidence tying him to the robbery and charged with armed robbery, possession of a firearm with no serial number, and felon in possession of a Firearm. The cold case into Smith's murder continues though. There's a \$20,000 reward for any info leading to an arrest and conviction.

A paid full timer has been hired by the Mendocino Coast Children's Fund (MCCF). The organization has been volunteer since it's inception nearly 30 years ago. Now the group who helps needy children from Westport to Gualala has hired Juliana Sanchez full time to meet growing demands. The nonprofit reportedly raised a bunch of money during the pandemic. They've been working with families, as of late, impacted by the pandemic, so they can stay in their homes. They also work with local school districts, private and charter schools to provide services.

[For more information about MCCF and to find out how you can help go to ww](#)

A man in Willits has been arrested after rampaging through his home, yelling, spreading ash on his own body and threatening family members. Last Sunday deputies went to Dakota Gimple's home in Willits where family members say as they were sleeping he became loud and after asking him to quiet down, he started to smash glass around the home, and destroy other items. His girlfriend became concerned and hid with their kids but says he forced the door open and threatened them, slightly injuring a two year old. The girlfriend climbed out a window and called 911. Gimple was arrested and charged for threatening his family and a deputy and taken to a hospital for treatment, then to jail on multiple charges and held on \$32,500.00 bail.

Conservationists are looking to buy a piece of unprotected land along the coast in the redwood region, called by some as the Lost Coast Redwoods. The interested group says they want to restore the industrial logging area to old growth forest and have raised nearly \$30 million. The Save the Redwoods League announced yesterday they've entered an agreement for 5 miles of the undeveloped coastline in northern Mendocino County from the Soper Company, but they need another 27 million by the end of the year. The group says if they have to, they'll take out loans to make it all happen.

The Boards of Supervisors in Lake, Mendocino and Sonoma counties are working together to develop the largest geothermal field for renewable energy. Earlier this week the county's supervisors partnered up. The Mendocino board joined Tuesday to the Sonoma Lake Mendocino Geothermal Opportunity Zone (GeoZone). And apparently solar power is really inexpensive so there wouldn't need to be other sources of energy for the area. That's according to Sonoma Clean Power Authority. They say the Geysers Geothermal Resource Area could do the trick.

Toys for Tots is looking for some new, unwrapped toys in Mendocino County. The local agency says they could use some help this year ahead of their toy distribution. That's happening at the end of next week, December 17th to the 20th at the Ukiah Veterans Hall. Follow the group on Facebook @ Mendocino County Toys for Tots. Donation boxes are all across the county...

Pear Tree Center  
Redwood Ford  
Ukiah Valley Fire  
Redwood Valley Fire Authority  
Hopland Fire Department  
Fowlers Auto Center  
Mendocino Farm Bureau  
West Real Estate  
Ukiah Ambulance  
Acme Rigging  
Golden Brands Distributing  
Yokums Auto Body Shop  
Mendo Mill  
Hydro Pacific Garden Supply  
Mendocino County Dept of child support  
Ukiah Elks Lodge

They've hired a new Personnel Commissioner in the Ukiah Unified School District. After Susan Sher retired earlier this year, Tom Jacobson was hired. He's been a local to the area since 2004 and is a cybersecurity analyst for a local CPA firm. He's worked for the Community Foundation of Mendocino County, Visit Mendocino and the City of Point Arena. The Ukiah Unified Personnel Commission is a non-partisan public body responsible for administering a merit system for selecting, retaining, and promoting classified employees for the last 54 years.

A grim milestone in Mendocino County as the 100th person has died from COVID-19 and it's apparently a child. The Mendocino County Public Health Dept. announced over the weekend that a minor under the age of 18 had died. The child in the Fort Bragg area had been fully vaccinated and had other underlying health conditions. The health dept. reminds fully vaccinated people over 16 should strongly consider getting a COVID-19 vaccine booster to improve immunity.

12/13/21

A local veteran in his seventies says when he went inside the Veteran's Hall in Garberville he was attacked by a homeless man. Hank Toburg says he went to identify things to be taken from the building before it's torn down, but a homeless man had been living on the porch there. Toburg says when he tried to ask the man to leave, he assaulted him. The veteran was apparently injured, his hands bloodied and a bloody nose and his knees, also bleeding. The Humboldt County Sheriff's Department reports the suspect, Christopher Nicholson was cited for assault and battery.

The Governor says he's going the way of Texas to get a law on the books so private citizens can sue to enforce a once longstanding, now, overturned ban on assault weapons in the state. A federal judge overturned the assault weapon ban comparing an AR-15 to a Swiss Army Knife. The US Supreme Court recently sided with Texas allowing their abortion law to stay in place, disallowing them if a fetal heartbeat is detected. Newsom says Calif. will use the same authority to protect people's lives, getting a law passed so private citizens can sue to enforce California's ban on assault weapons.

Sequoia National Park has reopened part of the Giant Forest after a massive wildfire took some trees and firefighters saved others. The Giant Forest was opened during daylight hours Saturday and Sunday and will be open moving forward Thursdays through Sundays, then to a seven-day schedule between Christmas and New Year's. The General Sherman tree, the largest living thing on earth by volume, made it through with foil wrapped around its trunk, along with other giants in the grove. Tens of thousands of other giants were lost however to fires this summer.

Cal Fire is looking for volunteers for the Jackson Demonstration State Forest as part of an advisory group. They will work with the fire agency and the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection on forest management at JDSF. They need three individual applicants with expertise in one of three categories: a Licensed Timber Operator, Forest Conservation and Traditional Ecological Knowledge. You have until January 7th to apply to Cal Fire's State Forests Program Manager in Fort Bragg.

A half billion dollars has been set aside for road and infrastructure projects in the state. The California Transportation Commission has over \$495 million to fix and improve transportation infrastructure across the state after the legislature passed the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017. Nearly \$800,000 will be used for work near Blue Lake in Humboldt County; another \$841,000 toward pavement, guardrail, and signage upgrades on U.S. 101 near Willits in Mendocino County and about \$776,000 for culvert upgrades on the 101 near Laytonville, Leggett, and Piercy in Mendocino County.

State Senator Mike McGuire says he's fighting to get more seasonal firefighters in the state as full timers are burnt out. McGuire had already worked to get the seasonal firefighters the same protection as full-time firefighters. He says the state needs to fix the critical firefighter shortage for their health and safety. He says he has bipartisan support for proposed legislation for next year to immediately hire another 1,124 firefighters, make it mandatory for at least three firefighters per engine, and have mandatory minimums for firefighters in hand crews.



Complaints have been coming into the Lakeport Police Department about drivers who are not stopping for school buses with their red lights and stop signs activated. Police putting out a public statement that it's extremely dangerous not to stop, and against the law. It includes those driving on the other side of the road from a bus, when there is not a double yellow line or another kind of physical barrier.

Lake County Supervisors are about ready to accept the new supervisorial district boundaries. The board is going to also consider the Blue Zones Project locally to help improve Lake County's health outcomes. They will take up the maps first, then later in tomorrow morning's meeting, they'll hear a presentation on the 2020 crop report.

A man who owns two buildings in Ukiah, where businesses are open, is asking the Planning Commission, if he can tear the buildings down. Dragon's Lair and Tom's Glass at 101 and 105 S. State Street respectively are in the buildings where the owner says the buildings have become hazardous and repairing them would be too costly. The Ukiah Director of Community Development says the buildings are both in the city's historic registry, so they need a permit for demolition. No word what would happen to the two businesses.

The Rotary Club of Clearlake had their annual Christmas dinner, but because of the pandemic, it wasn't in person again. The Rotary's Community Christmas Dinner brought out club members, local government and school officials and volunteers Saturday to help pack up and distribute the free meals along with gifts for the 28th year. They say they believe they handed out over 1,000 meals at Burns Valley Elementary, plus another 100 meals for Meals on Wheels. The event was drive through.

A woman from Nevada arrested for arson in Lake County in October will not stand trial right now. The CHP arrested Nickelina Williams of Fallon, Nevada after the fire was reported by a group of motorists who tried to put the fire out themselves in mid-October. An officer on the scene noticed the woman near what was believed to be the ignition point and she was arrested but denied any guilt. Doctors say she's incompetent to stand trial, so she was referred to the Community Program Director for a placement recommendation. That won't happen until December 28th. She was charged with felony arson and arson during a state of emergency. She's in jail on \$35,000 bail.

Wearing a mask indoors is mandatory again. Now that the new omicron variant is upon us and cases are jumping up, the Governor announced mask wearing indoors is a thing again, at least until Jan. 15. Cases have gone up nearly 50% in the past two weeks. The statewide mask mandate was lifted in June for those vaccinated, but many counties imposed their own mask mandates as cases from new variants kept rising. The state is also ordering people going to indoor events prove a negative test within one or two days if you're not vaccinated and that travelers visiting or returning be tested within five days of their arrival.

12/14/21

Hundreds of people have lost their power in sections of Mendocino County due to the winter storm that is bearing down on us. PG&E reported 700 customers were without power. Most of the county, not on the coast, was under a winter weather advisory until this morning, but there's another storm system lining up behind this one. PG&E reported an equipment issue with power to be restored sometime this afternoon for those on SR 128. And they warn drivers out on the road to be cautious with snow at lower levels. The next storm is due tomorrow with snow possible at the 2,000 foot level, and possibly to the 1,500 foot level.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors has a packed agenda for their last meeting of the year. They'll consider Naphcare again after a tiff with 5th District Supervisor Ted Williams in mid-November, where the CEO got into it with Williams after reports of jail inmates not getting adequate care during mental health crises. Naphcare is awaiting a multi-million dollar deal to continue service. The board is also considering spending wildfire disaster settlement money from PG&E and they'll get an update on the cleanup efforts after the Hopkins Fire. They will also spend some time considering the new Redistricting Maps.

A new cooperative home development is happening in the Little River area. "The Woods" residents have closed on their deal for the land where they live, but the sale price is not being released to the public. Residents are paying \$1,000 month for space rents now, and will probably have to pay another \$200 bucks/month beyond that. The Woods Cooperative Association owns the Woods in Little River, a mobile home park. The nonprofit bid against big money to buy the land for the folks to be able to keep their mobile homes there. There's a fund set up too, for those who can't afford the additional \$200/month.

A woman booked into jail for arson after reportedly threatening to light her apartment building on fire. MendoFever reports Desiree Lynn Chavan was arrested by Willits Police after they found associated evidence with her threat last Monday. Police say they got a call to loud threats of setting a fire to the building by others. They say when they got there they found a fire had been set inside Chavan's apartment. But they only found burn marks in a wall. Neighbors and the apartment manager told police of Chavan's threats. A maintenance person put out her apartment fire. She's held on one felony charge of arson with bail set at \$100,000.

The CEO of PG&E says underground power lines should help to stop so many wildfires across California. The Press Democrat reports CEO Patti Poppe saying they will bury nearly 100 miles of electric distribution lines. This comes after the utility giant agreed to pay \$125 million after Cal Fire found the company's equipment started the massive Kincadee fire. Poppe did not tell the newspaper when we could expect the Public Safety Power Shutoffs to end, but said they're affecting less and less people each year. The company filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission saying it expects at least a \$1.15 billion loss from the Dixie fire, the second-largest wildfire in California history, which some fear could trigger, yet another bankruptcy filing.

It was just a training exercise... if you happened upon a fire in the Redwood Valley area Saturday. The Redwood Valley Calpella Fire Department and CAL FIRE were training how to work with cinder and smoke at a structure fire on a real home that had been donated for the exercise. The volunteer fire dept. got to work on a real burning building and learn hands on experience in a real life setting. A construction company donated the home which needed to be cleared. The firefighters also did an environmental impact report, a HAZMAT report, air quality assessment, an asbestos report, and more before the burn.

Wreaths that will be placed upon veteran's graves at Lake County cemeteries are due to arrive. The Wreaths Across America truck with the holiday decorations will arrive tonight downtown in Lakeport. Then community members can join in. They're encouraged to line Main St. and bring flags to help welcome the truck. Ceremonies will take place at Hartley, Kelseyville, Lower Lake, Middletown, St. Mary's and Upper Lake cemeteries this Saturday morning, with the theme, "Live Up To Their Legacy." Lake Co News reports youth and veterans organizations will present the Wreaths Across America ceremony this year.

A man from Willows has been killed in a solo tanker truck crash on Highway 20. The CHP reports the big rig overturned on Highway 20 Saturday morning east of Clearlake Oaks. The patrol reports while the driver tried to make it around a right hand curve on the highway, it rolled over, landed on the eastbound lane and went down an embankment. The tanker was filled with milk which offloaded onto the ground beneath it. They say the driver did have on a seatbelt, but had major injuries and was pronounced dead at the scene.

Phase 2 of the cleanup after the Hopkins Fire has been approved by the State of California. Properties impacted by last summer's fire should make sure they've filled out the Right of Entry Form for the state debris removal program, or they won't be included. Of course if they have a private contractor, they won't need one. The forms are due this Friday. But the work is delayed since a lot of forms weren't turned in and so the county can find a contractor.

Right-of-Entry permit applications should be sent in to the Prevention, Recovery, Resiliency, and Mitigation (PRRM) Division by:

Mailing or delivering them to the PRRM Division at: 501 Low Gap Road, Room 1010, Ukiah, CA 95482

Faxing them to (707)-463-5649

Emailing them to [disasterrecovery@mendocinocounty.org](mailto:disasterrecovery@mendocinocounty.org)

For more information, please contact PRRM at:

**(707)-234-6303**

[disasterrecovery@mendocinocounty.org](mailto:disasterrecovery@mendocinocounty.org) <https://www.mendocinocounty.org/community/fire-recovery>

A lawsuit has been filed by the family of a woman who died in the Sonoma County Jail last year. The Press Democrat reports the federal lawsuit was filed against the Sheriff's Office and some county officials claiming Amber Marcotte overdosed on drugs that should not have been in the jail. The lawyers also claim the sheriff's office had a "culture of lawlessness" so that county employees and others connected to the jail could bring illicit narcotics, like fentanyl, into the facility. The family says Marcotte had been held in a locked area and could not have gotten drugs for the overdose in any other way and say she died of a fentanyl overdose.

A mom accused of crashing her car and leaving her toddler there last year has been arrested more than a year later. Trinity Bray and her three year old disappeared last November after the solo car crash. Four days later she was seen naked on the side of the road after apparently driving into the Eel River, then staying at a marijuana grow on the other side of the river. She was booked into Mendocino County jail for abandonment/child neglect. Kym Kemp reports there's no confirmation the booking is related to that crash, just that Bray had been booked into jail on related charges.

12/15/21

Deputies had to administer Narcan to a man they say was down in Ukiah. They say they were at another call, when someone flagged them down to a nearby shopping center for a man down. They knew him from previous contacts, but say he wouldn't respond when they tried to rouse him. They say there was drug paraphernalia near, in his hands, consistent with opioid, and since his breathing was shallow they considered he may be overdosing. They gave him four doses of the overdose reversal drug Narcan while waiting for medics. He finally became conscious. They couldn't get an ambulance so they took him to a local hospital.

A bunch of maskless people in Ukiah went into a store and caused a ruckus. As of yesterday, masks are required indoors whether you're vaccinated or not. The 15-20 people at the Natural Foods Co-op said they were from the Mendocino Patriots group and indicated they were frustrated about having to wear a mask in public. They also didn't want to do curbside pickup and threw signs up saying things like "Fauci is a Facist" and "Freedom over Fear". Staff there would not serve them so they eventually left items, some half-eaten in shopping baskets and left when police arrived. The Daily Journal reports the same group went to other businesses over the weekend.

Masks have to be worn indoors, so the State Dept. of Public Health Office is reminding until January 15th, you must mask up. They say it doesn't matter if you were vaccinated, the only exemptions are for children under 2; those with medical or mental health conditions or disabilities that prevent them from safely masking; those hearing impaired, or communicating with a person who is hearing impaired, and for others where it would be a risk related to their work. The state also reports hospitals are at or near capacity so a moderate surge could be catastrophic.

The Lake County Public Health Dept. reports nearly 60% of county residents 5 and older are fully vaccinated, 7% are partially vaccinated and 34% are unvaccinated. Mendocino County did not have updated info on vaccination numbers, but the public health office says unvaccinated people are 17.5 percent more likely to die from the virus than vaccinated individuals. The county reported the 100th death this week too, in a fully vaccinated child under 18 with co-morbidities.

A father and son charged with starting the massive Caldor Fire that burned near Lake Tahoe have been released from jail. 32 year old Travis Smith had his \$1 million dollar bail reduced down to \$50,000, and dad, David had his reduced to \$25,000. The judge did not agree that the pair were a flight risk as prosecutors said. The two were arrested last week in El Dorado County for recklessly starting a fire and for illegal possession of a silencer and Travis, for another charge of the illegal conversion or manufacture of a machine gun. Their lawyer says they still have not heard how they supposedly started the fire that destroyed 1,000 homes and other buildings. The two were in the area when the fire started and reported seeing flames. They're due in court again Feb. 1st.

The driver of a tanker who died on Highway 20 has been identified. The Lake County Sheriff's Office says 57 year old Frank Kountz of Willows died in the crash Saturday morning. The agency says Kountz was in a 2013 Kenworth tanker headed west on the Highway near Clearlake Oaks and overturned while trying to get around a right-hand curve in the roadway. He had a load of milk, which leaked into the ground. He died at the scene.

A business competition at the Konocti Vista Resort awarded \$20,000 to a local. The 1Team 1Dream finals were Sunday where Catherine Ann Reese of Reese Ranch Retreat won it all, saying she hoped to inspire others with her story. The business competition was put together to encourage and nurture the entrepreneurial spirit in the community. Those participating got advice and mentorship from local business leaders. The top five winners shared the \$50,000 prize money. Reese got the top award, then it was Ashley Ruth Garrigus of Wild Hope Bakery, Jennifer Marie Gayda of Bottle Rock Candle Studio in Cobb, Anahi Maria Silva of Party Ideas, Valeri Ann Stallings of Send Rover on Over/doggie daycare, training, boarding and grooming.

A Ukiah ER doc is reminding as the omicron variant begins to multiply, so may emergency room visits after holiday gatherings this month. The Daily Journal reports Dr. Drew Colfax saying that local hospitals could be in crisis mode next month. He says Adventist Health is fine now, but he believes a crisis is coming. He blames it mostly on the new strain and holiday gatherings. He's recommending booster shots for those vaccinated, and for the unvaccinated to go get their shots.

The Governor out promoting his children's book, made some comments about schools and his vaccine mandate. Gov. Newsom on "Good Morning America" last week mentioned the Los Angeles Unified School District and said it should adjust a vaccine mandate deadline so tens of thousands of kids who don't get the shots by next month aren't dismissed from classes and have to do school online. Thousands of kids still don't have even one shot.

A new report says California has more eligible students to be admitted to attend the state's public universities than the campuses have room for. The Campaign for College Opportunity shows there are more eligible students applying to get into University of California and California State University campuses than they can admit. So that means fewer People of Color will be able to apply. And that the state won't have enough educated workers. The state ranks 34th nationwide for awarding four-year degrees.

San Francisco is getting out of the mask mandate as they allow fully vaccinated people to go mask free some settings. The city will allow it in gyms and workplaces but say they will have a mask mandate elsewhere. The city's Public Health officer said it was to recognize the "thought and care San Francisco residents had put into staying as safe as possible". Over 85% of city residents had been given at least one vaccine dose. There are also other Bay Area counties doing the same, but it remains to be seen if the state will exempt them too.

The Mendocino County Animal Shelter says they're full and because people are not picking up their animals that have been impounded, they may have to euthanize healthy animals. They've been trying to alleviate the situation by offering free dogs for adoption and say the rescue groups they've worked with are having the same issue, so they can't help. They say at times they wait for owners to pick up impounded pets up to a week which doesn't allow them to have enough kennel space. They're asking the public to help get dogs adopted.

A man's been busted in Ukiah with a slew of meth. A Mendocino Deputy saw a car with an expired registration go into a parking lot and contacted him. James Harnett gave the Deputy permission to search the car and found about an ounce of suspected meth in a black baggie on the front passenger side floorboard. There was also drug paraphernalia, a digital scale, and packaging for the drug. So, Harnett was arrested for possession of a controlled substance for sale (11378 H&S), transportation of a controlled substance (11379 H&S), and an active misdemeanor warrant for his arrest out of Mendocino County. He was held on \$26,500.00 bail.

12/16/21

3 more people have died from coronavirus in Mendocino County. The Public Health Office put out a statement that the 101st death was in a fully vaccinated 77 year old woman from Fort Bragg. The 102nd death was in a 53 year old unvaccinated man from Willits, and the 103rd death was a 79 year old unvaccinated man from Ukiah. They remind of the state's reinstated masking guidance in all indoor settings and that vaccination, masking, and social distancing are still the best way to fight the virus.

Some companies in Sonoma County are now joining the city of San Francisco, getting exemptions for masking indoors. The Governor reinstated the indoor mask mandate until January 15th. But Sonoma County has mask rules allowing certain vaccinated groups to go maskless in some workplaces. The state's rules do not mean the county cannot rely on its own guidelines. The state mandate says anyone in a public space, like an office, retail store and government meeting, has to wear masks regardless of their vaccination status. Sonoma County had that already, but changed it to allow "stable cohorts" of vaccinated people who regularly gather and don't come into contact with others much, to go maskless.

The Governor has announced a more than one billion dollar initiative to clean the state. Newsom was picking up litter himself and joined in painting over graffiti in Los Angeles yesterday as part of the announcement of the \$1.1 billion initiative to clean near highways, roads and other public spaces, part of a promise he made to deal with growing homeless encampments. He announced his Clean California plan last May and now announced an expansion for next year.

The Middletown Unified School District has tabled their decision on whether or not to mandate COVID-19 vaccinations for students and staff. The board was considering the idea to mirror language instituted by school boards at Lucerne Elementary, Konocti Unified and Lakeport Unified. They're because of Gov. Newsom's order in October for a COVID-19 vaccine to be added to the list of required vaccinations for students for in-person learning. He also said school employees would have to also be vaccinated. But the schools are asking the state for a recommend, not require mandate instead. Lake Co News reports Public Health reported six districts out of more than 1,000 across the state have asked for modifications.

The Bureau of Land Management has wiped out over a million illegal marijuana plants. The rangers, special agents, and various other law enforcement partners pulled the plants and over 180,000 pounds of processed marijuana this year. It was all part of the California Department of Justice's yearly Campaign Against Marijuana Planting, or CAMP, program. They also found a bunch of chemicals, ammo and weapons. Plus they cleared trash including 300 miles of waterline, 583 propane tanks and over 67,000 pounds of grow site infrastructure.

A man has died in Willits after driving off the side of a road. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office reports a car was found down a steep hillside Tuesday afternoon, where they found the driver had died in a solo car crash. They said they were trying to locate family to inform them of the man's death.

Anderson Valley High Schoolers are getting a donation to help protect the goats on school property after a mountain lion attack. The Mountain Lion Foundation reports they'll donate and install two livestock pens at the Boonville school tomorrow. The 10 by 20-foot, predator-proof livestock pens were offered after the school Superintendent asked the public for help after three goats were attacked by a mountain lion, two died. A California Department of Fish and Wildlife Biologist who is working with the foundation has also volunteered to help put up the pens.

A report says Mendocino County is in the top five, per capita, for opioid related deaths in Calif. The Calif. Overdose Surveillance Dashboard had Mendocino County with 20 opioid-related overdose deaths in 2020, that is about 26 per 100,000 residents, and over 62,360 prescriptions for opioids were written in the county last year. In comparison, Napa County, with about 40,000 more residents had just under 61,600 prescriptions for opioids but only eight related deaths, for a 5 per 100,000 rate of people dying. Lake County was third ahead of Mendocino County as fourth, Sonoma was sixth, and Humboldt County was 11th.

A landslide has been reported along with the drenching rain. With the latest storm that came through yesterday, the US Forest Service announced the landslide had closed Forest Road "M10", which is about a quarter mile west of Fout Springs. They report it will take several days of dry weather for crews to clear the road and are asking folks to avoid the area if possible. Areas where fires have burned recently in Northern California have been flooded, including where the massive August Complex and Ranch Fires burned.

The latest agriculture report for Lake County showed for the first time in about six years, the gross value of production was under \$100 million. The Record Bee reports that's the biggest downturn in a decade. The newspaper reports the county's 2020 commodities were at \$75,471,368, down 29% from 2019 because the value of wine grapes, timber, walnuts and field crops were down. The report delivered to the Board of Supervisors showing the 29% drop in 2020, a 5% drop in 2019, and 8% in 2018, for a 42% decline over the last three years.

The Clearlake City council has sold some property it hopes will bring more affordable homes to the market and bought some property that's part of a major new commercial development. Lake Co News reports somewhere along the way, the city acquired the 29 acres on old Highway 53 when a proposal to develop it fell through. The buyer is Danco Communities, which wants to divide the land into 22 1.25 acre lots. A family living nearby complained that the project would take away from the quiet country atmosphere there. Despite that objection, members said the city desperately needs more affordable housing. Work could start next year. After approving that sale, the council voted on an unrelated matter to buy two properties near what once was the Pearce Airfield. Members think owning that land will make it easier to develop an area where the city wants a large commercial and retail development.

12/17/21

The Yurok Tribe in Humboldt County wants its local, state, and federal partners to take a stronger stand against human trafficking on its reservation and the surrounding area. The tribe has put out what it calls an emergency declaration highlighting the number of cases involving missing and murdered indigenous women. The Yurok Tribal Court says it received reports from seven Yurok women, including mothers with young children, who were approached by would-be traffickers within the last month alone. All were able to get to safety. In mid-October tribe member Emilee Risling was declared missing. The Yurok and Hoopa Valley Tribe, along with Humboldt County Sheriff's Office have been searching for her, but she has not been found. The Tribes are offering a \$20,000 reward for information about the case. Chairman of the Yurok Tribe Joseph James says per capita, native women and girls are victims of human trafficking at a much higher rate than other groups. James calls the number of missing and murdered indigenous women in the region staggering. He wants immediate action to help his tribe and others deal with the issue.

Lake County DA Susan Kroner said she has completed an assignment from state AG Ron Bonta updating cannabis convictions. Bonta wants to make sure those convictions are in line with a cannabis crime sentencing reform bill he wrote back in 2016. Kroner tells Lake Co News Bonta required her office to review all of those convictions and determine if sentences should be reduced or charges dismissed. After that review, she recommended that 550 cases be sent back to court for resentencing or expungement. She says what happens to those people is now in the hands of the court system. Bonta's office says some counties have not finished their case reviews.

No reports of any problems at area schools today, on a day mentioned in several seemingly threatening posts on social media. The posts were vague and not specific and caused concern in districts in California and around the country. School officials said they were aware of the threats, but reassured parents that kids would be safe. Most of those posts were on TikTok. That company says it is working to find out who is responsible and working directly with schools and law enforcement to quash what has become known as TikTok Challenges.

Governor Newsom wants to spend more than 250 million dollars to fight back against organized retail theft. California has seen a dramatic increase in those brazen smash and grab-type robberies in the past few weeks. The governor says those crimes have caused a lot of fear and anxiety. Under his plan, the state would set up a dedicated unit in the attorney general's office to prosecute organized retail theft. It would also send millions to local prosecutors and set up a National Guard unit focused on crimes related to the drug trade at the U S-Mexico border. He'll include funding when he submits his new budget to lawmakers next month. Republicans say it is about time the governor realized Californians are fed up with crime.

There's more info on the woman we told you about who was arrested for child endangerment. Kym Kemp reporting Trinity Bray had crashed last year near Leggett, then went to a marijuana garden for a few days and surfaced again naked on the side of highway 101. All while having her three-year-old son with her. But apparently the boy was found holding onto a log down a steep embankment, he was not with her on the road. The Mendocino County DA charged her with felony abuse or endangering the health of a child. We weren't sure if her arrest earlier this week was about that incident last December, but it appears it was. Investigators also reportedly found drugs in the car which had gone down a steep embankment, into the Eel River. More charges could be coming.

Law enforcement in Mendocino County report eight murders for 2021. The Sheriff spoke to Kym Kemp regarding the violent deaths, saying many had something to do with black market marijuana sales. He said they were "extremely brutal homicides" and that nearly 90% were people of color, either Mexican or Native American. He also told the news site that the crimes in small towns mean they're someone we likely know, because we can't detach when we lose someone in our community, or possibly a friend or family member. Kendall says education and rehabilitation can help communities prevent and heal from violent crime.

The Ukiah Unified School District will be offering holiday free meals for kids. The meals will be distributed by Food Service workers and volunteers from the school district tomorrow at Ukiah High 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. They are offering a fully-cooked, large frozen ham, bag of potatoes, bag of apples, box of stuffing, biscuit mix, cornbread mix or dinner rolls, and milk. The offering for any child's family who are 18 or younger. The message from the school district also says, "don't forget to read with your kids over the break, and Happy Holidays from everyone at Ukiah Unified".



OSHA, the state's workplace regulator has lengthened pandemic regulations into 2022, but added language to it. Some argue the revisions could make the state's labor shortage worse. The Occupational Safety and Health Standards Board has changed the temporary rule distinguishing people who are vaccinated, from those who are not, saying both may not work if they have COVID symptoms or knowingly were in contact with someone who has tested positive. The rules will be in place from Jan. 14 through April 14. Those who were exposed and, vaccinated but asymptomatic have to stay home for 14 days even if they test negative or, if they return to work, wear masks and stay 6 feet away from others for two weeks.

A new report shows nearly 10% of people in California who've died from COVID19 lived in a nursing facility. The State Assembly Health Committee was discussing nursing homes at a recent meeting, noting there were 9,400 who died and 56,275 confirmed COVID cases among nursing home residents who recovered. Assemblyman Jim Wood chairs the committee and convened the meeting on nursing homes, calling the infections and deaths, "truly appalling". With this the Governor's administration is putting together a proposal that ties state funding to performance. Nearly 141,000 people in US nursing homes died from the virus

The Sheriff's office reports arresting a couple on multiple crimes after reports in the Brooktrails area of Willits of someone stealing gas containers. The post on social media a couple weeks ago of a video circulating of a man and woman stealing gas containers in a white Uhaul truck with the stickers removed, the truck stolen. Deputies say someone had been living in the truck, where they found the gas containers, a cooler, chainsaws, and a climbing rope. Plus mail, ID cards, debit cards and a gun. Shevelle Perkins and her boyfriend, Christopher Brockway were located and arrested with a ghost gun and ammo. There were various charges against each of them, Brockway booked on \$65,000.00 bail and Perkins on \$35,000.00.

12/20/21

A man in Covelo's been arrested for having ammunition while not allowed. Deputies found Charles Whipple after reports of two people in some sort of altercation or disturbance, plus possible shooting in the area. Deputies found the ammo on the ground in front of a home and found Whipple in a small one room cabin on the property. They searched and found a whole lot more ammo and arrested him for having ammunition by a prohibited person. He was held on \$15,000.00 bail

After a routine traffic stop of a Honda Civic in Willits, deputies arrest a man on various charges. The car pulled over for deputies, then took off, driving too fast on city streets in poor weather conditions. Deputies stopped following for their own safety, but looked up the Honda and found Rafael Paz was the driver and went to his house. There they found the car, not registered, and found Paz laying in a bed in a small shed. He was arrested for reckless driving while evading. They also saw a bunch of meth and fentanyl in the shed and got a search warrant. Paz was out of jail on bail at the time, so he was further charged with possession of a controlled substance for sale (11351 HS, and 11378 HS), Transportation of a controlled substance (11352 HS and 11379 HS) and committing a felony offense while on bail (12022.1 PC) and held on \$35,000.00 bail.

A missing elderly man in Potter Valley has been found safe. Report on Sunday by a neighbor that their 77 year old elderly neighbor who has dementia was gone. They say they saw his front door open and that he had not been seen since Saturday. Deputies canvassed the neighborhood and one neighbor reported finding a shoe, a pair of glasses and a metal walker about a ¼ mile from the elderly man's home. Search and Rescue were called to the area due to the cold weather and the man's dementia, they found him tangled up in some wire fencing and bushes. They say he was incoherent and may have had hypothermia, so he was flown by air ambulance to a nearby hospital.

A giant forest fire has been squelched finally, 3 months after starting. The KNP Complex hadn't grown much in the last several weeks after burning nearly 140 square miles, but it was just 100% contained Thursday after a bunch of rain in the Sierra Nevada. The National Park Service reported the huge fire in Sequoia and Kings Canyon national parks that burned giant trees after starting September 9th was started by lightening. Two fires merged into one and burned roughly 30% of the groves of giant sequoias, burning between 2,300 to 3,600 sequoias.

The top coastal regulators in the state have given the green light for the federal government to poison invasive mice on the Farallon Islands. The California Coastal Commission voted 5-3 for the plan to drop nearly 3,000 pounds of rodenticide – laced pellets on the islands about 27 miles off the coast of San Francisco and Marin County. They say there are tens of thousands of human-introduced mice which have been taking over the habitat from the islands' seabirds. The Farallons have the largest seabird breeding colony in the lower United States.

The Humboldt County Jail has been inundated with COVID cases. Kym Kemp reports speaking to a number of inmates who have tested positive for the coronavirus over the last week. They report there are more than 50 cases after a laundry worker first got infected from a staff member, then they kept testing more and more positive cases. The positive cases were taken in small groups out of the holding areas. The news site reports all of the inmates they spoke to gave them pretty much the same story, but the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office did not respond at press time to their calls. The news site reports of all of the inmates they spoke to, none had been vaccinated. The news site also says inmates are given one mask only and they are not mandated to wear them.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors has a lot on its plate for the last session of 2021. At their regular meeting tomorrow, they'll tackle the latest on the pandemic, hear about the potential to divide up the Public Works and Water Resources departments, consider a plan for federal recovery dollars and hear a resolution on environmental reviews for cannabis projects. Public Health Staff will be the first to present. The agency sent out a statement over the weekend about the omicron strain and the holidays, so we should hear more on that matter.

Some folks in Ukiah who lost power are reportedly back with service. Police reported someone flying a mylar balloon that was let go may have been to blame as it became stuck in powerlines. A city utility worker was working on the issue yesterday after the balloon caused a blown fuse. There were social media reports that folks heard a loud boom before the power flickered

12/21/21 off.

A pretty decent sized earthquake has shaken a large swatch of Northern Calif. The Director of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, Mark Ghilarducci put out a statement late last night about the large earthquake west of Petrolia in Humboldt County. He said the Governor and all Californians are offering support along the North Coast to their colleagues impacted by the 6.2 magnitude earthquake. His office, and other state agencies including Caltrans, the CHP, the California Health and Human Services Agency and CalFire were working closely with local first responders and emergency managers to evaluate damage to roads, bridges, medical facilities and other infrastructure and coordinating on impacts to the communities. He also said their early warning technology worked and warned 2,500 individuals before the shaking started.

Willits Daily Bread is at it again, providing residents a warm meal, other food items, and necessities to stay warm in the cold. The organization provides four dinners a week for all who may be hungry. And there's a special holiday meal being provided this Thursday. The Willits Daily Bread organizer says they've been distributing about 50 meals/day. And right now they are asking the public for cookie donations for this week's holiday meal. If you're so inclined, you can drop off the sweets today and tomorrow between 4-5:30 p.m. or Thursday between 4- 4:30 p.m. at St. Francis in the Redwood Episcopal Church on 66 East Commercial Street.

Walmart is in trouble with the state. The Calif. Atty. General is suing the giant retailer for illegally dumping over 1 million batteries, aerosol cans of insect killer and other products, including toxic cleaning supplies, electronic waste and latex paints into California landfills. The company calls the lawsuit filed against them yesterday "unjustified." But Atty. General Rob Bonta says even big box stores, like regular folks, need to dump unwanted goods properly. This isn't the first time too, the company, with over 300 stores in the state, was sued in 2010 for a similar reason and paid out \$25 million to settle and agreed to stop the practice. Other states have also sued and won against Walmart.

A man from Ukiah accused of leading cops on a chase crashes and injures two people. The CHP says they arrested Dustin Blakesly Sunday afternoon by Gobbi and Main streets. Deputies tried to pull the guy over after a traffic violation and he took off. They say he went onto the southbound 101 with CHP officers joining the chase by Highway 175 which then continued on side streets and into the city of Ukiah. He then crashed into another car coming out of the Safeway parking lot on Gobbi. He was finally nabbed after he tried running from the crash and is suspected to have been driving drunk. He also had warrants out for his arrest, including driving without a valid license and domestic battery. The injuries on the two others he hit were described as minor to moderate.

Sherwood Oaks, a nursing home in Ft. Bragg is reportedly still dealing with the impact of the pandemic. The facility has lost staff the last year who resigned due to the virus or because the nursing home had to reduce the number of residents it takes care of. They have about half the amount they are licensed for. The Daily Journal reports the administrator of the nursing home said they need about 55 residents to break even; they have under 40. They've also been using traveling nurses which cost almost three times the amount they would normally pay. Plus traveling nurses are also in short supply nationwide. The administrator is also retiring at the end of the year, next week, and there's a shortage of qualified nursing home administrators too. Sherwood Oaks leases their space and there's a pending sale of the building too which has been putting off its maintenance. All of this has reportedly been reported to the state, which is required by law.

Reports out of Humboldt County that folks really felt that earthquake that hit off the coast of Eureka outside of a town called Petrolia. Shaker reports came from up north in Medford and down south in Carmel. Kym Kemp reports a Humboldt State Geology professor told them the 6.2 temblor was in the Mendocino triple junction region, which she called "a complex zone of faults and deformation". There are three major fault systems there she says, where three large plates meet. And yesterday afternoon the National Weather Service in Eureka tweeted there was never a threat of a tsunami. There were however several reports of aftershocks throughout the day.

Special election ballots have gone out for those in the Kelseyville Fire Protection District and today's the day to turn them in. Measure A on the ballot to be counted tonight after the 8pm deadline, like any other election day. It's a non-polling election though, all mail, only. It's only for the fire district to establish a community facilities district (CFD) through the Mello-Roos Community Facilities Act of 1982. That's a special tax district a public agency can form to get more money. Measure A would bring in more money by authorizing a bond to construct a new station on the Soda Bay corridor and to replace old equipment.

Cannabis businesses and other stakeholders statewide are asking the Governor and the Legislature to help what they're calling an unavoidable market collapse. At a gathering to discuss a letter they drafted together and supported by industry leaders, dispensary owners, manufacturers, distributors and farmers, they said the industry could collapse. They're looking for a change to the tax code, because with the new year, cultivation tax rates will reflect an inflation adjustment. They want the cultivation tax suspended immediately.

The redistricting maps are done. After the 2020 US Census, the 2020 California Citizens Redistricting Commission reporting wrapping up and approving the final maps for the state's congressional, Senate, Assembly and Board of Equalization districts. The 11 member Commission was set to meet today to finalize all. The Commission Chair says she and her colleagues answered the call to serve the state and finished up the process without interjecting politics into the equation to achieve fairer and more equitable maps. Lake County is now in one district, 4 after a decade of being split into two, 3 and 5.

The City of Lakeport and Lake County have reportedly entered an agreement for the annexation of the South Lakeport area. An announcement was put out on Monday about the arrangement for a draft sales tax agreement for both the Lakeport City Council and Board of Supervisors to each consider next month. It's about 137 acres, made up of 50 parcels, across from South Main Street and Soda Bay Road. Lake Co News reports it's one of the most lucrative commercial areas in Lake County. The city looking for the annexation for years and wanted it done in 2019, but the county was not on board until now. The two parties say residents and businesses in the annexation area will have improved fire protection, access to public water, emergency resiliency through installation of fire hydrants and municipal law enforcement.

City fire hydrants in Fort Bragg are being flushed, which is routine. Public Works crews reported next week, Monday thru Thursday all day long, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. they'll flush the hydrants in cul-de-sac and court city streets only. It's for preventative maintenance to keep the hydrants in good working order. So you may see some rushing water in those streets for a period of time. You may also have lower water pressure or see some discoloration which won't last long. They say it won't affect the quality of the drinking water and just to run cold water for a bit and it should lessen.

12/22/21

Three vehicles reportedly damaged after someone trying to drill into a gas tank of one of them, ignites it at a Ukiah repair shop. The Ukiah Valley Fire Authority reports coming out to the repair shop Sunday morning in the 3600 block of North State Street after a would be crook tried to rip off gas from a FedEx van, which then caught on fire. Two FedEx vans were in flames when they arrived. But they say, neither had any holiday packages inside. But one was a total loss. And a pickup parked nearby was damaged from the heat. Firefighters say someone was trying to siphon gas out of the vehicles with an electric drill, which was found burned, under one of the vans, along with a gas can. No suspect has been identified.

Congressman Mike Thompson's got a new district with the new redistricting maps, with Lake County all in one district now. He's announced he's running for re-election in the new Fourth Congressional District, which includes all of Lake and Napa Counties and parts of Solano, Sonoma and Yolo Counties. He's represented part of the district for years and says he grew up there. As a democrat, he's a senior Member of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee.

The Lakeport Fire Protection District has a new fire engine and with that an old pastime. They just got their 2021 Pierce Enforcer 1500 Type 1 Pumper after receiving money from Measure M. On Saturday they held an official "push in" ceremony, where crew members, and some community partners gather around the engine, and they "push in" to the station. The ceremony is symbolic of years past when fire brigades pushed in their horse drawn pumpers to a stall close to where the horses were kept. After the ceremony, they swore in some new firefighters too.

During an update on the COVID19 pandemic, the Mendocino County Public Health Officer, Dr. Andy Coren urged those who were not yet vaccinated to get their jabs. He updated on the new, and fast multiplying omicron variant and said the new year was looking ominous. He mentioned case numbers doubling, and that deaths have been rising over the last several weeks. He also said vaccination rates were up since the shots were approved for kids from five to 11 years old. Dr. Coren confirmed there had been a trio of outbreaks in schools, but all were resolved last week. He also said the hardest hit communities continue to be Native Americans, partly due to low vaccination rates.

Mendocino Headlands State Park is getting new restrooms. California State Parks report a new agreement with a company in Santa Rosa to give the current bathrooms a facelift across from the Ford House Museum and Visitor Center. The main purpose they say is to meet ADA requirements, then secondarily to put in more fixtures so more people can use the facilities, and also to improve safety and vandal resistance through design. They will also move the ADA parking spots on Main St. to the Ford House parking for better access for those with limited mobility.

Public outcry after a new requirement is considered for several hundred thousand Californians to return unemployment money, they got during the height of the COVID pandemic. A new state policy says almost 900,000 people who filed for unemployment benefits but didn't work or look for work must return the benefits. But some say it might force low-income workers to come up with money they don't have anymore. The Economic Development Department is requesting proof of work from a third of nearly 3 million Pandemic Unemployment Assistance recipients. And if they can't prove they were working or planning to before applying, they'll have to return the money, that could mean over \$32,000.

Thousands of students in independent study programs at many of the larger school districts get a reprieve on their vaccination mandate deadlines. The Los Angeles Unified School District board has voted to allow students to wait until next fall to have had both doses of the Covid-19 vaccine. They first said spring of 2021. Same for West Contra Costa Unified, they went though just until February. Oakland and Sacramento are also delaying. Some anti-vaccine and anti-vaccine mandate groups said it was a win, but Ed Source reports school board members said that was not the case.

Governor Newsom says not only do healthcare workers need to be vaccinated, they also need to have booster shots. It's because of the surge in cases due to the omicron variant. Governor Newsom says Omicron is triggering immediate action to protect Californians and make sure hospitals are prepared. Health experts say the state may be able to escape the worst because of the high vaccination or natural immunity rates. So the state has that protection against omicron, but it obviously doesn't guarantee people won't get the virus either.

The state of California says they will grant waivers on cannabis license fees for people of color who may have been impacted by the War on Drugs. It comes as stakeholders are asking for a suspension of cannabis taxes, saying the industry could bottom out if it doesn't happen in the New Year. Then on Monday the California Department of Cannabis Control announced the new program starting New Year's Day. And lawmakers put several million dollars aside to pay for certain groups to get fee waivers and deferrals.

More than half of the inmates in one unit of the Humboldt County Jail are infected with coronavirus. Kym Kemp reports an inmate told them there are only 24 people out of 58 not infected. On Tuesday they counted 34 inmates who had tested positive. The jail is in lockdown for two weeks after someone tests positive. As we reported earlier in the week, each inmate is getting only one new mask/week. The inmate who spoke to the news site says all of the inmates who did not wear masks have been infected. And he says

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they're trying to distance inmates from each other in close quarters. 2 more people in Mendocino County have died from coronavirus. The 104th death was reported in a 72 year old man from Willits who was unvaccinated, and the 105th death was in a 76 year-old man from the Fort Bragg area; also, unvaccinated. In Dr. Coren's last public address on the pandemic he said he wouldn't be mandating vaccinations or masking because he has found when the mandates come, so does the pushback. Instead, public health is asking residents to think about ways they are protecting themselves and their families from COVID-19. And when in doubt, consult with and follow all CDC and CDPH guidance. Vaccination, masking, and social distancing remain the best tools for combating COVID-19.

One man is dead and three other people have been hurt after a head on, DUI-suspected crash in Ukiah. The CHP reports 35 year old Ezekiel Guzman of Ukiah was traveling on Talmage Road Tuesday night about 6:45 p.m. and his 2001 Chevy Malibu crossed into the other side of traffic, hitting a 2019 Ford Fusion just east of Hastings Road. Of the two passengers in Guzman's car, one died. Guzman and the other passenger were taken to the hospital due to moderate injuries. None of those in the car had on a seatbelt. The Fusion driver did have their seatbelt on, but also had moderate injuries. Police say they think drugs or alcohol may have been a factor in the crash.

More than a dozen projects have been approved in Calif. to improve habitat for salmon. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) says there are 15 projects getting grant funding for a total of almost \$10 million as part of the agency's Fisheries Restoration Grant Program (FRGP). The money in the past has included money for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund to protect and help heal Pacific salmon and steelhead throughout California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Alaska. The 15 approved projects will continue state and federal fisheries recovery plans.

After much discussion, there was no movement to separate Lake County's Water Resources Department from the Department of Public Works. At the Lake County Supervisors meeting this week they discussed the federal infrastructure bill and how the money could help the two departments work on individual projects. The board had voted in 2019 to join the two departments after they were split apart in 2016. The director of both departments said he didn't support their separation, saying he had a good team and a system in place. So it seems as though things will stay status quo.

Downtown Lakeport has a perfect place for a new mural. So, essential workers will be honored with a painting on the side of the Meals on Wheels Thrift Store. The Lake County Arts Council is partnering with the city of Lakeport, Lake County Rural Arts Initiative and the Lake Family Resource Center for the installation of the new mural on a giant wall facing First Street. \$8,000 has been awarded for the artist for labor and materials. They will choose the muralist after a call to submit proposals. They hope to have that done by March and the mural complete by May.

The Governor and other higher-ups are working to fight the swift spread of the omicron variant. The President has also promised the fed would be sending rapid tests out to states for free. All as Gov. Newsom announces all California health care workers will have to get boosters. The mayor of San Jose is also considering the state's first city booster mandate. Omicron is in all 50 states now is said to double its numbers each day. It's not as prevalent apparently here in California as other states. President Joe Biden said earlier this week we should be concerned, but not panicked about omicron. Dr. Anthony Fauci said large holiday gatherings are a bad idea.

Like the Mendocino County Public Health Officer before him, the Acting Public Health Officer in Lake County, Dr. Charlie Evans is warning about the virus ahead of the holidays. Dr. Evans did say however that omicron had surfaced in Sonoma, Napa, and Marin, and is likely in Lake County, but not confirmed. He says most of the cases are still the delta variant. In Lake County cases of the virus had been down in November compared to the three months before, went up right after Thanksgiving and appeared to go down, but are up again. Dr. Evans says he expects a serious increase in cases the next few weeks.

A Mendocino Unified school teacher has added on to her achievements, by becoming a volunteer Firefighter and Medical Responder. Seneca Sluis is a special education teacher, working in the school district since 2014 and has now joined the Mendocino Volunteer Fire Department. The Daily Journal reports she was first a Medical Responder, then went for the full training to also fight fires. She had already been an Emergency Medical Technician.

A man from Lakeport accused of having child pornography, has pleaded no contest. 59 year old Jeffery Cramer pleaded in March and was sentenced this week to a lesser charge, but there was a witness. Cramer is no longer in custody and because of the pandemic and apparently its impact on his lawyer, the sentencing was delayed. Now it will be January 20th instead. Since he pleaded with a so-called Harvey Waiver it means the court can still consider the earlier charges against him. As you may recall, Cramer is the previous owner of Main Street Bicycles in Lakeport, where items were confiscated.

A former Kelseyville High music teacher accused of having sex with and molesting a minor will hear his punishment after the holidays. It's been two years since the alleged incidents involving Cory Cunningham who was then charged with sexual penetration of a minor, contacting minor with intent for sex and molesting child under 18 years old. Another charge of abuse — endangering a child with gross bodily injury has been dismissed. He was arrested in December of 2019, jailed and placed on leave from his job. It's all continued until January 7th now due to the pandemic. In October he pleaded not guilty and denied special allegations.

Voters in Kelseyville have apparently rejected a new community services district that would levy special taxes and build a new fire station. LakeCo News reports the company that ran the election told the Kelseyville Fire Board of Directors this week that the measure didn't get the two-thirds majority it needed to pass. That company sent out more than 7,200 ballots in November, but only 2,100 were returned. Fewer than half of those voters had checked yes. Official results will not be out until a final ballot count on January 4th. A new fire station would cost 2.4 million dollars, plus another 1.2 million a year for staffing. The rejected proposal would have authorized a 4 million dollar bond issue paid for by an extra tax levy for people who live in that district.

12/24/21

A new rate plan is on the way for some PG&E customers in Lake County. The utility says it will move about 7,100 residential customers to the new plan that bases rates on time of use. The utility says it is part of an eventual plan to move all of its 2.5 million customers to time of use billing. Under the plan, electricity prices would be higher at peak times and lower when demand falls. That would encourage people to cut back their power use at those peak times. Customers will be getting a mailer from PG&E outlining the change, set to take effect in April. Users can opt out if they want to stay with their current flat-rate plan. The state is requiring all investor-owned utilities to make a time of use available as part of a statewide energy conservation policy.

Mendocino County public health officer Andy Coren thinks Covid vaccines are in short supply in some countries because a few people are looking to make a buck. In Coren's view, there's a global shortage because some companies that hold patents simply want to make money, rather than sharing with all worldwide vaccine manufacturers. Coren tells Mendofever.com that he agrees with the World Health Organization, which says failing to quickly vaccinate the whole world will prolong the epidemic and could lead to new variants. Coren calls a vaccine shortage created by a profit motive is—in his words—unconscionable.

The state says the Omicron coronavirus variant is spreading rapidly across California. Health officials say it is now present in up to 70 percent of all newly reported cases. It has only been three weeks since California's first Omicron-related case was reported in a man from San Francisco. Governor Newsom says he knows people are exhausted, but once again, he says the way out of the pandemic is through vaccines, booster shots, and masks.



Mendocino National Forest is hosting a virtual symposium to guide the development of post-fire restoration strategies on national forests in California. It will focus on the best way to restore lands burned in wildfires. Park service officials say it is important to manage forest lands after a fire in an ecologically sound way. The symposium will feature speakers with experience in post-fire land restoration and management. The symposium will be on Wednesday, Jan. 26. To find out more or to sign up visit the National Forest website

Something you may not think about – CalFire. is warning about...gift wrap. The advice—move all wrapping paper that was ripped off those gifts from any source of fire, like fireplaces or lit candles. You should also never burn the wrapping paper in the furnace. Cal Fire says the paper is very flammable, so you should make sure it doesn't lead to a Christmas tragedy.

If your holiday plans include a trip to the mountains, you may need to make new plans. Heavy snow and dangerous conditions are forecast for the Sierras through the holiday weekend. Officials there are discouraging travel.

A man from Willits accused of starting a fire that burned a Fed Ex van has been charged with a lesser crime instead. Steven Ramier was identified as a man who was trying to siphon gas from the van. He got away December 19th, but was picked up later and arrested on suspicion of "arson in a state of insurrection". He pleaded not guilty at his arraignment last week. Deputies and firefighters responded to the van finding an electric drill with fire damage under it near its gas tank. Two delivery vans, a pickup truck and a utility pole were damaged in the fire. He has a slew of crimes on his record including robbery and resisting arrest. He was out on bail at the time of his new arrest. He's due back in court Jan. 5th.

12/27/21

A man arrested for a fatal crash in Ukiah last week is charged with gross vehicular manslaughter while driving under the influence and driving without a license. Ezekial Guzman was arrested after a head on crash last week we told you about. The CHP says he was driving drunk when he drifted into another lane of traffic and hit another car. Guzman's passenger was killed, neither of them had on seatbelts. The driver of the other vehicle, from Potter Valley, had moderate injuries and was wearing his seatbelt. Guzman is being held on \$250,000 bail. He had previously been convicted for DUI, so he was on probation for that. He's due in court today.

Reports of snow on the road in some parts of Mendocino County as the holiday weekend ended. There were reports yesterday of snow in the Brooktrails area with dangerous road conditions, unless you have a four wheel drive vehicle or chains on your tires. A winter storm warning is still in effect into this morning. The NWS in Eureka reported possible hail this morning too, which could further complicate road travel through the 101 corridor. There was also a power outage yesterday that impacted about 1,000 customers in the Round Valley area. And reports several cars were stuck on State Route 175 between Hopland and Lake County.

Mendocino County has at-home COVID tests to dole out. The over the counter tests have been made available by the Public Health Dept and are being handed out by community groups which have a lot of public contact. The tests are safe and effective and Public Health recommends you test at home before you go to a holiday gathering, before returning to school, and before and after you travel. If you test positive, they say you should isolate for 10 days and until you have no symptoms for at least 24 hours.

For a how-to video on at-home testing, and testing site schedules and locations visit

<https://www.mendocinocounty.org/covid19>

Free vaccine booster shots continue to be available at primary care providers, pharmacies, and at the County's fixed and pop-up clinics.

For more information: <https://www.mendocinocounty.org/covid19>

There's a new mayor in the town of Willits. During their Dec. 8th City Council meeting, Saprina Rodriguez was chosen by unanimous vote. And just after the vote, she took over leading the meeting and asked for nominations for Vice Mayor. Greta Kanne was then chosen, also by unanimous vote. The process happens each two year cycle when councilmembers are chosen by registered voters for four years, then the councilmembers choose their leaders.

COVID safety protocols the topic of the latest Willits Unified School District (WUSD) School Board meeting. The hybrid meeting with both Zoom and in-person touched on the protocols, which apparently some parents find too strict. Those at the meeting said they wanted the outdoor mask requirement tossed and the Willits Teachers Association (WTA) put out a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the same. They have asked the school board to remove the requirement by Feb. 1st since after holidays, there could be some cases and to give some more time for vaccines to be administered for those without.

A reminder by the California State Parks Dept. for a healthy way to start the new year. The yearly First Day Hikes on New Year's Day. Over 40 state parks have more than 50 guided hikes across the state. But it's a nationally led effort. The First Day Hikes program encourages folks to get out and experience beautiful natural and cultural resources in the outdoors, and to remind that it doesn't have to be the only day of the year to do so. The state Parks Director says it's a great "opportunity to improve one's physical, mental and social health", by connecting with nature.

A teacher from Clearlake has been arrested in Southern California for allegedly trying to meet a minor for sex. Police in the city of Brea, in Orange County say 36 year old Ricardo Ruiz was arrested Thursday for three felonies. They say he tried to contact a minor at Brea shopping center after a tip from a TV reporter about a sting by a civilian group trying to find sexual predators. The group calls themselves, Creep Catching Unit. They had a couple other stings over the last 6 months. Ruiz was being held on \$100,000 bail, but was released after posting a bail bond Friday. Police say traveling 500 miles indicated a "strong intent" by a suspect to engage in crime. Ruiz had no criminal record before this.

California is about to record its 5 millionth case of coronavirus. As omicron takes over 50% to 70% of new cases. The variant has quickly taken over as the dominant strain of the virus in the nation. The first case surfaced in South Africa, then a resident in San Francisco who had traveled there, apparently brought it back. The state Dept. of Public Health reports it's being "detected at increasing proportions in wastewater in multiple regions throughout California". The Governor said last week though that the state is "better positioned" to handle a surge than a year ago when cases put a strain on hospitals and morgues.

There's a new leader at Mendocino College Foundation. Julie McGovern has been hired as the new executive director, effective next month. The Foundation Board President Tom Dow says they're thrilled to welcome McGovern aboard. She's taking over for Katie Fairbairn, who retired nearly a year ago. The Superintendent and President Dr. Tim Karas chimed in saying Julie has the qualifications and expertise to grow the Foundation into an even "greater, more successful, organization to impact the lives of our students and increase access to higher education."

Blizzard conditions have closed a ski resort in Lake Tahoe, as they try to find a ski shop manager reported missing on his way to Christmas dinner with friends. Rory Angelotta of Truckee never made it to dinner Saturday and was reported missing late that night at Northstar California Resort. The Placer County Sheriff's office reports finding his ski pass was used that morning, and his phone had also logged an emergency ping about then. His car was in the parking lot and all calls are going to his voicemail. The lift he took apparently provides access across the resort, and in the backcountry, where they had about 6 feet of fresh snow Saturday. The resort closed Sunday and yesterday due to the hazardous conditions which also prevented searchers from looking for Angelotta.

12/28/21

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is considering some new protections for the foothill yellow-legged frog. The federal agency is proposing Endangered Species Act (ESA) protections in four areas that are geographically and genetically distinct. The amphibian named for its yellow belly and the bottom of its back legs is seen in the Willamette Valley of Oregon all the way to the Santa Lucia Mountain range in southern California, out to the Pacific coast to the western slopes of the Cascade and Sierra Nevada mountains. The creature has several potential threats, including enough water, predators, disease and temperature change due to climate change, fires and more.

The minimum wage is going up again for the New Year. Starting this Saturday, New Year's Day, the wage will go up to \$15 an hour for companies who have 26 or more employees. For those with less than that, it'll be \$14. The state now has the highest minimum wage in the nation, and it's more than double the federal minimum wage, which is only \$7.25 an hour. There are several cities in the state though with even higher minimum wages than the \$15. West Hollywood has the highest in the country with \$17.64 an hour for hotel workers, and \$15.50 for non-hotel workers, and that's going up to \$16.50 an hour in July.

It's official, the California Citizens Redistricting Commission has delivered the state's final congressional, State Senate, Assembly and Board of Equalization district maps to the California Secretary of State. Their work is done about the time of the intended deadline. Monday was set as the deadline by the state Supreme Court. The same process is done every decade, with the US Census, to make sure boundaries are evenly split. The bi-partisan commission was made up of five Democrats, five Republicans and four members with no political affiliation.

The jobless numbers are coming down in California. In Lake County, the jobless rate was pretty well near where we were at since the start of the pandemic. The Employment Development Department reported a 5.8% unemployment rate, the same as in February 2020. This is for November. In October it was a tad higher, at 6.2% and 7.4% the year before. The overall rate for the state was at 6.9% in November as opposed to 8.7% the year before. The national rate is 4.2%. Mendocino County was at 4.7% and neighboring Glenn was 5.1%, Napa at 4.2% and Sonoma County was at 3.7%.

Two people from Eureka have been arrested after reports of an armed robbery in Mendocino County. Eureka police reported getting a tip on Christmas morning that Brandon Haselip and Michelle McDaniel, who had active arrest warrants for committing the robbery were seen in a parked car in Eureka. The two arrested after Haselip took off and hid in a shed. Police say they had a bunch of drugs on them, including nearly 2.5 ounces of Fentanyl, more than a gram and a half of Cocaine, several Percocet and benzodiazepines pills, packaging and scales to weigh drugs and stolen property from the armed robbery. They're in Humboldt County Jail for the warrants, plus Haselip was charged for possession of controlled substances for sales and a probation violation.

Tens of thousands who lost their power during the latest string of storms have been restored. Pacific Gas and Electric Company reports electric and vegetation crews were out working to get the power back on to 65,000 customers impacted by weather related outages. Almost 50,000 customers got their power back on since Christmas morning, and another 15,000 were still without as of Sunday night. All as PG&E meteorologists were forecasting low snow levels with heavier snow in low to mid elevations late yesterday. The National Weather Service had issued a Winter Storm Warning through this morning for the Sierra and northern mountains.

The Mendocino County Sheriff warns about the Weather Advisory from last night at 10:00 PM to this morning at 10:00 AM in the county. The agency reports that PG&E was working on the power outages across the county with customers impacted in Covelo, Laytonville, Willits, Potter Valley, Calpella, Ukiah, and Fort Bragg. PG&E was informing customers of the outage, when crews would be in their area, and their estimated restoration time, by phone, text and email. The message by the Sheriff's office on Facebook also said the department along with the Office of Emergency Services wished everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

Contra Costa County is requiring first responders and at-risk workers to get the coronavirus booster shot. Officials announced the requirement yesterday. It goes into effect January 10th. It applies to county law enforcement officers, firefighters and emergency medical personnel who work in or may respond to emergency calls at high-risk facilities. The order also applies to non-emergency ambulance workers who provide medical transport to those facilities. In Sonoma County they're reporting a surge in cases of the omicron variant of the coronavirus. Health officials say there's been an average infection rate of 16 new cases per 100-thousand residents. It comes after an infectious disease expert at UC Berkeley confirmed the Bay Area and the state of California is now experiencing the same winter surge that has come to other U.S. states.

ury selection in the trial of a former Sonoma County sheriff's deputy accused of killing someone during a traffic stop starts after the holiday weekend. The trial for former Deputy Charles Blount for the November 2019 in-custody death begins Monday. David Ward was killed after he was detained by officers, then put in a now-banned chokehold. Plus, his head was bashed into his car's doorframe. In the video, you can hear Blount say "oh well" while Ward laid prone in handcuffs afterward. The car Ward was in had been reported stolen days earlier. Blount faces involuntary manslaughter

12/29/21 and felony assault by a peace officer charges.

You've gotta wear a mask indoors in Sonoma County, vaccinated or not. Yesterday the county removed an exemption it had placed earlier this month that allowed vaccinated people to go without a mask in some indoor settings, like at gyms, in offices and at church. The new health order went into effect this morning at 12:01 a.m. The county's public health officer, Dr. Sundari Mase says the vaccine works, but if you still get the virus, you can infect others. But you probably won't become severely ill or die from the virus.

After a gang-related stabbing in Ukiah last month, an arrest has been made. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office reports Jaime Antonio Zambrano is accused of the attempted murder along with a special allegation, for knifing the victim November 28th at an apartment complex. Zambrano also gets a strike against him in the state's "Three Strikes" law if he's convicted. Zambrano has been in and out of jail for several years and is a suspected gang member.

After reports of negative tests at the Humboldt County Jail, some inmates are speaking out saying they're concerned recent positive tests of inmates could mean they're still contagious. Kym Kemp reports after some detainees were quarantined for ten days, and were returned to their dorm unit, but some say two recent positive cases were still ill. But a spokesperson for the Sheriff's Dept. says an inmate who was the first to test positive, in this latest surge was no longer symptomatic and was not tested again as that is not their protocol. And they are following CDPH/Public Health guidance regarding congregate living and mass isolation.

There are still several thousand PG&E customers in Southern Humboldt County without power. As of last night the energy company reported there were still some Garberville residents without power, but it should be resolved today. But they didn't state how many would get their power back, and that it may only be temporary as the company's got staff still working on the repairs. There was a transmission pole and some wiring down north of Garberville. There are folks also without power in northern Mendocino County too.

Some state prison inmates with one strike against them may be let out early. Early release credits are only allowed for some Strike inmates if they only have about 20% of their time left. But apparently the state's considering changing it even though the Three Strikes law was last modified by voters. Prison administrators have reportedly been using "emergency" regulations to get around the voter-approved early release credit cap. Instead of serving 80% of their time, some are being released after only serving half.

A couple who have both been working in the Konocti Unified School District are leaving after several years, for new adventures. The School Board said their goodbyes earlier this month to Ed and Sarah Fuchs whose last day is tomorrow. Ed has been a PE teacher for 8th graders, a class adviser and the boys' wrestling coach, and Sarah has worked as the College and Career Center adviser, testing coordinator and athletic director at Lower Lake High. They're moving to Wisconsin.

Since the power went out for folks in Humboldt and Mendocino County, those in Covelo got theirs back with the help of generators. PG&E reported every one of the 1,300-plus customers in the Covelo area lost power Sunday night after a snowstorm. The energy company reported buying generators on Monday night and that power would be back on Tuesday night. They also reported a couple hundred customers in the Round Valley area would be covered by the generators too. Laytonville, Willits and Potter Valley also lost power after trees came down. Yesterday afternoon about 200 Mendocino County residents were still in the dark. You can check the status at the PG&E website.

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California is the victim of another COVID-19 surge. Hospitals are also seeing rapidly increasing cases, faster than ever before. It's all due to the omicron variant which is ravaging the country, along with delta, which has not dissipated either. The Bay Area News Group reported a day-over-day increase in hospitalizations due to the virus, higher than at any time since the pandemic began. The most hospitalizations, the report found, were in Contra Costa County — up 76% in the last two weeks, but in Orange County, they've risen 89% recently. Health experts say the next two to three weeks will be a very dangerous time in California. And in the country, we are nearing the 300,000 case/day mark. The last record was 250,000 on Jan. 11th.

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Ukiah could be in line to get nearly \$500,000 over the next 18 years as a participant in settlements with three large drug companies over the community costs of the Opioid crisis. In a major settlement nearing between several State Attorneys General and drug makers McKesson, Cardinal Health and AmerisourceBergen and Janssen, California and its cities and counties could to receive up to \$2.2 billion in Settlement Funds over the next 18 years to be used for substance use prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery. Ukiah's share would reportedly be around

12/31/21 \$488,000.

Several Mendocino County water agencies are asking Pacific Gas and Electric to increase the water flow coming through the Potter Valley Project. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports that due to a problem with the project's transformer bank, PG&E is only sending 45 cubic feet per second as per their minimum flow requirements for the East Branch Russian River and contractual obligation to the Potter Valley Irrigation District. The County says with Lake Mendocino at 36% capacity, there isn't enough water to meet basic health and safety needs and they want the flow increased to 140 cfs.

The Lake County Health Department says while the Omicron variant has not yet been identified in Lake County, surrounding counties are finding it and it is almost certainly spreading through the community. In a statement Thursday officials said they anticipate a large climb in cases in the coming weeks, and they encourage businesses, schools, and families to prepare for many people testing positive and getting sick. They encourage vaccinations and boosters saying they seem to provide good protection from serious illness from Omicron as seen in the US and around the world with the booster offering important additional protection. They also suggest you familiarize yourself with how to get tested, which you can find on the Lake County Health Department Website.

Both kids and adults can take part when the Lake County Library's Winter Reading Challenge begins on Tuesday, January 4. The library has Challenge programs for pre-K, kids, teens, and adults. And children who can't quite read on their own can still sign up and parents can record the books that they read together. And it's not just books – you can also do the Challenge with Ebooks, audiobooks, comics, or whatever you'd like to check out from the library and read. You can register for the challenge on the Lake County Library website or by stopping by your local branch.



The water level in Clear Lake has gone up a bit this week, with end of year rain and snow making for a slightly better water year this year than 2020. Lake County News reports while Lake County is still in its second year of extreme drought and Clear Lake has been at its lowest since the drought of the late 1970s, the Lake has risen nearly a foot and a half since in the last two weeks. There's also been a huge recent boost to the snow pack with the California Department of Water Resources reporting the Northern Sierra at 145% of normal, the Central Sierra at 162%, and the Southern Sierra at 167%.

The first Sonoma County Dungeness crab of the season has gone to Market. The commercial fishery opened on Wednesday, more than a month late, but just in time to get the crab for sale for New Year's Eve. The Press Democrat reports the Sonoma Zone was the last to open because of lingering migratory whales and other marine mammals that could have gotten entangled in fishing gear. Most other Dungeness fisheries opened on December 1st. As for the price, one fisherman who brings his catch to Bodega Bay said it's being sold in the seafood department for \$9.99 a pound.