

KWNE-KMKX FFC Reports Q4, 2023

The Governor's Office is announcing that Newsom is selecting Laphonza Butler to complete the US Senate term of the late Senator Dianne Feinstein through next year. Butler is the president of the nation's largest organization dedicated to electing women, EMILY's List. In a release issued in Lake County News, Butler is listed as a senior advisor to VP Kamala Harris, a labor leader and advocate for women and working people. She will be the first openly LGBTQ person to represent California in the Senate. For over 10 years she served as the president of the largest labor union in California, SIEU Local 2015 representing nursing home and homecare workers.

10/02/2023

Residents in North Mendocino County felt shaking from quakes over the weekend. A magnitude 3.9 earthquake struck around 8:40am Sunday with the epicenter near Mill Creek. Saturday, there was a 4.7 earthquake south of Petrolia about 24 hours earlier, and another 4.2 quake Saturday morning just after 10am. A third quake of 2.1 shook south of Ferndale off the Coast at 10:30am. KymKemp reports there were no significant damage or injuries. Around 100 people reportedly felt the shaking according to the USGS, with some feeling the quake in Mendocino County.

Clearlake Oaks County Water District officials say they are cooperating with FEMA officials and are denying allegations they fraudulently kept state and federal emergency funds. Federal officials say they knowingly held onto the funds in violation of the False Claims Act. The Press Democrat reports on Friday they the water district said they tried to return money meant secure insurance reimbursements for storm damage in 2017. Thursday a whistleblower complaint led to a \$1.6 million settlement, according to the US Department of Justice. The water district maintains they were waiting for FEMA to perform an audit before returning the money. A Local Agency Investment Fund was created and administered by the state Treasurer's Office. The water district said they settled to avoid a lengthy and expensive trial.

Authorities are searching the Point Reyes seashore for a missing person following a possible shark attack. The Press Democrat reports a Coast Guard official says a group of people called authorities for a possible shark attack after seeing a friend in the water disappear off Wildcat Beach. Sunday morning multiple agencies responded to the call and began a search that ended around 5pm. The beach is only accessible by hiking or using ATV's for several miles. Officials say it's too early to formally call it a shark attack, but they continue to investigate and search for the missing person.

The Bureau of Land Management is lifting fire orders on seasonal restrictions in place since the summer. Public lands in Mendocino County are part of the area where limits on internal combustion engines off roads and trails were rescinded. BLM officials urge caution with fire danger still possible even with the beginning of the rainy season. The state year-round fire prevention order is still in place. Those wanting to have a campfire can once again do so with a valid California Campfire Permit. For more details and orders check out readyforwildfire.org or with Cal Fire.

Sheet1

The Mendocino College Foundation Board of Directors meeting this week includes scholarship application process updates and more. On Wednesday from noon to 2pm, at the Ukiah Campus Library Building, the board will go over a land update. They'll discuss the Friends of the Mendocino College Coastal Field Station Liaison Vacancy and recommend a new Director. They plan to go over directors and affiliates reports and get an update from the Mendocino College Superintendent. It will be the last meeting until December.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors plan to meet tomorrow at 9am and will hear a request to use the Lake County Special Districts property by the Lake County Rodeo. They'd like to use the property northwest of Highway 29 and Whalen Way on a long-term basis. Lake County News reports in other business they'll hear a presentation on the Lake County Community Wildfire Protection Plan and discuss approval. The board will hear a presentation by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife on their Clear Lake Hitch Barriers Removal Project. They'll proclaim this week as National 4-H Week in the county, and next Monday as Indigenous People's Day. The board will go over the community Economic resilience Fund groups. The Board of Supervisors plans to adopt an ordinance allowing temporary cannabis processing structures and more. The board will go over the Lake County Watershed Protection District for a \$2.5 million grant application for the Hitch Habitat Improvement Planning. They plan to consider appointments to the Emergency Medical Care Committee. And in closed session the board plans to confer with legal counsel on potential cases as well as existing litigation between Earthways Foundation, Inc versus the county.

Mendocino County Museum will honor Indigenous People's Day with free admission to all visitors this Sunday from noon to 4pm. In a news release from the Mendocino County Cultural Services Agency, the public is invited to view Woven Worlds in a permanent exhibit that explores the history and celebrates the culture of Mendocino County's indigenous people.

Lakeport Police are hosting the National Night Out Against Crime tomorrow at Library Park. Starting at 4pm the department is inviting the community to gather for an evening of fun. Activities include bike decorating on Park Street. There will be about 30 agencies present with informational booths about public resources. According to Lake County News, CHP, PG&E, city services including animal care and school districts will be on hand with the Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services and more. Everything at the event is free for families. Check the Lakeport Police Department's facebook page for more information.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service are announcing adding the northwestern and southwestern pond turtles in California, Oregon and Washington as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. In a release in MendoFever, the service explains the turtle population is dwindling. They are crucial to healthy rivers and wetlands and losing them would harm aquatic ecosystems. Pond turtles live frequently in rivers, creeks and small lakes, marshes, irrigation ditches and more. The reptiles have been losing habitat and their numbers have decreased with urban development including dam construction, disease and climate change.

Sheet1

The City of Ukiah is announcing the installation of new water infrastructure. New fire hydrants will be put in with perpendicular lines, according to a release in MendoFever. Work will begin from Gobbi north to Mill. There aren't any city-wide interruptions scheduled next week, but some properties in the area will have temporary interruptions and will know at least 3 days in advance. Starting October 9th, sidewalk demolition is scheduled on the southeast side of State Street, including tree removal. The trees will be replaced in larger spaces with irrigation where they're less likely to damage infrastructure work. ADA compliant sidewalks are set to be installed. Construction will take place next week from 7am to 6pm, Monday thru Friday. On street parking in the zone will be closed but there will be pedestrian access.

Lakeport Police are changing how they interact with the homeless population. During the Town Hall Meeting last week, the community learned that in Lake County there are about 1,200 homeless. Chief of Police Brad Rasmussen discussed how the department is aiming to hire a licensed clinical social worker as they lean on treatment strategies rather than incarceration. According to the Record Bee, the Chief noted in one case, a 90 day program helped transition a meth addict away from trouble and on to recovery. Lake County Behavioral Health Services were on hand and noted that mental health first aid in high schools is helping deter young adults from abuse. Community leaders expressed hoping for legislation to handle overcrowding in jails by moving some offenders into a Mental Health Court.

There will be a Candidate Forum for candidates in the 1st District Supervisor's Race at Redwood Valley Grange on Thursday, October 12 at 6:30pm on East Road. Five candidates are on the ballot for the March 5th, 2024 primary election since incumbent Glenn McGourty will not be seeking a second term. The Mendocino Women's Political Coalition is sponsoring the event along with the Redwood Valley Grange and Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council.

The National Weather Service is warning coastal residents and mariners that a gale warning is in place through tomorrow. ClimaGuard reports those on the water should seek safe harbor, alter course and secure vessels for severe conditions. The Small Craft Advisory and Gale Warning span from Point St. George to Cape Mendocino. Strong north winds are expected with gusts up to 45 knots. The ocean is forecasted to have 9 to 12 foot waves. There is reduced visibility expected with small crafts urged to take caution.

10/03/2023

Officials are searching for remains of a man who may have been attacked by a shark off of Point Reyes. The National Park Service along with local police and fire departments are looking for a 52 year old man whose friends say he disappeared in what appeared to be a shark attack. The Press Democrat reports many agencies are working the coast, including the US Coast Guard by land, sea and air. Sunday morning, authorities were called by a group of people around 10:40am saying they saw shark activity in the Pacific from the beach. Monday morning, water resources were called off due to fog, but crews were back out yesterday searching for any remains.

The Governor has vetoed the bill that would have provided unemployment benefits to striking workers. Saturday, Newsom said he vetoed the bill because the state is running out of money, telling news outlets that "Now is not the time to increase costs or incur this sizable debt." The Economic and Development Department already has over \$18 million in debt and had to borrow from the feds during the pandemic. Fraud has been rampant as well, increasing state's costs. The bill would've allowed workers who have been on strike for over two weeks to receive up to \$450 weekly.

Sheet 1

Federal support is available for people to help pay their PG&E bills. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program can offer up to \$1,000 for people who enroll. In an announcement issued in MendoVoice, PG&E says the program has already given more than \$75 million to people this year. Eligibility for the program services vary depending on income, household size and location of your home. Other federal assistance programs are out there to help with home internet, wastewater and electricity fees or discounts.

Laphonza Butler says she's ready to serve. Governor Newsom chose Butler to fill the US Senate seat vacated by the late Senator Feinstein. The governor said Sunday that he is fulfilling his pledge to appoint a Black woman. Some were hoping it would be Barbara Lee, the congresswoman who is running for the seat next year. Newsom earlier said he did not want to tip the hand of anyone officially running for the seat, but he did not ask Butler to stay out of the race. Should she choose to run, she has until December 8th to file paperwork.

An autopsy is being performed after a death at the Elijah House Shelter. The Lake County Coroner will investigate after shelter staff called authorities at around 2am this morning when they found someone had died in a bed. There were no signs of foul play and more details are yet to be released.

There will be a Water Forum Planning Group Meeting this week with the Russian River Water Forum. Thursday from 10am to 1pm at the Ukiah Valley Conference Center the group plans to give an update on the New Eel-Russian Facility Proposal and discuss future coordination. There will be presentations on Lake County and Lake Pillsbury Alliance interests related to the Potter Valley Project and New Facility Proposal. The meeting will also be available via zoom.

Ukiah residents are prepping for the 17th Annual Empty Bowls Event at Plowshares this Saturday. The event will be a drive-thru dinner with proceeds supporting Plowshares' programs to feed the community. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports tickets usually sell out, but can be purchased online at [plowshares feeds.org](http://plowsharesfeeds.org) or at the office on South State Street. They've been feeding the community of Ukiah for 4 decades and are almost entirely community supported. In the last year, the program has given over 77,000 meals to those in need. 100 percent of this weekend's event will go towards Meals-On-Wheels and more locally. Ceramic bowls are provided by Mendocino College Ceramics Club potters and local artists.

Kaiser Permanente and eight labor unions representing workers are at an impasse in labor negotiations. Over 75,000 health care workers could go on a three-day strike starting tomorrow. The strike could impact Kaiser facilities in Santa Rosa and more as SEIU United Healthcare Workers West prepare to walk the picket line. The Press Democrat reports there are two additional unions preparing to strike in the Bay Area. A union official says Kaiser executives are bargaining in bad faith and are committing unfair labor practices. Kaiser officials say they remain optimistic that they'll reach a deal and avoid a strike. Their contract expired September 30th. If the strike happens, it could be the largest health worker walkout in US history.

The East Region Town Hall is meeting tomorrow at 4pm at the Moose Lodge in Clearlake Oaks. The Community Development Department Director will be the guest speaker who will discuss the Clearlake Oaks Roadmap Taskforce Update as well as the Cannabis Ordinance Task Force update and commercial cannabis projects. Lake County News reports the group will also hear about Spring Valley Lake recovery, illegal cannabis cultivation and Firewise Community Safety. They'll also go over the latest on the new Klaus Park. The ERTH will discuss an update from the Northshore Fire Protection District and more.

Sheet1

Cal Fire's Forest Health Research Program is awarding \$5.5 million to 15 scientific research studies. Officials are hoping the studies will help forest landowners, resource agencies, fire management organizations and lawmakers on forest health and management. They are looking for scientific publications, outreach and education and decision support tools. The program was created as part of the California Climate Investment to discover solutions for forest resilience, fuel treatment effectiveness, carbon storage and more.

Applications for tax deferment are now being processed. State Controller Malia Cohen announced the California's Property Tax Postponement, or PTP Program, lets seniors, the disabled, or low income homeowners have extra time to pay their property taxes. Last year in the state, homeowners were able to postpone over \$5.6 million in residential property taxes. Lake County News reports eligibility has been expanded several times and have added manufactured homes. The new income limit has been raised to nearly \$52,000, that adds eligibility to more people. Processing began yesterday, and the final deadline for the current tax year is next February. Residents affected by natural disasters may be eligible for another tax relief program that lets properties be reappraised.

The Point Cabrillo Lighthouse is back in action as a navigational beacon.

MendoFever reports the motor from the 1930s was recently rebuilt. The lens was lifted off the bearings to clean, inspect and re-lubricate the bearings. Halogen bulbs have been installed and the Point Cabrillo Lightkeepers Association staff and volunteers have gone through new training. The lighthouse also got a new paint job and new back doors over the summer, after being destroyed in January's winter storms. The nonprofit, Point Cabrillo Lightkeepers Association, is inviting the Mendocino Community to join them on October 14th for the last lighthouse lens tour of the year.

The late US Senator Dianne Feinstein is laying in state at San Francisco's City Hall today. San Francisco Mayor London Breed and Feinstein's daughter and granddaughter followed her flag draped casket. The Press Democrat reports she served as the city by the bay's first female mayor and joined Barbara Boxer as the first woman to represent California in the US Senate. A memorial service is set for tomorrow outside of City Hall with Nancy Pelosi, Vice President Kamala Harris and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer scheduled to attend.

10/04/2023

A Gale Warning is in effect until 11pm tonight. The National Weather Service is warning the seas will be 11-13 feet with north wind gusts up to 40 knots from Point Saint George to Cape Mendocino. Strong winds are making hazardous seas which could capsize or damage vessels and reduce visibility. Those on the water are urged to remain in port, seek safe harbor or alter course and secure your vessel for severe conditions.

Kaiser Permanente workers could walk off the job today. Negotiations between the institution and unions representing about 75,000 healthcare workers ended with non resolution yesterday. There are 1,800 Kaiser workers in Sonoma County who could start striking this morning. The Press Democrat reports the SEIU Healthcare Workers West said they are fully prepared to go on strike, but said that union negotiators are on standby. A key issue is labor shortages with staffing said to be inadequate jeopardizing patient safety. Kaiser officials say talks are ongoing as they reschedule non-emergency and elective surgeries and bring in temporary staff saying local hospitals and pharmacies will stay open. The unions say they'd like Kaiser to commit to a \$25 minimum wage and more.

Sheet 1

A Cobb man is facing attempted murder and assault charges and is slated for a jury trial next month. Hunter Toles appeared remotely at the Lake County Superior Court. His trial was set for this month, until his attorney, Thomas Quinn requested a continuance with pretrial discovery issues. The charges come from an event in spring of last year, when Lake County Sheriff's Deputies were called to Rainbow Road on Cobb Mountain with a woman who had been shot. She was treated with a non life threatening gunshot wound and identified Toles as the suspect. The Record Bee reports he was found and taken into custody with bail set at over \$3 million. His bail was reduced to \$100,000 and agreed to stay away from the witness and be placed under the probation department control. Toles entered a not guilty plea to all counts and denied special allegations.

There will be a National Wireless Emergency Alert System test today. It's part of a nationwide test by the FCC and FEMA and will affect cell phones, radio and television broadcasts at 11:20am. In a release issued in MendoVoice, FEMA authorities say it will be the third nationwide test, and second test to all cell devices. The agencies are coordinating to make sure that public safety is preserved in the case of an emergency, particularly on the national level. The alerts are made and sent by authorized federal, state, local, tribal and territorial government agencies in geo-targeted areas. You'll hear the EAS test on the radio, and it will last about one minute.

Guest speaker Pamela Lee from the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Farm to School will speak at the Willits Economic Localizations' Building Community series in an event this Sunday. The series includes a new \$60 million grant program for schools, farmers, distributors and the community to improve kids' health and local food systems in Willits. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the aim is to build support for programs including connecting local producers with school district buyers, boosting the local farm economy. The organization also wants to see kids more connected with food cultivation and nutrition topics. The event this Sunday is free but donations are encouraged at the Grange.

The Clearlake City Council is meeting tomorrow at 6pm in City Hall. The agenda includes discussing an increase of legal expenses as the city faces tribal lawsuits. The Council will also go over a proposed water rate increase. Lake County News reports the meeting tomorrow will begin with proclaiming October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month and Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The council will consider doubling their legal expense budget to half a million to defend the city against lawsuits filed by the Koi nation. They'll hear Golden State Water Company's request for a 32-41 percent rate increase over a three year period. The council also is expected to award a nearly \$600,000 contract for the Senior Center Kitchen Remodel Project.

Authorities are investigating an assault that severely injured a woman last month. Sunday, September 17th at around 4:40am, Mendocino County Sheriff's Deputies were called to a home on South Dora Street in Ukiah. There they found a 33 year old woman being treated by emergency responders for multiple severe injuries. Reportedly, her boyfriend, Larry Commander beat her with a pistol, threatening to kill her. In a release in KymKemp, Commander was arrested for the attack after a search that included a clinic in Ukiah where employees say he was acting highly unusual. Commander was found walking near the Pear Tree Shopping Center and was taken into custody. He is in jail being held in lieu of \$250,000 bail.

Sheet 1

Derek Cleek of Willits has been found guilty of four felonies and will be sentenced on Halloween in Mendocino County Superior Court. The county District Attorney posted on social media the outcome of the case; Cleek was charged with being a felon with a shotgun and ammo, having three destructive Molotov cocktails and more. In one hour, jurors deliberated yesterday and returned with the guilty verdicts. Based on his four convictions, his sentencing will be recommended by the Mendocino County Adult Probation Department. The new Mendocino County Superior Court Judge Keith Faulder presided over the court and will sentence Cleek at the end of the month.

The Ukiah City Council is approving the Redwood Credit Unions plans for a branch. In a special meeting Friday, MendoFever reports the council accepted the bank's 7th draft for the new branch on Perkins and Main Streets. The latest plan includes a partial second floor with two small offices. With fierce opposition over subdividing the property and the decision on whether the bank will also have an ATM one councilmember said if they didn't act on the latest plan, they'd send a signal to the greater community that Ukiah is not a place to waste your time. After over 3 hours, the council voted 3 to 2 to approve RCU's final proposal.

There is more information to the PG&E assistance as part of the California Climate Credit to be distributed by the utility to over 5 million customers. The California Cap-and-Trade Program is creating the credit aimed at transitioning customers to a low-carbon future. Residential homes will get a credit of about \$40 on their October bills. It is the same credit that was given in March this year. Lake County News reports residential households get the electric credit twice yearly and a natural gas credit issued once. PG&E is also providing more assistance with the California Alternate Rates for Energy Program with a discount of 20 percent or more monthly on gas and electricity.

Cal Fire is planning a public review of the Jackson Demonstration State Forest next week. There is a revised Forest Management Plan for the next decade. In a release in MendoFever, Cal Fire says the Jackson Advisory Group and the agency have been seeking public input over the last several months on modifications to the plan. They'll go over tribal access and co-management, sustainable management and accelerated forest restoration. Public recreation and research are also objectives. During the meeting a week from Friday, they'll present a road map for meeting goals and objectives in reducing fire risk, habitat restoration, carbon sequestration and more. The meeting is set for October 13th from 5 to 7pm at the First Presbyterian Church in Fort Bragg. Public comment will be accepted until November 10th.

Hundreds of medical workers joined tens of thousands of others in a huge multi-state strike against Kaiser Permanente and is the largest health care worker strike in US history. The Press Democrat reports around 1,800 workers in Sonoma County and 200 in Napa are represented by the SIEU United Healthcare Workers West, representing nearly 60,000 workers in the state. Yesterday, those on the picket line said they protesting chronic understaffing they say threatens patients' safety and are saying a higher minimum wage is necessary. The unions plan to continue the strike for up to two more days at most sites. Kaiser workers at Santa Rosa Medical Center were picketing on Mendocino Boulevard were warned by police not to block entry to the emergency room.

10/05/2023

Sheet1

A memorial service is being held today outside City Hall. Mayor London Breed, former US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and VP Harris will be there. President Biden will deliver remarks by video during today's service. The Press Democrat reports a week after her death was announced, US Senator Dianne Feinstein lay in the San Francisco City Hall rotunda yesterday. Pelosi was in attendance along with Vice President Harris. Feinstein was known for getting San Francisco through the AIDS crisis and being a leader who championed civil rights and much more, fighting for a younger generation of women leaders.

California state reservoirs are at 128 percent after a miracle water year, the wettest time in recorded state history. The AP reports after a dozen years in a drought, the series of winter storms thru last January put a stop to the dry conditions. Officials measured nearly 34 inches of rain thru the end of September. The state's "water year" begins in October with fall and winter months getting the bulk of precipitation. Water restrictions for farms, homes and businesses threatened the economy and ecology of the Golden State. As of last month, reservoirs were holding over 27 million acre feet of stored water. They may drain some of the reservoirs to make room for more water expected this year with the arrival of El Nino.

A Mendocino County Superior Court Judge is ordering state prison inmate Tyson Randall Young be held responsible for over a million dollars in restitution to the Kencke family. In a brief evidentiary hearing yesterday, the restitution amount was calculated and accruing interest began. Young, a former State Park Ranger, had been convicted for felony driving under the influence causing great bodily injury to a child. The inmate is currently working off his six year state prison sentence with the Department of Corrections at fire camp. District Attorney David Eyster says in the short term, half of Young's prison wages will be garnished. In the long term the California Franchise Tax Board will keep tabs on the collection.

A woman found guilty of murder but not guilty by insanity. Kelley Coan was found both guilty of murder in the first degree with the special allegation she used a gun to inflict death, has also been found not guilty of the crime by reason of insanity. The homicide happened in 2017 near Caspar submitted to psychiatric testing and concluded she was incapable of know the nature of her act and unable to distinguish it from right or wrong. She is expected to be committed to a state hospital with a maximum period of confinement set at 50 years to life. Coan is expected back in the Mendocino County Superior Court on October 19th where a mental health director will make a decision as to the placement for her. She has the right to undergo medicated treatment and if her sanity is restored, can be released.

A Lakeport man is facing a 40 year old murder charge. Monday, Sonoma County authorities arrested Alfredo Carretero Jr. for the 1983 homicide of Noelle Russo. Thanks to DNA analysis and investigators' continued work, Carretero is behind bars, being held with no bail. Lake County News reports he was arraigned yesterday and scheduled to enter a plea on October 18th. The report comes after 4 decades of searching for the suspect in a murder that left Russo's body in an area of Rohnert Park, after being beaten to her death. Detectives continued working the case, and between 2010 and this year, submitted several pieces of evidence for DNA analysis. Carretero had been an original person of interest was recently identified as the main suspect. Carretero had been known in Lake County for drug-related assault charges.

Sheet1

Laphonza Butler is working to attempt to fill the late Senator Dianne Feinstein's shoes. Governor Newsom's choice to temporarily fill her seat is an historic one as Butler is the first LGBTQ person to represent California in the Senate. CalMatters reports there will be two sets of elections in both the March primary and the November general election. A special election to choose who serves the final two months of Feinstein's term, and the regular election to decide who gets the full six year term. US Representatives Adam Shiff, Katie Porter and Barbara Lee are just some in the field of Democratic candidates positioning for the seat. Butler was sworn in by Vice President Kamala Harris Tuesday.

Save the Redwoods League is buying around 400 acres of Russian River Redwoods. The \$6.5 million sale means the land will never be developed or logged commercially. The Press Democrat reports the conservation organization closed on the sale Friday on land near Guerneville, including the 2,000 year old Clar Tree. The League hasn't determined recreational uses on parts of the property including parts of Bohemian Grove. Former landowner Roger Burch was persuaded to sell to the conservation group in a quick 2-month deal. Now the challenge remains on what part of county government will hold the title with possibilities including the Russian River Sanitation District and the Sonoma County Water Agency.

The Konocti Fire Safe Council is holding an event called "Lessons from Lahaina", a wildfire and evacuation preparedness event for people in the Soda Bay corridor. The event next Wednesday, October 11th will be at Konocti Harbor Resort in Andy's Tavern. Guest speakers include Cal Fire Battalion Chief Brian York and more. The group hopes to continue in public outreach to educate and prepare people along the Soda Bay Road corridor in case of wildfire. Lake County News reports the council is focusing on the eight designated Zonehaven districts for preparation, mitigation, education and evacuation.

Workers will get at least five paid sick days per year, two more days than before and more. Senate Bill 616 was signed by the governor yesterday that also increases the accrual and carry-over amounts. In a release issued by the governor's office, Newsom says increasing access to paid sick days reduces health care costs through improved productivity and morale with fewer turnovers. Newsom signed a host of other bills yesterday, including AB 969 on elections and voting systems; SB 568 on exporting electronic waste, and more.

An AmeriCorps fellowship called GrizzlyCorps is sending college grads into rural communities across the state to promote regenerative agri-food systems and fire and forest resilience. There are four new members of the GrizzlyCorps fellowship where they'll work with U of C Hopland Research and Extension Center along with the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District. The organization says they'll focus on work in Lake and Mendocino Counties to promote agriculture and land based economies that depend on our healthy ecosystem. The region is predicted to see more rain, higher temperatures and more wildfires according to the California Climate Change Assessment. The program has been a positive impact in Mendocino County with the Farm to School program and more.

Lake County Sheriff's Deputies are searching for a missing man. Christopher Vetter of Upper Lake has been missing since August 9th. Vetter was last seen in Upper Lake early on Wednesday, August 9th. He is a white man who is 5 foot 9 inches tall and weighs around 120 pounds. Christopher has brown hair, brown eyes and a mustache and beard. He has a medical condition and has been missing from his family. If anyone has any information on Christopher, please call the Lake County

10/06/2023 Sheriff's Office.

Sheet1

The largest health care strike in US history continues today. KCRA reports patients were experiencing delays at Kaiser pharmacies. The 75,000 member strike includes licensed vocational nurses, home health aides, radiology professionals, pharmacy and ER workers. There were some reports of 3 hour waits for medical appointments and pharmacy delays. The AP reports the massive strike over wages and staffing heads into its third day today with no deal between Kaiser and the unions. The strike will officially end Saturday morning at 6am. Kaiser Permanente workers on strike today say another walkout is possible without employer concessions. The Press Democrat reports this morning the two sides scheduled bargaining sessions for one week from today and tomorrow, the 12th and 13th.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors will meet next Tuesday to discuss continuing streamlining of the Cannabis Department Programs. The Cannabis Department has been streamlining the online portal with the Accela Program. In recent Canna Notes, the department is also asking licensees and applicants to provide demographic data to improve information and help inform state resources that may be available.

The quarter 3 Unified Cannabis Enforcement Taskforce update is out. The state Department of Cannabis Control thwarted over \$100 million in illegal cannabis products and took more than 69 crime-linked firearms, an over 300 percent increase. There were 35 percent less search warrants in the quarter, compared to last year, but close to the same amount of illegal products and grows halted. In the last year since the department's inception, they've seized nearly \$300 million in unlicensed cannabis, pulling over 277,000 plants and over 100 guns.

19 local fire departments, fire agencies and community groups are being awarded wildfire safety grants totaling over \$300,000 from the California Fire Foundation with PG&E. The Press Democrat reports the utility's vice president says everyone must work together to combat the state's growing wildfire threat, particularly in the North Coast region. According to the Cal Fire Foundation, the grants will help implement projects like fuels and hazards reduction to public education and outreach as well as new specialized equipment for firefighters. In Mendocino County fire agencies and departments will get over \$72,000. Lake County will receive \$40,000 for tribal wellness and for the Lake Pillsbury Fire Fighters Association.

Mendocino County Battalion Aviation Chief of the Ukiah Air Attack Base Ray Taglio is retiring. Taglio says he doesn't officially retire until November 20th, after firefighting for 27 years. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports Taglio began with Cal Fire in 1992 with the Sonoma County Unit, before it merged with Lake and Napa Counties. He joined the Mendocino Unit as a helitack fighter in 1995. This week, Taglio was working to train others in the air fire fighting force. He says you have to really multi-task to succeed in the complex position of leadership and determination.

Ukiah residents are prepping for the 17th Annual Empty Bowls Event at Plowshares this Saturday. The event will be a drive-thru dinner with proceeds supporting Plowshares' programs to feed the community. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports tickets usually sell out, but can be purchased online at [plowshares feeds.org](http://plowsharesfeeds.org) or at the office on South State Street. They've been feeding the community of Ukiah for 4 decades and are almost entirely community supported. In the last year, the program has given over 77,000 meals to those in need. 100 percent of this weekend's event will go towards Meals-On-Wheels and more locally. Ceramic bowls are provided by Mendocino College Ceramics Club potters and local artists.

Sheet 1

The Mendocino Historical Review Board is adopting an amended policy for approval of commercial signs and more. During their meeting this week, the board also approved a policy for supporting signs so that when a business relocates, a previously approved sign permit can remain valid and the sign copy can be changed. The board received an application to convert the green warehouse on Lansing Street to an unspecified commercial use with changes to the roof, the barn door and new windows. With some opposition about modernizing an historical structure, they continued the application until December's meeting. They also heard from the Planning and Building Services Director on the County Board of Supervisors direction on temporary tents, with enforcement deprioritized for a year as agencies address the issue.

The Fort Bragg City Council is meeting next week at 6pm in Town Hall on Tuesday. The agenda includes approval of the Noyo Harbor District's Grant Application. They'll receive a report and consider adopting a cooperative agreement with Housing Mendocino Coast and work for the Water Treatment Plant Rehab Project. In closed session the council will confer with legal counsel on anticipated and existing litigation including the suit versus the Mendocino Railroad. They'll also present proclamations declaring next Monday, October 9th as Indigenous Peoples Day and October as Domestic Violence Awareness month.

Cal Fire Mendocino Unit will conduct a prescribed burn in the Howard Forest starting at 9am this morning through 4pm this afternoon. Smoke will be visible in the area between Redwood Valley and Willits today. It's part of the fuels reduction goals of the California Fire Plan. Depending on conditions, the burn will be managed by Cal Fire and may continue into tomorrow as they mop up the blaze.

The Mendocino Coast Children's Fund is donating over 350 soccer balls to Coast Youth Soccer League for the players to keep. The league's players have been increasing over the last several years and it's the largest recreational sports league on the coast. IN a release in MendoFever, the organization says the increase is due to scholarships given by the Mendocino Coast Children's Fund. MCCF also provided new soccer balls to the Mendocino K8 and Fort Bragg Middle School soccer teams. Check out their new location at the Community Center of Mendocino.

The Lakeport Planning Commission is meeting next Wednesday at 5:30 in Lakeport City Hall. On the agenda is consideration to recommend retail storefront cannabis businesses and/or temporary cannabis events in the city. They'll decide on recommending cannabis businesses to the City Council. Lake County News reports the council passed a few codes in 2018 that regulates commercial cannabis in the city but so far the Council hasn't allowed it. Community Development Director Joey Hejnowicz says nearby jurisdictions like Clearlake, Ukiah, Willits, Fort Bragg all permit retail storefront cannabis sales to various degrees, and hopes the Council will allow those legally permitted to go forward.

Mendocino County's 3rd District Supervisor John Haschak has issued his monthly letter to MendoFever. In it, Haschak says he'd like to see an increase in short term rental taxes, but that it was shot down. The Board approved going forward with the Sherwood Road emergency access routes, allowing the residents of Brooktrails and others to vote on paying an annual assessment to maintain Firco Road and Willits Creek Trail for emergency purposes. It would allow fuel reduction projects, road maintenance and more. Supervisor Haschak will be at the Brickhouse Coffee in Willits next Thursday at 10am for his Talk with the Supervisor monthly event.

Sheet1

The Mendocino County Deputy Sheriff's Association is hosting a bbq this Saturday in Ukiah. Big Earl's BBQ will be on hand as residents and deputies engage with each other and the community. The event is free and will be at the Sheriff's Office on Low Gap Road in Ukiah, starting at noon.

A job fair is planned for next week. The Empowering Mendocino Workforce through Diversity Equity and Inclusion will host the fair at Coyote Valley Casino next Wednesday, the 11th from 10 am to 2pm. The Redwood Coast Regional Center and Career Point are helping organize the fair. The post on the Ukiah Valley and Willits Community Group on social media has more details.

Lake County residents are anxious about cannabis rules. At the East Region Town Hall meeting last week, legal cannabis growers and residents are uncertain about the future of the cannabis industry. The Record Bee reports the Lake County Code Enforcement Director says the county has remained conservative and the Board of Supervisors have moved at a slow pace, allowing everyone to understand state rules and how local agencies determine policy. Turner says it's complicated to turn an illegal industry to regulatory framework. During the meeting a report was brought up that indicates water use for cannabis growers is about 1 liter per foot. The board has an ordinance requiring a hydrology report and continues to work on the rules.

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Generators to dry cannabis were also brought as a contentious issue. A study is planned to examine wildfire risk, tribal land disturbance noise and more.

Half a dozen people felt a couple of earthquakes at The Geysers geothermal area yesterday. The Press Democrat reports Sunday morning at around 8:40am a 3 magnitude quake registered about 4 miles north of the Geysers steam field. Later yesterday afternoon another quake shook the area at a larger 3.8 magnitude according to the USGS. No damage or injuries were reported.

Lake County is working to engage with the public on the Clear Lake Hitch barrier removal project. The Lake County Watershed Protection District with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife are inviting residents along streams in the watershed to a town hall. The Stream Clearing and Permitting Overview session is set for this Wednesday from 5:30 to 7:00 pm at the Lake County Superior Courthouse and will be available remotely as well. They'll discuss ongoing local and state efforts to remove Clear Lake Hitch barriers to foster a healthier aquatic ecosystem. Private landowners are encouraged to hear about the conservation efforts and understand the program to maintain environmental balance.

The Mendocino County Cannabis Department is closed for Indigenous Peoples Day today, but is letting the community know that LEEP Direct Grant Applications will be available thru the end of this month. The department is also interested in demographic information to submit to the state for additional resources in legal cannabis permitting. The Cannabis Equity Grant Demographic Survey link has been sent top those who signed up for Canna Notes from the department. The survey will continue through the end of next month as the department continues to streamline the online portal and create policies that best fit the community.

Sheet 1

A Mendocino County woman is facing county jail time, because she stole a paycheck in the mail from Mendocino County to District Attorney Eyster. Kylee Wood of Willits was sentenced late last month, prosecuted by Lake County's District Attorney Kroner. Wood was convicted of felony grand theft. Her accomplice was never caught. The Mendocino County DA posted on social media that Woods had been placed on supervised probation for 2 years in December of 2021, but was found in violation five separate times, the last one in August. She was sentenced to 16 months in the Mendocino County Jail on September 27th.

A new Mendocino County Courthouse is moving forward. Officials are in final negotiations on the design, engineering and construction of a \$144 million Mendocino County Courthouse. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports contracts are expected to be signed by the end of the month. The Mendocino County project is on the high priority list with the California Judicial Council as well as a smaller courthouse in Lake County. The timetable will be a year long final design development followed by state review. The construction in Ukiah is scheduled to begin in early 2025. The 82,000 square foot courthouse will be built on 4 acres that will wrap around the Ukiah Train Depot. Current plans show a 3 story block like structure. City and county representatives are working on the future of the old courthouse downtown.

Potter Valley residents are remembering the 2017 Redwood Complex Fire and how it merged with another fire in Redwood Valley. In a press release over the weekend, Mendocino County officials issued a notice of commemoration. The Redwood Complex Fire burned over 36,000 acres and forced the evacuation of 8,000 residents, claiming nine lives. The county CEO, Sheriff and Office of Emergency Services are reflecting on the tragedy and honoring the memory of its victims. Officials also want to acknowledge the bravery of first responders and all who worked serving the Redwood Valley and Potter Valley communities.

The Mendocino National Forest is planning prescribed fire operations at campgrounds and other sites this fall and winter as cooler and wetter conditions move in. Forest personnel began last week in the Red Bluff Area and will continue along the Grindstone District with pile burns in higher elevations. They'll be moving down to lower elevations. This week, Upper Lake Ranger District fire personnel will potentially burn 40 acres of piles in the Lake Pillsbury basin or 20-130 acres of understory burning at Howard Mill. Managers will monitor weather conditions and continue to take advantage of burn windows. Some smoke may be visible and local fire and government authorities are keeping track of the fuel mitigation process.

CHP and Lake County agencies are investigating a semi truck accident. Friday afternoon on Highway 20, a big rig hauling cattle overturned just east of Clearlake Oaks. Lake County News reports there were multiple emergency and animal rescuers working to save the livestock and driver. It happened just after noon when a witness said the truck driver was headed east pulling a double decker livestock trailer with 79 cattle. It appeared to some that the driver was taking turns on the highway too quickly and flipped over. The driver was not injured, but some cows were killed in the crash. Firefighters sawed into the metal trailer to free the cattle. It took many hours into the evening to get the cows out with help from Cal Fire, Cal Trans, the Lake County Sheriff and more.

Sheet1

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection is asking the public to help with the Fungi for the Fall Continental MyCoBlitz from the 13th through the 22nd. In a release, the department says the BioBlitz helps survey all organisms living in a specific area. The MycoBlitz focuses solely on mushrooms. They are looking for residents to help catalog as many species as they can. The continental scale mushroom collecting foray is an effort to document all fungi that exist in the continent. Observations will be included in the iNaturalist project during the foray week that begins this Friday. Cal Fire's website has more details on the fungus survey and more.

First 5 Mendocino is expanding their trauma informed care. The organization is announcing next month, November 9th mental health researcher Dr. Mary Catherine McDonald will lead a series of training events to inform the community. Dr. McDonald will share information on the latest in neuroscience research on trauma and give practical strategies to promote resilience and mental health development in both kids and adults. There are several interactive workshops planned with panel discussions and networking. The first session will be one month from today from 10am to 3pm at the SPACE auditorium in Ukiah. Check out first5mendocinio.org for more details.

Chair of the California State Water Resources Control Board is celebrating the Purple Pipe Project with young Ukiah students. Last week, Joaquin Esquivel spoke with YoKayOH (Yokayo) Elementary students about the success of creating one billion gallons of recycled water via irrigation and dust-control. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the state water official says things have been hard in the Russian River Watershed and how the water treatment plant is playing a key role in preserving the environment. Officials are preparing for Phase 4 of the Ukiah's recycled water project and officials say they'll see the Purple Pipe get installed soon.

Large businesses in the state must disclose emissions under a new law signed by the Governor over the weekend. The law mandates over 5,300 companies who make more than \$1 billion annually report their direct and indirect emissions. The AP reports emissions from travel, transport and building operations would be included. SB 253 aims to bring more transparency to the public about how big businesses contribute to climate change. The California Chamber of Commerce and other groups oppose the law saying it's too soon to implement and that companies don't have the expertise to accurately report indirect emissions. Under the new law, the Air Resources Board has to approve rules by 2025 to implement legislation. It wouldn't be until 2027 that companies would have to disclose those indirect emissions.

Caltrans is awarding nearly \$115 million in Clean California grants to local municipalities as a part of the Clean California initiative. In an announcement released yesterday, the grants will support 60 projects across the state. Key projects include the Anderson Valley Track to Health and Fitness by the Anderson Valley Unified School District to enhance and expand community fitness opportunities in Boonville. Another project would include the Fort Bragg Art and Recycling Beautification Project to install art and multi-use waste receptacles at locations throughout the city to reduce litter and increase recycling. The funds will also help the City of Willits with the Beautify Willits project to improve public spaces and increase accessibility downtown, in public parks and the Main and Commercial Street

10/10/2023 Corridors.

Sheet1

Gas prices are headed down in California. Analysts for GasBuddy say the high prices are set to decrease. The Sac Bee reports as gas prices have hovered around \$6 a gallon, there are predictions that those prices could drop a dollar by Thanksgiving. However, don't get too excited, the drop could be temporary. California is subject to factors including the summer blend gasoline, refinery shutdowns and facility disruptions could be problematic. The war between Israel and Hamas could have a ripple effect on oil prices globally, and saw an increase just this week because of the attacks. For now, relief could last a while as refineries increase production and political and economic pressures remain to keep prices stable.

There will be a Candidate Forum for candidates in the 1st District Supervisor's Race at Redwood Valley Grange on Thursday, October 12 at 6:30pm on East Road. Five candidates are on the ballot for the March 5th, 2024 primary election since incumbent Glenn McGourty will not be seeking a second term. The Mendocino Women's Political Coalition is sponsoring the event along with the Redwood Valley Grange and Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council. The 1st Districts includes Potter Valley, Redwood Valley, Calpella and Talmage.

There will be a job fair at the Coyote Valley Casino tomorrow, October 11th, from 10am to 2pm. The Empowering Mendocino Workforce through Diversity Equity and Inclusion is hosting the event with help from the Redwood Coast Regional Center and Career Point.

Lake County residents are anxious about cannabis rules. At the East Region Town Hall meeting last week, legal cannabis growers and residents are uncertain about the future of the cannabis industry. The Record Bee reports the Lake County Code Enforcement Director says the county has remained conservative and the Board of Supervisors have moved at a slow pace, allowing everyone to understand state rules and how local agencies determine policy. During the meeting a report was brought up that indicates water use for cannabis growers is about 1 liter per foot. The board has an ordinance requiring a hydrology report and continues to work on the rules. Generators to dry cannabis were also brought as a contentious issue. A study is planned to examine wildfire risk, tribal land disturbance, noise and more.

Gov Newsom vetoed a bill which if passed would have made condoms available to high school students for free. With the state budget deficit now at 30 billion dollars the idea was deemed to expensive. With more than 1.9 million California high school students in 4,000 schools, the unfunded mandate now leaves schools to handle the issue on their own. The bill would have also made it illegal to sell condoms to anyone under 18.

There is an update on the new Eel-Russian Facility Proposal. The Russian River Water Forum's Planning Group met last week and heard presentations from Lake County Representatives. Proponents of the new facility will form a Joint Power Authorities as a regional entity to officially become the party to purchase PG&E's Potter Valley facility as the utility releases the draft license surrender by the end of next month. The Joint Power Authorities group aims to identify water-supply resiliency, protect Tribal interests and support stewardship of fisheries, water quality and recreation in the Russian and Eel Rivers Basins. The Planning Group supporting the Water Forum represents interests in Sonoma, Mendocino, Lake and Humboldt Counties.

Sheet 1

Groups that fight for consumers and auto safety are urging Governor Gavin Newsom to veto a bill that they say would make it harder for Californians who allege fraud or get stuck with a “lemon” vehicle to prove their case. Senate Bill 71 raises the limit from \$25,000 thousand to \$35,000 to avoid being moved to limited civil court, where the discovery process and the number of depositions are limited. The bill is supported by debt collectors and the Alliance for Automotive Innovation, which represents the auto industry. The Alliance, in a letter to lawmakers, said the change would, quote, “benefit consumers and the auto industry by reducing litigation costs and accelerating case timelines in lemon law cases.”

The Forest Service is announcing they have \$150 million in grant funding to support underserved and small acreage forest landowners for climate mitigation and forest resilience. USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack says the program targets private forest landowners with less than 2,500 acres of forest land. In an announcement in KymKemp, the Forest Service says the program is called Forest Landowners Support and is funded through the Inflation Reduction Act. There are categories for grant applications depending on budget size and purpose. They are looking for proposals from state and local governments, Tribal governments, education and for and non-profit entities. Requirements include rural location, tree coverage, and more. The deadline for grant proposal submission begins October 21st but deadlines are different per category.

Lake County Library’s Literacy Program is planning training next week. The Lakeport Library will hold an in-person, no-cost New Tutor Training on Wednesday, October 18th from 11am to 4pm. The Literacy Program Coordinator will teach techniques for teaching adults to read, write and speak English. Bilingual Spanish speakers are encouraged to come and support adult learners interesting in learning English for the first time. With complete training, tutors will be matched with adult learners in settings around the county. The program also offers GED and High School Equivalency test preparation, digital literacy, citizenship application help, written driving test assistance and more.

PG&E is facing the prospect of a state penalty and fines for the a destructive wildfire that the utility caused in Northern California. The Mercury News reports the state Public Utilities Commission is considering a \$45 million penalty against PG&E due to the utility’s role in causing the Dixie Fire that scorched parts of five counties in 2021. The fire began on July 13, 2021, when a rotting tree fell onto a PG&E transmission line near State Route 70 in the Feather River Canyon. The Dixie Fire burned through sections of Plumas, Butte, Lassen, Shasta, and Tehama counties before it was contained in October. It destroyed more than 1,300 buildings. One firefighter was killed in the battle to control the blaze. PG&E previously estimated its costs for the fire could reach \$1.15 billion, which includes \$637 million that went to firefighting efforts.

There is a Clean California Dump Day this weekend in Lake County. This Saturday, the 14th Caltrans District 1 and Lake County will have the Dump Day Event at transfer stations in Lakeport and Clearlake. Residents can drop accepted large items for free. It’s part of the Governor’s Clean California initiative led by Caltrans to keep roads and waterways free of litter. Saturday residents can bring dump day items starting at 9am thru 1pm, or until capacity is reached. The Lakeport Transfer Station on Soda Bay Road in Lakeport, the LCWS Recycling Center on Davis Street in Clearlake and the Eastlake Landfill on Davis Avenue in Clearlake will be places accepting large items from residents. No construction materials, hazardous waste, tires or asbestos will be accepted.

Sheet 1

The Mendocino Land Trust is planning a Sunset Soiree on October 21st, from 4-7pm at the Caspar Community Center. This year's event features a silent auction, live music and local cuisine. Tickets are \$125 and can be purchased online. There are six new public access projects in the works, including a new public park in Fort Bragg and new trails along the coast.

Governor Newsom has vetoed magic mushroom legalization. The bill that would've decriminalized possession and personal use of several hallucinogens was vetoed last weekend. The AP reports it could have ensured people would not be arrested nor prosecuted for limited amounts of plant based hallucinogens. Newsom championed legalizing cannabis back in 2016 but said guidelines need to be in place before the state works to set up regulated treatment with dosing information, therapeutic guidelines and rules against exploitation. The law would have taken effect in 2025 and would have mandated the California Health and Human Services Agency to study and make recommendations on medical clearance. Already though, cities including Oakland, San Francisco, Santa Cruz and Berkeley have decriminalized the natural psychedelics.

The governor has signed legislation to speed up offshore wind development to help the state's long term electricity demand and climate goals. Governor Newsom signed SB 286 this week, to expedite the offshore wind permitting process that can take 5 years. The bill aims to protect the coastal environment and fishing fleets as well as creating sustainable jobs and more. The Offshore Wind Expediting Act helps the process through the State Coastal and State Lands Commissions. The Record Bee reports environmental safeguards will remain in place and the fishing industry protected. It will become law on January 1st of 2024.

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Cal Fire is lifting its burn suspension of residential outdoor burn permits starting today at noon. People with residential burn permits can now burn on permissible burn days. As per usual, agriculture burns must be inspected by Cal Fire before burning until the end of the peak fire season. Permits are available online and are for people in the State Responsibility area and it is the responsibility of the landowner to check with local fire agencies for any other permit requirements. Before you burn, call the Mendocino County Air Management District to make sure you're permitted to burn.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors is approving the Lake County Rodeo Association to lease and buy county owned property for events. At their meeting last week the board heard the proposal. Lake County News reports the rodeo board would like to make an 86 acre parcel in north Lakeport its long term home. Equestrian trails may also be in the cards for the land, using it as a public access trail head. There was discussion on using the site to also facilitate large animal sheltering during emergencies and evacuations. The Rodeo Association will go ahead and start putting in the infrastructure for events.

Conservation advocates are pressing the state to set ambitious targets for nature-based climate solutions this week. The California Natural Resources Agency's Expert Advisory Committee meets Thursday to unveil draft recommendations to capture and store climate-warming carbon through better management of farms, forests and wetlands. The California News Service reports plants naturally sequester carbon in their biomass and in the soil. Restoration of coastal wetlands and conservation of old-growth forests, for example, remove carbon from the air and make the state more resilient to the effects of climate change, such as drought, wildfire and flooding. The commission has until the end of the year to finalize its recommendations.

Sheet1

Cal OES is holding a seven-stop tour to build on the state's earthquake early warning system, starting today in Sacramento, and tomorrow in San Francisco. A shake simulator able to duplicate a 7.0 magnitude earthquake will travel across the state giving first responders quake prep tips. The Great Shake Out tour will finish with the Great California Shake Out Day on October 19th with residents participating in an earthquake drill and practice life saving actions like drop, cover and hold on. Check out California's Office of Emergency Services online for details.

Redwood Credit Union is ranked the healthiest credit union in the state and sixth healthiest in the nation according to a HealthScore issued by Glatt Consulting. Credit unions financial health is studied by the firm that uses metrics to calculate operational strength, asset and liability management and more. The Willits News reports Redwood Credit Union has been awarded the highest 5-star rating for nine years in a row. It's good news for residents of Ukiah with the approval of the latest Redwood Credit Union Branch set to go ahead in the city.

The state Attorney General Rob Bonta is announcing that the large-capacity magazine ban will stay, per the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Large capacity magazines can hold over 10 rounds of ammo. The court order issued yesterday confirms California's restrictions. AG Bonta says the ban is a key component in efforts to fight gun violence. The Ninth Circuit is arguing that the US Supreme Court Decision needs to be reevaluated on the test of the Second Amendment and its history and tradition of regulation. The release issued in KymKemp notes the court made the decision by focusing on current technology and recognizes that large capacity magazines are not protected by the Second Amendment.

The latest COVID 19 vaccine has had a rocky start, weeks after federal approval. As COVID cases increase there have been some delays reported by CVS, Walgreens, Kaiser and other medical facilities. The Bay Area News Group reports medical professionals say there is a supply issue and back orders. The vaccine is not yet available for patients under 12 yet, as adult vaccines have been the first to be distributed. Child size vaccines require different dosing and packaging. It's been a month now, that the CDC announced the updated vaccines by Pfizer and Moderna were cleared for everyone 6 months and older by the FDA. According to the California Department of Public Health, only about 22 percent of residents have gotten the latest booster.

The California Trout group, Round Valley Indian Tribes and the Eel River Forum are presenting the early phases of a restoration and conservation plan for the river system. MendoFever reports the groups met last week and discussed the four phases to the Eel River Watershed restoration. Phase one is the planning stage and is happening now with a study on five focal species of fish and their habitat. Scientists involved in the effort set up the program goals and objectives that include removing barriers, including the Scott Dam. The next phase of the plan is prioritization including discussion of cost, engaging with landowners along the river and data gathering. Officials will also study plant health through satellite imagery for the entire watershed.

Sheet1

The last lens tour for the Point Cabrillo Lighthouse is set for this weekend. On Saturday the 14th, the Lightkeepers Association lighthouse lens tour will begin at 10am with the last tour of the day at 4pm. The lens and motor just got restored with the 110 year old Fresnel Lens cleaned up and shining brightly. The lighthouse on the Northern Coast raises funds through the tours to preserve the nautical beacon. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the tours are not for the faint of heart with a half mile walk from the parking lot to the lighthouse, and steep stairs and ladders. The Point Cabrillo Lighthouse will announce their 2024 tour schedule soon.

Governor Newsom has been busy vetoing and signing new legislation. Just this week, he signed SB 362 into law. The Delete Act directs the California Privacy Protection Agency to create a tool that makes data brokers delete personal information when requested. The LA Times reports data gatherers sell people's personal information like addresses, spending habits and employment status. There are about 500 data brokers in the state that analyze and use the information for marketing and political campaigns. The new law will make it easier to protect consumer privacy and help people get sensitive information erased from data brokers' banks. Opponents of the bill say the legislation could have unintended consequences for small businesses.

More new legislation is on the books. Governor Newsom signed a bill that is intended to change California's mental health policies. The signing of the bill yesterday effectively loosens rules about involuntary treatment, with some saying more people will be put into mental health facilities against their will. The Record Bee reports Newsom is expected to sign additional laws that would let voters determine how to pay for 10,000 new beds and housing, as well as funding mental health services via a tax on the rich. The growing homeless population has motivated lawmakers in dealing with mental health on a community wide scale. Through CARE Court, family, friends and behavioral health officials can petition a court to order treatment plans.

The Clearlake Oaks County Water District will pay about \$1.6 million back after it failed to repay federal and state grant funds. The US Attorney's Office Northern District of California released a statement saying the money was sent to the Lake County Water District after winter of 2017 that brought flooding and mudslides to the state. In spring of that year, FEMA declared a major disaster for California and allowed some public entities to apply for reimbursement for disaster related costs from FEMA and Cal OES. It is alleged that the Clearlake Oaks County Water District applied for those funds after already getting reimbursed by its insurer, the California Joint Powers Insurance Authority. The district kept the money instead of returning it in violation of the False Claims Act and state law.

The Department of Water Resources is awarding the City of Fort Bragg nearly \$1.5 million for a pilot project desalination system. Canada's Oneka Technologies had sought a coastal area in California in their first venture into the Golden State with demanding environmental protection requirements. The Advocate News reports an official with the Fort Bragg Public Works says the company wanted to bring their system to the coast and that they turned out to be a good match. The off-shore mobile units will be anchored to the sea floor and don't require an outside source of energy. Fort Bragg is utilizing specialized consultants for permitting and approval as Oneka studies exactly where off the coast they'll position the new unit. City officials are asking residents to help in a short survey on the city's website to engage with the public on the desalination plans.

Sheet1

In a flurry of legislative signatures and vetoes, Governor Newsom signed a bill that would permanently allow small rural hospitals to employ physicians. In a release issued in Mendocino, Assemblyman Jim Wood is announcing the legislation allows smaller hospitals to adequately staff themselves with doctors, removing a sunset of a 2003 bill that would've made physician retention in those smaller hospitals harder. Woods says California will be able to hire physicians who want to practice as an employee and will be mutually beneficial to the hospitals and the doctors who want to serve patients.

Lakeport is launching an effort to work with local businesses. The Lakeport Business Walk Program aims to help the business community with available resources. Lake County News reports members of the Lakeport Economic Development Advisory Committee along with city staff and others gathered this week to form teams who will work with local business owners this and next month. The purpose of the program is to illustrate the city's commitment to encouraging businesses and get information about problems they may face. Findings from the foray will be presented to the City Council early next year. The Economic Development Advisory Committee meets every second Wednesday of each month; the next one is set for November 8th.

Governor Newsom signed a new law that will ban more than a couple dozen ingredients from cosmetics and personal care products. Ingredients that have risks of burns, cancer, birth defects, and more are just some of over 1,600 already banned in Europe. The Bay Area News Group reports vinyl acetate, lily aldehyde and anthraquinone are just some of the newly banned chemicals. The new law won't take effect until 2027, to give companies time to replace and/or eliminate the harmful ingredients from their products.

Artificial intelligence is growing fast – so companies such as Google, Amazon, Verizon, Microsoft and more have come together to establish best practices in the field. They seek to foster responsible governance that prioritizes privacy, accountability and benefit to society. California News Service reports the framework is divided into six main categories: Responsible AI Values and Principles, accountability, documentation, defined processes, multistakeholder reviews, and metrics to monitor progress.

The First Appellate District Court of Appeals has found an Upper Lake man who beat his children's mother to death is not guilty by reason of insanity. Lake County News reports Willy Timmons was sentenced in March of 2022 to 16 years to life in state prison for the 2017 murder of Vanessa Niko. A jury convicted Timmons of second-degree murder, torture, inflicting traumatic injury, aggravated mayhem and special allegations of use of a deadly weapon and more. The court ruling indicated that Timmon's appeal filed last year said the trial court refused to allow him to enter a plea of not guilty by reason of insanity. During the 2017 trial, a psychologist found Timmons exhibited symptoms of schizophrenia, paranoid type, with delusions along with a meth addiction. The victim was a mother of six, three of whom were Timmons children.

Sheet1

Governor Newsom has just a few days left to sign new legislation or veto it. Hundreds of bills are on his desk. The governor is rejecting an unusually large number of the bills passed by the legislature, about 1 in 5, according to a legislative data tracker. Cal Matters reports many of the bills being vetoed are because of the \$30 billion deficit; the legislature sent him bills that would add nearly \$20 billion of unaccounted costs the state simply cannot afford. Legislators and more are watching for the October 16th filing deadline to see how much tax revenue the state realizes in personal and corporate income taxes. A budget analyst recently noted the current state budget should get around \$52 billion. Newsom is considering the 2024-2025 budget he plans to present to the Legislature in January, where some expectations indicate a \$15 billion deficit.

There will be a forum for candidates in the 1st District Supervisor's Race at Redwood Valley Grange tonight at 6:30pm on East Road. Five candidates are on the ballot for the March 5th, 2024 primary election since incumbent Glenn McGourty will not be seeking a second term. The Mendocino Women's Political Coalition is sponsoring the event along with the Redwood Valley Grange and Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council. The 1st Districts includes Potter Valley, Redwood Valley, Calpella and Talmage.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is hosting an online outreach meeting for licensed hunters regarding hunting programs in the Bay Delta Region. The meeting will be virtual and is scheduled for next Wednesday, October 18th from 5 to 7pm via Microsoft Teams. The department will give updates on habitat conditions, wetlands and hunting access for the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area Complex and the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area. Hunters are encouraged to comment, ask questions and engage with department specialists as part of an annual outreach meeting.

Ukiah is prepping for some weighty pumpkins. This weekend's Giant Pumpkin Weigh-Off begins tomorrow from 4 to 7pm downtown. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the record for heaviest pumpkin in the event was in 2008 with an over 1,000 pound mammoth pumpkin. Tomorrow's festivities include live music, food and drinks and free children's activities. There will be a Saturday morning PumpkinFest Parade starting at 10am, rain or shine. The contenders will be on display through the weekend. Also on tap is a 3-on-3 basketball tournament, haunted house and scarecrow city.

The Yurok Tribe is saddened by the Governor's veto of a bill that would have heightened notification and hearing timelines when a foster child goes missing. The Chairman of the Tribe says people of color and the poor are disproportionately impacted by the foster care system. The governor said Sunday the bill would have cost \$10 million. Newsom noted he is directing the California Department of Social Services to work with counties to assess protocols and address needed improvements. AB 273 would have directed social workers and probation officers to look into the placement of the child and notify officials when a child is missing. The Willits News reports Newsom says the state faces economic risk and revenue uncertainty and must remain disciplined in significant fiscal implications.

Sheet1

California's Homeland Security Advisor is releasing a statement on protection efforts for Californians. In a release yesterday, Cal OES say they are actively monitoring the developing situation in Israel and Gaza and closely coordinating with security partners tracking potential impacts on the domestic threat environment. Officials are saying they are aware of statements about potential threats today, Friday, October 13th but emphasize that no specific and credible threat to California has been identified. The office is urging residents to stay alert, vigilant and prepared and also to immediately report any suspicious activity through local authorities.

10/13/2023

Area residents are headed home from Israel and Gaza. The Press Democrat reports 10 Sonoma County residents are still in Israel, waiting the the US State Department to get transport. 7 Napa County residents have already been evacuated and are either already in the US or in Italy on their way home to California. The US is also setting up transport by sea; those awaiting word from US authorities will have no choice when transportation becomes available. The US evacuation processes began today, but officials say it may take some time. There are ongoing discussions about where and how additional evacuations will continue.

An Ukiah man is acquitted of vandalizing property in Mendocino County Superior Court this week. Eduardo Alvarez faced a jury who deliberated Wednesday and announced it acquitted Alvarez of one felony vandalism count and were hung on a second count. The Defendant still faces charges of vandalizing property causing over \$400 in damage last spring. There will be a retrial of the second count before a new jury, its scheduled to start on December 4th.

PG&E say they're on track to underground 350 miles of powerlines by the end of the year. In a statement in the Record Bee, PG&E says as of today crews have completed heavy construction of digging the length of trenches and is laying conduit. As of this week, over 137 miles have been fully installed underground and have been fully energized. The utility says about 20 miles each day will be buried and energized through the end of the year. Customers in Lake County are already using the lines underground. By 2026, PG&E plans to lay 2,000 miles underground with the cost per mile costing around \$3 million. The undergrounding is a permanent way to reduce wildfire risk and improve reliability while decreasing the need for Public Safety Power Shutoffs. There are more than 2,000 utility crew members working daily on the project.

The Yurok Tribe is saddened by the Governor's veto of a bill that would have heightened notification and hearing timelines when a foster child goes missing. The Chairman of the Tribe says Indigenous people, people of color and the poor are disproportionately impacted by the foster care system. The governor said Sunday the bill would have cost \$10 million. Newsom noted he is directing the California Department of Social Services to work with counties to assess protocols and address needed improvements. AB 273 would have directed social workers and probation officers to look into the placement of the child and notify officials when a child is missing. The Willits News reports Newsom says the state faces economic risk and revenue uncertainty and must remain disciplined in significant fiscal implications.

Sheet1

Vote By Mail Ballots were mailed out to eligible voters last week and are available now in the County Clerk's Office for the Special Consolidated District Election in the City of Fort Bragg. The Advocate News reports the election on November 7th includes a city-wide measure. On Election Day CV Starr Center will have a polling station for those needing help dropping their ballots off. You can also drop your ballot off now through 8pm on November 7th. No stamps are needed if you plan to mail your ballot and must be postmarked by November 7th. The ballots will be counted at the Mendocino County Election office in Ukiah with preliminary results posted on the County's website.

A partial solar eclipse will be visible tomorrow morning. Millions of people in the Western Hemisphere will be able to see part of a "ring of fire" effect, when the moon crosses in front of the sun, but not fully covering it. For those in the North Coast area, the eclipse will begin around 8am and end around 10:40am. A docent at the Robert Ferguson Observatory says about 78 percent of the sun will be covered at maximum around 9:19am, according to reporting in the Press Democrat. Officials say it is vitally important that people not look directly at the sun without appropriate scopes; otherwise, eye injury could be harmful. Lake County Libraries will host eclipse viewing events with free eclipse glasses available while supplies last.

To reduce pollution in California's waterways, the State Parks' Division of Boating is accepting grant applications for floating restrooms. A million dollars in federal and state funding is available for around four Americans with Disabilities Act compliant floating potties. Applicants are encouraged to review the grant guidelines and submit an application by November 13th. The grant is available through the Clean Vessel Act with about 135 restrooms across the state. Each bathroom unit can be towed to shore for scheduled pump-outs and cleaning. In a release from the California State Parks' Division of Boating and Waterways issued in KymKemp, the department says grant applicants must operate a lake or reservoir open to the public.

Ukiah is prepping for some weighty pumpkins starting this afternoon. The Giant Pumpkin Weigh-Off begins at 4pm downtown. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the record for heaviest pumpkin in the event was in 2008 with an over 1,000 pound mammoth pumpkin. Today's festivities include live music, food and drinks and free children's activities. There will be a Saturday morning PumpkinFest Parade starting at 10am, rain or shine. The contenders will be on display through the weekend. Also on tap is a 3-on-3 basketball tournament, haunted house and scarecrow city.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service is announcing up to \$36 million via President Biden's Investing in America initiative for fish passage projects across the country. In a release in MendoFever, communities will benefit from dam removals, culvert replacements and reduced flooding as the Service works with Tribes, state and local agencies, non-governmental organizations and conservation partners to reconnect important aquatic systems. The National Fish Passage Program is prioritizing projects to create sustainable fish passage, prioritize species and habitats, work on regional and watershed priorities for habitat restoration and enhanced community resilience.

Sheet1

The Clearlake City Council is approving the sale of a city owned lot to help encourage development of new homes. Lake County News reports at their meeting last week, the council approved selling a property on 36th Avenue as part of the city's homestead program. The program offers people a lot at no cost or \$10,000 toward the purchase of a privately owned parcel. The homestead program was approved 3 years ago and uses \$1 million from Series B bond funds to encourage market-rate housing. There are income requirements and connections within Lake County, financing for the construction of a new home and more. The number of applicants has decreased with interest rates high but the Clearlake City Manager says there are still several people going through the process.

Latino Outdoors North Coast is hosting a Leave No Trace Event this weekend. Tonight there will be a one hour workshop introduction to the principles for the Leave No Trace project from 5 to 6:30pm at the Noyo Headlands Park, West Cypress Street entrance. Tomorrow, the 14th is Stewardship Day: Invasive Plant Removal and Native Plant Restoration with the Mendocino Land Trust and the City of Fort Bragg from 10am to noon. A Fort Bragg city official will give a presentation on native species and problems caused by invasive plants. A leader from the Mendocino Land Trust Stewardship team will also be there and discuss work and opportunities in the area. Tools and gloves will be provided but feel free to bring planting tools if you like, as well as a chair or blanket.

This weekend the Potter Valley Tribe is asking for volunteers to help clean up the Eel River near Potter Valley. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports they will be cleaning a 12 mile section of river from Van Arsdale Reservoir to Lake Pillsbury in Lake County. Volunteers are asked to meet at 9am at the Potter Valley Tribe's ER14 property west of Pioneer Bridge on the south side of the Eel River. They'll work to pick up trash from the river, roads and beaches so everyone can enjoy a clean watershed and recreation area. Sunday, there is a walk planned in Low Gap Park in Ukiah across the street from Ukiah High School with the Sanhedrin Chapter of the California Native Plant Society.

The City of Ukiah is continuing its work to expand the diversity of staff and programs in the city. In a release in MendoFever, the city says their engagement at the Ukiah High School Career Fair gave them an opportunity to show off the diverse career paths as the largest employer of youth in the area. This weekend, the city will be at a booth for the Ukiah Country Pumpkinfest. They'll have a renaissance themed booth near the Haunted House on School Street where people can find out more about upcoming projects and employment opportunities.

It's Clean California Dump Day this weekend in Lake County. Tomorrow, the 14th Caltrans District 1 and Lake County will have the Dump Day Event at transfer stations in Lakeport and Clearlake. Residents can drop accepted large items for free. It's part of the Governor's Clean California initiative led by Caltrans to keep roads and waterways free of litter. Saturday residents can bring dump day items starting at 9am thru 1pm, or until capacity is reached. The Lakeport Transfer Station on Soda Bay Road in Lakeport, the LCWS Recycling Center on Davis Street in Clearlake and the Eastlake Landfill on Davis Avenue in Clearlake will be places accepting large items from residents. No construction materials, hazardous waste, tires or asbestos will be accepted.

10/16/2023 Mendocino County's Auditor-Controller elect was arrested with the county's former payroll manager. MendoFever reports Chamise Cubbinson and Paula Kennedy were booked into county jail yesterday afternoon. Both were reportedly released quickly on the single felony charge of misappropriation of public funds. Mendocino County's District Attorney filed criminal complaints on Friday, alleging Kennedy was given over \$68,000 in unauthorized pay. The women are accused of knowingly, unlawfully and serially embezzling public funds. Chamise Cubbinson's lawyer told MendoFever that there is nothing indicating Cubbinson, nor did any of the money go to her.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office is investigating a suspicious death uncovered in a car crash. Last week, October 8th, CHP responded to a collision in the Brooktrails Subdivision in Willits. A Toyota Sienna van involved in the crash drove away from the scene. Officers found the van empty some distance away. A witness told deputies they saw the driver of the van walking on Birch Street. Officers found Root Birimisa also Eureka who was arrested for DUI and hit and run, and booked into jail. The van he was driving was found out to be part of a missing person's investigation of Christine Randolph. Her body was found under the floorboards of the van while in police custody. The suspicious circumstances of her death are being investigated by the coroner. There was an autopsy Friday, with results yet to be published. Anyone with information about the accident, or Christine Randolph is urged to call Mendocino County Sheriff's Office.

Pro-Palestinian advocates in Santa Rosa drew up to 80 people to rally yesterday in support of the Palestinian people, condemning the Israeli government's campaign to clear the Gaza Strip, just over a week from a violent Hamas attack in Israeli settlements. There were some counter protesters holding an Israeli flags across the street. The two groups were seen arguing with one another around the Courthouse Square demonstrations. The Press Democrat reports Jewish people were part of the rally, and expressed anger over the occupation of Gaza. The North Coast Coalition for Palestine, the Peace and Justice Center of Sonoma County and the Jewish Voice for Peace were some of the groups behind yesterday's rally. Meanwhile, Santa Rosa Police are on heightened alert for any local violence or hate crimes connected to the Israeli war against Hamas.

Lake County is engaging with residents on the future of local parks, trails and recreation. In a recent announcement, the Public Services Department is asking people what they'd like to see as they develop a Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan. The Parks Round 3 Survey's aim is to prioritize development of parks and trails based on community priorities. Lake County is intending on creating strategies that include public comment. Today, there is a Community Visioning Forum Planning Committee meeting at 5:30pm at the courthouse in Lakeport. Check out the county webpage for more details.

The Mendocino Cannabis Department is issuing a policy update regarding referrals to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. The aim of the policy update is to clarify county code on the Cannabis Cultivation Business License application review process. The department says applications for the license will be reviewed by it and other agencies and renewed annually. Any referral to or consultation with an agency other than the department must be reviewed within 30 days. The policy update aims to avoid delays in legal licensing. Working with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Cannabis Department will inspect the site and determine if it includes habitat for sensitive species and can further investigate before final determination. The county is working with Fish and Wildlife to avoid impacts to natural communities and ecosystems.

Sheet 1

This month, Cal OES has been touring the state with the first in the county earthquake early warning technology. The statewide tour began last week as part of the campaign, the Great California ShakeOut. The simulator can replicate a 7.0 magnitude earthquake. Last week, the tour stopped in Sacramento and San Francisco, and will head south this week. On Thursday, October 19th millions of residents will take part in an earthquake drill to practice life saving actions like drop, cover, and hold on.

Lake County will swear in the new chief public defender at the Board of Supervisors meeting planned for tomorrow morning at 9am. Raymond Buenaventura will take his oath of office. Lake County News reports Buenaventura was hired in September to create the new public defender's office, after being the Mayor of Daly City. During the meeting the board will also hear a presentation on the Clear Lake Integrated Preparedness and Resilience Plan for Mussel Management. The agenda for the meeting tomorrow also includes approval of the fiscal year budget for 2023-2024 for the Sheriff-Coroner and Budget Unit, jail facilities and compensation adjustments for deputy and dispatcher positions. The board is expected to approve services for the Hammond Park Improvements Project. They'll go over litigation

CalFire is setting \$30 million aside for Green Schoolyard Grants to lessen impacts of climate change and give nature based solutions to the next generation. In a release, Cal Fire's Urban Community Forestry Program is opening this year's grant guidelines that include projects to convert pavement into green spaces, plant trees and improve the environment for students and more. The department is looking for projects to reduce greenhouse emissions, address climate change resilience and improve urban forests. They'll focus on facilities in disadvantaged communities. The Schoolyard Greening application portal is open through the first of December. The \$30 million available adds to more than \$100 million in funding Cal Fire announced last spring.

Groups that fight hunger are calling for a fair shake in the upcoming farm bill, which provides federal matching funds for programs that help low-income families afford fresh produce. The Market Match program gives people on Cal Fresh about 15 dollars per market per day to spend at 270 sites across the state. The California News Service reports the current Farm Bill expired September 30th and negotiations are ongoing for a new bill to cover the next five years. Groups such as the Farmers Market for All Coalition and the Alliance for California Farmers Markets are asking Congress to fund programs such as Market Match across the country.

The Lakeport City Council is set to meet tomorrow evening at 6pm. City Manager Kevin Ingram is poised to ask the council to consider renaming the park on North Main Street to Xabatin (Ka-bah-ten) or Big Water Community Park. It's the former Natural High School site funded by a nearly \$6 million grant from Prop 68 and the State Parks and Water Board. The park first known as Lakefront Park will be officially named to pay tribute to the area's Native American Pomo heritage. During the meeting, the police chief will give an overview of the town hall on homelessness and mental illness held last month.

Sheet 1

A Fort Bragg business owner is asking the City Council to withdraw its legal action against the Skunk Train. MendoVoice reports owner of Union Lumber Company Store, David Figueiredo says new legal papers served to the Mendocino Railway by the city has halted a deal to sell the lumber company's building to the railway. County court files do not show a new suit, but actually is part of a response to the railway's motion to further delay the ongoing suit contesting the train's claim it operates under federal railroad law making it not subject to city or state regulations. The lumber store occupies about half a block in downtown Fort Bragg. The railway tracks are inches behind the store, having been part of the Mendocino Railway at one time. Figueiredo says he's been negotiating for the sale for five years and is ready to retire. He found out last week that the deal was off the table.

The North Coast is settling after a couple of moderately sized earthquakes early this morning. KymKemp reports a magnitude 4.8 quake hit Humboldt just east of Petrolia around 3:20am. It was followed by a 4.1 magnitude quake 11 minutes later just off the coast east of Eureka. The US Geological Survey reports the quakes were about 20-30 miles deep with over 600 residents reporting feeling the shaking this morning. Last night along the same fault line in Ojai a 2.7 magnitude quake shook southern California residents.

10/17/2023 Santa Rosa Police are investigating a Redwood Valley man with firearms violations. Last weekend, police pulled Frank Pomilia over for speeding. The 21-year-old had a couple of AR-15 rifle magazines and an unregistered, loaded 9 mm handgun in the console of his truck. MendoFever reports he was arrested and booked into Sonoma County Jail for possession of a loaded firearm and more.

New work on water infrastructure is set to begin as the City of Ukiah installs new storm drains. Crews are continuing to work on switching to a new water service infrastructure. If water to a home or business needs to be turned off during the work, people will be contacted at least 3 days in advance. The city released an update in MendoFever that says the street work in the city will also include a joint trench for new underground electric lines as well as phone and cable lines. Tree removal and sidewalk demolition was delayed last week and is expected to happen this week. The city is working to lay down ADA compliant sidewalks with new curbs and gutters. Construction in Ukiah continues to be active Monday through Friday from 7am to 6pm.

The Mendocino National Forest will see continued prescribed burns this week at Howard Mill and in the Grindstone District. And in a Forest Service Update, the department is announcing the Grindstone District staff installed two new corrals at Ides Coves Horsepacker Trailhead. Firefighters had been using the trail system in the Yolla Bolly Middle Eel Wilderness for practiced impact tactics and protection of natural resources in the wilderness after it closed due to the Slide 1 Fire earlier; the closure order has since been lifted. The Forest Service is also reaching out the public for upcoming summer 2024 job opportunities. The positions will be posted starting October 26th through November 8th on USA JOBS with positions in fire, recreation, wildlife, archeology, engineering and more.

Sheet 1

The Lakeport Police Department is urging residents to be aware of tools and resources on trespassing and more. Lake County News reports there is a new Trespass Enforcement Authorization Information Page on their website. The page has an expressed waiver, description of ineligible properties and process for submitting a letter to the police. It allows the department to enforce no-trespassing on private property in Lakeport with enforcement action after voluntary compliance and warning don't work. There is also a place to submit concerns that aren't urgent to the Lakeport Police on their webpage.

The Grass Roots Institute is launching a campaign to ban new gas stations in Mendocino County. MendoFever reports this weekend the group is hosting an event with a community organizer and leader in Sonoma County's movement to ban new fossil fuel stations in Sonoma County. This Sunday, the 22nd at noon at the Caspar Center, the Grass Roots Institute will make the case in avoiding new toxic chemical leaks and pollutions sites, support the transition to emissions free transportation and more. Woody Hastings is an environmental activist in the area and has worked with a coalition opposing new gas stations since 2019.

The Redwood Valley Elementary School is up for sale again. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports in the Ukiah Unified Board of Trustees meeting last week, they passed the resolution to sell the surplus property and is looking for bids of the lot at 700 School Street. The real estate won't be sold for less than \$900,000. The timeline to accept bids has been extended by the district through January 18th. At that meeting in the beginning of 2024, the district plans to open sealed bids and also accept oral bids on the property, which is being sold as-is. They've also extended the closing date to 90 days following a Purchase and Sale Agreement. Prospective bidders can check out the property next week, Wednesday, October 25th at 10am for a walk-thru and site specific information.

Good news for tax filers, the IRS is postponing tax deadlines to November 16th for most taxpayers in the state. Last winter's natural disasters spurred the department to postpone tax payments to October 16th. In a release issued in KymKemp, the IRS says most people and businesses in California now have an extra month to file their 2022 returns and pay any tax due. The relief is based on FEMA disaster declarations of severe winter storms, flooding, landslides and more this year. Residents or businesses who had uninsured or un-reimbursed disaster related losses can claim them on their 2022 or 2023 tax filings. There is also a special disaster distribution available for some to make a hardship withdrawal and more.

Advocates for electric vehicles and clean air are urging the Environmental Protection Agency to take aggressive measures as it decides on new emissions rules for medium and heavy-duty electric trucks. With the growth of e-commerce, truck traffic has increased significantly, so the nonprofit CALSTART and other agencies offer incentives for companies to offset the cost of building the power and charging infrastructure necessary to spur the transition to zero-emissions trucks. The California News Service reports public utilities are also mobilizing to expand service to the E-V truck charging network. The E-P-A is expected to finalize the rule by early next year.

Sheet1

The Peregrine Audubon Society will be hosting Carrington Hilson on Elk in Coastal Northern California on Tuesday, Oct. 17 at 7 p.m. at the Ukiah City Council Chambers. The presentation will be on elk research and management in coastal northern California, including Del Norte, Humboldt, and Mendocino counties. The focus of work is to obtain a comprehensive assessment of elk populations and their ecology in Northern California. This study is working to estimate population and compare several survey techniques to monitor elk populations. The group is also examining habitat use, resource selection, behavior, disease, and cause-specific mortality. This information will allow long-term elk monitoring program that allows for management and conservation of elk.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is hosting an online outreach meeting for licensed hunters regarding hunting programs in the Bay Delta Region. The meeting will be virtual and is scheduled for tomorrow, Wednesday, October 18th from 5 to 7pm via Microsoft Teams. The department will give updates on habitat conditions, wetlands and hunting access for the Grizzly Island Wildlife Area Complex and the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area. Hunters are encouraged to comment, ask questions and engage with department specialists as part of an annual outreach meeting.

In a landmark moment aimed at addressing California's pressing water challenges exacerbated by climate change in California, Gov. Gavin Newsom has signed into law SB 659, officially titled the California Water Supply Solutions Act of 2023. In the Russian River Flood Control and Water Conservation Improvement District release, the legislation directs the California Department of Water Resources to provide actionable recommendations to develop additional opportunities that increase the recharge of the state's groundwater basins without reducing the amount of water available for environmental purposes. The bill also requires the plan to protect safe drinking water and maintain a high level of water quality.

Lake County Library's Literacy Program is planning training tomorrow. The Lakeport Library will hold an in-person, no-cost New Tutor Training on Wednesday, October 18th from 11am to 4pm. The Literacy Program Coordinator will teach techniques for teaching adults to read, write and speak English. Bilingual Spanish speakers are encouraged to come and support adult learners interesting in learning English for the first time. With complete training, tutors will be matched with adult learners in settings around the county. The program also offers GED and High School Equivalency test preparation, digital literacy, citizenship application help, written driving test assistance and more.

Negotiations have been successful between Kaiser Permanente and unions representing those who work there. Cal Matters reports twice in one year workers have walked out saying they are striking for better pay and increased staffing levels. The unions told Kaiser last week that they are prepared to walk out again at the beginning of next month. The health care institution then announced a new contract with steep raises over the next 4 years. Meanwhile, Governor Newsom signed a new minimum wage for health workers, raising it to \$25 an hour over the next 10 years. The new contract between unions and Kaiser will raise pay for nearly 70,000 workers in the state by 21 percent within 3 years. The new contract agreement was praised by Vice President Harris. Union leaders say the wage bump and other commitments will create long term stability for the workforce.

Sheet1

There is a new invader in the Russian River Watershed, the New Zealand mudsnail. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife are confirming the presence of the invasive species at Warm Springs Hatchery near Lake Sonoma. Lake County News reports the snails were found in a pipeline and in an aeration pond during a survey. Warm Springs Hatchery releases salmon and steelhead into Russian River tributaries in the lower basin. Officials are doing everything to halt the mudsnails spread. Biosecurity measures are increased at the hatchery with help from the US Army Corps of Engineers. Boaters and other visitors to the Russian River watershed are being asked to decontaminate all equipment used in the water.

The Mendocino Board of Supervisors is suspending Chamise Cubbison as Auditor Controller Treasurer Tax Collector after her felony charge of misappropriation of public funds. During their board meeting yesterday, the board appointed Sara Pierce as Acting Auditor Controller. District Attorney David Eyster was given evidence of the misappropriation about a year ago from the CEO. Human Resources and the IT department worked together to understand the extent of the issue and preserve evidence. The board also brought on a forensic auditing firm last March to assess internal controls. The county is also awaiting the close of an audit being done by State Controller with Supervisor Williams saying they welcome the opportunity to understand where systems can be improved. Cubbison and co-defendant Paula Jane Kennedy have yet to enter pleas; their next court appearance is set for October 31st.

10/18/2023

Governor Newsom signed AB 436 which repeals all bans in cruising state wide. The car culture of California could not be happier. From car clubs to regular people cruising has been a part of California since there were cars, and this move is intended to bring back a time honored tradition of cruising in your car. Drag racing and side shows however are still very illegal. The new law starts in 2024.

The missing woman whose body was found beneath the floorboards of a van is still being investigated and no cause of death yet determined. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports an autopsy was done last Friday after the crash that led police to search Root Mirimisa's Toyota Sienna. The crash on the 8th is where Mirimisa was found after fleeing the scene, which led police to search the van days later where they found missing person Christine Randolph's body. Mirimisa was found to be Randolph's son, the two traveling together. The Mendocino County Sheriff Captain Greg Van Patten says there were no obvious signs of foul play, related to her demise. They are still waiting for those toxicology results from last week's autopsy. Anyone with information is urged to call the Sheriff's Tip-Line.

The Clearlake City Council is set to meet tomorrow evening. There is a resolution on the agenda to support the Konocti County Water District's proposal of annexation of over 100 acres in the Dam Road area. Lake County News reports the City Manager is expected to explain about the annexation and how it will eliminate the service of two districts. The Creekside Mobile Home Park water system was destroyed in the Cache fire and has been getting water service from the Konocti County Water District. The move would let the water district install a new main line and upgrade water service to the area. The council also plans to go over 8 city-owned properties as surplus. The meeting begins tomorrow at 6pm in the Clearlake City Hall.

Sheet 1

Tomorrow is California's Great ShakeOut. The statewide earthquake drill encourages people to practice how to protect themselves during quakes to reduce injuries and more. Lake County News reports more than 53 million people worldwide are participating in drills this year including over 17 million in the US. Tomorrow, October 19th, many are holding the drill at 10:19am. Nearly 10 million people in California are participating. In Lake County, over 7,000 were signed up to take part in the Great ShakeOut. The Lake County Board of Supervisors will participate. There is still time to officially register to take part in the earthquake drill, at ShakeOut.org. The MyShake app will get a test alert along the west coast as one of many ways to get the alert sent by the USGS.

A Lakeport man is guilty of felony assault with a deadly weapon. The Mendocino County Superior Court jury deliberated early Tuesday to announce the guilty verdict. Jacob Coleman had a prior Strike conviction of felony assault with a firearm in Lake County last year. The prosecutor proved six separate circumstances in aggravation, according to MendoFever, providing factors that may influence his sentencing. Coleman's case is now with the Adult Probation Department for investigation and sentencing recommendation. Coleman's sentencing is scheduled for November 14th.

A couple of brothers and their mother out of Sacramento have pled guilty to conspiracy in a nationwide catalytic converter theft scheme. According to national news outlets, \$600 million worth of stolen catalytic converters were shipped from California to New Jersey. The converters contain small amounts of precious metals. Three members of a family in California pled guilty on Monday for their role in transporting the stolen car parts, where they got \$38 million for their part. 21 people from California and New Jersey have been charged in the case.

The City of Ukiah is announcing the start of Phase 4 construction of the Ukiah Recycled Water Project. The city release in MendoFever indicates the funding is from an over \$53 million grant. City residents can expect traffic delays and construction sites at Bush Street and Low Gap and State Streets starting next week. On Monday, the 23rd, crews will be digging holes in the side of the street to find underground utilities, primarily on the west side. A week from today, work will be directed to the section of Low Gap Road between State and Bush Streets. Low Gap will have one-way traffic from 7am to 5pm through Friday. The section is getting water and sewer infrastructure replaced along with recycled water installation with work through next month.

Testing for California Basic Education Skills and other teacher credentialing may change. The Record Bee reports the Pearson contract expires about two years from now and currently tests teachers statewide. Last Friday, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing was directed to research how to best improve assessments in the state. California has been thinking about moving away from the standardized testing for years. In 2021, legislation passed that gave teacher candidates the option to take the approved coursework instead of commission testing. Some say the standardized testing causes disproportionate harm to people of color. Others say there is an urgent need to review testing as California faces a teacher shortage.

Sheet1

The last year is been among the wettest ever in California. Maven's Notebook reports atmospheric rivers that slammed the state along with rain from Hurricane Hilary have added more water than ever. California's annual rainfall year is typically measured from October 1 to September 30th. This week, state data indicates that the state got 141 percent of its annual average. The snowpack reached its deepest level recorded in 4 decades. The precipitation has replenished the state's lakes and groundwater with reservoirs currently at 128 percent of the average for this time of year. After years of extreme drought, the water has been welcome, for the most part. Less that a quarter of California's acreage burned in wildfires this year with just over 300,000 acres burned compared to over 1.5 million annually. Experts are warning of El Nino, the phenomenon expected to last through the winter with forecasts of continued wet weather.

The California Trucking Association is suing the Air Resources Board over new regulations. The lawsuit claims the state cannot begin regulating trucking emissions without getting permission from the Federal EPA. The "Advanced Clean Fleets" regulation mandates all new trucks sold after 2045 would be zero-emission vehicles. KCRA reports the trucking association is asking the regulations be declared invalid and wants an injunction to stop the board from enforcing regulations. The phasing out of diesel big rigs was created with the Clean Truck Partnership and Air Resources Board with participating companies like GM and Daimler.

The Mendocino County Planning and Building Services is establishing a one year amnesty program waiving all violations and penalty fees related to building permits that don't have a confirmed code enforcement case. The waiver also applies to permits not already under review or to programs that do not apply to zoning violations. The county issued a release today, confirming the amnesty program from November 1st this year to November, 2024. All amnesty building permit applications must be submitted on or before November 1st 2024 to be eligible. Residents are invited to self-report any unpermitted structures and legalize improvements during the year long program.

CHP Clear Lake is investigating a possible hit and run fatality. Last night, CHP responded to reports of a possibly injured person near State Route 29, north of Hofacker Lane near Lower Lake. MendoFever reports a Hispanic man was pronounced dead at the scene. The Northern Division Investigative Services Unit of CHP is asking anyone with information on the events of last night in the area, to contact the CHP Clear Lake Area Office.

Bay Area residents are saying many did not feel the earthquake that shook the area yesterday morning, but DID get the ShakeApp alert at 3:19am, instead of the planned 10:19am. The Bay Area News Group reports the quake triggered a ShakeAlert for surrounding counties during the 4.1 magnitude quake yesterday, but many say they didn't feel it. The Press Democrat reports representatives with ShakeAlert, in participation with CalOES had planned for an earthquake drill after 10am today. ShakeAlert officials say it was a mistake, on an X social media post. Apparently, there was a mix-up between time zones in the test alert system. Emergency officials, drill participants and area residents are still waiting for a formal announcement about the errant alarm.

10/19/2023

Sheet1

Parts of Northern California could match or break a heat record today, set over a century ago. The Press Democrat reports for those wanting to escape the heat and head to the coast, to be watchful of sneaker waves. The National Weather Service issued a moderate heat advisory through 11pm tonight for parts of Lake, Sonoma and Napa counties. While it's not a Red Flag warning, high heat could dry out fuels and lead to fires, according to authorities. Yesterday, there was a 3 acre fire near The Geysers that was stopped within an hour. As for the coast, hazardous conditions are expected today with a northwest swell with a lot of energy associated with it. A high-surf advisory is in effect through 7pm tonight.

CHP is offering teen driver safety education classes to help know the dangers the age group faces on the road. Lake County News reports fatal and injury crashes have been increasing, showing the need to educate teen drivers and their parents to keep the roads safe for everyone. Start Smart is a free two hour class to inform new drivers of their responsibilities that come with being a licensed driver in California. Parents or guardians must also attend the class with their teen led by public information officers at local CHP area offices. Taking the class may even lower your car insurance rates. There is a free CHP Start Smart app that has access to the state driver handbook.

The Mendocino Land Trust is holding a Soiree this coming Saturday. The group is looking at six new public access projects including a park in Fort Bragg and trails along the coast. The Land Trust plans to work on a new headlands trail in Albion as well as improving part of the California Coastal Trail, the Cove Trail in Point Arena and improve the Mill Bend Preserve in Gualala. The Sunset Soiree will be October 21st from 4 to 7pm at the Caspar Community Center. There will be a silent auction, local cuisine and live music. The auction is also available online.

CHP Clear Lake is investigating a possible hit and run fatality. Last night, CHP responded to reports of a possibly injured person near State Route 29, north of Hofacker Lane near Lower Lake. MendoFever reports a Hispanic man was pronounced dead at the scene. The Northern Division Investigative Services Unit of CHP is asking anyone with information on the events of Tuesday night in the area, to contact the CHP Clear Lake Area Office.

This week the Lake County Board of Supervisors approved a salary increase for the Sheriff's Office employees. Salaries were nearly doubled for some positions, while changing some position allocations from funded to unfunded status. It was a slim majority, with some noting the budget negotiations were required to be in public meetings. The Record Bee reports Supervisor Sabatier abstained in the vote noting missing information like increase percentage. There was a Meet and Confer process held at the end of last month including unions representing some. The Board noted a staffing emergency in Sheriff's Rob Howe's office and not giving the salary increases could have hurt retention and recruitment. Some want a closed session about the impact of the raises.

Sheet1

The Pear Tree Center in Ukiah is one of the Arts Champions as awarded by the Mendocino County Arts Council. In a release, the Pear Tree Center is this year's Business Arts Champion. The business has supported local and regional artists through commissioning and licensing their work and has helped local nonprofits by underwriting the cost of space rental supporting innovation to serve the needs of the Greater Ukiah region. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports Solange Roberdeau is the Arts Champion and is an Elk based printmaker and educator working at Art Explorers Inc, in Fort Bragg as the Gallery Coordinator and teacher. Jess Thompson is the Arts Champion Individual at the Cider Creek Collective ceramic studio, and the late potter, artist and sculptor Doug Browe is this year's honoree. The champions will be recognized in a proclamation by the Board of Supervisors at their meeting on the 31st.

In the latest Russian River Water Forum Update this week there is more information on the Potter Valley Project decommissioning proposal and the removal of the Cape Horn Dam. The non-binding acceptance in concept of the Sonoma County Water Agency, Mendocino County Inland Water and Power Commission and the Round Valley Indian Tribes proposal will be included in the November 15th initial draft Surrender Application and Decommissioning Plan. The draft will be available for public review next month. The proposal includes co-equal objectives of fish migration and water diversions.

The Mendocino College Theatre Arts Department is hosting a production of Promise of Paradise: Stories from Back to the Land starting today. The show will start tonight at 7:30 with productions Friday and Saturday at 7:30 and Sunday at 2pm. The original ensemble performance aims to engage audiences in original story telling by and about our community. The one weekend only performances this weekend will be at the college's Center Theatre on the Ukiah Campus. Tonight's show will have a pay what you wish preview. Official opening night tomorrow will include a gala reception starting at 6:30pm. Saturday's performance will be a fundraiser for Mendocino College Foundation Student Scholarships.

Under a new law signed by the governor last week, public agencies, corporate campuses, industrial parks and others will be banned from watering "nonfunctional turf" using potable water. The new rules will be phased in at the beginning of 2027. The prohibition is currently in place as a temporary measure. The State Water Resources Board started the ban as an emergency regulation during the drought of last year; it is set to expire next June. The Sac Bee reports on the water education aquafornia news release, saying the new restriction will not apply to residential lawns, apartments, sports fields or cemeteries.

The Mendocino County Planning and Building Services is establishing a one year amnesty program waiving all violations and penalty fees related to building permits that don't have a confirmed code enforcement case. The waiver also applies to permits not already under review or to programs that do not apply to zoning violations. The county issued a release yesterday, confirming the amnesty program from November 1st this year to November, 2024. All amnesty building permit applications must be submitted on or before November 1st 2024 to be eligible. Residents are invited to self-report any unpermitted structures and legalize improvements during the year long program.

Sheet1

The Coalition to Save Jackson Forest issued a release in Mendocino saying the Mendocino Redwood Company has filed a lawsuit against Cal Fire, alleging breach of contract on the Soda Gulch timber harvest plan. The largest landowner in the county employs John Anderson, who is also a member of the Jackson Advisory group, creating a legal or ethical conflict of interest. The lawsuit was filed one year ago but was recently reported on when Mendocino Court Judge Nadel issued a tentative ruling in late September denying the company didn't follow the correct procedure for dispute resolution. In last Friday's meeting of the Advisory Committee, there was a listening session for public input. Residents addressed environmental and indigenous co-management concerns.

10/20/2023 Clearlake Police are investigating an attempted homicide. This morning at 7am, the Mendocino/Lake Regional SWAT team initiated a search warrant on East Highway 20 in Clearlake Oaks. A suspect in the investigation was taken into custody by the Clearlake Police Department. More information has yet to be released, but we will update you when details are available.

Former Mendocino County officials are scrutinizing the suspension of Auditor Chamise Cubbison. She is facing a felony charge of misappropriation of public funds. Even though Cubbison has not yet entered a plea in the case, the board voted to immediately suspend her without pay earlier this week. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports there are questions surrounding the suspension and her formal position title as Auditor, not Treasurer. As an elected official, Cubbison's attorney says the code provision the board used to suspend her may have been the wrong choice. The former Treasurer, Shari Schapmire resigned in December of 2021 when the board consolidated county financial offices. The former county DA, Schapmire and Cubbison's attorney point to the board's consolidation as a cause for the county's financial issues.

The California Transportation Commission is allocating over \$3.7 billion for projects to rebuild the state's transportation infrastructure. Most of the funding is going to over 600 cities, counties and regional agencies to fix bridges, reduce pollution, increase highway safety and provide transportation services. Projects include about \$38 million toward roadway repairs and extension of the existing retaining wall as well as a dewatering system on Route 1 near Westport south of Hillcrest Terrace in Mendocino County, along with nearly \$2 million to road and culvert repairs on Route 162 east of the Middle Fork Eel River Bridge.

The Mendocino County Public Health Environmental Division has an advisory for Caspar Beach. During an ocean water quality sample the department found bacteria levels were too high. The enterococcus bacteria are at a level that is an increased risk to human health. Warning signs have been posted at Caspar Beach warning people to avoid the water for 50 yards on both sides of the drainage entering the ocean. The beach will remain closed with warning signs until water quality meets the minimum standards mandated by the state of California.

The Lake County Treasurer Tax Collectors Office issued an update on this years coming property taxes. Tax bills are set to be mailed out beginning next Monday. The return address on your property tax bill will show Whittier, California. It is a transition the office recently changed, to electronic check processing. Check received in office will be immediately deposited. The county aims to make paying your taxes easier, more efficient and significantly faster. You can still pay your bill in person at the Treasurer Tax Collector's Office on Forbes Street in Lakeport or to the address in Whittier. Payments will be due on December 11th.

Sheet1

The Mendocino Unit of Cal Fire is planning a prescribed burn today in Hopland. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the planned blaze will be controlled in cooperation with the Hopland Research Extension Center on the property on University Road. The burn is expected to start at around 9am through 6pm. Firecrews will be on hand to reduce burnable vegetation, improve wildlife habitat and decrease the chance of wildfires. Residents can expect to see smoke throughout the day. Fire officials will monitor conditions, weather and more and are expected to be there to mop up and make sure there are no spot fires.

It's about 2 and a half weeks away from the special election in Fort Bragg. On November 7th, voters will decide on Measure Q. It would extend a one half percent tax on retail and use sales funding the city streets repair, maintenance and more. Measure Q must get a two-thirds vote of approval to effectively pass. The Advocate News reports the tax was approved in 2004 and in 2014 and is project to generate over \$1.3 million if passed. Vote by Mail ballots were mailed out earlier this month to voters and are also available at the County Clerk's Office on Low Gap Road.

The Fort Bragg City Council is approving an agreement with the Housing Mendocino Coast and work for the water treatment plant rehab project. The new work will improve reservoirs at the treatment plant and other water saving construction. The Advocate News reports the plant, built in 1958 was upgraded in 1986, with the latest upgrades done nearly 20 years ago. The Department of Housing and Community Development was approved to use funds from the state for a community land trust. The Mayor of Fort Bragg proclaimed honors for the late City Clerk and Assistant Fire Chief for the Fort Bragg Volunteer Fire Department.

Ukiah's Purple Pipe project will impact traffic next week as the city updates infrastructure. The project includes adding a recycled water pipes to irrigate schools, the golf course and Todd Grove Park. The project will also help underground power lines and widen streets and sidewalks. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the Public Works Director says much of the work that may congest traffic will be done during school breaks, so as to not disrupt students on their way to school at Low Gap Road and Bush Street. The improvement project includes ADA widening that will likely happen next summer when school is out. By mid-week, city officials forecast work will move to the section of Low Gap Road between State and Bush streets. Low Gap Road will be open to one way west bound traffic from 7am to 5pm next week.

PG&E is offering free-in-home safety checks as the seasons change. The utility offered the service in a press release issued in KymKemp. The safety checks will help customers operate furnaces and water heaters efficiently and reduce the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning. The gas can be dangerous as it can't be seen, smelled or heard. The CDC reports year over 400 Americans die from unintentional CO poisoning with over 100,000 visiting the ER and 14,000 hospitalized. This year, PG&E has responded to over 6,000 incidents where carbon monoxide was suspected. Officials say residents should have carbon monoxide detectors in their homes on every floor and should be tested twice annually. Generators, grills and propane heaters should never be used inside.

Sheet 1

A special meeting is planned within a few weeks for an update to the Palace Hotel in Ukiah. The City Council met this week, when staff announced they are planning on an update regarding the condition of the Palace Hotel soon. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the hotel has been vacant and decaying for years and was recently about to sell before the proposal fell through this earlier this year. Also at the council meeting this week, the council considered an appeal to the permit granted for a new car wash on Talmage Road. On that property staff found some procedural issues and have reached out to the applicant with a resolution to move the proposed new car wash to be compatible near the Ukiah Municipal Airport. The Council also discussed the future of water diversions surrounding the Potter Valley Project. The water resources director says there are details yet to be worked out.

Law enforcement officials are investigating human remains in the Mendocino National Forest. Earlier this month the Glenn County Sheriff's Office got a report of an abandoned truck in a remote area off of Road 20N59. MendoFever reports officials ran a check and discovered that Donald Stockwell Jr. had been reported as an at-risk missing person with dementia in January. He was last seen in the truck at a gas station in Willows in February. Detectives searched the area and found human remains near the truck. They are working with the family as they continue to determine what happened.

A Clearlake man is in jail for setting a fire in Lakeport. Lakeport Police arrested Cameron Bates yesterday on charges including arson, drug possession and receipt of stolen property. Lake County News reports he was arrested after being released from Lake County Jail earlier the same day. The wildland fire was reported around Lakeport Boulevard and Highway 29 around noon Thursday. Local fire protection districts quickly contained the blaze at about a quarter of an acre according to police. Officials say there were multiple witnesses who saw a person walking away from the fire who also say the person tried to start another fire on the northeast side of the Chamber of Commerce.

A lawsuit against Clearlake by the Koi Nation Tribe is set to go to trial today. The Clearlake City Council approved additional funding for the litigation and legal challenges surrounding major park and road projects. Lake County News reports at a meeting earlier this month the council approved doubling the city's expenditures with their law firm to half a million dollars. The Koi Tribe, whose territory includes the city of Clearlake and Lower Lake began the suit in March to stop the city's projects on the 18th Avenue extension, related to a new hotel. An additional suit this summer was filed on the Burns Valley Sports Complex and Recreation Center project, saying the city did not conduct state required consultation with the tribal government.

The Planning Group for the Russian River Water Forum continues to discuss PG&E's "non-binding acceptance in concept" of a Proposal to take control over the Potter Valley Project and more. MendoFever reports on the latest Russian River Water Forum update. The proposal has two options for the Cape Horn Dam. An official from the Mendocino County Inland Water and Power Commission said the group is happy PG&E accepted the proposal and are seeing the move as a step forward in the complex process. More work is yet to be done on the future of the hydroelectric facility including water rights. The Water Rights working group is set to meet on November 2nd. Discussion over the future of Lake Pillsbury was included in the latest meeting as the group weighs the pros and cons of dam removal versus rehabilitation.

Sheet1

The late Senator Diane Feinstein's replacement, Laphonza Butler says she is not seeking election to a full term next year. Butler said she made the decision after thinking about what kind of life she wants to have. She does plan to continue in public service, but not at the level some expected her to. There is a crowd of candidates for the full term including US Representatives Katie Porter, Adam Schiff and Barbara Lee as well as Republican Steve Garvey.

A federal judge is ruling that California's prohibition of semiautomatic gun sales violates the constitutional right to bear arms. The AP reports US District Judge Benitez said that firearms like AR-15 rifles are commonly used by criminals, but are also owned by people who obey the law. His ruling is similar to his decision in 2021 where he called the state's ban on assault weapons a failed experiment. His decision may overturn several state statues across the country related to assault weapons. California has 10 days to seek a stay as part of an appeal to the US 9th Circuit Court. Attorney General Rob Bonta has said he has already filed that notice of appeal.

fatal airplane crash is being investigated after it crashed in Covelo on Friday. In a release from the Mendocino County Coroner, the flight went down on Airport Road in Covelo Friday evening that left its two passengers dead. The crash caught on fire that spread to nearby brush. Authorities from many agencies were looking into how and why the accident happened, and who the passengers are. The Mendocino County Coroner is investigating along with the National Transportation Safety Board and the FAA in conjunction with Cal Fire, CHP, the county sheriff's office and the Round Valley Tribal Police.

10/23/2023

The Mendocino County Cannabis Department is opening an eligibility window for applications for people who have been previously convicted of a non-violent cannabis related offense. Due to confusion at a recent public meeting where the county says inaccurate information was given the department will accept submissions for equity applicants, November 13th through the 17. The department reports that more information will be ongoing through Canna Notes. They continue to streamline and coordinate state and county regulations on legal cannabis cultivation and permitting.

The Fort Bragg City Council meeting set for today at 6pm will include discussion on appointing a director and alternate to represent the city on the Redwood Empire Municipal Insurance Fund Board of Directors. The agenda also includes adding an additional Engineering Technician to the Fort Bragg Employee Organization and remove the position of Public Works Administrative Analyst. Business of the council will include getting an update on the end of the CV Starr Operating Agreement with Mendocino Coast Recreation and Park District. The council will also get a presentation on the Noyo Harbor Blue Economy Visioning, Resiliency and Implementation Plan. During closed session, the city council plants to go over the employment of City Clerk and City Manager positions.

Governor Newsom is traveling after a surprise visit Friday to Israel on his way to China. Newsom had no official diplomatic agenda, but raised speculation about his political ambitions. Newsom said he will be meeting "with those impacted by the horrific terrorist attacks and offering California's support." The Mercury News reports Newsom's visit is welcome news to a Southern California woman who flew to Israel after her daughter and her father other family members, including children were taken hostage during the deadly Hamas massacre two weeks ago. Newsom began his climate-themed visit at the University of Hong Kong today touting the US and China's partnership on climate change. He is now headed to Beijing, Shanghai and other provinces.

Sheet1

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors is facing scrutiny over the suspension of Auditor Chamise Cubbison. Over the weekend her lawyer told the Ukiah Daily Journal that they're in touch with an employment attorney and will follow up today. DA David Eyster filed felony charges of misappropriation of public funds against Cubbison as well as Payroll Manager Paula Kennedy from reports that Kennedy received \$68,000 over a couple of years in extra pay. Cubbison says she and her council will fight the charge. A court hearing to enter her plea was delayed until next week. Now the board's decision may have been an illegal one as Cubbison is an elected official who has not yet pled in the case. Cubbison's lawyer says she never received any funds and there is no claim that public money is in jeopardy. Cubbison's title at the time of her employment is also a contentious issue as the board cited a state code specifying a county treasurer, and not an auditor. The history of the relationship between DA Eyster and Cubbison has been a tumultuous one for many years. The county is waiting for the State Controller's Office audit of its finances for more information.

Across the Bay Area, homebuyers are seeing rate increases and their budgets shrink. People are paying more money for fewer square feet than they did last year. A half percentage point increase raises monthly payments by hundreds. The Bay Area News Group reports mortgage rates, at their highest level in 23 years, also have discouraged possible sellers from moving, creating tight supply. The lack of inventory has increased prices for a second month in a row. The median home price in the Bay Area was \$1.3 million in September, a 6.6% increase from last year, according to new data from the California Association of Realtors.

Senator Mike McGuire is traveling throughout his district and visited the newly named Xabatin (Ka-bah-ten) Community Park in Lakeport last week. City officials accompanied McGuire after the Lakeport City Council officials changed the park's name at their meeting on Tuesday. There is a grand opening ceremony planned for this coming Thursday at 4pm. Lake County News reports the official re-naming campaign was funded by a nearly \$6 million grant through Prop 68. The public is invited to the ribbon cutting of the former Natural High School property. The Big Valley and Scotts Valley Bands of Pomo Indians will be performing native dances and more.

The Koi Nation of Northern California has an advocate with the Attorney General. In the Koi Nation lawsuit against the City of Clearlake, the tribe alleges officials did not adequately consult with them on preservation of cultural sites in the development of a new hotel. The quarter mile extension of 18th Avenue west of Highway 53 is part of the hotel development project. Last year, the city council decided a full environmental analysis was not needed, according to reporting in the Press Democrat. The Koi Nation says the project requires meaningful consultation according to the California Environmental Quality Act. Attorney Rob Bonta says he agrees. A brief was filed Tuesday with the state arguing the city's inattention to tribal involvement violates the law. The tribe wants to factor in values like spiritual, cultural and related resources to be taken in account and included in the management of the Airport Hotel and 18th Avenue Extension Project.

Sheet1

A prominent Ukiah realtor will spend a year in jail, and register as a sex offender. David Ryan was arrested by Ukiah Police two years ago for felony sexual behavior and burglary. MendoFever reports last week Ryan pled no contest in Mendocino County Superior Court. He's sentenced to a year in county jail and will be on probation for two additional years, as well as registering as a sex offender. The realtor had been buying and selling homes locally for years. In a victim impact statement a woman told the court how he sexually attacked her, in front of her 7 year old child; an additional charge of misdemeanor child endangerment had been dropped. The journal reports several women filed police reports as far back as 1998, accusing Ryan of sexual crimes, alleging he kept keys to several residences and harassed women in their own homes.

Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar Curry is reaching out to local officials on ongoing work in Lake County. She is running for re-election to continue representing District 4. Aguiar Curry says she helped bring \$40 million to Lake County and discussed a partnership with UC Davis and economic development projects. The Record Bee reports she is championing the Internet for All initiative saying every child deserves quality internet in the state. She talked of mental health during the Judge's Breakfast on Thursday in Clearlake and talked about continued efforts to recruit medical professionals. Aguiar Curry touted the need for increased wildfire mitigation and how state and federal resources can help fund efforts to reduce risk.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors is addressing cannabis policies. The meeting last week included discussing cannabis prohibition zones. The current policy allows people to petition the Planning Commission and the Board to create special zones if 60 percent of neighborhoods get enough signatures, to prohibit cannabis. So far this year, two groups have tried to petition for prohibition zones, but were denied by the board. MendoFever reports the process of overlaying already zoned areas into cannabis free areas involves many levels of staff review, so the board decided if residents want to opt in or out of a zone, they must ask the Planning Commission or Board to start the process. Some supervisors said the zoning question is not a priority. At the end of their meeting they decided to table the topic and come back with a policy in the future.

The Lake County Burn Ban is lifted as of 9am this morning. Cal Fire decided the wildfire risk has been sufficiently reduced. Burn permits are still required for outdoor burning with the Lake County Air Basin. Lake County News reports for those seeking multi-day burns, overnight burns, standing vegetation burns and more a smoke management plan is required and is available at the Lake County Air Quality Management District.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors will work on a response to state regulations that would mandate water right holders give information on wells and water usage as part of an effort to preserve Clear Lake hitch. Lake County News reports they'll meet tomorrow morning at 9am. Board members will take written comments on the draft regulations through the end of this month. The board will also consider approval of the Facilities Capital Improvement Plan through fiscal year 2027-2028. Regarding the Lake County Watershed Protection District, the group plans to adopt a resolution to accept a State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways Mussel Infestation Prevention agreement with over \$330,000 in grant funding. In closed session, the board will confer with a labor negotiator and go over litigation with Earthways Foundation, Inc.

Sheet1

In the fatal plane crash near the airport in Covelo more information is coming in. The two fatalities on board are from out of state. A family member had been tracking the flight and knew the plane had gone down. Mendocino County Sheriff's investigators along with the FAA and NTSB are looking into the details of the fiery scene. Dental records helped the coroner's office identify the victims. The Press Democrat reports they expect those details this week. The Beechcraft A-36 plane went down around 6pm Friday evening, we don't yet know if it was taking off or landing at the airport.

10/24/2023

Highway 101 is the scene of an investigation into a roll over accident near Standish Hickey State Park. Reporting in KymKemp says a car rolled over after a high speed pursuit north of Leggett. It was a suspect being chased northbound by CHP. The highway was closed while the driver was trapped for over an hour until emergency personnel could get him loaded onto a CHP helicopter to an area hospital. Authorities kept the road closed as CalTrans and CHP investigated the accident and cleared the road safely.

Clearlake Police are searching for a missing teenage girl. Alysa Ontko is a native girl with dark brown hair and brown eyes. The 16 year old is five foot 4 inches tall and weighs around 125 pounds. Lake County News reports Alysa was last seen yesterday near Carle High School wearing a black hoodie and black jeans. Anyone with information is asked to call Clearlake Police.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors are getting a request for Measure B funds to build a treatment center for substance use disorder while costs are mounting for construction of the new jail that will include mental illness treatment. MendoFever reports the Ford Street Project is looking for over \$4 million to build a 24 bed sober living facility near the Ukiah Recovery Center. The California Department of Healthcare Services offered the project over \$3 million for their first phase. The Executive Director for the Ford Street Project says they have followed the county's processes to the letter and is demanding clarity in their funding. At the end of this weeks meeting, two supervisors were appointed to an ad hoc committee to research questions about the proposal with Ford Street and the potion of Measure B funds for the new jail.

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Governor Newsom is announcing that the state passed it's zero-emission vehicle truck sales goal ahead of schedule by two years. The goal was 6 percent of new trucks to be ZEV by 2024 and surpassed that percentage by a point and a half last year with over 7,600 trucks sold. The Record Bee reports by 2035 half of all new medium and heavy duty truck sales need to be zero emissions with 100 percent ZEV by 2045. California has accelerated the transition with over \$10 billion for the charging infrastructure development. Trucks make up over 35 percent of California's transportation emissions and a fourth of the state's on road green house gasses.

Sheet1

Harvest Mendocino has expanded dates for the annual festival. October 27th through November 12, the tourism organization, Visit Mendocino has several events featuring locally produced foods and crafts. This weekend, the Fort Bragg Magic Market will have local foods and gifts with Halloween themes along Franklin and Laurel Streets. Saturday, there will be a costume and pet parade, live music and kids activities. The first ever Craft Cannabis Cornucopia event is set for Saturday afternoon with live music, foods and flower tasting. You can meet the California State Fair winners. The county tourism site also has information on Fungi Walks and Talks with the Mendocino Botanical Gardens and more.

Three local nonprofits will get a chance at \$10,000 from the 100+ Women Strong fathering next week. The American Association of University Women's Tech Trek, Oscar's Place Adoption Center and Sanctuary and the Ukiah Senior Center are the three finalists who will participate in next week's presentation on November 2nd with the 100+ Women Strong Gathering in Hopland. Each organization will get five minutes to make their case and take audience questions. The Willits News reports the gathering is open to the public and supported by local organizations. 100+ Women Strong was created in 2019 and has so far given away more than \$187,000 to support local nonprofits in the Mendocino community.

The Lake County Superior Court has a new way to remind people to show up to court. The court has a new technological service to remind people of court dates and appearance times. Lake County News reports people who sign up will get text and or email reminders. Reminders will ping people two weeks before their date, and 2 days head of their appearance. People can sign up and create an account using their case number to register.

The Clearlake Oaks Water District was ordered to repay disaster relief funds it got from the feds and state agencies. They must pay FEMA nearly \$1.6 million and nearly \$400,000 to Cal OES. The Record Bee reports the general manager of the water district said the funds were given for relief from flooding that happened in 2017. The Inspector General of the US Department of Homeland Security says with the US Attorney's Office in Northern California, the money will be repaid to the US. Combating fraud in federal grants is part of an effort by the False Claims Act to resolve the matter. The district says they kept the funds in an investment fund and a spokesperson says they fully cooperated in the investigation. The claim they offered to return the funds a number of times and never concealed the money. In order to settle the matter rather than going to trial, the district decided to repay the money.

California's Attorney General Rob Bonta is filing a motion in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals to extend a stay on a decision to halt the state's restrictions on assault weapons. In a release in KymKemp, the AG says the court granted a ten day stay that will expire on October 29th. Bonta says California law has prohibited sales of semi-automatic assault weapons for decades and that the district court issued a dangerous decision. The Assault Weapons Control Act was passed in 1989 and strengthened in 2000. Since then, the state has restricted the manufacture, distribution, possession and more. AG Bonta says without an extension of the stay, pending appeal, assault weapons may flood into the state.

Sheet1

Banks across the country are engaging the public in a campaign to combat phishing on social media. The Savings Bank of Mendocino County is participating in the #BanksNeverAskThat campaign sharing information by the American Bankers Association to inform the public about bogus bank scams. The national group aims to explain to everyone that banks will never ask for sensitive information like passwords and Social Security numbers by phone, email or social media. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports people should watch for misspelled words, poor grammar or false links that could hook customers into a scheme. Officials urge people to change their passwords and check in with your local branch if you are the victim of a scam.

Eight kids who were abducted from foster homes in Arkansas were driven across the country by their biological mom before being found safe in Northern California. Anderson Police responded to a welfare check on Saturday after a group of children and a woman were acting bizarre. Police arrived and identified Trista Fullerton with a felony warrant on the abduction of her eight kids. The Shasta County Sheriff's Office found all eight kids and issued protective custody warrants for their safety. Fullerton was jailed and the children will be reunified with their legal foster guardians in Arkansas.

Wednesday the First 5 Lake County Commission will hold a public hearing on their Annual Evaluation Report. The meeting at 2pm on Wednesday at the Anderson Ranch Conference Room will also be available virtually, according to Lake County News. The hearing is aimed at accepting comments from the public and will be available for residents to see.

A Lake County Superior Court received evidence in a preliminary hearing this week where the judge ordered Melinda Fred of Lakeport to answer to murder charges. Fred is scheduled for arraignment and bail review hearing one week from today. The charges stem from the homicide of a man last May. The Record Bee reports Christopher Burrows, was found last spring stabbed to death on Red Feather Lane in Lakeport. Fred was arrested and initially bail was set for \$1 million. Fred is charged with murder, assault with a deadly weapon and corporal injury on her partner.

California Governor Newsom is visiting the Great Wall of China today. The AP reports Newsom met with China's leader Xi Jinping in Beijing today. His weeklong tour of China is being scrutinized after years of heightened tensions between the US and China. Newsom and Xi are discussing ways to work on climate change. Fentanyl was also part of a discussion as a leading killer of young people in the US, along with China's role in combating the transnational shipping of chemicals used to make the drug. Newsom says he also raised human rights issues and Taiwan. The governor also met with the leader of China's National Development and Reform Commission where a memorandum on environmental issues was signed.

10/25/2023

In the fatal plane crash near the airport in Covelo more information is coming in. The two fatalities on board are from out of state. A family member had been tracking the flight and knew the plane had gone down. Mendocino County Sheriff's investigators along with the FAA and NTSB are looking into the details of the fiery scene. Dental records helped the coroner's office identify the victims. The Press Democrat reports they expect those details this week. The Beechcraft A-36 plane went down around 6pm Friday evening, we don't yet know if it was taking off or landing at the airport. Teams from the Forestry Service and the Round Valley Tribal Police were on hand. Ultimately, the National Traffic Safety Board will determine the circumstances and cause.

Sheet 1

Highway 101 is the scene of an investigation into a roll over accident near Standish Hickey State Park. Reporting in KymKemp says a car rolled over after a high speed pursuit north of Leggett. It was a suspect being chased northbound by CHP. The highway was closed while the driver was trapped for over an hour until emergency personnel could get him loaded onto a CHP helicopter to an area hospital. Authorities kept the road closed as CalTrans and CHP investigated the accident and cleared the road safely.

The Cal Fire Mendocino Unit will be actively doing prescribed burns beginning today through Saturday, of a couple dozen burn piles at the unit headquarters on Highway 101 in Willits. Smoke will be visible from Redwood Valley through Willits. Cal Fire is using very tight restrictions and will monitor wind conditions and more to conduct the burns safely.

The Governor's Office is announcing that the state has created over 6,600 megawatts of battery storage. In a release in Lake County News, the office reports the storage is double the amount from two years ago, a significant step to California's goal of 100 percent clean energy by 2045. Storing excess power from solar, wind and other renewable sources generated during the day will help meet demand when energy is needed. The announcement says nearly 2,000 more megawatts of energy storage projects will be online by the end of the year.

The Anthropology Department at CSU Chico is helping authorities investigate human remains found in Covelo. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office released a statement saying their office was contacted by a hunter on Bauer Ranch Road near Mendocino Pass Road when they found several human bones scattered on a property. The hunter also found a man's ID in the same area Saturday evening. After a storm delay, yesterday deputies and search and rescue teams found several human skeletal remains. Anyone with information to help the coroner is urged to call the sheriff's tip-line.

The Fort Bragg City Council is announcing increased usage and membership fees for the CV Starr Center that the city took over. As the council works on the center after taking over from the Mendocino Coast Recreation and Parks District, they've also agreed to use a special fund to help a local swim team. Beginning in 2024, swim team lane rental fees will go to \$13. MendoFever reports the increased rental fees and other funds could generate \$180,000 a year. The fees there haven't increased in a decade. The operating costs to run the center have increased with the price to heat the pool doubling. Insurance and minimum wage have increased as well. A former official says the increased fees remain lower than similar facilities nearby. The City of Fort Bragg will do a comprehensive study to analyze the costs to continue operations.

The California Department of Cannabis Control is discussing potential federal rescheduling of marijuana and how it will affect the state's cannabis industry. In a release this week, KymKemp reports cannabis may be reclassified from Schedule 1 to Schedule III in the federal Controlled Substances Act. The state department claims the move will have significant tax benefits for cannabis businesses. People are watching how the DEA will respond in deciding that reorganization. The move won't legalize marijuana on a federal level, and state licensed cannabis businesses would remain operating as the regulatory framework.

Sheet 1

California Attorney General Rob Bonta is joining with 32 other state's attorneys general in a lawsuit against Meta, the parent company of Facebook and Instagram. The suit filed in the US District Court for the Northern District of California alleges that Meta designed and is using harmful features on their social media platforms to addict children and teens. The attorneys are looking for an injunction and funding to address what they say is harmful to young people's mental and physical health. Lake County News reports the complaints come after a nationwide investigation that began 2 years ago. The suit was filed yesterday, where Meta is reported to have violated federal and state laws. AG Bonta began also investigating TikTok this spring that is ongoing.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors is approving a resolution to continue to use the Juvenile Hall in Lakeport for an overnight shelter. The board recognized that some repairs are needed to meet code standards. Based on the state of emergency for the health of shelter residents, the board waived the request for competitive bidding. The Lake County Behavioral Health Services will continue to administer the shelter contractor, the Continuum of Care provider and Blue Horizon Foundation until new management by Redwood Community Services takes over operations in December. The Record Bee reports the move will require a General Plan Conformity Determination.

Clearlake Police are investigating a shooting that involved at least three suspects. Last month, police responded to a shooting near Austin Park. A couple of juveniles fled the scene, one being arrested days later. The Record Bee reports a 26 year old man Treyvon Jones was arrested in connection with the shooting, with help from the Mendo/Lake Regional SWAT team a few weeks ago on Highway 20. Jones was arrested for attempted murder. Anyone with information on the events of September 12th is urged to call the Clearlake Police Department.

The UC Hopland Research and Extension Center and Redwood Valley Outdoor Education Project are collaborating next week for a youth environmental education event. Local youth organizations in Ukiah, Hopland and Redwood Valley will get together one week from today, November 1st to find volunteers needed to help guide field trips and nature walks. The Hopland Research Center and Redwood Valley Outdoor Education Project welcome over 3,000 students in field trips annually since the end of the pandemic. They need volunteers to support site staff and guide groups on nature walks while sharing information about the wildlife and ecosystems of the area. The recruiting event next Wednesday from 10am to 1pm at Shippey Hall at the Research Center on University Road.

There will be a grand opening for the newly named Xabatin Community Park, tomorrow at 4pm. Parking will be available near the park on North Main Street as well as at the Silviera Community Center. People are asked to not walk on the newly sown grass. Lake County News reports the Clear Lake High School, Lake County Military Honors Team and more will help welcome an invocation from Senator Mike McGuire. The mayor and other community leaders will be on hand to celebrate the renaming of the park to reflect the original residents of the area, the Pomo Indians with the Big Valley and Scotts Valley Bands engaged in tomorrow's event. The new skate park there will be broken in with performances by professional skateboarders and BMX riders. Food trucks will be there with free goodies provided by the city. City funding will pay to demolish the school district building for future development, including a boathouse.

Sheet1

10/26/2023 Governor Newsom met with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing yesterday. Newsom was joined by the US Ambassador to China. The Record Bee reports Newsom has been touring China discussing how California and the county can work together to advance climate action, promote economic development and tourism and strengthen cultural ties. Newsom also has been discussing human rights violations and anti-democratic efforts in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Tibet and more. He talked about his trip to Israel last Friday and how China can help diffuse tension in the region. He invited China to the Asia Pacific Economic cooperation summit in San Francisco next month.

The Mendocino County Cannabis Department is announcing that Go-Biz is allowing an increase in funding to verified local equity applicants, with over \$1 million disbursed for the month of October. The LEEP Round 3 Direct Grant Disbursement has begun, and awardees have been notified and can expect payment before October 31st. Other grant funding opportunities are still expected, including the Local Jurisdictional Assistance Grant Program and future rounds of LEEP. Funding is aimed at lowering barriers to cannabis permitting and licensing. Eligibility includes current Cannabis Cultivation Permit or Business License holders, applicants and those seeking to apply.

Senator Mike McGuire is traveling throughout his district and visited the newly named Xabatin (Ka-bah-ten) Community Park in Lakeport last week. City officials accompanied McGuire after the Lakeport City Council officials changed the park's name at their meeting on Tuesday. There is a grand opening ceremony planned for this coming Thursday at 4pm. The official re-naming campaign was funded by a nearly \$6 million grant through Prop 68. The public is invited to the ribbon cutting of the former Natural High School property. The Big Valley and Scotts Valley Bands of Pomo Indians will be performing native dances and more.

A man has been arrested for shooting at people in Clearlake Oaks. Yesterday afternoon Lake County Sheriff's deputies responded to shots fired at the Red and White market. Witnesses say a man was shooting his rifle at homeless people in the area. Thankfully, there were no injuries reported. The shooter was identified as Glenn Prasad. The Major Crimes Unit detectives found an unregistered AR style rifle at a home on Shoreview Drive, where he was arrested and taken to jail. Prasad is charged with two felonies: discharge of a firearm in a gross negligent manner and felony possession of an assault weapon. His bail is set at \$10,000. Prasad will be arraigned in one week.

The Governor's Office is announcing \$95 million for flood preparation across the state in projects to repair levees, enhance flood diversion and recharge capacity. In a release issued in Lake County News, Newsom's office is working to get ready for a wet winter. \$436 million has been invested to support flood response and projects to protect communities. The funding highlighted yesterday includes \$67 million to repair levees impacted by last year's storms. \$14 million is going to the State Water Resources Control Board to help domestic wells that were damaged. Over \$11 million in funding is set for the Storm Assistance for Immigrants project. The state has 2.4 million more sandbags ready. Officials' emergency response coordination across local communities is a priority with more enhanced forecasting and warning data.

An east coast man is free after being found not guilty of two alcohol related driving charges. A Mendocino Superior Court jury found William Britton of Rhode Island not guilty during a three day trial. The charges stem from spring of last year, when Britton allegedly drove under the influence near Talmage.

Sheet1

The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County will have adoption fees reduced this weekend in their Halloween Event. There is also a trunk or treating at the center Saturday and Sunday. They're open 1pm to 5pm today and tomorrow and 11am to 3pm on the weekend.

Cal Fire Mendocino Unit will be doing a prescribed burn on the Shamrock Ranch area east of Highway 101 near Laytonville. The burning will start tomorrow morning around 10am and continue through the weekend, finishing Sunday around 5pm. The fuel mitigation and reduction goals are part of the California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan. You can track prescribed burns at fire.ca.gov. Fire crews will monitor the burn areas and weather conditions while in progress.

The state Attorney General Rob Bonta says victims of sexual trafficking deserve support and financial restitution. In a brief filed this week in the First District Court of Appeal Bonta argues according to the state's broad restitution statute, victims rights and more, that victims of exploitation are entitled to restitution from the person who exploited them. In a release issued in KymKemp, the California Department of Justice continues to combat human trafficking, and Bonta wants to clarify that the statute in the state does not distinguish between labor and sex trafficking. The brief alleges that trafficking victims need a chance to recover physically, mentally and financially.

Mendocino County Residents have a one year amnesty program for building permits beginning next Wednesday. November 1st begins the program to encourage residents to get into compliance and get the right permits. The one year amnesty effectively waives all violation and penalty fees for permits submitted after work has already been started or even completed. In a reminder, MendoVoice says there are some eligibility requirements and more information can be found at the Mendocino County Department of Planning.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors is facing legal scrutiny after they unanimously suspended the elected Treasurer Tax Collector / Auditor Controller Chemise Cubbison. The Anderson Valley Advertiser reports at the board meeting last week the supervisors appear to have acted before consulting with county counsel on how to proceed. The suspension came as the county's former payroll manager Paula Kennedy allegedly misappropriated over \$68,000 in public funds for 3 years. Cubbison and Kennedy were supposed to have been arraigned last week, but in order for Kennedy to arrange representation, the move is postponed until next Tuesday. Sara Pierce was appointed as the Acting Auditor Controller/Treasurer. Some argue that Cubbison has rights that were denied to her. She may have been entitled to appear before the Board and respond to the proposed suspension.

As Northern California cools way down, there is snow expected in the Sierras this week. Snow may fall all the way from northern California to the Central Valley with areas below 6,000 feet could get an inch and valley floors will see some rain. The LA Times and National Weather Service measured the first snow of the season near Donner Pass. The winter wetness moves in as the state and federal officials prepare for El Nino. A storm could bring more cold weather and rain tomorrow through early Saturday.

The Cal Fire Mendocino Unit will be continuing their prescribed burns through Saturday, of a couple dozen burn piles at the unit headquarters on Highway 101 in Willits. Smoke will be visible from Redwood Valley through Willits. Cal Fire is using very tight restrictions and will monitor wind conditions and more to conduct the burns safely.

Sheet 1

The CV Starr Center in Fort Bragg is repairing the pool. There is scheduled maintenance that will shut down the pool to the public from November 1st through the 10th. Repairs include the urgent auto-fill system, UV disinfection and backwash maintenance, according to reporting in MendoFever on a release from the City of Fort Bragg. Last week, contractor Knorr Systems Inc. let the center know parts have arrived and they are ready to repair systems that are critically failing. During the closure, the center is planning to recertify lifeguards. The CV Starr center will open the pool back up in time for the Mendocino Sea Dragons swim team meet on November 18th.

10/27/2023 A portion of funds from the voter approved Prop 64 will help the Fort Bragg Police Department with CHP to gather data on DUI enforcement. A part of the Cannabis Tax is being set aside for law enforcement grants and projects. Fort Bragg announced is has received about \$47,000 to host educational events, publicity of DUI offenders and get specialized training in recognizing drivers under the influence of not only alcohol, but marijuana and other drugs. The first event will be next Friday, November 3rd from 9 to 11pm at the intersection of E. Redwood Avenue and North Franklin Street.

A Fire Weather Watch is in place for the weekend in Mendocino, Lake and Sonoma Counties. The National Weather Service predicts gusty winds and relative low humidity for the state. Winds are forecast to gust up to around 20 miles per hour in the interior, with higher elevations gusting up to 50 miles per hour. Fire and emergency officials are warning Californians to exercise fire safety precautions and have an emergency plan. The watch is in effect from 5am tomorrow morning through 5pm Sunday evening. The critical fire weather comes as a dry low-pressure system dives into Northern California pulling a cold, dry air mass into the region. Simultaneously, a ridge of high pressure is developing to the east, and the low pressure front is expected to create a pressure gradient that helps winds develop.

Caspar Beach is open for swimmers. The beach had been closed recently due to an influx of bacteria. Warning signs were posted on October 19 following positive testing for high levels of enterococcus. MendoVoice reports there was a dead sea lion floating in Caspar Creek before the warnings were posted last week. The latest warning was the only one this year that the county tested for on several beaches. Mendocino County Environmental Health will test the beaches again on Halloween for the last time until next spring. Last week's positive test was the first one in years at Caspar Beach.

Governor Newsom is announcing two significant Cal Fire appointments; Chief Deputy Director Anale Burlew and State Fire Marshal Daniel Berlant. Both have a long history with the department. Chief Burlew has been working with Cal Fire for 25 years. She began in the Nevada Yuba Placer Unit and was promoted to Battalion Chief in 2011. In February of 2022 Chief Burlew was appointed as the Assistant Deputy Director of Fire Protection Operations statewide. Chief Daniel Berlant was appointed State Fire Marshal by the governor on October 6th. He has worked with Cal Fire for over 20 years, starting off as a volunteer and moving up to Assistant Deputy Director at the Office of the State Fire Marshal in 2016. Chief Berlant will continue oversight of Fire Engineering and Investigations Division.

Sheet1

The Mendocino County Department of Public Health is issuing a health care workers masking order. Personnel with patient contact working in health care facilities to be masked with strong recommendations to get the seasonal flu and COVID vaccinations. The order is aimed at preserving the capacity of health care workers during the cooler months, aka flu season. Effective November 24th thru the end of April the mask mandate will be in place. Starting next year, the order will be in place beginning in October. Mendocino County Health Officer Dr. Andrew Coren says vaccinations are the safest and most effective way to prevent severe infection, hospitalization or worse from viruses. High quality and well fitting masks will help prevent staff from spreading viruses and other infections.

The Mendocino Unit of Cal Fire announced that the prescribed burn plan for Shamrock Ranch near Laytonville has been postponed until further notice. Cal Fire does have plans to continue burning piles at the unit headquarters on Highway 101 in Willits. Smoke will be visible from Redwood Valley through Willits today and tomorrow.

There are details emerging from the plane crash one week ago in Covelo. A Beechcraft A-36 plane went down west of Covelo killing two passengers. KymKemp reports the pilot, Vaughn Porter and his girlfriend Jamie Rust from Utah had planned a trip to Shelter Cove. The couple planned to fly to the Humboldt County Airport but stopped at the Round Valley Airport and refueled, hoping to avoid the fog. The plane they were in crashed shortly after take-off. Utah TV station KSL reported that the pilot, Vaughn Porter had over three decades of flying experience; sadly, his wife and mother of his four children was a fatal victim to COVID in 2022. The family of both people have set up a Go-Fund-Me page to help cover the funeral expenses. The NTSB and FAA continue to investigate how the crash occurred.

The Measure B Committee was recently formed to advise the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors discussed funds for the behavioral health wing of the new jail as well as the Ford Street Project. MendoFever reports the board put off the decision last week, and created an ad hoc committee to research the Measure B budget. The Ford Street Project has requested additional funds for their health facility. The board put off their decision about awarding over \$4 million in Measure B funds to for the Ford Street Project, hoping to use funds to help cover the behavioral health wing of the future new jail. They decided to vote on jail funds next Tuesday. They did vote to pass a proposal of support to the Board of Supervisors.

The future of California's zero-emissions goals may depend on Governor Newsom's trip to China this week. The Record Bee reports most metals needed for electric car batteries are in China. Newsom is the third California governor to make the trip east to discuss climate regulation to technology and more. The governor met with Chinese leader Xi Jinping on Wednesday, keeping the focus on climate change and cooperation. New laws are on the books in California that force large companies to disclose their emissions; those laws include US company operations in China. Newsom has plans to visit an offshore wind facility in the country, as well as the Tesla Shanghai gigafactory there. Newsom is cementing the relationship between California and China moving forward.

Sheet1

The Fort Bragg Food Bank's annual Turkey Challenge is on. The Thanksgiving fundraiser aims to reach the goal of \$50,000 to feed the hungry. The Mendocino Beacon reports there various ways to participate in the community wide event. People can pledge money with local businesses matching individual donations of \$200 up to \$25,000. Another avenue to help in the fundraiser is donations at the Harvest Market. The food bank will be able to purchase turkeys and more with the funds. People can also give directly to the Food Bank in person on North Franklin Street.

A couple from Willits will face a jury next month, in the charges of drug possession after their storage unit was seized by police. James Biocca and Melody Yadon had stored methamphetamine and fentanyl in a Kelseyville storage unit. Police are charging the couple with possession, transportation and sales of controlled substances. Lakeport Police arrested the defendants after the search in February. Biocca had a previous charge of possession earlier this year. Yadon and Biocca both were taken into custody, and are out of jail on bond. The trial is scheduled to begin on November 15th.

Harvest Mendocino has expanded dates for the annual festival. October 27th through November 12, the tourism organization, Visit Mendocino has several events featuring locally produced produce and craftsmen. This weekend, the Fort Bragg Magic Market will have local foods and gifts with Halloween themes along Franklin and Laurel Streets. Saturday, there will be a costume and pet parade, live music and kids activities. The first ever Craft Cannabis Cornucopia event is set for Saturday afternoon with live music, foods and flower tasting. You can meet the California State Fair winners. The county tourism site also has information on Fungi Walks and Talks with the Mendocino Botanical Gardens and more.

Tomorrow is National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. The Lakeport Police Department is working with the US Drug Enforcement Administration on the take-back between 10am and 2pm on Saturday. Lake County News reports the drug take back will be in the front lobby of the police station on South Main Street. They'll accept all over-the-counter or prescription medications in all forms including schedule 2 through 5 controlled and non-controlled substances. The containers should be emptied with pills in a plastic bag so they can be seen. They are also collecting vape pens and other e-cigarette devices without batteries. Lakeport Police will not accept illegal drugs, needles or inhalers.

10/30/2023 A 19-year old is facing manslaughter charges after a baby was killed in a crash near Sea Ranch. Saturday night, the Press Democrat reports the driver is suspected of driving under the influence when his truck drove off of Highway 1 and flipped over, killing a one year old child. Colton Marrufo will face gross vehicular manslaughter, child endangerment and gun charges. A four year old suffered minor injuries. Marrufo was found drunk according to CHP. He went through medical clearance and is now in custody in Sonoma County Jail on a \$200,000 bail. He is set to appear in Sonoma County court one week from tomorrow.

No damage or injuries are being reported after a 3.9 earthquake shook south of San Francisco. The Press Democrat reports it happened Friday evening just after 6:30pm and was centered near Millbrae. It was measured at nearly 8 miles deep. The quake happened on the San Andreas Fault, where earlier this month farther north in Mendocino and Humboldt Counties a few 3 point magnitude quakes shook the coastal areas.

Sheet 1

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors along with District Attorney David Eyster face as much scrutiny as two women who were suspended from duties in the finance office. Auditor Chamise Cubbison says supporters will be at her plea hearing tomorrow morning at 9am. The Board will meet later tomorrow afternoon at 1pm to go over the suspension that may have a legal challenge to it. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports some say District Attorney Eyster's continued battles with Cubbison over spending have affected the latest investigation. Some say the DA should have referred the high profile case due to their involvement. Cubbison was recruited years ago by the county, and elected last year to work in a combo position of Auditor/Controller/Treasurer & Tax Collector Office. Cubbison's attorney says the suspension over \$68,000 in overtime pay to Paula Kennedy was arranged before her tenure.

California's unemployment rate in September is a point above where it was last year, 4.7 percent. Nationwide, the unemployment rate for the month is 3.8 percent, just .3 percentage points higher than last year. In Lake County News, the unemployment rate for Lake County didn't change from August, with 5.6 percent; but the rate is higher than September of last year. California added over 430,000 new jobs than in February of 2020, the pre-pandemic high. Regionally, Lake County's private service grew by just over a point and private education and health services grew by 4.5 percent. Mendocino County's rate is 4.6 percent and Sonoma is 3.5 percent for the same time period.

The oldest confirmed Californian ever is in Mendocino County. The Press Democrat reports that Edie Ceccarelli of Willits is the third oldest person on Earth at 115 and the oldest person in the country. The active senior was born in 1908 and lives in a care home in the town where she was born, Willits. Ceccarelli's blood was drawn by researchers last week to study her blood in a bio bank for researchers to discover how her longevity might help the discovery of new medical breakthroughs.

Storm drains are being installed along the west side of Mill Street, to Gobbi in Ukiah with no utility service interruptions slated for this week. In a few weeks, work to replace the sewer lines in the center of State Street will begin. MendoFever reports Sidewalk work is ongoing on the north side of town, with new curbs and gutters being put together. On the west side, sidewalk demo has begun with base rock installed for pedestrian access. Electric lines, irrigation lines will be placed before new sidewalks are set. With four crews working hard downtown, Phase One is speeding along. Construction is happening this week from 7am to 6pm.

Mendocino's County CEO Report includes information about work the Redwood Empire Hazardous Incident Team does. Early this month, a damaged sail boat was found off the coast of Mendocino. The Coast Guard found a sailor and noticed a noxious gas on board. Elevated carbon monoxide levels were high, officials believe from a jug of fiberglass resin. The Redwood Empire Hazardous Incident Team stepped in to clear out contaminants. The team eliminated the cause and turned the boat back over to the Coast Guard.

Mendocino County is alerting taxpayers to an error in billing. Some taxpayers received more than one notice and could see mistakes on the bills due to a printing error. In a release sent out Friday, they say corrected tax bills will be prepared and sent out as soon as possible. The county is asking residents to use the reprinted bill when sending in tax payments. You can reach out to the Mendocino County Tax Collector's Office for more information.

Sheet1

Hackers changed a digital sign on Highway 20. KymKemp reports instead of a safety message at the intersection of State Route 20 and Road 144 the sign had two words, "Fat Cock." The signs were apparently reprogrammed in an online hack that could lead to felony charges of vandalism. Caltrans has faced this issue before in 2017 when a sign near Davis read "Trump Has Herpes" in another online attack. Tongue-in-cheek responses from some media say the latest hack was an attack on overweight roosters. Caltrans worked to fix the sign where the agency is working on the Calpella Two Bridge Replacement project.

The heavy rain in NorCal this year has helped to produce an infestation in pear orchards of the flatheaded borer. In an article in the Willits News, reported by UC Coop Extension Diversified Ag Advisor Dr. Goncalves, the insect has been found in Lake County orchards. The flathead borers tend to invade sunburned areas on first year trees. The insect mainly feeds on soft woods. The borer is a beetle found around the world and is one of the largest beetles. The flatheaded borer is one of over 300 species in the state and can also be found damaging logs and wood products and in other fruit orchards like walnut, cherry, apple and more. The California Pear Advisory Board and UC Coop Extension Advisors are testing to identify the stages of life for the insect to work on mitigation measures. The group will hold an online meeting this Thursday from 8 to 9am. You can get more details at the UCCE offices in Lake and Mendocino Counties.

The Ukiah City Council is meeting Wednesday and will talk about demolishing the Palace Hotel. Last month, the building was officially inspected and was found to have structural failures including a collapsed floor, failed joists and buckling lead glass windows. A report was made to the city that the building needs to be demolished because of its serious threat to public health and safety. MendoFever reports the demolition is exempt from environmental review because of the damage done by the storms of late winter. The Palace Hotel has been vacant for nearly 3 decades. The City of Ukiah will hold a public meeting on Wednesday at 4pm to include the public as the historic building makes its final mark on Ukiah as it comes down.

Heavy rain is predicted for the state as we begin a new water year. Officials with the National Weather Service and the NOAA say El Nino will be a predominant climate factor driving winter's outlook. Cal Matters reports the west will see above average precipitation that could surpass the 1997-98 winter with damaging and sometimes fatal mudslides and nearly a billion in property damage. With reservoirs up from last winter, officials say it's time to be more proactive on flood protection and water storage.

The UC Hopland Research and Extension Center and Redwood Valley Outdoor Education Project are collaborating this week for a youth environmental education event. Local youth organizations in Ukiah, Hopland and Redwood Valley will get together on November 1st to find volunteers needed to help guide field trips and nature walks. The Hopland Research Center and Redwood Valley Outdoor Education Project welcome over 3,000 students in field trips annually since the end of the pandemic. They need volunteers to support site staff and guide groups on nature walks while sharing information about the wildlife and ecosystems of the area. The recruiting event next Wednesday from 10am to 1pm at Shippey Hall at the Research Center on University Road.

Mendocino County Sheriff's Deputies are searching for a carjack suspect. The sheriff asked residents in Hopland to shelter in place last night while authorities searched for the man. New details are emerging today about the suspect, Christian Beyer.

Among local arrests, investigators found that Beyer was convicted by a military judge for assault, domestic violence and more last year. He had been demoted in rank and confined for 43 days. KymKemp reports Beyer had a YouTube channel where he seemed paranoid about law enforcement following him. In another video of his arrest by Mendocino County Sheriff's Deputies last weekend, he was aggressive towards the deputies. Beyer is still on the run and authorities continue to warn residents that he may be dangerous. Call the sheriff's office if anyone knows something or sees suspicious activity. Beyer is 6 feet tall and weighs around 200 pounds. He was last seen with a large knife in Hopland last night.

The Lake County Sheriff's Office has identified a body found two weeks ago. Andrew Cleofaus-Paul Gurrola is the name of the man whose body was found along Highway 29 at Hofacker Lane. The Press Democrat reports a cause of his death has not yet been released. His body was found on October 17th by CHP about a mile and a half south of Lower Lake.

The Ukiah Valley Fire Authority with the City of Ukiah are partnering with Pano AI, an early wildfire detection technology to help keep the community safe from wildfires. It's the first commercial deployment of the technology in early wildfire detection program in NorCal. MendoFever reports Pano AI has set out 4 ultra-high-definition mountaintop camera systems that can rotate 360 degrees. The four stations will support rapid response times, situational awareness for fire fighters and more. The Ukiah Valley Fire Authority Chief says early detection improves their ability to suppress and helps reduce costs and ensuring firefighters are kept safe. The new technology is said to be the most advanced and is already working with governments, fire authorities and more throughout 7 states and in Australia and Canada.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors will hear from suspended Auditor/Controller Chamise Cubbison's attorney after her court appearance this morning. In their afternoon meeting today the Board is including an opportunity for Cubbison to make a presentation in response to her suspension earlier this month at 4pm. The public is invited and will have an opportunity to be involved in questions, according to MendoVoice. The plea hearing for felony charges filed against her and Paula Kennedy is scheduled for 9am.

PG&E is inviting North Coast region customers to a Town Hall for regional updates and tips on energy savings. On Wednesday, November 1 from 5:30 to 7 p.m., PG&E experts will provide a brief presentation where participants will have the opportunity to ask questions. The utility will also provide an update regarding a pair of proposed decisions in the General Rate Case by the California Public Utilities Commission. The proposed decisions would reduce PG&E's undergrounding plans of more than 2,000 miles between now and 2026.

In the latest Russian River Water Forum update yesterday, the Planning Group meeting scheduled for November 2nd will be postponed to December 7th. PG&E intends to release its initial draft decommissioning plan within a few weeks. The meeting in December will cover the update on PG&E's decommissioning process and include a presentation on the Eel River watershed fisheries, tribal connections, and restoration efforts. The group is asking people to register for the December meeting by the end of November.

Sheet 1

The Mendocino Local Agency Formation Commission is inviting the public to apply for the position of the Alternate Public Member on the Commission to fulfill a four year term that will end in December of 2027. Candidates should submit a letter of interest, an application and resume and include a financial disclosure statement. The applications and more details are on the Mendo LAFCo website.

The Clearlake City Council will go over a potential rate increase by Golden State Water Company who could raise rates over 40 percent over three years. In the council's meeting on Thursday night at 6pm, they'll discuss the rate increase application submitted to the California Public Utilities Commission, filed in August. Lake County News reports other business the council will decide on adoption of an amendment to an agreement between the city and the county and City of Lakeport for operation of a local cable tv channel. The city council will also discuss adopting an employee home loan assistance program. And in closed session the council will discuss a liability claim.

California salmon numbers are at a critical level. For only the third time in history, the state banned recreational and commercial salmon fishing. Scientists are beginning to capture and bring juvenile fish to an emergency hatchery at UC Davis. In a report in Politico the director of California's Fish and Wildlife Department describes the hatchery he and NOAA oversee as "Noah's Ark." He describes that salmon have dealt with increasing temperatures and manmade barriers, but says there is hope as dams are removed and aquasystems are rehabilitated. Officials are modernizing infrastructure to benefit salmon and restore habitat across the state.

PG&E is distributing nearly \$80 million to help communities build up microgrids to keep lights on during outages. Politico reports ownership and operation of microgrids will remain under the purview of PG&E, with the Public Utilities Commission working in partnership with the state's three main utilities. Groups like the Green Power Institute say the commission should consider microgrids that are not managed by the large utilities, but rather local non-utility-driven alternatives. The commission was tasked with microgrids in a law passed in 2018. Growing intensity of wildfires and other weather events are pushing authorities to add to the electricity grid.

Starting January 1st, California's ban on the sale of new gas-powered mowers and blowers will go into effect; and experts say the transition will require money, education and tolerance. It won't be illegal to use existing gas-powered landscaping tools, and the current inventory will be sold until it runs out. The California News Service with the Sac Bee report Assembly Bill 1346 created a 30-million-dollar CORE program and fund to give landscapers big discounts on new equipment, which is more expensive than gas models. But the money is running low in some categories. Check the CORE website for a current list of funds still available.

The East Region Town Hall will meet tomorrow afternoon at 4pm in Clearlake Oaks. They are poised to get an update on the John T. Klaus Park and commercial cannabis. There will be an update on the Clearlake Oaks Roadmap Taskforce and meetings with the Sonoma Clean Power, the Lake County Area Plan update, and the Blue Ribbon Committee. Lake County News reports other business will include an update on Spring Valley, FireWise Community safety and Spring Valley Lake recovery. The next meeting of the East Region Town Hall is set for December 6th.

Sheet1

The poverty rate climbed for California in the first part of this year as social programs expire from the pandemic. The rate increased from nearly 12 percent to over 13 percent, adding 5 million more residents. Tax credits, emergency food help and more expired in late 2022 and into spring of this year. When CalFresh food assistance had been keeping over a million people out of poverty in the first quarter of this year, but has now stopped. The LA Times reports nearly 40 percent of those living in poverty are Latino. The child poverty rate is now 14 percent, compared to 9 percent in 2021. Seniors are also feeling the social programs absence with a rate of 15 percent. Workers across the state in service industries experience higher rates of poverty than other sectors. Some say increased wages and improved training and education would help the working poor.

Contention over the suspension of Mendocino County Auditor/Controller, Chamise Cubbison was apparent in the court yesterday morning. There a room full of supporters in the courtroom as well as in front of the Board of Supervisors. MendoFever reports Cubbison and codefendant Paula Kennedy's arraignment set for 9am yesterday has been postponed until November 29th. Defense Attorney Chris Andrian said Cubbison was not in the position until after the funds were gone, and that she was summarily suspended without a hearing, according to the Ukiah Daily Journal. The appointee replacing Cubbison, Sara Pierce reported she found outside bank accounts that weren't fully disclosed. She refused to sign off on the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report for the fiscal year 2021-22. Pierce also informed state auditors about the accounts they reportedly did not know about. She said the discrepancy will negatively affect the county's ability to get grant funding and that the current fiscal year close will be delayed.

11/01/2023

The Mendocino County Coroner is investigating the discovery of a body found in a burning car near the Covelo Dump yesterday morning. In a release, the Mendocino County Sheriff reports the Covelo Fire Department was dispatched to the dump just before 10am, where the body was found. There are no further details now, but we are monitoring the situation and will give you an update when authorities know more.

The annual count of sheltered and unsheltered homeless people in Mendocino County is out. At the end of last January, 30 Mendocino County Homeless Services Continuum of Care volunteers collected information and submitted the data to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The numbers this year show that there was 633 homeless people, a nearly quarter decline from last year. A spokesperson for the Continuum of Care says through expanded rental assistance programs, and new funding for low income households and more, the trend is positive for the county.

The Lake County Sheriff's Office has identified a body found two weeks ago. Andrew Cleofaus-Paul Gurrola is the name of the man whose body was found along Highway 29 at Hofacker Lane. The Press Democrat reports a cause of his death has not yet been released. His body was found by CHP about a mile and a half south of Lower Lake.

Sheet 1

It's that time of year, when you can cut your own Christmas Tree out of the Mendocino National Forest. The forest service is announcing that Christmas tree permits will be on sale online starting Friday, the 3rd. The online portal, Recreation.gov is the place to review guidelines and buy the permit. This year it's \$10 per tree with a \$2.50 transaction fee. They are good through December 31st. Those wanting to cut a tree should check the forecast and bring the proper tools needed. The Forest Service is reminding people that they can only use designated roads and be careful when driving through a burned area. They recommend cutting early in the season before snow builds up in higher elevations. Permits will also be available for sale at the Willows or Upper Lake Ranger Station.

Cultural burns are planned for today and tomorrow in the Cobb area. The burns are part of a prescribed and cultural fire training exchange with the Tribal EcoRestoration Alliance along with Lake County. The collaboration is working with Cal Fire, the US Forest Service and more to reduce fuel loading, support capacity building and training about controlled burns to improve the health of woodlands and grasslands and more. Lake County News reports depending on weather conditions the fires will be started around 8am each day and tamped down by later afternoon. Residents in the Cobb area may see smoke today and tomorrow.

Open enrollment starts today for the state marketplace known as CoveredCA. An estimated one-point-three million Californians are eligible for free Medi-Cal or for low-cost plan through the marketplace. The California News Service reports ninety percent of the enrollees on CoveredCA receive financial assistance, two-thirds of whom have access to comprehensive health insurance coverage, for a cost of \$10 or less per month. This year premiums are going up by nine-percent, but many people won't feel the increase thanks to federal subsidies from the Inflation Reduction Act, and the new California Enhanced Cost Sharing program, which lowers expenses for anyone making up to 250-percent of the Federal Poverty Level. That works out to income of about 35-thousand dollars a year for an individual, or about 70-thousand for a family of four.

The Jackson Demonstration State Forest with University of California Coop Extension is hosting a series of field conversations about improvement. The Adaptive Management tour will focus on a different aspect of the forest management with renewed focus as part of Cal Fire's Modernization Vision. The second tour is set for Friday, on November 3rd from 10am to 2pm. Visitors will learn about work before, during and after fire monitoring protocols that allows for continued refinement of prescribed burns.

California Highway Patrol just got some federal funds to help efforts in reducing reckless driving with a crack down on illegal sidershows, takeovers, and street racing. The \$2 million grant called the Sideshow, Takeover, Racing, Education and Enforcement Taskforce, or STREET II mission is to lower the number of injuries and deaths related to the dangerous events. The money is part of an allocation in the state budget to engage the public in a campaign with specialized enforcement operations. Lake County News reports from January through the end of July this year, CHP issued more than 31,000 tickets to drivers going over 100 miles per hour. The STREET II grant campaign will be active through September of next year. The funds come from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Sonoma County authorities have more information about the fatal crash that happened over the weekend in Sea Ranch. The Press Democrat reports the baby who was killed is John Marrufo, who was about a year and a half old. The crash happened Saturday night around 10:30, when driver Colton Marrufo flipped over on Highway 1. Yesterday, the Sonoma County District Attorney's office charged Marrufo with gross vehicular manslaughter, child cruelty, gun related counts, driving under the influence and more. The 19 year old is in jail in lieu of a half a million dollar bail. He was arraigned yesterday and scheduled to appear at a bail hearing Friday. Another 4 year old child was also in the car, but suffered minor injuries.

The California Department of Public Health is warning people at high risk for Mpox to get vaccinated. What was formerly known as monkeypox, is on the rise across the state. Lake County News reports health officials are urging those at risk to get vaccinated and be aware of the signs and symptoms. This week, the department issued a health alert to providers about the increase of cases. Those who should seriously consider getting the two part vaccine for Mpox include those with sexual partners who were diagnosed with the virus, and those concerned about sexually transmitted diseases. Officials say people should have conversations with their sexual partners as well as their health providers. Mpox can cause flu-like symptoms and include a rash.

Fast Food companies throughout the state are increasing prices. The New York Post reports McDonald's and Chipotle are raising menu prices after California passed minimum wage hikes. The governor signed a law that will give fast food workers \$20 an hour minimum, starting next spring. Already, price hikes across the country have decreased fast food sales, especially for people earning less than \$45,000 annually with inflation and other economic factors. The new minimum wage would be the highest in the nation for the industry.

Lake County issued an urgent message to residents today. The temporary emergency shelter operated by Blue Horizons Foundation at 1111 Whalen Way, Lakeport, will not open tonight. Blue Horizons staff is on-site to notify people who present to the building of this closure. Further information will be provided tomorrow (11/2). The County of Lake is working with Blue Horizons to reopen the shelter as soon as possible.

11/02/2023

The alleged carjacker that had Hopland residents sheltering in place earlier this week has been captured. Christian Beyer escaped from Mendocino County Deputies last Sunday when several local agencies began the manhunt. MendoFever reports he was found yesterday over sixty miles away in Petaluma. Petaluma Police found Beyer at a home and arrested him. Early this week, there were reports that Beyer had possibly carjacked a vehicle and tried to run people over, but clarification is needed from the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office. He was seen running away from near the Hopland Antique Store carrying a large knife. Witnesses say he made it over the Russian River to the east side of the valley.

There is another prescribed burn set for today and possibly through Saturday along Highway 53 and Anderson Ranch Parkway near Lower Lake. Lake County News reports the Lake County Fire Protection Agency, and the California Department of Parks and Recreation Northern Buttes District will coordinate the blaze, weather permitting. CHP and CalTrans will help control traffic. The aim of the fire is to reduce fuel next to Highway 53, reduce invasive plants and provide live fire training for fire crews. Smoke will be visible and with current conditions should travel to the east.

Sheet1

An atmospheric river is approaching Northern California. Arctic air is setting up a powerful winter-like jet stream this weekend, according to the San Francisco Chronicle. It looks like tomorrow a storm is expected to bring up to 5 inches of rain from Eureka south to Cape Mendocino and last through the weekend. The National Weather Service predicts heavy rain in coastal Sonoma County as well. Officials are concerned about the Smith River Complex burn area, as Humboldt and Del Norte counties could get the brunt of the storm. Another system is predicted to hit NorCal early next week and some say it could mean even more rain than the first system coming tomorrow.

The owner of the Palace Hotel in Ukiah has 30 days to stabilize the building or get a permit to demolish it. The Ukiah City Council voted in a special meeting for the action yesterday. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the city manager says they hope to preserve the historical structure, but their first concern is safety. The Chief Building Official noted in September that the hotel has deteriorated recently, with even more damage done after the late winter storms. An attorney for the owner says the timeline is unreasonable and asked the city to work with the owner to help find a buyer. The council decided action needed to be taken and voted unanimously on the 30 day timeline.

An advisory committee is sending their recommendations to Congress as part of the Not Invisible Act Commission, created by Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland. The group made up of law enforcement, tribal leaders, family members of missing and murdered individuals and survivors were mandated to develop the recommendations the government can take to address public safety among the nation's indigenous population. Lake County News reports the Justice Department along with the Department of the Interior must act on the recommendations within 90 days. At a White House Tribal National Summit last year, the Inter Department's Bureau of Indian Affairs and the FBI announced an agreement to administer criminal investigations in tribal lands. Secretary Haaland developed the Missing and Murdered Unit to direct interagency work with missing and murdered Indigenous people. The Not Invisible Act Commission was created in 2020 and has already begun working on finding the missing and prosecuting those responsible.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors will borrow \$6.8 million in mental health taxes to build a new jail. They voted unanimously this week on the move and declined to fund a proposal for an addiction treatment and recovery facility. MendoFever reports funds will come from Measure B, a voter approved sales tax that has accumulated about \$6.3 million. They'll also use about \$5.8 million for the project from a capital facilities reserve account. Staff from the Behavioral Health Department submitted a recommendation for the Ford Street Project be funded with the Measure B funds. The board created an ad hoc committee to look into the measure last month. The new jail has been in the works for years, since 2017 with a \$25 million grant from the state, but the state fire marshal reportedly delayed approval.

The Redwood Valley County Water District Board is getting \$200,000 in a fire insurance claim settlement. The board met in October to go over the latest from the Russian River Water Forum, consolidation of water districts, Groundwater Sustainability Agency fees and more. MendoFever reports the board is urging water districts to move forward as the city of Ukiah takes over service contracts to manage the Willow Water District. Administrators of the Ukiah Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency are proposing a \$2 million budget for management. The state is asking the agency for costly studies of surface water and groundwater. Various other topics were discussed at the meeting, and will be continued in the next scheduled meeting on November 16th.

Sheet1

Cal Fire is announcing \$117 million dollars in Wildfire Prevention Grants are available. Starting yesterday, grant applications are open. The newly appointed State Fire Marshal Chief Daniel Berlant says the Wildfire Prevention Grant program has been an important part of providing communities the support they need to reduce wildfire risk. They allow the state to invest in local projects that protect, engage and educate people and communities across the state. Completed applications are due on January 10, 2024. The agency is looking for projects that reduce hazardous fuel, fire prevention planning and education. Projects should aim to protect communities and improve public health. There will be a virtual workshop on the grants available that will be on November 8th. Check Cal Fire's Wildfire Prevention Grants webpage for details.

Friends of Boggs Mountain is sponsoring a free map and compass class this Saturday, Nov. 4, at 10 a.m. Lake County News reports the class will be at the Little Red School House on Bottle Rock Road in Cobb. The instructor will help people understand a topographic map, proper use of your compass, magnetic north, true north, and map symbology. Students will get time to practice orienting a map in proper north direction and understanding contour lines. The class for people of all ages is an introduction to outdoor navigation and map reading on Boggs Mountain Demonstration State Forest. People are urged to RSVP and bring their own compasses.

Hospice Services of Lake County is holding a free bereavement camp for families this weekend. Lake County News reports the event is aimed at families with kids ages 5 years and older who have experienced loss this Saturday, November 4th from 10am to 2pm in Clearlake. The agency wants to recognize and address the ways children grieve and heal after the death of a loved one. The Wings of Hope Bereavement Camps are offered periodically throughout the year and are run by counselors and trained volunteers. Call the Hospice Service of Lake County for more information.

Lake County is taking registration for an event aimed at helping businesses get funding. The "How To Get A Business Loan" session is set for next Tuesday, November 7th from 11am to 1pm at the Lucerne Alpine Senior Center. The event will be hosted by the Community Development Services as part of the Small and Micro Business Assistance Program. Topics will include accessing capital, accounting, credit building and loans. Check with Community Development Services within the county for more details and for registration.

The Mendocino County Department of Public Health is reminding people to get the latest COVID vaccine. The shots are available at local pharmacies for insured patients, and those on Medi-Cal. In a release this week, the department lists pharmacies like Rite-Aid, Safeway, CVS, Walgreens and Walmart have the newest vaccine.

The West Business Development group is providing free webinars this month and is hosting an online holiday marketplace beginning on the 15th. Along with the Small Business Development Center for Mendocino and Lake Counties, the organization is planning the first webinar on Saturday the 4th at 9:30am for an E-Commerce Digital Lab. There are also webinars planned for next week including How to Apply for small business loans. Their newsletter also is announcing the 100 Women Strong Inland Mendo for meet-up at Campovida in Hopland tonight at 8:30. It's the organizations last event of 2023. The group is hosting 3 non-profits as they campaign for funds raised to positively affect the community.

Sheet1

The Fort Bragg Police Department is planning some events centered around engaging the public on the problem of driving under the influence. The department got a grant from CHP earlier this year to study DUI enforcement and more. Grant funds come from voter approved Prop 64, the Cannabis Tax dedicated to law enforcement projects. The Advocate News reports Fort Bragg will use the \$47,000 grant in multiple education events downtown during peak DUI hours. Some events will be held at local bars, where breathalyzers will be available to customers and bartenders to see what their blood alcohol content is. People who guess the right number will win prizes. Other projects will include publicizing drunk driving data and specialized training to stop impaired drivers. Tomorrow, Fort Bragg Police will be at the intersection of E. Redwood Avenue and N. Franklin Street from 9 to 11pm

The man who threatened Ukiah residents and caused the lockdown of Hopland earlier this week may have been more dangerous than previously understood. Christian Beyer was found in Petaluma when he was arrested on a federal warrant Wednesday, after fleeing Mendocino County Sheriff's Deputies on Monday. The Press Democrat reports the Army veteran is also accused of making online threats to kill staff at a military facility. Beyer posted a video on YouTube Monday, where he threatened to kill multiple people at Fort Irwin in Southern California, according to a special agent with the Naval Criminal Investigative Service working with the FBI Los Angeles Joint Terrorism Task Force. Beyer had several social media postings and videos regarding the military base along with a history of violence and illegal firearms.

11/03/2023

The worst mass murder in Mendocino County History is being remembered, as one of the murders passed away in prison. The Mendocino County District Attorney posted online that the vice-president of the Vallejo Chapter of the Hells Angels, Chuck Diaz had been convicted in 1986 of murder in the first degree of Dallas Grondalski via knife attack. After Grondalski left the chapter and secretly moving to Fort Bragg with his family, Diaz with other Hells Angels found them, killed Grondalski and murdered his family the next day, wanting to get rid of all evidence by setting their home on fire. Diaz's codefendant, Gerald Butch Lester, the former chapter president is still in prison for the crime. It took until 2004 for local authorities and investigators to limit suspects to the two Hells Angels club members and convict them.

A separated trailer was sent careening into Clear Lake yesterday morning. KymKemp reports a tractor trailer was driving on Highway 20 near Clearlake Oaks when the trailer became separated and slid 30 feet down the embankment and into the lake just after about 5am. The front half of the big rig kept going down the road. Highway 20 had one-way traffic through about 8:30 yesterday morning. There were no injuries reported and a heavy duty tow truck was dispatched to try to get the trailer out of the water. The Governor's Office of Emergency Services Hazardous Materials Spill report indicated the trailer had 50-60 tons of nitrogen and phosphorus. CHP is investigating the incident as agencies investigate if any spillage occurred in Clear Lake.

The Mendocino County Divisions of Environmental Health and Planning and Building Services are announcing they are holding a Coastal Community Stakeholder Meeting on November 13th from 8am to 10 am at the Fort Bragg Branch of the Mendocino County Library. The agenda includes an overview of current permitting processes, a discussion on recent updates and proposed changes as well as a community wide conversation on ways to make permitting more efficient and accessible to every resident. County staff from each department will be at the meeting to answer questions.

Sheet 1

Cal Fire's Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit announced this week that the Boggs Mountain Demonstration State Forest is now only open for day use from sunrise to sunset and is only open to pedestrians, bicycles and equestrian use. Lake County News reports some forest roads may be closed pending wet weather conditions. Friends of Boggs Mountain is sponsoring a free map and compass class this Saturday, Nov. 4, at 10 a.m. The class will be at the Little Red School House on Bottle Rock Road in Cobb. The instructor will help people understand a topographic map, proper use of your compass, magnetic north, true north, and map symbology. People are urged to RSVP and bring their own compasses.

Exposure to fentanyl during pregnancy is said to affect babies with a novel syndrome that is extremely harmful and disforming. Babies born after being exposed to fentanyl come into the world with small heads, underdeveloped jawbones, conjoined toes and rounded feet. The Tribune News Service reports physicians in a study, including in California, published the data in Genetic in Medicine Open. It's the first established link between the synthetic opioid and birth defects. Until now, the children may have been misdiagnosed as having a genetic condition. Other effects include cleft palate and other genital anomalies. The doctors hope the study will increase awareness so that pregnant women won't use fentanyl or immediately get proper treatment.

Legislators are announcing a bipartisan bill to make settlements from the PG&E Fire Victims Trust nontaxable. Representatives Mike Thompson and Doug LaMalfa said yesterday that it is one step closer to providing essential tax relief to fire survivors. Lake County News reports Thompson says the bill remains a top priority and will continue to move it forward until the president signs it into law.

The East Region Town Hall is working on cannabis regulations. During their meeting this week, the group worked to fine tune the process to help in permitting. The group reported on non-compliance with an illegal grow in Spring Valley. They worked with code enforcement who said they were shorthanded. As the seasons change, October was the end of the outdoor grow season and now operations legal or permitted are moving indoors. The Record Bee reports code enforcement has gained drones and more officers trained and have plans to hire part-time officers. There was a Blue Ribbon Commission updates as well this week, on projects slated for approval. Board members discussed increased funds to improve Middle Creek flood damage and ecosystem restoration. They also discussed long term traffic plans to route trucks off of Highway 20 and onto Highway 29.

The Eel River Recovery Project will hold a forest health meeting in Laytonville tomorrow from 9am to 5pm at Harwood Hall. MendoFever reports the meeting is focused on the community organization to maximize benefits of fire preparedness and forest health. A member of the Cahto Tribe will open the meeting along with 3rd District Supervisor John Haschak. There will be a report on the Cal Fire Tenmile Creek Watershed Forest Health Grant. The project includes treating nearly 1000 acres of land including part of the Cahto Tribe Rancheria. A member of the Redwood Forest Foundation will report on a Usal Forest Cal Fire grant. Other local groups including the Mendocino Fire Safe Council will be on hand too.

Sheet 1

2023's third quarter saw over 26 percent of new cars sold in the state were zero-emission vehicles, according to data out of the Governor's Office. Lake County News reports it's an increase from about 25 percent in the 2nd quarter. Governor Newsom touted the state's progress in China last week, as he and his Chinese counterparts discussed progress on ZEVs after Newsom announced that California surpassed its zero-emission truck sales and car sales two years ahead of schedule. Thousand of dollars in rebates and grants are available for California residents and may have helped the state sell over a third of all US zero emission sales this year. The state has allotted an historic \$52 billion as part of the California Climate Commitment including over \$10 billion for zero emission vehicles and infrastructure.

The city of Lakeport is looking to fill several positions. They are looking for residents to work on local committees and commissions. Lake County News reports people are needed to sit on the Lakeport Fire Protection Board, the Vector Control District Board and the Economic Development Advisory Committee. The positions would begin on the first day of 2024. Appointments will be made at a Lakeport City Council this month. The city will take applications through Monday, November 6th.

A portion of funds from the voter approved Prop 64 will help the Fort Bragg Police Department with CHP to gather data on DUI enforcement. A part of the Cannabis Tax is being set aside for law enforcement grants and projects. Fort Bragg announced is has received about \$47,000 to host educational events, publicity of DUI offenders and get specialized training in recognizing drivers under the influence of not only alcohol, but marijuana and other drugs. The first event will be tonight from 9 to 11pm at the intersection of E. Redwood Avenue and North Franklin Street.

The West Business Development group is providing free webinars this month and is hosting an online holiday marketplace beginning on the 15th. Along with the Small Business Development Center for Mendocino and Lake Counties, the organization is planning the first webinar on Saturday the 4th at 9:30am for an E-Commerce Digital Lab. There are also webinars planned for next week including How to Apply for small business loans.

A Mendocino County Superior Court judge is rejecting a delay requested by the Skunk Train in the Fort Bragg lawsuit against the Mendocino Railway. The rail company is fighting to prove that they are a public utility and federally exempt as a common carrier. Judge Brennan says delay is unwarranted. MendoVoice reports the rail company lost an eminent domain case, and a request that the matter be moved up to federal court. The judge set the next trial date for December 14th to work on the schedule and set discovery proceedings. The City of Fort Bragg along with the California Coastal Commission argues that the railroad might have environmental and other impacts and more

11/06/2023

The Lake County Board of Supervisors will meet tomorrow morning at 9am and proclaim November as National Native American Heritage Month. Lake County News reports the board will address hunger in Lake County and discuss giving staff direction to act. There will be a public hearing to approve a tentative subdivision map for Valley Oaks Land and Development at Highway 29 and Hartmann Road, Middletown. They'll consider adopting a property tax exchange on the proposed Konocti County Water District annexation. The board is expected to approve an agreement for substance use disorder outpatient drug free services and more with New Life Health Authority for \$10 million for Fiscal Year 2023-24. And in closed session the board will meet with legal counsel on litigation regarding Earthways Inc, the Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project and more.

Sheet 1

Downtown Ukiah continues to be a work in progress. MendoFever reports the intersection of Mill and State Streets will be closed from School to Main Streets for most of the week. Next week work may start to move south toward Cherry Street with sewer line replacement. Sidewalk work will happen on the north side with new curbs and gutters being put together, and will also have electric and irrigation lines installed. Construction hours continue to be during the work week from 7am to 6pm.

The Ukiah BLM Field Office is announcing that they've eased fire restrictions, including on Cow Mountain. The bureau says while weather conditions are no longer causing high wildfire danger, they are urging everyone to be responsible and help reduce the risk. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports that recreational target shooters can practice but are asked to be cognate of hot bullet fragments and exploding targets that can spark a wildfire. Shooters are reminded they have to pick up all their spent shells, brass and targets. The Ukiah office is also reminding people to check weather conditions, especially on Red Flag warnings and Fire Weather Watches if conditions turn dry and windy.

Cal Fire is announcing \$117 million dollars in Wildfire Prevention Grants are available. Starting today, grant applications are open. The newly appointed State Fire Marshal Chief Daniel Berlant says the Wildfire Prevention Grant program has been an important part of providing communities the support they need to reduce wildfire risk,. They allow the state to invest in local projects that protect, engage and educate people and communities across the state. Completed applications are due on January 10, 2024. The agency is looking for projects that reduce hazardous fuel, fire prevention planning and education. Projects should aim to protect communities and improve public health. There will be a virtual workshop on the grants available that will be on November 8th. Check Cal Fire's Wildfire Prevention Grants webpage for details.

The Mendocino Department of Cannabis says they are continuing to streamline the online platform for applications and more. Phase III applications have a new email address for submission. Check the department website for instructions and new policies. The also announced they are extending their equity grant eligibility window to November 24th.

Part of Cow Mountain has a burn scar after a weekend blaze. People on the east side of the Ukiah Valley said they saw a column of smoke around 1pm, south of Cow Mountain. Fire crews went to Twining Road where they report the fire had grown up to an acre of dry grass. MendoFever reports within an hour, firefighters and other resources had the blaze under control and forward progress halted.

The Mendocino County Coroner has new details on the remains of a body found in a burned out car a week ago. The death is deemed suspicious, according to the Press Democrat. The remains were found Tuesday morning on County Road 337L near the dump in Covelo. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Deputies worked with Ukiah Valley Fire Authority and Cal Fire. The Cal State Chico Forensic anthropology staff helped identify the person but have not released the name yet. Anyone with information about the burning car and the fatal discovery should call the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office.

For the first time in several years, the California Drought Monitor reports that the state is 100 percent drought free. KTVU reports there are small parts of Northern and Southern California that are abnormally dry, but not in drought conditions. The Farmer's Almanac, NOAA, and the National Weather Service are predicting for a wetter than normal winter season approaching, especially with the trending El Nino.

Sheet1

The deadline to file for Lake County candidates is this coming Wednesday, November the 8th by 5pm. Those who are running in the Presidential Primary Election set for March should have in lieu of filing petitions submitted by the November 8th timeline. Declarations of Candidacy, Nomination Papers and some fees have a deadline a month later, on December 8th. Lake County Registrar of Voters the primary election is on March 5th for Federal, State, Legislative and County officials.

The Governor's Office of Planning and Research have a Woody Feedstock Aggregation Pilot Project to focus funds on projects with the Redwood Forest Foundation and the Forest Reciprocity Group of Cloud Forest. The group of organizations are collaborating to create uses for woody biomass in forest stewardship projects and biomass utilization. In an announcement issued in KymKemp, the group says forest practices and products will help reduce the risk of fires, help stabilize watersheds and help curb carbon emissions. They plan to develop ways to repurpose extra vegetation into poles and other wooden goods and reduce fire fuels in the state's forests. In Mendocino County they hope to also help facilitate helping supply housing.

The Big River watershed has a lot going on, for many groups and agencies working to restore the wetlands after decades of timber and dams. The longest underdeveloped estuary in California is about 9 miles long. MendoFever summarized the tour meant to engage the public on positive environmental actions in the region. Last Saturday many converged to the Big River area to go over planning and ongoing projects. The good news is that salmon populations have grown in Big River which is a good sign for ecosystem restoration. A Rail Dump is in the planning phase of clearing out and rehabilitating the land. The Dry Dock Gulch project was just finished with the help of beavers helping manage and inspire changes to the water flow.

West Coast Native American Tribes want a chemical found in tires banned for killing salmon. The Yurok Tribe in California with other tribes in Washington are asking the EPA to prohibit the rubber preservative 6PPD saying it kills fish like the Coho Salmon when rains wash the matter from roads into rivers. Other states in the upper Northwest and in New England say the chemical is an unreasonable threat to waters and fisheries. The AP reports the chemical has been over for over 6 decades and is also found in footwear, synthetic turf and playground equipment. Manufacturers are already seeking an alternative that will meet safety standards. The petition to ban the substance last week will go through a long regulatory process. The EPA will gather more data to create regulations.

Representative Jared Huffman is apologizing to his constituents on a vote he says he regrets. House Resolution 798 condemned supporting Hamas, Hezbollah and other terrorist organizations at colleges and universities. The House brought the resolution last week to help stop anti-Semitic statements out of institutions of higher education. The bill passed late last week, but there were 23 votes opposing it. Huffman chose to vote no on the resolution, but says he regrets his decision. The Press Democrat reports Huffman said "I screwed up folks." He says by owning his error and issuing an apology to friends in the Jewish Community he can somehow lessen the pain and confusion the vote brought. He told the paper yesterday that the urgent humanitarian concerns of the region led him to a rushed decision.

11/07/2023

Sheet 1

The Lakeport City Council is meeting this afternoon and will authorize an agreement with Vanir for a navigation center feasibility study on area homelessness. The Public Works Director will ask for approval for the purchase of fencing for the newly named Xabatin Park. Meanwhile, the Lakeport courthouse project is nearly done with the design phase. It was selected last year and has been ranked on top of the statewide list of projects most in need of replacement with the Judicial Council of California authorizing the budget at nearly \$84 million. Lake County News reports the Council along with the local court have been working on the 46,000 square foot building with construction scheduled to start next summer, putting it's completion in 2026.

The City of Ukiah is announcing that the outdoor skating rink will start coming together in just under two weeks, on November 20th. MendoFever reports the rink represents a partnership between the Greater Ukiah Business and Tourism Alliance with the City and funding by local sponsors. It will be in the South School Street block downtown with the street closed to traffic from the 20th through the end of January. The ice skating rink will open on Saturday, December 2nd through mid January and will be open daily. The farmers market will meet next to the rink on Saturdays.

Lake County's Community Development Services are hosting "How To Get A Business Loan" today from 11am to 1pm at the Lucerne Alpine Senior Center. The State of California's Community Development Block Grant Program is funding grants with Lake County's Small and Micro Business Assistance Program. The class will help people learn to access capital, how to build and repair credit and a look at how lenders consider loans.

The Mendocino County Divisions of Environmental Health and Planning and Building Services are announcing they are holding a Coastal Community Stakeholder Meeting next Monday, November 13th from 8am to 10am at the Fort Bragg Branch of the Mendocino County Library. The agenda includes an overview of current permitting processes, a discussion on recent updates and proposed changes as well as a community wide conversation on ways to make permitting more efficient and accessible to every resident. Short-term rentals ordinances will also be covered in other meetings scheduled for next Tuesday from 6 to 7pm at the Fort Bragg Veterans Memorial Building; November 15th from 6 to 7pm at the Boonville Veterans Memorial Building and toward the end of the month in Willits and Ukiah. County staff from each department will be at the meeting to answer questions.

The Fort Bragg City Council meeting set for tomorrow at 4pm. The agenda includes going over results from this years Police Salary Survey. They'll go over ordinance 672, adopted in 1986 as to how the Police Department establishes a minimum standard of compensation, benefits and salaries. They are also set to discuss Mayoral rotation with a report on the nomination process for the mayor and vice mayor by the city council. A process of several cities in California like Arcata, Rancho Cordova and Redlands rotate to the next council member of honorary positions. The council will discuss the process or creating and ordinance it would require.

A woman was severely injured yesterday evening after being hit by a car in Lucerne. CHP reports it happened just before 5:30pm at State Route 20 and Grove Street as she got off a bus and began crossing the street. Witnesses say within seconds, she was seen lying in the road. Emergency responders were able to respond and get her to the hospital. MendoFever reports the scene was posted on the Scanner Lake County Facebook page. Authorities are investigating and searching for the driver of the hit-and-run.

Sheet1

Lake County Community Development Director will share the General Plan process update at the Sierra Club Lake Group community meeting next week, November 15th at 6pm. The Record Bee reports Mireya Turner, Community Development Director plans to discuss progress on land use planning, development agreements and visioning documents that will affect the future of Lake County. The General Plan has not been updated in 15 years. The discussion will be held virtually through video conference and live-streamed on Facebook. The meeting is free and open to the public. Pre-registration is required to attend via Zoom. The director will talk about the next steps in the process and engage with audience questions and comments. The Sierra Club Lake Group says it's a great time to consider a healthy ecosystem and recreation for residents.

Governor Newsom says the state is ready for the Sites Reservoir Project. The certification of the project this week moves the state toward fixing critical infrastructure projects to modernize the transportation system, ensure safe drinking water and create clean energy. Lake County News reports SB149 limits time an environmental impact report can be challenged in court, removing up to five years of red tape. The streamlining project is also uses federal funds to build and retrofit valuable infrastructure. Specifically, the Site Reservoir Project helps in designing reservoirs to capture water in the wet months and store it for use during hot and dry periods while making sure there is enough water supply for residents.

The Willits City Council plans to recognize November as Native American Heritage month during their city council meeting on Wednesday the 8th. They'll go over an introduction of an ordinance on model water efficient landscaping, installation and maintenance in zoning requirements. Mandatory organic waste disposal reduction will be considered as an addition to the municipal code. The council will resolve authorization of a sidewalk ordinance amendment and more.

An accident in northern Mendocino County blocked the northbound lanes of Highway 101 yesterday afternoon after 4pm. KymKemp reports on the CHP investigation of an overturned SUV. Passengers in the vehicle weren't hurt. Fire and emergency medical services were on hand from Leggett and Laytonville.

The Rotary Clubs of Ukiah will be hosting the 10th Annual Guitars for the Troops fundraiser in honor of Veterans Day. The event this coming Saturday will begin at 5:30 at the Carl Purdy Hall, Redwood Empire Fairgrounds. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports there will be dinner and live music at the event, with tickets available at the door or at the Mendocino Book Company. Funds raised will be used to gift guitars to veterans, as well as help local veterans organizations and projects, such as Canine Companions for Independence, The Community Foundation of Mendocino County Veterans Angel Fund, the Veterans Garden and local Rotary projects.

Sheet1

The Lake Pillsbury Alliance produced a video for Lake County officials about what would happen if the Potter Valley Project includes dam removal. The documentary illustrates significant financial devastation. The Record Bee reports Lake County could lose \$750,000 if the Scott Dam were decommissioned along with taxes and other revenue from Lake Pillsbury. An organizer with the Alliance says water stored in Lake Pillsbury is distributed through the Potter Valley Project, which affects Scott and Cape Horn Dams and more. The water also supports million of dollars in agricultural benefits. In Mendocino County, agriculture brings in over \$740 million in crops. County supervisors and others say the impact would be massive without Lake Pillsbury. The year-round water supply is a variable worthy of scrutiny as the Potter Valley Project decommissioning and watershed planning and projects continue.

State Transportation officials are announcing new evacuation routes for areas near Ukiah and Willits. The cities are on a list of "Climate Adaptation Projects" recommended for approval. Officials say the first round of funds is over \$300 million for 15 projects across the state. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the projects are aimed at protecting transportation infrastructure against the impact of climate change, especially in underserved communities. In Mendocino County, the Mendocino Redmeyer Road Extension and Brooktrails Second Access are included in the recommendations. The California Transportation Commission is set to consider approval in December.

11/08/2023

A murder suspect in a 2 year old case has been booked into Mendocino County Jail after being caught by border patrol in San Diego. In December of 2021 a man had been shot through his bedroom window in Albion, experiencing a gunshot wound to his head. Despite the major injury, he survived. Mendocino County Sheriff's Deputies discovered two suspects nearby the home where it happened, and were able to arrest Roberto Chavez Souza and Jose Morfin Aguilar for attempted murder. They also found a gun, facemask and latex gloves nearby. The two were released pending additional investigation. In May of 2022 felony arrest warrants were issued for three suspects. In July of this year, Roberto Chavez Souza was arrested. Jose Morfin Aguilar is not in custody, but has an outstanding warrant in the case. In a release from the Sheriff's Office, the third suspect, Jose Panduro Rodriguez of Clearlake Oaks was recently found and taken in custody late last month.

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors met yesterday and discussed their October 31st decision to fund the new jail via Measure B funds. The board decided to use Measure B funds for construction of the new jail that includes a mental health wing. Two of the board members say they're frustrated the board bypassed an oversight committee and worry about the ability to pay the money back, which may compromise future projects. A Grand Jury report last year, noted that the oversight committee's strategic plan recommended funds dedicated for addiction treatment, like the Ford Street Project. The executive director of the non profit now says she's working with the Probation Department and Public Defender to end contracts of offering sober living accommodations early, after the board turned down her proposal saying there wasn't enough money for the psychiatric health facility.

Sheet 1

A water tank in Hidden Valley Lake is being replaced. In a ceremony late last month, federal officials with local and state leaders broke ground on the infrastructure projects in the area starting with building a replacement for the old redwood container. Congressman Mike Thompson told Lake County News that funding for the project that includes a series of infrastructure improvements came from the Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act. Other leaders were on hand as the district begins to replace another redwood tank and set up backup generators at water pumping stations to ensure clean water is accessible to the community. The current tank replacement project is set to be finished within months.

The Lake County Sheriff's Office is investigating an electrocution that killed someone last night in Lake County. MendoFever reports just before 5:30pm someone experience an electric shock in Lucrene near the Sande Beach Mobile Home Park. There are reports that power lines were down in the area where the victim was pronounced dead at the scene.

The town of Paradise is still recovering from the state's deadliest wildfire, five years later. Multiple media outlets are reporting that the deadly Camp Fire destroyed over 18,000 buildings and killed 85 people. The slow, extensive and expensive recovery continues in Paradise as only about a third of the population has returned to help rebuild. Survivors are still living in temporary homes; some were able to start rebuilding. It took nine months to get rid of all the hazardous toxins and fire debris piles before rebuilding could even begin. Still, those that returned say the extraordinary changes since the fire are helping make Paradise an affordable and safe place to live again. Tougher codes and new ordinances are aimed at resiliency, and community leaders are now sending advice and encouragement to the residents of Lahaina.

The Willits City Council plans to recognize November as Native American Heritage month during their city council meeting on Wednesday the 8th. They'll go over an introduction of an ordinance on model water efficient landscaping, installation and maintenance in zoning requirements. Mandatory organic waste disposal reduction will be considered adding to the municipal code. The agenda include department recommendations to authorize a grant application for a senate bill for local assistance. The council will resolve authorization of a sidewalk ordinance amendment.

Today and tomorrow, the California Conservation Corps Ukiah Center is exercising their annual flood fighter training with the Department of Water Resources. Members will practice flood fighting measures, structure protection, wave wash protection and more. In a media advisory, the team announced it will be practicing at the Lake Mendocino Dam to prepare state resources to respond to flooding in the area. The training will be visible to the public with crews practicing at the base of the dam.

A leader with the Russian River Watershed says Low Impact Development and sustainable agricultural practices will help ensure the watershed is protected. Willits News published information out of the latest Russian River Watershed Forum this week. The publication outlines runoff pollution, agricultural contributions, and green infrastructure as an effective plan as the Potter Valley Project goes through decommissioning and agencies plan for what happens next. Author Michael Harrigan of the City of Healdsburg says residents of the Russian River Watershed face reduced water quality and property damages, especially with significant rainfall.

Sheet1

California State Parks are offering free admission this Saturday for all veterans, active duty and reserve military. In a news release from the parks department this week, the Parks Director says the move aims to recognize the sacrifices that our nations military and their families have made and continue to make in service of their country. The Press Democrat reports parks in Mendocino County that are offering free entrance include the Russian Gulch, Standish-Hickey and Van Damme State Parks. Lake County parks including the Anderson Marsh State Historic Park and the Clear Lake State Park are participating as well.

The Mendocino National Forest is looking for public feedback in a series of sessions that include visions for restoration. This week, the group is in Chico and Red Bluff for the public meetings that begin at 5pm. The forest plans to hold sessions in Nice and in Covelo later this month. The input sessions are part of collaboration with the Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Research stations and the USDA California Climate Hub. The Mendocino National Forest hopes to hear from residents about what is important to them within the forests and include public input in restoration projects. A community input sessions is planned in Nice at the Robinson Rancheria on the 27th and at the Library Commons in Covelo on the 28th.

There is a new monument at the state Capitol honoring California Native Americans. The new piece was unveiled yesterday in Sacramento. KCRA reports the statue depicts William Franklin, a Miwok leader remembered for keeping tribal culture alive. The new monument is replacing a statue of Father Junipero Serra that was torn down in 2020 during Black Lives Matter protests. Many California Native people say the statue was a reminder of atrocities inflicted on their ancestors. Assemblymember James Ramos spoke during the ceremony, about AB 338 that led to the creation of the monument.

Downtown Ukiah is under construction with a couple of projects in the works. The City Engineer tells the Ukiah Daily Journal that work is at a feverish pace right now with the Phase 4 of the Recycled Water Project to move existing sewer lines and more. There is a 2 million gallon water tank being installed as part of the project that will run into the winter months. Utilities along main streets downtown are being installed with expanded sidewalks being prepared as well. One of the biggest parts of the ongoing work includes preparing for Phase 4 that includes removing 50 years of sludge near the water treatment plant. The downtown streetscape project is nearing Phase 1 completion while under-grounding electric lines are still being finalized. The city is also preparing for work on the Orr Street Bridge, and is working
11/09/2023 on procuring or creating materials for construction there.

Mendocino County Supervisors are facing more uphill battles. During a Board of Supervisors meeting this week, County CEO Darcie Antle said she is concerned about the fiscal sustainability of the county. MendoFever reports Antle says the deficit is going up with increased salaries and as labor negotiations continue and vacancies persist. Next year's retirement contributions are expected to go up nearly \$3 million. Acting Auditor Controller Treasurer Tax Collector Sara Pierce, who is working in the suspended Chamise Cubbison's position, says trying to work through the county's finances is difficult. Pierce's assistant said her office is not being heard and is providing information they have to auditors and they are actively working on dozens of tasks not currently being implemented.

Sheet1

More information is being released about a body found in a burned out car near the dump in Covelo. Mendocino County Sheriff's Deputies were able to get some information from the license plate. With help from the Chico State University Forensic Anthropology Department, authorities are waiting for confirmation via DNA analysis. During the investigation, a man reported his son was possibly missing and may be the victim. Deputies discovered the missing person worked at an illegal grow on Hopper Lane in Covelo. The victim had been staying near the grow site where authorities found Lawrence Joaquin and arrested him for drug charges and more. Another suspect, Iran Hoaglen fled the scene before being arrested. Hoaglen was found and arrested with help from the Lake County Sheriff's Office and the Lake/Mendocino Regional SWAT team. The investigation continues.

A Marysville man is found guilty after a three day trial for driving under the influence of meth and more. The Mendocino County District Attorney posted the jury deliberated last week and announced David Allred guilty. After the jury was excused, Allred also plead no contest to willful failure to appear in court. CHP and the Department of Justice crime lab helped bring forward evidence to the crimes in the Mendocino County Superior Court.

The League of Women Voters of Mendocino County is meeting next Tuesday from 6 to 7:30pm via Zoom. A District Supervisor will be on hand to discuss the contentious fiscal situation of the county and possibly next steps. The group is meeting as county finances continue to be contentious, along with department leadership changes and labor negotiations. The Advocate News reports the League of Women Voters will try to make recommendations brought up during their virtual meeting.

The Jackson Demonstration State Forest Advisory Group is meeting a week from today, November 15th. The day-long agenda includes looking forward to the 2024 schedule. The group also plans to discuss the Wildfire Resilience Project, continued from last month's meeting. In another continued topic, the advisory group will go over the Forest Management Plan Scope of Work with an update. During the public forum part of the meeting they'll go over pyrosilvicultural THP, or fire as a tool to control fuel density in the forest. The Field Tour portion of the meeting will continue in the afternoon with a trip into the forest via Road 630.

A man from Willits has been found guilty of felony malicious vandalizing a headstone in Little Lake Cemetery. The Mendocino County District Attorney posted the decision of a jury last night. Raymond Gribaldo was found guilty within an hour of jury deliberation. He removed and broke a headstone, filmed himself doing it and sent the video to family of the departed. Apparently, Gribaldo said he was fighting with the daughter of the woman interred in the grave. He was referred to the Mendocino County Adult Probation Department for a sentencing recommendation and more. Gribaldo's sentencing hearing is set for January 3rd.

Sheet1

California homeowners facing home insurance coverage problems will have to wait for years for help. Consumers, lawmakers and insurers say the Department of Insurance's proposals to address the crisis won't be "prompt" as requested by Governor Newsom in September. The Bay Area News Group reports the governor's executive order for prompt regulatory action has more complex hurdles in the way of immediate relief for those looking for affordable insurance. The Department of Insurance is working on regulations but isn't expected to finalize new rules until next year, and enacted the year after that. With homeowners seeing up to triple sized premiums and insurers leaving the state, some have been forced to go without insurance. Wildfires have cost insurance companies so much that providing coverage in California is untenable.

The Alliance for Rural Community Health is offering to pay half the tuition or \$2,000 scholarships for students who enroll in medical assistant or dental assistant training programs through the Mendocino County Office of Education to complete their externship at health centers in the area. Deadline for scholarship applications is December 4th. Classes run January 9 through May 16 and are held in Ukiah on Tuesdays and Thursdays with a 120 hour externship to finish up the programs. The Alliance is dedicated to supporting the network of Mendocino and Lake County community health centers. There are more details on Mendocino County's website.

Climate activists will deliver a petition with 15-thousand signatures today (Thursday) to trade negotiators ahead of next week's Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum in San Francisco. President Joe Biden will be meeting with other world leaders to announce the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, which would govern 40 percent of the global economy. The California News Service reports the Biden administration has pledged to prioritize climate change, workers' rights and the health of low-income communities hardest hit by climate pollution and sea-level rise.

A hunter safety course will be offered December 2nd and 3rd for the first 12 applicants at the Highland Springs Range House. Lake County News reports the class covers gun safety and principles of conservation and hunter ethics. Completion of the class and exam will qualify applicants to get a hunting license. Prospective students should register with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and be prepared to read the "Guide to Hunting Responsibility and Safety" for class credit.

Speaking of hunting, there is a California Free Hunting Day coming up this month, a few days after Thanksgiving on the 25th. Residents can hunt without buying a license, if other requirements are met including completion of a hunter education course, a Free Hunt Days Registration and any required tags or entry permits. On the 25th, waterfowl seasons and upland game seasons will be open in zones throughout the state. More information is at the CDFW Free Hunting Days website.

Sheet1

Video of the Sonoma City Council's meeting last week shows anti-Semitic and racist public comments. The virtual meeting on November 1st was posted to the city's website on Tuesday, and showed hateful rhetoric targeting people of color and the Jewish community. A council member's personal information was also publicized. The Press Democrat reports the city has encountered increasing hate speech across North Bay communities, especially within the last month. The Sonoma City Manager says he'll continue to be aggressive in stopping public comments that cross the line to protect the community. Last month, anti-Semitic fliers were distributed in response to the mayor's office issuing a statement condemning hateful public comments. City staff says they plan to work with the attorney general to punish hate speech and hold those who threaten violence responsible.

The North Coast Resource Partnership is extending the deadline for proposals of technical assistance for project development for Cal Fire Forest Health Pilot Projects. The collaboration of agencies is prioritizing Tribes and disadvantaged communities. The organization update in this week's Russian River Water Forum newsletter notes the application process is open through February 1st of next year. The pilot program is aimed at prioritizing and implementing forest health projects in the North Coast Region. The group plans to use a \$10 million grant from Cal Fire to administer and implement projects. Projects must include fuels reduction, pest management, reforestation or biomass utilization. They anticipate giving between \$5,000 to \$15,000 per entity for support in a contract with the North Coast Regional Partnership.

President Biden plans to meet the Chinese President, Xi Jinping next week in San Francisco. The Asia-Pacific Cooperation Summit kicks off tomorrow. The AP reports the White House has planned on the visit for weeks, for the leaders to discuss trade, Taiwan, climate change and more. The administration aims to keep lines of communication open to work together on global issues. The Chinese President is scheduled to join the summit on Tuesday. Thousands of protesters are planning on joining the action as well. Contentious issues may be covered, including the Chinese spy balloon that traveled over the US, and Taiwan's independence. Biden may also urge Xi Jinping to influence North Korea on missile tests as well as go over Iran's influence in the Israel Hamas war.

The Rotary Clubs of Ukiah will be hosting the 10th Annual Guitars for the Troops fundraiser in honor of Veterans Day. The event this coming Saturday will begin at 5pm at the Carl Purdy Hall at the Redwood Empire Fairgrounds. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports there will be dinner, dancing and live music at the event, with tickets available at the door or at the Mendocino Book Company. Funds raised will be used to gift guitars to veterans, as well as help local veteran's organizations and projects, such as Canine Companions for Independence, The Community Foundation of Mendocino County Veterans Angel Fund, the Veterans Garden and local Rotary projects.

Casa of Mendocino and Lake County is hosting an event this weekend. The "Sips, Eats & Sweets" event will happen at Barra Winery Sunday at 3pm. There will be silent auction and local cuisine to raise funds for the organization. The CASA program helps abused and neglected children in the court system with support and guidance.

Sheet 1

The Mendocino County Divisions of Environmental Health and Planning and Building Services are announcing they are holding a Coastal Community Stakeholder Meeting next Monday, November 13th from 8am to 10 am at the Fort Bragg Branch of the Mendocino County Library. The agenda includes an overview of current permitting processes, a discussion on recent updates and proposed changes as well as a community wide conversation on ways to make permitting more efficient and accessible to every resident. County staff from each department will be at the meeting to answer questions.

California is investing a million dollars into the Mendocino Construction Corps. The program, according to reporting in the Ukiah Daily Journal, helps high school students train as builders, plumbers and other trades. The Mendocino County program is a local version of the North Bay Construction Corps having worked with hundreds of students in nearby counties train for and get jobs. State Senator Mike McGuire announced the program yesterday in Ukiah. He said the funding will help hire a coordinator for the program and cover the cost of it for five years. McGuire says the state will need almost half a million construction and trade job workers within the next 6 years, filling a gap in Mendocino County for new housing.

The Fort Bragg City Council is holding a special session on Monday at 4pm. The council is expected to go over a request for proposals on the biosolids treatment and disposal facility study at the wastewater treatment plant. They'd like to minimize their reliance on outside contractors and decrease the carbon footprint associated with hauling off waste and instead provide a treatment and disposal option for commercial compostables with drying equipment as they work on the wastewater collection system master plan. The council will consider an update to the city's personnel rules surrounding catastrophic leave program. The Agenda details the closed session agenda including ongoing litigation with the Mendocino Railroad. The city council will also go over a report on the recruitment for the positions of City Manager and City Clerk.

A new Ecological Staircase trail guide is being introduced tomorrow at Jug Handle State Reserve at 10am. MendoParks with California State Parks just completed its yearly Ecological Staircase Pygmy Forest display by local botanist Mario Abreu at the Ford House, according to the Mendocino Beacon. The information has been updated to include details about plant life on the trails and on the Pomo Indian cultural display that was put together with the Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians. The new guide details Shelter Cove to the Navarro River and the ecosystem around it. MendoParks staff will be on hand to guide 5 mile hikes.

Authorities in Mendocino County are looking for a couple of vehicles and 4 armed men, allegedly involved in a Laytonville robbery. KymKemp reports just before 6:30 pm last night, 4 Latin males with multiple firearms fled an alleged robbery in a silver Ford truck with Texas plates and a white Jeep. They were last seen headed south on Highway 101. Authorities were sent to southern Mendocino County to look for the group.

Sheet1

California roads can be dangerous and CHP and local law enforcement agencies are seeing more aggressive driving and speed. A \$2.5 million grant awarded to CHP will help agencies enforce laws aimed at road rage and reckless driving through their SPEED II program. Speed Prevention, Education and Enforcement Deterrence campaigns will run statewide. In the last couple of years speed was a factor in almost half of all fatal crashes and those that injure passengers the most. A CHP Commissioner tells Lake County News that the combination of proactive enforcement and community education aims to decrease the threat of speed and aggressive driving, making roads safer for everyone.

Mendocino County District Supervisor John Haschak has delivered his monthly update to local media. He writes in the midst of controversies involving the finance department there is a chance to get rid of wasteful practices, modernize policies and provide better and more efficient services. Haschak notes the need for the mental health wing of the new jail, noting the upgrade will cost \$44 million, about \$18 million more than originally estimated. He says bureaucratic delays, supply chain issues and other problems have delayed the construction and led to increased costs. Haschak notes the additional funds will be borrowed from money in Measure B funds, and will be repaid.

A big storm is headed to the North Coast next week. The National Weather Service notes a low pressure system could bring up to 2 or more inches of rain. Coastal mountains could get even more rain, up to 4 inches. The storm is set to hit the area Tuesday and bring in winds from the south. The Press Democrat reports flooding will be minimal. There could be water built up in low lying areas, with minimal damage expected.

Thousands of customers who have home, auto and rent policies are seeing their insurer leave the state. Farmers Direct Property and Casualty Insurance Company is the latest to be destabilized by climate change, inflation and fire damage costs. Residents in NorCal have seen several insurers leave the state and face significantly increased costs with little choices. More people are having to go to the state's FAIR Plan at a high price, and the Press Democrat reports is becoming unstable. The California Department of Insurance is trying to help with discounts for those who harden their properties against fire and other damaging events. Some insurance companies hope reevaluation of what's happening could help lawmakers ease restrictions. It could be years for policies and regulations to take shape and actually affect the crisis.

The Mendocino District Attorney says a convicted murderer could be released on parole. Cameron Whitlock was found guilty in 1990 for the murder with a firearm of a Mendocino Coast contractor. Whitlock was also convicted of robbery and auto theft. He apparently shot Wallace Kuntz twice after getting into the contractors truck. He pulled the body out and tried to burn it to hide the crime. He was sentenced to 20 years to life after a sentence reduction. He applied for release on parole beginning in 2002 about 5 times. At a parole hearing this week, local authorities and the victim's family appeared to speak against parole. The parole board approved his release on parole. Governor Newsom has the authority to reverse the decision within the next 3 months.

Sheet1

California State Parks are offering free admission this Saturday for all veterans, active duty and reserve military. In a news release from the parks department this week, the Parks Director says the move aims to recognize the sacrifices that our nations military and their families have made and continue to make in service of their country. The Press Democrat reports parks in Mendocino County that are offering free entrance include the Russian Gulch, Standish-Hickey and Van Damme State Parks. Lake County parks including the Anderson Marsh State Historic Park and the Clear Lake State Park are participating as well.

There is a new mobile application for EBT cards. The California Department of Social Services with the state EBT project are providing the ebtEDGE Mobile Application and cardholder portal, and it is available today. Lake County News report the new app will help residents access their card information to set safety features and more. It has developed biometric access, gives cardholders the ability to freeze transactions, more efficient and swifter card replacement and more to stave off fraud and help users. Current cardholders can access the new online tool at ebt.ca.gov or by calling Customer Service for more details on the new technology.

Beginning after midnight tonight, drivers headed east on Route 20 will see a shift as they cross the new bridge crossing the Russian River and East Side Calpella Road. Golden Gate Media reports it is part of work on the Calpella Bridge Replacement Project, costing just over \$32 million. Drivers will temporarily not be able to turn left onto Road 144, or from Road 144 to eastbound 20. The detours and blocked lanes will last through next spring. Crews are connecting the existing road to the newly constructed bridge alignment. The estimated completion is set for 2025 and aims to significantly modernize and fortify transportation corridors in Mendocino County.

For the first time in over a decade, the US is hosting the annual Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit in San Francisco. Chinese President Xi Jinping is expected to arrive in the area tomorrow and meet with President Biden on Wednesday. The summit, meant to enhance trade and economic growth will also include contentious issues various leaders will have to face. There are 21 members whose nations represent about half the world's trade, according to the Press Democrat. Russia's war in Ukraine, Taiwan's independence, the Chinese spy balloon incident and the Israel Hamas War are threatening to wash over what is supposed to be centered on trade and the economy. Besides controversial global tensions, Biden hopes to make progress on the new Indo Pacific trade deal after former President

11/13/2023 Trump withdrew the US from it.

Several inches of rain is possible for the North Coast in a moderate atmospheric river, rated a level 2, out of 5. Rainfall amounts aren't expected to be catastrophic but some locations could get more than a month's worth of rain in days. The National Weather Service is reporting that the Ukiah Valley could get up to two inches as Mendocino and Lake Counties are preparing for the highest amounts of precipitation. Snow is expected in higher elevations of the Sierras, with more snow likely late week as colder air is pulled across the area. El Nino is expected to affect weather with an increase in frequency of atmospheric rivers, including this year. Locally, MendoVoice reports in their farm column that the last of this year's cannabis crop is due to be finished just in time as farmers begin to plant winter crops like garlic and onions.

Sheet1

Authorities are investigating a fatal crash that happened Saturday morning at the top of the Willits Grade portion of Highway 101. MendoFever reports a sedan and a truck collided around 4am just south of Willits. There were reports of a man lying in the road near Cal Fire's Howard Forest Station who was pronounced dead by emergency responders. Caltrans closed a southbound lane for several hours with the two vehicles stuck on Highway 101. No details as to the identity of the man have yet been released.

There is a new mobile application for EBT cards. The California Department of Social Services with the state EBT project is providing the ebtEDGE Mobile Application and cardholder portal, and it is available now. Lake County News report the new app will help residents access their card information to set safety features and more. It has developed biometric access, gives cardholders the ability to freeze transactions, more efficient and swifter card replacement and more to stave off fraud and help users. Current cardholders can access the new online tool at ebt.ca.gov or by calling Customer Service for more details on the new technology.

The Mendocino Land Trust continues to work on area trails and more. In a release over the weekend, the Executive Director issued updates to some of their projects in Mendocino County. The Trust is currently working with the Redwood Coast Land Conservancy at Mill Bend Preserve. There, the groups are working on fuels management and seeking out funding for planning, permitting and design of public access as well as restoring the estuary fishery. Near Point Arena, the Trust is buying 12 acres for a connection in the trails called Saunders Landing. Finally, the biggest public access project on the coast is in Fort Bragg. The Trust with area agencies are working to develop close to 600 acres of pygmy forest recently acquired by the Recreation District. The project aims to develop trails while reducing human impact to the sanctuary areas.

Fort Bragg voters decided to renew the half cent sales tax that has helped finance road repairs for the last two decades. MendoVoice reports 81 percent of voters approved the measure authorizing the tax for an additional 10 years, with no set limit. The Assessor Clerk Recorder Registrar of Voters in Mendocino County says certification of last weeks election will likely happen by this Friday. Election day this time around saw dismal attendance numbers, with only about 23 percent of residents casting votes. Historically, it's the lowest turn out in history. The tax measure is set to begin in 2025 with the current tax expiring by the end of next year. The annual revenue from the tax measure is just under a million dollars each decade. website. Later this month, sessions will continue at the Willits Library on Wednesday, Nov 29th, from 6 -7pm. On November 30th there will be a session in Ukiah, in a Conference Room at Low Gap Road from 6 – 8pm in- person and online.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors plan to meet tomorrow morning at 9am and go over the terms of a contract with Redwood Community Services for nearly \$2.5 million to continue running the homeless shelter through 2026. The agenda also includes approving a funding request to support Upper Eel River watershed community visioning process with the CalWild's State Coastal Conservancy Grant. The board will discuss extending emergency proclamations including a shelter crisis. The board plans to accept congressional funding for the Kelseyville Sidewalks Project. In closed session, the board will meet with legal counsel on existing litigation.

Sheet1

Mendocino County Sheriff's officials are investigating a possible fatal boat accident. Friday evening, a body was found on Ten Mile Beach, north of Fort Bragg. A capsized boat was found on a sandbar not far from the beach. KymKemp reports the 16 to 20 foot personal boat was secured by the California State Parks personnel. A US Coast Guard copter flew grid patterns in the area to rule out other possible victims. Investigators worked through the weekend with the harbor to determine if there were any last known occupants. The Mendocino County Coroner is working on identifying the body.

About 300 young adults leaving foster care in California will now receive a monthly check to help them make ends meet, part of the state's first guaranteed income program. Some 150 people in Ventura will receive one-thousand dollars a month, and another 150 in San Francisco will receive 12-hundred dollars a month, with no strings attached. The California News Service reports opponents worry that people receiving unrestricted income could waste it on luxuries, but post-analysis of pilot programs in Stockton and Santa Clara County disprove that concern. This is the first statewide universal basic income program. There are also about 200 local programs now operating across California.

Cal Fire's Sonoma Lake Napa Unit is downstaffing from peak levels as rain and cooler temperatures move into the area. Lake County News reports the Boggs Copter, the Sikorsky Cal Fire Hawk will leave the Helitack Base today. The Cal Fire unit will keep one fire engine at every fire state and keep 153 seasonal firefighters plus over 250 permanent staff after today. Cal Fire as always, will continue to monitor weather conditions and more if there is a need to respond to wildfires or other emergencies. This year, over 650 acres in the unit have burned in 340 wildfires. The good news is that it's the third year wildfire activity has been significantly reduced.

A new law signed by the Governor will help protect people from excessive balance billing for ground ambulance rides. The AP reports California will be the 14th state to do so. Federally, legislators are working on the No Surprises Act to address the issue nationally. A federal and state law passed last year largely banned balanced billing for hospital care and air ambulance services, but not ground ambulance services. The average surprise bill for emergency ground ambulance rides in the state is over \$1,200, and is the highest in the country. The new law will apply to about 14 million state residents in state regulated commercial health plans and limit how much a non network ambulance can charge patients. Officials are urging people to check their policy for details and can file a complaint with your health plan.

Authorities are investigating a serious crash on Highway 101 near Laytonville that happened Sunday afternoon. KymKemp reports a vehicle headed south crashed into a tree near Vincent Lane south of Laytonville. The patient had major injuries and needed to be extricated from the vehicle as an air ambulance was dispatched. It took a few hours to get the patient out of the vehicle and flown off the roadway to the hospital by about 3pm.

The rain moving into NorCal is not an atmospheric river, according to the National Weather Service. SFGate reports meteorologists are no longer using that description to for the system that's bringing rain to the area through Sunday. Instead, it is being examined as a "Gulf of Alaska low" that dropped down moisture, rather than pulling rain from the south Pacific. The total rainfall forecasted has dropped from over 2 inches to around 1 to 2 inches. Weather officials say the heaviest rain is expected to the coast and mostly offshore, farther to the west of Mendocino County than 11/14/23 previously forecasted. Tomorrow is expected to be the wettest day.

Sheet1

More information is being released about the man who was electrocuted in Lake County one week ago, November 7th. The fatal accident happened when Steven Green got a drone he was flying stuck in a tree. It happened last Tuesday evening just before 5:30pm near the Sandy Beach Trailer Lodge in Lucerne. Green tried to dislodge the drone using an aluminum pole while standing on an aluminum ladder when he accidentally touched a power line nearby. KymKemp reports when emergency responders got there they tried life saving measures for about half an hour and were unfortunately unsuccessful. Electrical injuries kill around 1,000 people per year, according to the National Library of Medicine.

Governor Newsom is urging California universities to beef up campus security as protests rage over the Israel Hamas War. Newsom sent a letter yesterday to university system heads to cultivate spaces for affinity and dialogue amid heightened anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, according to Politico. He said students have been physically assaulted and targeted because of having a Jewish, Arab, or Muslim identity. Meanwhile, hundreds of protesters are calling for a cease fire in Gaza. A protest led by Jewish peace activists staged a sit-in at the federal building in Oakland, last night. There were multiple arrests, according to AOL News. Protest organizers, Jewish Voice for Peace, posted online that by 9pm last night, dozens were taken into custody.

The Mendocino County Coroner is working to ID the man who died in an early morning crash. The man killed in a rollover crash was speeding, according to CHP. The accident happened early yesterday morning before 8am. He was headed east near Albion on Albion Ridge Road when the truck he was driving didn't make the turn onto Middle Ridge Road, veering off the east shoulder. The man was not wearing a seatbelt, and was thrown from the truck. Emergency personnel arrived and pronounced the man dead at the scene. CHP is investigating. Anyone with information on the incident is urged to call the CHP office in Ukiah.

There are more details on another fatal accident in Mendocino County that happened over the weekend. Saturday, a man was killed when hit by another driver early in the morning after trying to avoid crashing into a pickup truck on Highway 101. The Press Democrat reports it happened around 4am, just north of the Cal Fire Howard Forest Station. The CHP Ukiah office explained the truck ended up facing north in the southbound lane after going up a dirt embankment. Another driver approached the area and tried to avoid the pick up truck driver who'd left his vehicle. The pickup driver was pronounced dead at the scene. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office and Coroner are investigating and will identify the fatality. CHP says drugs and alcohol were not likely a factor in the death. The second driver stayed at the site and cooperated with authorities.

Thanksgiving is just over a week away, and is slated to be the busiest holiday for travelers on record. Lake County News reports nearly 7.5 million people will be out and about in California, breaking a record. Nationwide, about 55.5 million people are scheduled to travel for the upcoming holiday weekend. AAA Northern California reports there is a year long trend showing Californians are eager to get away to be with loved ones. They report most travelers, about 88 percent, plan to drive. The good news for drivers is that gas is down about 36 cents a gallon compared to last year. Officials recommend drivers leave during off peak hours, before 11am or after 6pm. For those who are flying, get to the airport early.

Sheet1

The Mendocino County Office of Elections issued a release announcing the official filing period for the March primary election can file for candidacy until December 8th. There are several documents and policies to fulfill for those interested in local, state and federal offices and are available on the county's election website or on the California Secretary of State's website. More information is available at the county office in Ukiah as well.

PG&E has not done enough to clean up the geothermal landfill south of Middletown. During the Middletown Area Town Hall meeting last week, there was an update on the site. The Record Bee reports there is still waste in the ground water and PG&E is still on the line to correct the hazardous conditions. During the meeting conservation advocates say the utility planted Eucalyptus trees hoping they'd soak up wastewater, but it has not been enough. The water board reportedly gave PG&E guidelines on the work, but water samples are showing that conditions have worsened. A Planning Commission representative says PG&E must resubmit plans to clear up the property on Butts Canyon Road.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue division will have new rain gear, thanks to the work of local Rotary clubs. The Sheriff announced yesterday the Collaborative Grant by Rotary International. According to a post on social media, Search and Rescue volunteers will receive rain gear next month. The grant was approved in September for what the Sheriff says is long awaited rain gear as the cold and wet season approaches. Local Rotary clubs include the Ukiah, South Ukiah, Willits and Fort Bragg chapters.

Applications are available for Cal Fire's millions of grant funding, now through mid-January. The department made the announcement today regeneration projects is available. Cal Fire is looking for projects to prevent wildfires and restore forests to healthy functioning ecosystems. Another aim of the grants is to capture carbons and reduce green house gasses. A video will be released explaining the grant process and requirements on Cal Fire's Forest Health webpage. All applications are due by January 15th.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors plan to meet this morning at 9am and go over the terms of a contract with Redwood Community Services for nearly \$2.5 million to continue running the homeless shelter through 2026. The agenda also includes approving a funding request to support Upper Eel River watershed community visioning process with the CalWild's State Coastal Conservancy Grant. The board will discuss extending emergency proclamations including a shelter crisis. The board plans to accept congressional funding for the Kelseyville Sidewalks Project. In closed session, the board will meet with legal counsel on existing litigation.

California Water Commission is taking comments on white paper. In the latest update from the Russian River Water Forum, the commission announced it will include discussion on a draft white paper containing potential strategies to protect communities, fish, and wildlife in the event of long-term drought. The draft was developed in support of a Water Resilience Portfolio Action which calls for protections in cases when droughts last at least six years. The commission's meeting will be Wednesday, Nov. 15, in Sacramento. Public comments on the draft can be submitted during the meeting or emailed to the commission.

Sheet1

Lady of the Lake for Lake County News author Angela DePalma-Dow is the area limnologist, studying the characteristics of lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands. She has been working with the County of Lake Water resources Department for the last 5 years as an invasive species program coordinator. The Press Democrat reports De Palma-Dow works with local, tribal and federal agencies to keep Clear Lake protected. She is currently removing the invasive creeping water primrose from properties around the lake and following up with native plantings. The prolific weed can clog waterways and overrun native wetland plants. The invasive plant also hurts fish access to spawning grounds and more.

Medi-Cal is announcing changes starting at the beginning of 2024. Effective January 1st, the program is expanding coverage. Asset verification and immigration status will no longer be required in determining new or ongoing eligibility. Lake County News reports the agency previously changed the age scope for Medi-Cal for adult coverage from ages 26 to 49. As open enrollment continues for now, residents are urged to contact their county social services departments for policy updates and more.

11/15/2023 Authorities are investigating a suspicious death on Highway 101 near the Sonoma County border. This morning someone found a dead man in the southbound lane of the highway between Cloverdale and Hopland. KymKemp reports the body was found near the Geysers Road exit off-ramp. Hopland Fire Chief Mitch Franklin confirmed the situation around 7:30am. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office reports they don't believe foul play was the cause. The Sheriff's Department and CHP Ukiah are investigating the case and the coroner is working to identify the victim.

This week is national Crash Responder Safety Week according to the International Association of Firefighters. KRCR reports once a week a first responder is struck by a passing vehicle while attempting to do their urgent duties. Northern California fire crews say the first thing an engine does when responding to a crash is to angle the vehicles so that their crews and victims are shielded from passing traffic. The agency says drivers need to stay alert, slow down and move over.

The Jackson Demonstration State Forest Advisory Group has a temporary facilitator going into a day-long meeting today. Cal Fire's new Deputy Chief Emily Smith will lead the group after what MendoVoice called a chaotic meeting in September, when the previous leader, Kim Rodriguez resigned in protest. Smith says today, they will follow protocol with items timed down to the minute. Cal Fire's Mendocino Unit Chief Luke Kendall is retiring this Friday, and a new Chief will be named. They plan to go over the THP or Timber Harvest Plan that didn't happen at the last meeting. The plan includes using fire as a tool in controlling wildfire threats. The agenda includes looking forward to the 2024 schedule. The group plans to discuss the Wildfire Resilience Project, continued from last months meeting.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office has released more information on the body found on Ten Mile Dunes near Fort Bragg. Last Friday they found a capsized boat and the body of Charles Case washed ashore. Authorities found out that another victim, Kenneth Silva was also aboard the boat when it launched from Noyo Harbor on Friday. The US Coast Guard searched the ocean around the area, but was unable to find Silva. The Sheriff's Department continues to look for Silva with the investigation ongoing.

Sheet1

There have been several fatal accidents in Mendocino County recently. Saturday, a man out of San Jose was killed when hit by another driver early in the morning near the Cal Fire Howard Forest Station. A woman driving a Subaru appeared to have hit the man who'd left his truck after losing control. In updated information from the CHP Ukiah office, poor visibility was reported with fog and drizzle and may have contributed to the crash. CHP explained the truck ended up facing north in the southbound lane after going up a dirt embankment. The pickup driver was pronounced dead at the scene. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office and Coroner are investigating and will identify the fatality. CHP says drugs and alcohol were not likely a factor in the death. The second driver stayed at the site and cooperated with authorities.

There is a Native American Heritage Celebration set for today at the Pomo Plaza in Ukiah. Music begins at noon with vendors and more. Elders of the Pomo Tribe will be there as well as workshops and discussions among local agencies and tribes. There will be Native dancers and dinner. Mendocino College and the Redwood Coast Regional Center will be on hand supporting the celebration.

Mendocino Sheriff's Department Deputies with the Mendo Lake Multi Agency Regional SWAT Team located fugitive Justin Bolton this week in Willits. The sheriff's office used a K9 to help take Bolton into custody Monday on a homicide investigation out of Mariposa County. He is reportedly connected to the disappearance and murder of Wendy Lee Pullins who went missing over a year ago. The grandmother of nine went missing in the spring of 2022 and was found in September of last year down an embankment in her Jeep after what appeared to be an accident. Detectives from the California Department of Justice found her body and found she had been killed. Bolton was arrested on the felony warrant in a high risk enforcement stop around noon. He was booked into jail and is pending extradition to Mariposa County.

Lake County is getting \$750,000 in federal funding to help finance the Middle Creek Flood Restoration Project. Lake County News reports it's part of the 2023 appropriations government funding bill that will support the Burns Valley Sports Complex and Recreation Center Project and the Lakeport Armory Facility Project. Congressman Mike Thompson presented the check to Lake County officials at the end of last month. The county has until the end of the year to work on restoration of 1,650 acres near Upper Lake in the confluence of Middle and Scotts creeks to the wetlands. The project includes removing phosphorus and reducing the concentration of chlorophyll by about a third in Clear Lake. The project also includes helping remove three miles of substandard levees and other infrastructure.

PG&E rates may be increased if the California Public Utilities Commission approves a rate increase tomorrow. Cal Matters reports it's an unpopular trend, with the utility raising rates by over 90 percent within the last 10 years. PG&E requested an increase to help pay for safety upgrades and undergrounding power lines to decrease risk of wildfires. So far, this year the utility has worked to bury nearly 200 miles. They want a 26 percent increase from last year's rates to over \$15 billion. State regulators have tried to lower the cost by a couple billion to translate to a 9 to 13 percent increase. Residents already pay more than two times the national average. PG&E says they need to work on transmission and distribution upgrades to reduce sparking ignitions as they face a \$45 million penalty for the Dixie Fire in 2021.

Sheet1

A convicted murderer from Point Arena has been tentatively approved for parole. Cameron Whitlock was sentenced over 30 years ago for killing Wallace Kuntz and convicted of murder in the second degree using a gun. KymKemp reports he was also found guilty of auto theft. Investigators say Whitlock shot Kuntz in the head. He then got into Kuntz's truck, shot the man again and drove off. He then pulled the body out and set it on fire. He was sentenced to 21 years to life in state prison in the spring of 1990. Whitlock applied for parole 5 times in the years since, but was denied. Yesterday, Whitlock faced members of the Kuntz family at the hearing where he was approved for parole. There is a 120 day decision review period where the governor has the authority to review it with the ability to reverse or modify the decision.

Lake County authorities are investigating a medical emergency at the Lakeport Unified School District yesterday. The superintendent issued a statement via the Lakeport Police Department's Nixle alert system. Lake County News reports toward the end of the school day Tuesday a student showed symptoms of a drug overdose or poisoning on campus. Emergency responders were called to the school and helped intervene in time. The school system plans to have counselors and support providers on campus for all affected by the traumatic event. The school district is working with Lakeport Police in a random search of the campus with drug sniffing dogs.

The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit appears to be successful in strengthening communication between the US and China. The event in San Francisco is bringing Chinese President Xi Jinping to the table when it comes to the fentanyl crisis. CNN reports US officials are finalizing a deal today to crack down on the export of chemicals sourced from China to make the synthetic opioid. The agreement reportedly targets companies that make and export ingredients used to make the drug to Mexico where it's distributed from. The deal is part of the conversation between the two world leaders in Xi's first visit to the US in 6 years.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office and other agencies are still looking for a missing man after a 16-20 foot boat capsized near the Ten Mile Dunes last Friday. One man was found dead on the beach after washing ashore near Fort Bragg, according to the Ukiah Daily Journal. The body of Charles Case of Lake County was discovered with the capsized boat about half a mile away. A second man, Kenneth Silva, also a Lake County resident is still missing. The US Coast Guard, Sheriff's Search and Rescue Team, California State Park Rangers and volunteers searched the shoreline and ocean for 24 hours after Case's body was discovered. The Sheriff's Office continues to search daily for the missing man.

Small businesses in Ukiah are getting ready for the first ever "Pink Friday" on November 17th. The inaugural event mission is to engage with the community and invite residents to shop small and support local businesses before Black Friday next week. There will be local cuisine, giveaways, sales and specials. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports there will be over 50 participating businesses. The event organizer says Pink Friday will help support local economic development and the families who work hard. People are urged to participate and share hashtag Pink Friday Ukiah on social media to get the word out and help support small businesses as the holiday quickly approach.

Sheet 1

The Lake County Board of Supervisors voted to continue the Emergency Declaration for a shelter crisis this week. The original declaration was made last January. The Record Bee reports the measure allowed use of the former Juvenile Hall to shelter people overnights as severe weather spread across the area. The shelter services will be guided by the Housing and Homeless Incentive grant program with the state's Homeless Housing Assistance program. The board approved a nearly \$2.5 million agreement for contractor Redwood Community Services to manage the facility. A board member says the program is modeled after the Building Bridges program run by Redwood Community Services in Mendocino County. Lakeport's Chief of Police supports the shelter initiative and says they are working on keeping the shelter open 24/7.

California just launched the "Outdoors for All Strategy" that works to make this state's natural spaces more accessible, more welcoming and less expensive. The strategy maps out a six-point plan to reduce the nature gap by building more parks and green space, improving public transportation to natural areas, prioritizing the needs of local community members, building pathways to make the workforce at parks and their parent agencies more diverse. The California News Service reports the program will guide agencies such as the state Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Water Resources and Cal Fire as they try to mitigate climate change and preserve 30 percent of our land by 2030.

CHP announced a grant for their program to help the senior community with free specialized training. The Keeping Everyone Safe, or KEYS grant of \$225,000 along with funding from the California Office of Traffic Safety will help fund the program aimed at helped educate drivers over 65 in a course. CHP has been providing the program since 2008. The course focuses on how age related physical changes may affect driving ability. Lake County News reports the Age Well, Drive Smart class helps seniors drive longer and more safely. The two hour class is available at any CHP office.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors say they are applying for funding through the Cal Jobs First Catalyst Fund to develop an emergency facility and more during their meeting this week. The Record Bee reports the Catalyst Fund will allocate \$600 million across 13 regions in the state, including the Redwood Region. The state is seeking the region's overall plan for projects that would aid the community with an emergency hub and other uses year round that would help the local economy. A supervisor said Lake County has a good shot for the grant. They discussed the synergy of emergency and non emergency uses of the project design. The board has discussed the need for an emergency center in the region that has been vulnerable to wildfires and floods while also addressing the need for spurring the local economy. A regional group is working on the proposed application.

The Mendocino Major Crimes Task Force and the Department of Cannabis Control are investigating a large cache of marijuana found during a routine traffic stop last week. Last Thursday around 11:30am, a truck hauling an enclosed trailer was pulled over for speeding south of the Ridgewood Scales near Willits. KymKemp reports CHP uncovered about 300 pounds of illegal unprocessed marijuana. Carlos Sanicrenoj of Ukiah was ticketed and released. He is expected to be charged with possession, illegal cultivation and illegal transportation of marijuana.

Sheet1

The Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum was largely constructive in San Francisco this week. Chinese President Xi Jinping met with Governor Newsom early in the week, and with President Biden yesterday. NBC reports they reached an agreement on several issues including the resumption of military to military communications and cooperation on curbing the ingredients China makes that contribute to the fentanyl crisis in the US. At a dinner last night the US Commerce Secretary and US trade and investment leaders joined in discussions and heard a half hour speech from Xi. Notably, the Chinese President says pandas may soon be returning to California. Recently, pandas across the country had been returned to China as they were only here on loan in a program that began over 50 year ago called Panda Diplomacy. The move is seen as a friendly gesture as talks between leaders continued during the summit this week.

The Noyo Ocean Collective is looking for community members to join a Community Outreach Team to help develop a long range use plan for the harbor. The Mendocino Beacon reports the collective is looking for volunteers to work with residents in the community about Noyo Harbor planning. The organization is looking to engage with the public and reach out to a diverse community. It's part of the Blue Economy Symposium working committee. The Special Project Manager for the City of Fort Bragg says volunteers will be guided by expert consultants and scientists as they seek out community input. Information about the position is available at City Hall and can also be found at the Noyo Ocean Collective's webpage. The collective is set to meet next on December 7th to answer questions and have more information.

The Department of State Hospitals Conditional Release Program has custody of a Cobb man charged with attempted murder and informed Lake County Superior Court that they will continue the matter next February. The Record Bee reports Peter Guerrero was committed to the state as a mentally disordered offender, after reportedly beating his father to death. It was recommended that Guerrero be placed in a locked facility and contained to the state hospital.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors is looking for residents who live in Southern Lake County to fill a vacancy on the Cannabis Ordinance Task Force. They are aiming to appoint someone during their December 19th Board of Supervisors Meeting. The county is asking that interested candidates should apply by December 13th. Applications are at the Lake County Courthouse in the Clerk of the Board Office in Lakeport. Interested residents can also check out more information on the position at Lake County's webpage. It is a volunteer position for the Cannabis Ordinance Task Force advisory board.

The Fort Bragg Unified School District is looking for residents to fill a vacant position on the board of trustees. The district is looking to appoint someone to fill the position by the November 24th General Election next year, according to MendoFever. Application packets are available at the district office. They are accepting applications through December 15th. The board will schedule interviews with selected candidates. For information on the Board of Education and duties of a board member, residents are asked to contact the Superintendent Joseph Aldridge.

Sheet 1

The Fort Bragg City Council is terminating an agreement with Mendocino County on the operation of an animal control facility. The facility was closed earlier this year out of financial concerns. The Mendocino Beacon reports the Mendocino Coast Humane Society will work with city staff to incorporate the adjacent building in expansion of their operations. The council also approved professional help in finding a new City Manager after City Manager Peggy Ducey's resignation was accepted last month. During the meeting the council also approved an agreement to develop Fort Bragg's Wastewater Collection System Master Plan with mapping and modeling of the project expected to be complete next summer with a final project report in May of 2025.

There is more information coming from the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office about the man killed on Albion Ridge Road this week. The Press Democrat reports that Thomas Shoemaker was driving his truck at a high rate of speed when he veered off the road near Middle Ridge Road. Not wearing a seatbelt, he was thrown from the truck. Emergency responders pronounced him dead at the scene. CHP is continuing the investigation into the accident.

Local and state officials along with Caltrans are celebrating the completion of the Pudding Creek Bridge Project. Caltrans issued a release today on the finalization of the project that will improve accessibility and safety for drivers, pedestrians and bikers. The 340 foot long bridge was expanded to provide two twelve foot wide lanes; two eight foot wide pedestrian walkways and upgraded railings featuring steel salmon artwork. The project was part of the "Complete the Streets" Improvement with new sidewalks that connect south to Elm Street and north to Pudding Creek Drive with sewer line relocation.

11/17/2023

Today PG&E announced their initial draft plan for removing two Eel River dams and surrendering the Potter Valley Project. There are a couple of options going forward, according to the Record Bee. One choice would be to remove the Scott and Cape Horn Dams; another alternative would be to develop a new diversion to the Russian River during the dam removal process. Friends of the Eel River say they prefer the speediest path to dam removal to help hundreds of miles of cold water habitat to help restore the fish population. As agencies, groups and organizations plan for the future of the watershed, members of the public are invited to submit comments to PG&E by December 22nd.

Clearlake Police are looking for a missing woman. Ricci Chandler was last seen in the morning over November 16th, yesterday, near Olympic Drive in Clearlake driving a black Cadillac SUV with Arizona plate X8A1SP. Chandler is at risk with an epilepsy and bipolar disorder, and has not taken her meds as prescribed. She is a white woman, about 5 foot 1 inch tall with long brown hair, possibly pulled into a bun and brown eyes. She was last seen wearing a black jacket and black pants. Call the Clearlake Police Department if you have any information on Ricci Chandler's whereabouts.

The City of Willits and the Willits Police Department computer servers will be down for upgrades all day. The emergency 911 number will not be affected during the outage that will start at 9am.

There is more information coming from the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office about the man killed on Albion Ridge Road this week. The Press Democrat reports that Thomas Shoemaker was driving his truck at a high rate of speed when he veered off the road near Middle Ridge Road. Not wearing a seatbelt, he was thrown from the truck. Emergency responders pronounced him dead at the scene. CHP is continuing the investigation into the accident.

Sheet1

DNA has linked a suspect in a 40 year old cold case in the region. Newsbreak reports Alfredo Carretero Jr. of Lakeport was linked to DNA evidence in the murder of beauty pageant winner Noelle Russo according to the Sonoma County District Attorney's Office. Russo was last seen in June of 1983 in Santa Rosa. Her battered body was found by a young boy in Rohnert Park. Investigators say the weapon used to kill Russo was a piece of milled lumber. Carretero Jr was considered one of the original persons of interest in the case and was recently identified as the main suspect with the new DNA data. The 65 year old was booked into Sonoma County Jail.

The Ukiah City Planning Commission is recommending further annexation of the Western Hills. In the vote they took during last week's meeting, they said they'd compromise on some parcels that should be allowed for development, according to reporting in Mendocino. The commission is moving on the Western Hills due to their high-severity wildfire risk. The city would like the property under its control to better maintain it and so that it is less likely to be used for illegal cannabis grows. 84 acres were added to the annexation area this year. The commission voted to recommend to the City Council approval of rezoning to 44 acres that would remain in private ownership. There is some worry over the

The average price of gas in Ukiah Thursday is ranging from \$4.69 to \$5.39 per gallon, according to Gas Buddy. The California average is \$5.03, down from \$5.11 a week ago. Even a small decrease will make holiday travel easier for drivers, with AAA forecasting record breaking holiday travel numbers. Nearly 9 out of every 10 people will be driving this year. AAA says if you are planning on hitting the road next week, to leave during non peak hours, 11am or 6pm. Airlines are preparing for a busy week as well, and people are urged to get to the airport early if they plan to fly.

A man convicted of involuntary manslaughter will be sentenced in January after changing his plea to guilty rather than non guilty by insanity. Drew Price was found guilty this week in the death of Deborah Garner Flicker in March of 2022. Price withdrew his insanity plea after hearing he'd been acquitted of murder and instead convicted of involuntary manslaughter. The felony conviction for involuntary manslaughter carries a sentence of up to four years in county prison, and given his pre sentence credits it is expected that Price will only serve about four months. That sentencing hearing, according to the Mendocino County District Attorney will happen on the 10th of January.

CHP Ukiah is investigating a traffic crash that happened yesterday morning. Just before 11am a head-on collision was reported between a sedan and a truck on State Route 253 at Stripp Lane. The sedan was headed west on 253 when it crossed into the eastbound lane into the path of a truck. Both vehicle airbags were deployed, but the driver of the sedan was not wearing a seatbelt. The man from Santa Rosa was pronounced dead at the scene. The man in the truck, Dennis Smart of Ukiah, was taken to Adventist Hospital. CHP is investigating whether alcohol was a factor in the fatal crash.

The California Office of Traffic Safety has been doling out grants recently. In the latest round, CHP will get funding to engage the public in motorcycle safety, as crashes continue to be a major concern. Lake County News reports CHP began a yearlong program called Get Educated and Ride Safe, or GEARS to increase awareness throughout California. Last year, state data reflects there was an 8 percent increase from the year before in motorcycle crashes that resulted in 381 deaths and nearly 7,000 injuries. The campaign will promote US DOT compliant helmets for all riders. The agency will also increase enforcement in areas with high crash statistics with crashes involving speed, improper turns and driving the influence.

Sheet1

The Lake County Sheriff's Office is investigating a murder on Dixon Drive in Lakeport. Yesterday a man armed with a knife reportedly assaulted someone. Deputies arrived and tried to deescalate the situation, the suspect had a firearm and shots were fired. The suspect was pronounced dead at the scene by emergency responders.

Thousands of scientists in the state began a three day strike Wednesday. The AP reports it's the first walkout by a state civil service union. The walkout is expected to spread to Oakland and other cities thru today. Members of the California Association of Professional Scientists began marching in the capital this week. There are about 5,200 unionized members working in over 50 state departments on issues like air pollution, toxic waste control, earthquake hazards and more. They've been working without a contract since 2020. The union is working to increase wages saying state scientists are paid 40 to 60 percent less than comparable positions. A state mediation session is planned for November 28th.

The Leonids meteor shower will light up the night sky with fast-moving streaks of light. This year, the Leonids began on November 3rd and will be visible thru December 2nd. The meteor shower is set to peak Friday night and early Saturday morning, according to NASA. The shower is produced when the Earth passes through the trail of dust and ice left by the comet Tempel-Tuttle during its 33-year orbit around the sun. The Leonids can include larger explosions of light and color called fireballs that can last longer than an average meteor streak, according to NASA. The Press Democrat reports people should start looking for the Leonids starting at about midnight on Friday, when the constellation Leo rises in the east, though the shower's streaks will be visible throughout the sky.

A group of peace activists a protesting what they say are war crimes by the Israeli Defense Forces in Gaza. There were a couple dozen people protesting outside the Ukiah courthouse yesterday afternoon. Over 15,000 Palestinian casualties have been estimated, about half, reportedly children. Thousands are missing in the debris of the Israeli offense in Gaza, according to reporting in the Ukiah Daily Journal. One group called Showing Up for Racial Justice Mendocino Coast is calling for a ceasefire. The group includes Jewish activists saying they feel strongly about repairing the world saying people should have human rights. Many attending protesters say they are following the events of the Israel Hamas war, and want to raise awareness about what some see as genocide.

11/20/2023

PG&E's initial surrender plan is open to public review and comment now through December 22nd. MendoFever reports the document includes a proposal to continue water diversion from the Eel to the Russian River. The draft plan was released Friday but did not get to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission as requested by some. The utility plans to send the draft to the agency next spring. Advisory and working groups with the Russian River Water Forum are considering several options for what happens after PG&E surrenders the Potter Valley Project. One is a proposal for 700 to 800 foot channel built of boulders to divert water from the Van Arsdale Reservoir in Potter Valley. An additional option would be a mechanical pump. Officials and interested parties are working to study which diversion action will best protect fish passages and water supply.

Sheet 1

PG&E says deconstruction of the dams could start as early as 2028 depending on regulatory approval, according to the Press Democrat. The Director for the California chapter of Trout Unlimited says removing the dam will make the Eel the longest free-flowing river in the state and will open up hundreds of stream miles of habitat previously unavailable to the native salmon and steelhead populations. PG&E has agreed to evaluate a regional proposal brought by the Sonoma Water and Russian River water users to keep enough of the smaller Cape Horn Dam with a diversion tunnel to allow wintertime diversions from the Eel to the Russian River open. Lake County officials are fighting a proposal to drain Lake Pillsbury, the 3.5 square mile reservoir. PG&E put all of the lake basin and shoreline under a permanent conservation easement held by the Mendocino Land trust to protect wildlife and prohibit future development.

Ukiah community leaders are urging residents to avoid work downtown this week. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports that construction crews will work hard this week, as there is a school break for the Ukiah Unified School District. Today through Wednesday there will be significant work at the intersection of Bush and Low Gap Roads. As part of the Ukiah Streetscape project, there will be many underground utilities crews are working around. The city's Public Works Director says work on Phase 4 of the Recycled Water, or Purple Pipe Project is happening, with over half of the ponds excavated as they work on the new distribution system.

The Mendocino County Department of Cannabis Control is reminding people to apply for the equity grant, the eligibility window closes this week. The Department also wants residents to know they, along with most county offices will close on the 22nd, the last day applicants can apply for the grant who qualify for the program. The department and most other county offices will reopen next Monday the 27th.

The City of Lakeport is working on a feasibility study to address homelessness. During the city council meeting earlier this month, the council approved an agreement with company Vanir for the work, funded by a state-sponsored program. Lake County News reports city leaders are leaning into navigation centers with temporary shelter, social services and support to help the homeless transition into stability and housing. The Assistant City Manager says homelessness is a complex issue in the city, state and nationwide. The five year plan of research and predevelopment have so far been covered by over \$350,000 through the Permanent Local Housing Allocation and officials have plans to seek out additional funds.

More information is coming to light after a murder suspect was convicted of involuntary manslaughter after dropping his insanity plea. Drew Price was found guilty last week of the murder of Deborah Garner Flicker. Price could be released immediately if sentenced to less than the maximum term. He's served time behind bars that will allow for time served credits with less than four months left in county jail. His decision to drop the insanity plea means he can't be committed to a state hospital. Instead, the lesser charge of involuntary manslaughter rather than murder in the first degree may allow him to be free sooner rather than later. MendoFever reports there have been some ethics issues involved in the case, some pertaining to the judge's interactions with the jury. Price's sentencing is set for January 10th at the Ukiah courthouse.

Sheet1

New research says natural disasters and pollution linked to climate change are contributing factors to high rates of anxiety and depression among young people. Researchers from San Francisco-based Hopelab consulted experts and interviewed youth climate activists to determine how climate impacts like wildfire, extreme heat, drought, flooding, and air pollution are affecting young people's mental health. The California News Service reports the Community Foundation of Sonoma County launched the Environmental Justice Coalition, which partners groups of students with a mentor to work on local environmental issues.

The Lake County Campus of Woodland Community College has a new interim dean. The Yuba Community College District Board of Trustees approved the appointment of Patricia Barba at their board meeting earlier this month. Barba is following Dean Ingrid Larson who left in September for a Mendocino College position. Lake County News reports her position is effective until next May. The board also named a new Director of Department of Supportive Programs and Services and more.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife are announcing emergency regulations to reduce the harvest of white sturgeon in California waters. The new rules reduce the amount of fish that can be kept to one per year and more. The policy was enacted by the California Fish and Game Commission in response to declines in white sturgeon and harmful algal blooms that have devastated their populations in recent years. The two species of sturgeon in the state are on the Federal Endangered Species Act radar, with the green type listed as threatened and white listed as a Species of Special Concern. In a release issued in KymKemp, the department says sturgeon report cards for next year become available soon. The requirements will remain in effect for all of 2024.

The Grass Roots Institute is announcing a new video of the launch of their campaign to prohibit new gas stations in Mendocino County. KymKemp issued the group's press release. The launch features a co-coordinator of Congas, an organization to prohibit new gas stations working in Sonoma County. The group says new fossil fuel stations can be prohibited easily with simple zoning changes. They say stopping new construction of potentially toxic hazardous waste sites helps communities focus on alternative transportation options.

The Mendocino National Forest is hosting a series of community sessions on post-wildfire recovery to engage with the public and get input that will be used to inform future restoration efforts. Residents are urged to share their input on prioritizing investments in its recovery. Families are encouraged to attend and bring their kids for fun activities and to meet Smokey Bear. The meetings are a first-of-its-kind collaboration with researchers from the U.S. Forest Service's Region 5, Pacific Northwest and Southwest Research Stations, USDA California Climate Hub, and UC Davis. Next week, there will be a session on Monday, November 27th at the Robinson Rancheria in Nice. Tuesday, the 28th, a session will be held in Covelo at the Library commons, each session starts at 5pm.

Sheet1

The Lakeport City Council is holding a special meeting tomorrow at 5pm to go over appointments and the new courthouse project, according to Lake County News. They'll also hold their regular meeting tomorrow at 6pm. In the special meeting at 5:00 the Lakeport Police Chief will present a Citizen Commendation to Dalton Harris. The council will consider reappointing George Spurr to another four year term on the Lake County Vector Control District Board through 2027. Other positions will be appointed to the Lakeport Fire Protection District Board and the Economic Development Advisory Committee. During the regular meeting at 6, the city manager will confirm the fulfillment between the Judicial Council of California and the City of Lakeport with development of the new Lake County Superior Courthouse. There will also be an update in efforts to mitigate issues with the city's wastewater collection system.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife are continuing the temporary recreational crab trap restriction from the Sonoma/Mendocino County line to Lopez Point, and expanding the restriction to the California/Oregon border to Cape Mendocino because of humpback whales and the possibility for entanglement from trap gear. The department issued an announcement in MendoFever on the expanded restrictions. The recreational trap restrictions will go into effect this Sunday, November 26th. All traps in Zone 1 must be removed by this Sunday. Recreational crabbers using other methods like hoop nets and crab snares will be allowed. The commercial Dungeness crab fishery is being delayed until December 16th. The department plans the next risk assessment will happen around the first week in December when more information will be released.

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11/21/2023

CHP is investigating a fatal crash on Highway 101 that happened over the weekend. On Saturday, MendoFever reports a SUV was headed north on 101 near Laytonville. The driver veered off the road and hit a tree. The SUV burst into flames and killed the driver. The Mendocino County Coroner's Office is investigating the identity of the victim as CHP continues to investigate the crash.

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Sheet1

The Deep Valley Arts Collective is looking for artist submissions for the "Big Works" art exhibition at the Medium Art Gallery in Ukiah from January 5th through February 25th, 2024. The only requirement, according to an announcement in the Ukiah Daily Journal is that the artwork must be a certain size to qualify. All works will be framed at a minimum of 30" x 30", with all mediums welcome and a maximum of 3 entries per artist. The deadline for entries is December 17th. Applicants will be notified by December 19th.

Lake County officials are investigating an officer involved shooting last week. A deputy responded to complaints of a man armed with a knife in an assault on Dixon Drive in Lakeport. The Press Democrat reports deputies arrived and found the man who had armed himself with a gun. Authorities tried many times to de-escalate the tense situation. However, shots were fired, according to the Lake County Sheriff's Office and the man was pronounced dead at the scene. The Lake County District Attorney's Office confirmed, that only one deputy fired their gun. The DA's office is investigating.

As record breaking travelers hit the roads this holiday CHP is reminding people to drive safely. CHP will be undergoing a maximum enforcement period to reduce the number of crashes and fatalities. Officers will be working to enforce traffic laws throughout the state watching for unsafe driving behaviors like impaired or distracted driving, speeding and reckless driving as well as seat belt use. Last year, 37 people were killed during this holiday weekend according to CHP. Lake County News reports there were also 8,600 tickets given to drivers for speed and seat belt violations. The maximum enforcement period begins at 6pm Wednesday through Sunday the 26th.

A man killed in a head-on crash in Ukiah last week has been identified. Authorities say Christopher Casey of Santa Rosa was driving west of State Route 253 just before 11am last Thursday, when he crossed into the east lane and crashed into a truck near Stipp Lane. The Press Democrat reports both vehicles airbags were deployed but Casey was not wearing a seat belt and was pronounced dead at the scene. The Mendocino County Coroner's Office identified Casey yesterday. The driver of the truck was taken to Adventist Ukiah with moderate injuries. CHP is continuing the investigation.

The People's Garden, or Jardin del Pueblo in Healdsburg was given a tractor worth nearly \$90,000 to help grow crops for the hungry. The anonymous donor dropped off the tractor last week. The garden is worked on by about 40 volunteers who've tended the 1 acre plot for the last year, many local farm workers themselves. The focus of the garden is to help fight food insecurity and support job training. They hope to help train people with help from the tractor's manufacturer. The all electric Monarch KM-V tractor was offered to the Sonoma Land Trust that decided the community garden in Healdsburg was the place it should be. This year's harvest brought about 8,000 pounds of food that was donated to the community according to a director of Farm to Pantry.

Sheet1

The California Legislature is considering rolling back some environmental guardrails that were supposed to make the legal cannabis industry more sustainable, according to a senior fellow at the USC Schaeffer Center for Health Policy and Economics at USC and a former president of the California Fish and Game Commission. Their report published in Maven' Notebook this week notes that legalized recreational cannabis in the state was supposed to bring illegal growers out of the black market and into a regulated and safe market. But, cannabis prices have fallen significantly. Larger growers are taking over the market with smaller farms caught up in local permitting and regulations. SB 508 loosens environmental safeguards in an attempt to help smaller farmers, but may end up boosting the bigger farms as the smaller cultivators are priced out of the market.

California's reservoirs are looking good at 124 percent of their average. But, high water levels may not leave enough space for the rains that began to move in last week. CalMatters reports the state's water managers have dueling responsibilities; controlling floods while preparing for water scarcity. El Nino forecasts aren't absolutely accurate, as over the last 23 years two out of three of El Nino's have been dry. The new rain year that just began is actually off to a drier start. The Public Policy Institute of California notes that the state could have saved more water last year if there had been more efficient ways to transfer water from rivers and reservoirs to groundwater recharge sites. The Russian River watershed held onto about 7 to 8,000 acre feet more water in Lake Mendocino last year with an additional 19,000 acre-feet in Lake Sonoma. Governor Newsom is trying to fast track the Sites Reservoir project but it won't be completed until at least 2030. Local, state and federal agencies are incorporating new weather forecasting tools into water governance as they decide to hold onto the water or release it.

The Mendocino College Foundation is raising funds for next week's Giving Tuesday for the campus Food Pantry. The Foundation reports in a survey among Mendocino College students, nearly 54 percent say they've gone hungry due to low funds. The Foundation supports food pantries at the main campus in Ukiah, as well as in centers in Lakeport, Willits and Fort Bragg. Not only to those who utilize the pantry are fulfilled, but students who spend time working at pantries say they are seeing fellow students and neighbors that are able to continue working and studying thanks to their support. Check out the Mendocino College Foundation's website for information and more to help in their Giving Tuesday initiative.

The National Park Service is issuing a call out for artists in the search for inspiration within Redwood National State Parks. The department is seeking artists of all mediums to apply for the 2024 Artist-In-Residence program. It's an opportunity for eligible artists to spend up to four weeks at the Redwood National & State Parks to work in on their chosen art form. Writers, sculptors, photographers, painters, dancers, musicians and more can apply for the program that provides a \$5,000 stipend. The submission window for the 2024 spring program is between December 1st through the 15th with the winning announcement on January 15th. The Dates of Residency are April 1st through the 30th. The Fall Program submission is next spring, with a November residency.

As CHP announces a maximum enforcement period starting tomorrow evening, the department along with the California Department of Justice are dealing with people driving under the influence of marijuana. The California Department of Motor Vehicles reports alcohol involved deaths have trended down in recent years, drug involved crash deaths have nearly quadrupled. KCRA reports the DMV annual report does not break down specific drugs. There is a legal limit for driving drunk at .08, but there is no specific measure for cannabis. There is no specific vehicle code for marijuana in the state. Officials are looking to the feds for research on the impact of weed on driving. Mother's Against Drunk Driving recommend parents talk to their teens about driving high or getting into a car with someone who is.

Ukiah has a new mayor starting in January. The Ukiah City Council voted to appoint Council Member Josefina Duenas as mayor. She was nominated by Council Member Douglas Crane who will replace her as vice mayor. Crane told MendoFever that Duenas fulfills the city's state obligations to diversity, equity and inclusion and that the city can do more to incorporate technology to help the public understand Duenas who is deaf. She was voted in to the position in a 3 to 2 vote during the council meeting last week. There will be a reception to welcome the new Mayor Duenas at the Civic Center in Ukiah on December 6th.

11/22/2023

The Ukiah Transit Center Feasibility Study will be presented to the Mendocino Transit Authority Board of Directors at their meeting on December 6th at 1:30 pm. The project focuses on working with community residents to define transportation needs and explore innovations in mobility to connect people with the places they need to go. It includes a recommended site north of Kohls on North Orchard Avenue in Ukiah. The final plan is set to be complete in January.

The Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens is hosting its annual Festival of Lights beginning on Friday. In an announcement issued in MendoVoice, the Botanical Gardens will present their 13th year with thousands of lights throughout the garden. Rain or shine, the exhibit will be open Friday through Sundays starting Friday through the 17th of December from 5pm to 7pm. This year's show features a new route, displays and more. Hot cocoa and other goodies will be available at the Friends of the Gardens' Holiday Café with Santa appearing each Sunday. There is a free parking shuttle each night that leaves from just north of the gardens in Fort Bragg.

The California Public Utilities Commission has approved rate hikes for PG&E. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the utility says the increase will go toward funding its project to underground power lines. The commission approved putting over 1,200 miles of lines underground in the utility's highest fire risk areas. They say the work is a permanent risk reduction that eliminates nearly 98 percent of the risk of wildfire sparks from electrical equipment and increases electric reliability in reducing power shutoffs. PG&E also says it will save customers billions in reduced annual tree trimming and overhead line maintenance costs. The utility says people can get a personalized rate plan to help, enroll in budget billing and get Bill Forecast Alerts to help manage bills. They report the average increase next year will be about \$21.

Sheet1

AAA estimates there will be about 55.5 million people traveling at least 50 miles this Thanksgiving. It's higher than last year and the third highest number of travelers in its history. The Press Democrat reports the North Bay is expected to be the busiest today. They recommend staying put between 2 and 6pm and traveling this morning or later tonight. Good news for drivers this year, as gas prices are down nearly half a dollar from last year. Domestic flights are also a bit less expensive this year. Airports are the busiest this holiday weekend today as well with nearly 50,000 forecasted flights. Air travel authorities say you should get to the airport early.

As CHP announces a maximum enforcement period starting tonight at 6, the department along with the California Department of Justice are dealing with people driving under the influence of marijuana. The California Department of Motor Vehicles reports alcohol involved deaths have trended down in recent years, drug involved crash deaths have nearly quadrupled. KCRA reports the DMV annual report does not break down specific drugs. There is a legal limit for driving drunk at .08, but there is no specific measure for cannabis. There is no specific vehicle code for marijuana in the state. Officials are looking to the feds for research on the impact of weed on driving. Mother's Against Drunk Driving recommend parents talk to their teens about driving high or getting into a car with someone who is.

The Mendocino County Department of Cannabis Control is reminding people to apply for the equity grant, the eligibility window closes this week. The Department also wants residents to know they, along with most county offices will close on the 22nd, the last day applicants can apply for the grant who qualify for the program. The department and most other county offices will reopen next Monday the 27th. They are also announcing they'll be accepting following applications from December 1st through the end of the year for those who want to fallow all or a portion of their canopy in 2024. ~~proposal during this time but is including it as an option for caps from 2021-2024. The plan will be included on the agenda for the next Water Forum Planning Group meeting on Thursday, December 7th in Ukiah.~~

The California State Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas is appointing Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry as the Assembly majority leader. Lake County News reports Rivas made the nomination yesterday. Aguiar-Curry has been the speaker pro tempore since July and served in the State Assembly since 2016.

An earthquake shook the Eel River Valley this morning before 8am. Kym Kemp reports it was a 3.3 magnitude quake that hit north of Ferndale. The USGS reports the quake was east of the triple junction, near the mouth of the Eel River, and notes the depth was about 20 kilometers deep. Over a hundred people reported they felt the earthquake, with some feeling it in the northern part of Mendocino County.

Dogs are getting sick and UC Davis says symptoms of a new illness spreading across the nation includes coughing, decreased activity and not eating their food. The mystery sickness hasn't yet been documented in California, but it's in Oregon and other neighboring states and is destined to be on the way. Veterinarians urge people to keep your pets away from dog parks, and are asking kennels and other places with multiple dogs to not use a community water bowl.

Sheet1

launched the eEDGE this month that has features to manage your PIN, can freeze and unfreeze benefits and allows users to see their account balance in real time. It also has biometric access to help stop fraud. For current users, you can deploy the app on your Apple or Android phones. You can reach out to the Mendocino County Office of Social Services in Ukiah or Fort Bragg for help and more information. and Judge Shanahan. Judge Pekin will preside over intractions and misdemeanors, Adult Drug Court and Behavioral Health. Family Law, Civil and Probate assignments were announced as well. Juvenile Court cases will be presided by Judge Dolan. In the Ten Mile Courthouse, Judge Brennan will continue to preside over criminal, civil, probate and family law matters at the courthouse in Fort Bragg. Judge Dolan will continue as the Presiding Judge of the Court's Appellate Division.

11/24/2023

The Mendocino County Department of Planning and Building Services is inviting residents to engagement sessions about a proposed Inland Short Term Rental Ordinance. Willits Library on Wednesday, Nov 29th, 6 -7pm and in Ukiah, Conference Room at Low Gap Road on Nov 30th from 6 – 8pm in person and online.

A federal grant is being given to CHP with the California Office of Traffic Safety to initiate the "California RFEstraint Safety Education and Training" campaign. The yearlong work will focus on reducing the number of children killed or injured in car accidents and crashes throughout the state. Lake County News reports state law requires kids to be properly restrained in an age appropriate seat in the rear of a vehicle until they are at least 8 years old. Check with your local CHP office for details. As a reminder, CHP will continue their maximum enforcement period through Sunday evening, and CalTrans work remains postponed through Sunday. Wednesday. The couple is from out of town and was not equipped to be outside overnight. The Sheriff's Office and the South Coast Fire Department were searching for the man lost several miles north of Gualala. Within 4 hours, the man was found and was evaluated by medical personnel.

The City of Fort Bragg is holding a special meeting today at 4pm. In the closed session, the agenda includes a conference with legal counsel on litigation between the city and the Mendocino Railroad. They'll also go over public employment for the titles City Clerk and City manager. In their regular city council meeting on Monday, they plan to approve work for the construction of the Raw Water Line Replacement Project, and the purchase of EV Fleet Charging Station for about \$28,000. The council is set to approve the Water Treatment Plant Upgrade as well. The meeting is set for Monday at 6pm.

Dates into custody after an investigation revealed that Bates was the main suspect. His arraignment hearing is set for next week on the 28th. Bates entered a not guilty plea earlier this month, according to the Record Bee. He also denied special allegations. He'll also be charged with a probation violation related to grand theft.

Restoration work on former Pacific Lumber Company's Steam Locomotive Number 37 has been suspended after years of debate. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the association had been working on it at the Strasburg Railroad Shop in Pennsylvania. They came to the decision to sell the locomotive. The organization saved the old engine from being scrapped in 2003 in an effort to preserve the timber/rail heritage and history. They will instead focus on the Arcata and Mad River Railroad Steam Locomotive Number 7 in the roundhouse in Samoa. The proceeds from the sale of engine Number 37 will help in the new restoration along with additional fundraising.

Sheet1

The Holiday Trolley is running now through Christmas Eve, stopping at local stores in Ukiah. The Willits News reports the old-town holiday transportation tradition will run from the El Azteca Restaurant to Slam Dunk Pizza with stops in between. The trolley, presented by the Mendocino Transit Authority, Greater Ukiah Business and Tourism Alliance along with local sponsors is now in its 26th year of operation. The old fashioned trolley will run on Thursdays and Fridays starting at 3pm and run hourly until 5pm. Weekends, the Holiday Trolley will run from noon until 6pm hourly. Bragg. The body of Charles Case was found on the beach about half a mile away from the small pleasure craft that had launched from Noyo Harbor. Kenneth Silva was with Case when they set out to sea. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office reports that the US Coast Guard, State Park Rangers and the Mendocino County Search and Rescue team searched for the man, but has not been found. The Sheriff's Office says they are still searching for Silva, according to the Advocate News.

The Bureau of Land Management is announcing a new order to stop the use of cyanide bombs on BLM lands. This week, US Representative Jared Huffman said the cyanide bombs are a cruel and indiscriminate device proven deadly for pets, humans and wildlife. He says they can now focus efforts on pushing other federal agencies to follow suit. In an announcement in KymKemp, BLM notes that the M-44 traps look like sprinkler heads, and when triggered, eject a cloud of cyanide meant to kill coyotes, wild dogs or foxes. They report the poisoning has not been shown to significantly reduce predator pressure on livestock and game species.

San Francisco Chronicle reports at least 10 cases have been identified in Southern California that they say is an atypical canine infectious respiratory disease.

Symptoms in affected dogs include coughing, nasal discharge, sneezing and lethargy, with some cases progressing rapidly within 24-36 hours, occasionally resulting in death. While the San Francisco SPCA has not observed a significant increase in respiratory disease at its facilities, veterinarians say so there is a good chance the illness is already present in the Bay Area. They emphasized the importance of keeping pets current on vaccines and avoiding crowded areas where viruses and bacteria are more likely to spread and shared spaces.

Mendocino County Superior Court has some new assignments for the new year coming up. MendoFever reports the Presiding Judge Keith Faulder has announced judicial assignments that are reviewed every couple of years and will be effective on January 2nd. Criminal cases will be presided over felony matters by Judge Faulder and Judge Shanahan. Judge Pekin will preside over infractions and misdemeanors, Adult Drug Court and Behavioral Health. Family Law, Civil and Probate assignments were announced as well. Juvenile Court cases will be presided by Judge Dolan. In the Ten Mile Courthouse, Judge Brennan will continue to preside over criminal, civil, probate and family law matters at the courthouse in Fort Bragg. Judge Dolan will continue as the Presiding Judge of the Court's Appellate Division.

Short-term rentals in Mendocino County will be discussed through several communities meetings this month. County officials say short term rentals have implications for transient occupancy tax revenues, housing stock and neighborhood stability, according to the Ukiah Daily Journal. County officials say there are no explicit short term rentals regulations for the inland areas of the county in zoning. The Mendocino County Department of Planning and Building Services is inviting residents to engagement sessions about a proposed Inland Short Term Rental Ordinance. Willits Library on Wednesday, Nov 29th, 6 -7pm and in Ukiah, Conference Room at Low Gap Road on Nov 30th from 6 – 8pm in person and online.

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A lost hiker has been found. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office confirmed that a 73 year old man went missing after hiking with his wife near Fish Rock Road, east of the dump. MendoFever reports the couple was separated around 4:30pm on Wednesday. The couple is from out of town and was not equipped to be outside overnight. The Sheriff's Office and the South Coast Fire Department were searching for the man lost several miles north of Gualala. Within 4 hours, the man was found and was evaluated by medical personnel.

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California State Parks is extending their Adventure Pass Program from 19 parks to 54 state parks. The pilot program is in its third year and gives fourth graders and their teachers free admission to parks thru next August of next year. Its part of the First Partners California for All Kids initiative to provide kids and their families with more opportunities to get out and enjoy the social, physical and mental benefits of time outdoors in California's State Parks and historic sites. Lake County News reports the pass is valid for fourth graders for the 2023-2024 school period. You can get the pass free online at ReserveCalifornia.com. So far, over 50,000 passes have been given out. The Golden Bear Pass is also available for income eligible residents and for people enrolled in California's Tribal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program.

The Lakeport Chamber of Commerce Visitor's Center suspected arsonist has been found guilty in Lake County Superior Court this week. Judge Blum ruled in a preliminary hearing that Cameron Bates is guilty of the felony arson violation in forest land, possession of a controlled substance and more. The crime happened last month, when a fire broke out between the Chamber and the Lake County Agricultural Department buildings. Witnesses saw Bates leaving the area of the fire at the time and called authorities. Within half an hour, the fire was extinguished. Police took Bates into custody after an investigation revealed that Bates was the main suspect. His arraignment hearing is set for next week on the 28th. Bates entered a not guilty plea earlier this month, according to the Record Bee. He also denied special allegations. He'll also be charged with a probation violation related to grand theft.

Sheet1

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One man from Lake County is still missing off the Mendocino Coast. About two weeks ago, a man was found dead on the beach near Ten Mile Dunes near Fort Bragg. The body of Charles Case was found on the beach about half a mile away from the small pleasure craft that had launched from Noyo Harbor. Kenneth Silva was with Case when they set out to sea. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office reports that the US Coast Guard, State Park Rangers and the Mendocino County Search and Rescue team searched for the man, but has not been found. The Sheriff's Office says they are still searching for Silva, according to the Advocate News.

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A mysterious respiratory illness affecting dogs reported in several states has now surfaced in California, prompting animal welfare officials to caution pet owners. The San Francisco Chronicle reports at least 10 cases have been identified in Southern California that they say is an atypical canine infectious respiratory disease.

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Sheet1

Clearlake Police are searching for a missing woman. Lake County News reports Barbara Guzzi was last seen on Saturday afternoon leaving the San Jose area in a white Nissan on her way to Clearlake. The 58 year old has a medical condition and is considered at risk. She is a white female, five foot 6 inches tall weighing around 130 pounds with blonde hair and blue eyes. Barbara Guzzi was wearing a black jacket, jeans, brown boots and has silver rings on her hands. If you have any information on Guzzi, please contact the Clearlake Police Department.

11/27/2023

Chamise Cubbison, the former Mendocino County Auditor/Controller will be back in court this week. On Wednesday, she is expected to plea in the felony case of accused misappropriating of funds. Her co-defendant, Paula Kennedy is slated to appear in Mendocino County Superior Court to face Judge Faulder as well, for over \$68,000 in misappropriated money. According to court filings, Cubbison was Kennedy's supervisor when funds were paid to Kennedy without the Board of Supervisors authorization. The Press Democrat reports the misappropriation supposedly happened between fall of 2019 and summer of 2022. Cubbison's lawyer says she did not receive a dime in the alleged scheme saying District Attorney David Eyster is politically motivated in Cubbison's charge. The women will appear in court at 9am Wednesday.

The National Weather Service has extended a hazardous conditions warning along the coast from Monterey beyond the north Mendocino County border. There was an increased risk for sneaker waves and rip currents along the shoreline especially along northwest facing beaches Sunday, and into today. High tides reached up to over seven feet. Forecasters say the tides could also pop up today, according to reporting in the Press Democrat. KymKemp reports there was a water rescue in Humboldt Bay on Sunday. Meanwhile, Fox news reports a five year old girl was caught in a rogue wave and swept into the ocean with her grandpa in Half Moon Bay Saturday. She was pulled from the water, but was pronounced dead at a local hospital. The US Coast Guard called off the search for her grandfather after combing over 100 square miles for over 22 hours.

The Northshore Fire Protection District in Lake County is announcing a critical staff shortage. In a post on social media yesterday, the district announced that there will be a significant reduction in Advanced Life Support services starting today. In their community announcement, the group says almost half of emergency calls need both Advanced Life Support and Basic Life Support. There will be delays in the Advanced Life Support as it will be brought in from another district. The district is urging the public to take basic first aid courses to be prepared. The firefighters say their union members are working to provide the best service as they seek to solve the staffing crisis.

There is a search for a missing dog in the aftermath of a boating accident on Pudding Creek. The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County issued a release in MendoFever with details about a pug named Priya. A man had launched a boat on the creek that crashed into breakers Friday afternoon. The man was pulled out of the water and given CPR before being taken to Santa Rosa Memorial. They believe he was trying to save his pet. His wife wants people to keep their eyes out for the Priya the Pug, who had a life jacket on.

Sheet1

A new battery storage project at the PG&E substation on East Road is one topic covered in the Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council this month. An iron-air battery, being developed by Form Energy, is being described as a cost-effective energy store that last longer than lithium. The state has set aside funding for long term energy storage supporting non lithium ion energy. MendoFever reports construction is set to begin in 2025. Also at the meeting Cal Trans noted the eastbound lane on Highway 20 has been routed onto the new bridge and that Road 144 exit won't be open until next spring. The group discussed water issues with an expert who reported a matrix of expertise across existing county departments would help the water management of Redwood Valley. Cannabis zone buffering, re-permitting of a gas station and the sale of the Redwood Valley School were discussed. Their next meeting is set for January 10th.

The wine harvest this year is unusually late, but vintners are seeing relief as they bring in most of the wine grapes. Vineyard management firms are saying this was a good solid year, after experiencing fire, smoke taint, drought and low yields. Grape quality is expected to be better than it has been in recent years. This year spring rains and temperatures that were cooler delayed harvest, but tonnage is up and presses are running. A wine maker from Napa Valley says for the last ten years, there's been some variation of what he calls monster situations. A vintner from western Sonoma County and Anderson Valley in Mendocino County says this year's crop is poised for long-term aging with higher acidity and more juice. The Press Democrat reports another Mendocino County wine maker says this year's vintage already shows balanced ripening.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors is considering funding to purchase the Kelseyville Senior Center building and lease it back to Kelseyville Seniors Inc., in their meeting tomorrow morning at 9am. Lake County News reports it may cost around \$118,000 and will need \$700,000 in renovations, funded by the American Rescue Plan Act. The upgraded senior center will be developed into a center servicing surrounding communities. In other business, the group will go over de-escalation training at the Behavioral Health Services Department. They're expected to approve a Health and Safety Grant use for the Office of Education and upgrade the Mobile Library Vehicle. The board is set to approve an agreement for a life-size bronze cast Lake Pomo family sculpture. And they'll consider a letter of support for CalWild's State Coastal Conservancy Grant for work on the Upper Eel River Watershed community visioning process. And in closed session they'll go over the interview and appointment for the Health Services director. The board will also go over litigation involving the Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project.

The Mendocino Coast Environmental Scholarship program with Mendocino Eco Education and Events and more are presenting a conference on the history of the Save the Redwoods League along with an up to date overview of climate change with an emphasis on Jackson State Demonstration Forest. MendoFever issued a release on the event happening this Saturday, December 2nd from 1 to 3pm at Mendocino's Stanford Inn. Scientists will discuss a paper submitted to Cal Fire and the JAG group on the "New Vision" plan for the forest. They'll talk about the unique redwood belt and how it's changed. The event will accept donations to offset costs of the session.

Sheet1

State lawmakers are working to create a ballot measure that would be the largest school construction bond in decades. Cal Matters reports that rural school districts are in desperate need of infrastructure rehab and more. Two bills are under consideration that would bring in billions to make repairs on schools. Assembly Bill 247 would raise \$14 billion for K-12 schools and community colleges. Senate Bill 28 would fund \$15.5 billion and would include the University of California and CSU. Only one is expected to proceed to the governor's desk for approval. AB247 may work out because it does not include the university systems. Lawmakers in support of the bill say they're confident Newsom will approve the school bond to be on the ballot for the general election in a year.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Department is heaving a sigh of relief after finding a missing hiker on Friday. A 72 year old man went missing west of Laytonville on a walk. The Sheriff's posting on social media and a Nixel Alert reported search and rescue teams were in the area of Wilderness Lodge Road. A Sheriff's Office K9 officer sniffed the man out of the forested area and is reportedly safe.

Giving Tuesday is here and several area organizations are raising funds for their community food banks and more. The Umpqua Bank is hosting their annual Wish Tree for Child Welfare Services in Lake County, according to Lake County News. The Ukiah Daily Journal Holiday Fund Drive began yesterday to provide food to the Ukiah Food Bank. The Mendocino College Foundation is continuing in their food drive for several area pantries. The Mendocino Coast Rec and Park District is holding their 37th annual Aquathon and silent auction this Saturday to raise money for second grader swim lessons. And this Friday the Fort Bragg Food Bank is seeking volunteers to help low-income folks with veterinary services with the Second Chance Project.

CHP Ukiah is investigating a fatal crash on SR 253. A woman from Redwood Valley was driving her car east on 253 when she couldn't manage a turn and flew off the road headed downhill 400 feet down, crashed into a tree and rolled several times. Erica Gonzalez was thrown from the car and died of her injuries. Mendocino Sheriff's Deputies, CalTrans and CHP responded to the scene early this morning just before 11/28/2023 3am. They do not think drugs or alcohol were a factor in the crash.

The National Weather Service issued a flood advisory yesterday for the North Bay. A low pressure system is moving in today and will bring in rain overnight. The wet weather has put an end to fire season, but residents should be wary of a wetter than normal winter. The National Weather Service predicts above normal levels from December through February. Local officials are urging residents to be prepared. KRON reports people are urged to sign up for emergency alerts and to know their zone. Officials say people can prepare for increased rain by clearing out gutters and downspouts, turn off automatic water systems and learn your escape route with an alternative, should a road be blocked or flooded.

Sheet1

The emergency shelter in Lake County is going to be open around the clock, all year. Redwood Community Services will operate the shelter at the former juvenile hall in north Lakeport. Lake County News reports the Lake County Board of Supervisors approved the contract that has the Behavioral Health Services Department as the lead administrator along with Redwood Community Services. They'll get nearly \$2.5 million through 2026 to operate it. In the contract approved during the board's meeting a few weeks ago there will need to be 35 beds to serve 300 people and reach 200 via street outreach. 88 homeless people is the target for the organization to exit the program to permanent housing and more. The initial funding from the Continuum of Care will decrease over time as Redwood Community Services develops enhanced care management with a medical respite benefit to sustain the shelter long-term.

Chamise Cubbison, the former Mendocino County Auditor/Controller will be back in court this week. On Wednesday, she is expected to plea in the felony case of accused misappropriating of funds. Her co-defendant, Paula Kennedy is slated to appear in Mendocino County Superior Court to face Judge Faulder as well, for over \$68,000 in misappropriated money. According to court filings, Cubbison was Kennedy's supervisor when funds were paid to Kennedy without the Board of Supervisors authorization. The Press Democrat reports the misappropriation supposedly happened between fall of 2019 and summer of 2022. Cubbison's lawyer says she did not receive a dime in the alleged scheme saying District Attorney David Eyster is politically motivated in Cubbison's charge. The women will appear in court at 9am Wednesday.

Senate Bill 833 has been signed by the governor in an aim to help small cannabis farmers continue operations. The Cannabis Licensing Reform Act allows growers to pause or reduce their crop size without paying the full annual fees. Senate President Designee Mike McGuire advanced the bill, in hopes of saving smaller farmers money when they need to downsize allowing a pause in their fee but must maintain an inactive license based on crop size. McGuire tells Lake County News that just as with other agricultural crops, cannabis farmers should not go under because of one bad season. SB833 will take effect on January 1st.

Short-term rentals in Mendocino County will be discussed through several communities meetings this month. County officials say short term rentals have implications for transient occupancy tax revenues, housing stock and neighborhood stability, according to the Ukiah Daily Journal. County officials say there are no explicit short term rentals regulations for the inland areas of the county in zoning. The Mendocino County Department of Planning and Building Services is inviting residents to engagement sessions about a proposed Inland Short Term Rental Ordinances. Willits Library on Wednesday, Nov 29th, 6 -7pm and in Ukiah, Conference Room at Low Gap Road on Nov 30th from 6 – 8pm in person and online.

Giving Tuesday is here and several area organizations are raising funds for their community food banks and more. The Umpqua Bank is hosting their annual Wish Tree for Child Welfare Services in Lake County, according to Lake County News. The Ukiah Daily Journal Holiday Fund Drive began Sunday to provide food to the Ukiah Food Bank. The Mendocino College Foundation is continuing in their food drive for several area pantries. And consider supporting another local news outlet with the Snoopy Bag for the Press Democrat, the non profit continues to support community journalism and education. Attorney General Rob Bonta says to be careful on this day of helping others and make sure people don't fall for scams by giving to organizations you trust and not to be intimidated by telemarketers.

Sheet1

The completion of the Pudding Creek Bridge is the third bridge upgrade of the century on the coast, according to MendoVoice. At the ribbon cutting a few weeks ago, Caltrans officials celebrated the finished project on time and with no injuries. Caltrans says two bridges on the coast are still critically in need of replacement and others need upgrades. Now Caltrans and others can set their sights on the Jack Peters Creek Bridge at the north side of the town of Mendocino. Construction started last week as an 80 foot steel pole was set up that is to carry wires up and away from the project that is estimated to be complete within the next two summers. Jack Peters Bridge has no sidewalks with crumbling railings, having been built during the Great Depression. Another bridge on the list is the Hare Creek Sgt. Emil Evenson Memorial Bridge south of Fort Bragg, but that is unscheduled at the moment. The Albion River Bridge and Albion Salmon Creek Bridge are set to be replaced or renovated. Work is expected to begin there in 2030.

Video recordings of cannabis inspections in Lake County are on hold. The issue stems from when a code enforcement officer didn't reportedly get permission to record her inspection of Pillsbury Farms in Potter Valley earlier this month, the grower protested. The Community Development Director noted before the inspection, there was a letter submitted that the officer use a body cam for personal safety, but that it is not the department's standard procedure. The Record Bee reports there was a violation regarding a greenhouse on the 8,000 square foot grow site that the owners are now addressing. The farm apparently had a county permit but not a state permit. Pillsbury Farms is working with the state to fix the problem. The owners of the farm are working with the county team to become legal growers as they shut down for this season and look to next spring, hoping for help with taxes and fees via the equity grant.

A Lakeport man lost his life after his boat capsized last Friday near Fort Bragg.

Yesterday, we reported there is a search for a missing dog in the aftermath of the boating accident on Pudding Creek. Lloyd Dennis was pulled from the water, given emergency medical aid and taken to Santa Rosa Memorial; sadly he passed away. When his boat crashed into breakers Friday afternoon, his dog went missing. The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County issued a release in MendoFever with details about a pug named Priya, who was in a life jacket; before it was found nearby yesterday. The family asks that people keep an eye out for the surviving dog and call the humane society if seen.

Applications for state funding begin today in California's State Water Efficiency and Enhancement Program. The funding out of the state Department of Food and Agriculture will be granting assistance to farmers and ranchers who implement irrigation practices that improve water efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In an update in the latest Russian River Water Forum, the department says the Mendocino County Resource Conservation District will be offering free technical help in applying for the funds. Projects that would fit into eligibility include improved pump energy efficiency, fuel conversion automation, on-farm water storage and irrigation system upgrades. Applications will be accepted now through January 19th.

Sheet1

The Mendocino Wine Company is the first Regenified Certified wine Grape Grower, according to reporting in the Wine Industry Advisor. It's the first vintner in the country to attain carbon neutral status and is a three time winner of California's Governor's Environmental and Economic Leadership Award for its work on environmentally responsible practices. The company is continuing their efforts now by focusing on soil health. Regenerative farming is founded on imitating nature, minimizing soil disturbance, encouraging plant diversity and more. The Regenification Verification Standard aims to use agricultural practices to restore biodiversity, water quality and more. The vineyards encompass 230 acres in Mendocino's Ukiah Valley and is a member of the California Sustainable Winegrowing Alliance and more.

11/29/2023 The US Department of Defense is announcing that the Secretary of Defense will meet with the Minister of Defence and Deputy Prime Minister of Australia along with the Secretary of Defence to the UK in California this weekend. The three leaders will go over progress in the Optimal Pathway to provide Australia with a conventionally armed, nuclear powered submarine and discuss collaboration between the three country's ecosystems and defense industry. US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin will also go over the adoption of commercial technology in the military and growing the national security innovation base. Secretary Austin will deliver a keynote address on December 2nd at the Reagan National Defense Forum.

The Mendocino Transit Authority Board of Directors will get a presentation on the draft Ukiah Transit Center feasibility study at their meeting next week, December 6th at the Ukiah Valley Conference Center at 1:30pm. Information published in the Ukiah Daily Journal reports the plan will focus on a recommended transit center site, north of Kohls on North Orchard Avenue in Ukiah. The public is invited as the project is aimed at including community and stakeholders input. The final plan is expected to be finished in January. The feasibility study is funded by the Mendocino Council of Governments with Local Transportation Funds.

The man who changed his non guilty by insanity plea to guilty has been acquitted of murder charges and found guilty of involuntary manslaughter. Drew Price was in Mendocino County Superior Court for the murder of Deborah Garner-Flicker of Ukiah. The charges go back to March of 2022 when a woman was killed with obvious signs of struggle inside the Willow Terrace Apartments. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports her death was deemed suspicious at the time when police learned that suspect Drew Price was seen leaving the apartment during the time of her death. Price now faces a sentence of up to four years in county prison with fines up to \$10,000. With his time-served credits, Prices only has a few months left behind bars. His formal sentencing is set for January 10th.

The Jackson Demonstration State Forest Advisory Council got back to work on issues tabled at their September meeting. With facilitator Emily Smith and new Mendocino Unit Chief Brandon Gunn three items postponed came to light this month. The timber harvest plan was approved, along with a Scope of Work for a new management plan. MendoVoice reports there were still contentious issues revolving around co-management with local tribal governments and Cal Fire. Though the council doesn't have the authority to make decisions, the California Board of Forestry, via Cal Fire, California Natural Resources Agency and Tribal Advisory Council all weigh in on project and plan approval. Unlike in September, the meeting proceeded to the field tour to see the first ever pyrosilv site. The pyrosilva plan will be voted on at the next JAG meeting in March.

Sheet 1

The Lake County Sheriff's Office is investigating a burglary at Lower Lake High School. Earlier this month, a maintenance worker found the chain to the maintenance gate had been cut, five vehicles tampered with, and several power tools and fuel were stolen. Surveillance footage showed two males break in the area at midnight on November 19th siphoning gas from vehicles then return later to steal tools and more. The suspects left in a green Honda Civic. A Deputy searched the Clearlake area and found the driver who was on probation. Upon searches of his car and home, nearly \$8,700 worth of power tools and school laptops were found. The Lake County Sheriff's Office investigation continues. Anyone with information should call Deputy Reynolds.

The Lakeport Police Department is setting a meeting for December to discuss the use of military equipment. Lake County News reports they've scheduled it for December 28th at 1:30pm in Lakeport City Hall. The meeting will be open to the public with a question and answer session on the annual military equipment report.

Governor Newsom is announcing new legislation to increase penalties for the trafficking of xylazine, known on the streets as "tranq." In a release from the governor's office in Lake County News, the animal tranquilizer has no approved use for people and is increasingly being found being trafficked in the illegal drug trade. The legislation would make xylazine a controlled substance, exempt from legitimate veterinary use. Newsom says that although tranq hasn't been seen in California at the same rate as other parts of the country, he wants to stay ahead to curb drug dealers and work on treatment and resources for those struggling with addiction. Nationwide, xylazine-related deaths have tripled in recent years and have caused severe wounds leading to amputation. The legislation would build on the Governor's Master Plan for Tackling the Fentanyl and Opioid Crisis and seeks to increase awareness on the trending tranquilizer.

California is allotting nearly \$300 million to build on progress to help around 10,000 homeless residents. In a release from the governor's office in Lake County News, California has removed over 5,600 encampments and provided over \$415 million to move people into housing. The California Interagency Council on Homelessness is now accepting applications for grants. So far, 66 communities have been granted about \$414 million since the start of the program in 2021. The office estimates \$750 million has been allocated to help around 23,000 move away from dangerous conditions on the streets. The Encampment Resolution Grants is an effort with CalTrans to connect homeless people with housing resources with local partners.

The Ukiah Haiku Festival is returning after a three year hiatus. MendoFever reports the open competition is returning this year with categories in English and Spanish, youth and adult competing for the prestigious Jane Reichold International Prize. Submissions will be accepted through February 8th. The festival is planned for the end of April and is free and open to the public. The Haiku traditionally is a three line poem and is a Japanese poetic form. There are regional categories open to residents of Sonoma, Lake, Mendocino and Humboldt Counties. For the first time, in honor of the Pomo culture there is an open call to Pomo Tribes as the name Ukiah is of the Pomo language.

Sheet1

The Yuba Community College District Board of Trustees is planning a meeting for tomorrow about the Woodland Community College's Lake County Campus. It is open to the public in Marysville, and will also be available virtually. The planned discussion will include the Lake County Campus meeting held earlier this month in Clearlake.

Lake County News reports during the November 9th meeting, former and current students and staff discussed the lack of resources in the Lake County Campus. The meeting will start at 10am tomorrow, with the board conducting its self evaluation.

Rain is moving into Northern California with a low pressure system that may also bring lightning to coastal areas. The National Weather Service predicts up to an inch of rain may fall in the coming weekend for parts of Mendocino, Sonoma and Lake Counties. Winds are expected to pick up tomorrow with gusts up to 25 miles an hour along the shoreline. The Press Democrat reports the system may lift the cold overnight lows that have created frosty conditions. Windy and wet conditions are expected to continue thru the weekend. Forecasters say normal seasonal temperatures will return next week.

The City of Fort Bragg City Council is holding a special meeting tomorrow at 5:30 in a closed session to discuss the appointment of City Manager.

Authorities have issued a Silver Alert for an 81 year old woman from Geyserville. Michele Paul has been missing for about two weeks, last seen on the 13th. She is five foot 2 inches tall and weighs around 110 pounds. Sonoma County officials say she was last seen in a black VW Jetta with California license plate 8LBD141. If you

11/30/2023

have any information about Ms. Paul, please call the Healdsburg Police Department

Short-term rentals in Mendocino County will be discussed today in Ukiah from 6 to 8pm with the Department of Planning and Building Services in the final scheduled session. As Mendocino County officials are considering an inland housing ordinance neighboring Sonoma County is considering a proposed ballot measure to expand the lodging tax. The Press Democrat reports the board is looking to amend the tax to include a broader range of short term rentals and more. The board voted 3-2 this week and was one vote short of getting the proposal on the March 2024 election ballot. An estimated \$1.5 million in taxes would be brought in if the proposal were to pass. Supervisors who voted "no" cited concerns about the measure including rental operators notifications. Having not passed, it will not be on the March ballot, but they could revisit the issue to consider putting it on the General Election ballot a year from now.

The FAIR Plan now has a broader homeowners' insurance policy options after a LA Superior Court Judge ruled to uphold the Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara's ruling. Additional coverage including accidental overflow of water or stream; incidental workers' compensation, theft, falling objects; weight of ice, snow or sleet; freezing and more will now be covered under the state insurance plan. These things are usually covered in standard homeowners policies, but weren't previously under the FAIR Plan's limitations. Lake County News reports current FAIR Plan policy holders must purchase a separate difference in conditions to apply. The "insurer of last resort" covered homeowners who couldn't get coverage as waves of insurance companies have left the state. The FAIR Plan has grown over 20 percent in the last year and now policy holders can have more coverage.

Sheet1

The Lake County Board of Supervisors voted to apply for a grant to promote sustainability and more. The board approved a partnership for a climate safe lake program. During their meeting this week, the Supervisors also decided to build the internal capacity of Lake County Community Risk Reduction Authority to use woody waste biomass, making over \$1 million available the county. The county was selected for the pilot program and will start working on it. They'll need a Joint Powers Authority to oversee a bio-mass utilization and sales to meet the goals of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research. According to the Record Bee, the work on climate change projects requires tracking and evaluation as they progress. They are working to meet every requirement including contracts using municipal solid waste algae, food waste for petrochemical products and more to ensure financial sustainability and addressing the overabundance of waste.

The Friends of Cow Mountain organization is looking for volunteers to help clear the abundant brush on paths throughout the trail system. New brush growth from previous wildfires threatens to totally cover some trails that people have used for recreation. Not only are trails disappearing, but the overgrown brush can be dangerous. The area is managed by the Bureau of Land Management but members of the Friends of Cow Mountain have cleared out trails on their off road vehicles spending days on the trails clearing vegetation in recent years. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports they do have permission from BLM and say they are always looking for help clearing the trails used by equestrians, bikers, ORVs and more. The nonprofit is also looking for bigger equipment to help knock down heavy brush areas to help make it safer for the volunteers to work and for people to recreate.

The California Department of Public Health is warning people of the increased use of xylazine. Yesterday the Governor announced new legislation to prevent the trafficking and illicit use of the drug known on the streets as tranq. Lake County News reports xylazine is a powerful sedative and has caused countless overdose deaths throughout the country. While the tranq trend began on the East Coast, it is making its way through the black market to California and often paired with fentanyl, making it even deadlier. The use of tranq creates open, festering sores on users bodies. They are working on a campaign to educate the public about the severity of using the drug illegally. The department is issuing guidance to healthcare facilities to support patients who've been exposed to xylazine and how to treat related wounds and follow up.

Northern California is short on social workers, and medical healthcare providers. The Mendocino Community Health Clinic is encouraging people to apply for a healthcare scholarship at CSU in Chico. The school is offering two scholarships to help people get a Master's in Social Work and eventually practice in underserved counties including Lake and Mendocino. MCHC officials say the program allows people to stay in the community while earning a degree that will help them in their career goals and serve their community by expanding access to healthcare. The Behavioral Health Expansion Program offers a \$10,000 per year stipend, and a public behavioral health program is offering a \$25,000 per year scholarship. Scholarship recipients must serve at a public behavioral health agency. The Mendocino County Office of Education has more details and entry programs and more.

Sheet1

National Wreaths Across America dedicates time annually to adorn veteran's gravesites with Christmas wreaths. This year, the group will be working on their mission on December 16th, when truck drivers roll into town with trucks full of balsam veteran's wreaths. They are looking for residents to help support the program that places nearly 3 million veteran wreaths at over 4,000 locations nationwide and abroad. The theme for this year is "Serve and Succeed." Locally, many Lake and Mendocino County cemeteries will participate with an observance beginning at 9am on the 16th. Check the organizations webpage for details.

Air quality has been worsening in parts of Northern California and the Bay Area this week. Overnight in these areas, air quality has been reaching over 150. The level may impact those with respiratory conditions. During the daytime, the air quality returns to near normal levels. NBC news reports the high pressure system that has dominated the weather has led to less wind and cold nights. The use of chimneys and agricultural burning has led to increased particles in the air overnight along with pollutants like vehicle exhaust. A temperature inversion has been trapping that pollution close to the ground. By morning, the sun warms the surface and the pollutants rise and diffuse. Officials warn those with health conditions should stay inside during the evening hours. Forecasters say the trend will continue for a few more days. Check MendoAir.org for current levels.

California Governor Newsom is set to take on Florida Governor DeSantis tonight on Fox. The event is slated to be one of the biggest in political TV this year. At 6pm tonight Sean Hannity will moderate a 90 minute debate on Red State versus Blue State in Georgia, in front of a live audience. The two governors have been fighting this year and agreed to square off in a debate tonight. Both governors are aiming to boost their political profiles, according to the Press Democrat. Newsom is not running in next year's election, but is supporting President Biden's candidacy and considers the future.

Governor Newsom is appointing Tomiquia Moss as Secretary of the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency. In a release in the Record Bee, Newsom says housing and homelessness is the number one issue in the state and Secretary Moss brings decades of knowledge with the public and nonprofit sectors. The Governor also announced appointments at the California Department of Real Estate, in the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control and the Civil Rights Council.

The attorney representing former Mendocino County Auditor/Controller, Chamise Cubbison, is formally asking the court to recuse District Attorney David Eyster. In her appearance in Mendocino Superior Court yesterday morning, MendoFever reports lawyer Chris Andrian says that there is potential conflict of interest in the public opposition the DA displayed before the Board of Supervisors, and years of contentious history between the two. He continued saying that the Board summarily dismissed Cubbison without pay with no due process. He forecasts civil litigation on that matter. Meanwhile, her co-defendant, Paula Kennedy also appeared, but pleas were not entered as the formal request for recusal was instead presented to the court. Cubbison's next court hearing is set for December 19th.

Sheet1

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12/01/2023 19 local fire departments, fire agencies and community groups are being awarded wildfire safety grants totaling over \$300,000 from the California Fire Foundation with PG&E. The Press Democrat reports the utility's vice president says everyone must work together to combat the state's growing wildfire threat, particularly in the North Coast region. According to the Cal Fire Foundation, the grants will help implement projects like fuels and hazards reduction to public education and outreach as well as new specialized equipment for firefighters. In Mendocino County fire agencies and departments will get over \$72,000. Lake County will receive \$40,000 for tribal wellness and for the Lake Pillsbury Fire Fighters Association.

Some homeless shelters are opening today, with the City Fort Bragg preparing to open their program through local churches and the Hospitality Center as they ready for extreme weather. MendoVoice reports the Fort Bragg emergency weather shelter will open when triggered by weather. City Manager Cervenka says they don't have service to support everyone and don't want to see homeless people stuck in the area. Cervenka says he will present the Emergency Warming Shelter program and eligibility at the city council meeting on December 11th. He urges non local people to get to a community that has more resources. The limited shelter services in Fort Bragg are based on the National Weather Service predictions of extreme weather. In Ukiah, the Building Bridges Homeless Resource Center is operating year round, with stipulations. And the Ford Street Project is offering shelter to families.

The Mendocino Coast Environmental Scholarship program with Mendocino Eco Education and Events and more are presenting a conference on the history of the Save the Redwoods League along with an up to date overview of climate change in our ecosystems and management with an emphasis on Jackson State Demonstration Forest. MendoFever issued a release on the event happening this Saturday, December 2nd from 1 to 3pm at Mendocino's Stanford Inn. Scientists will discuss a paper submitted to Cal Fire and the JAG group on the "New Vision" plan for the forest. They'll talk about the unique redwood belt and how it's changed. The event will accept donations to offset costs of the session.

Sensitive data from Blue Shield of California vision policy holders may be among confidential patient information accessed by criminal hackers. The Mercury News reports the Oakland-based health insurance giant announced the breach this week. Social Security numbers, birth dates, addresses and possibly diagnosis and treatment details were accessed in a cyber-attack. The insurer is among thousands of organizations affected by the hack. The company hasn't confirmed how many customers were affected, but Blue Shield has 4.5 million customers with vision plans that may have had their data taken. Blue Shield says it's taken "immediate steps" to protect its network.

Sheet1

Last night, Governor Newsom faced Governor DeSantis on the debate stage with Sean Hannity moderating. The show began with numbers showing migration out of California in 2021 and 2022. Newsom says the numbers have shifted recently, and told the Florida Governor that California has no peers, being the fifth largest economy in the world. ABC News reports the two discussed abortion with each calling the other extreme on their views. Newsom ended the show by saying that neither of them will be the presidential candidate in the coming election. Instead, political scholars say both were there to boost their national profile.

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The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office is investigating a Christmas tree burglary at Foster's Ranch Market in Laytonville. Wednesday, video footage captured a woman grab their tree displayed at the storefront. MendoFever reports the store's cameras captured the thief from a couple different angles, with employees identifying the suspect driving away with her door open after breaking the tree as she shoved it into her car and sped away. The tree had just been set up earlier that day. The 8 foot tall artificial tree has stood outside of the business for the last decade. It appeared the suspect was id'ed and contacted as a deputy continued the investigation. Foster's Ranch Market is getting a new Christmas tree, and says they'll chain this one up.

The man accused of shooting his assault rifle at the homeless in Clearlake Oaks appeared at the Lake County Superior Court in Lakeport for his prelim hearing. Glen Prasad was in court ordered custody. Last month, Prasad entered a not guilty plea to all charges and special allegations. He faces charges of assault with a firearm and two counts of possessing an assault weapon. It comes after an incident at the Red and White Store in Clearlake Oaks when a man reportedly shot at transients nearby. No one was injured, and witnesses helped describe the shooter who was arrested at a home on Shoreview Drive. Prasad remains in the Lake County Jail with bail set at \$260,000. His next court appearance is scheduled for next Tuesday, the 5th.

About 600 square miles of the Pacific along California's coastline has been leased for floating wind farms with more on the way. The state is working on another renewable energy technology in the form of electricity created from waves and tides, called Blue power. Governor Newsom signed new legislation that instructs agencies to work on feasibility and impacts of capturing ocean movements to generate power within the next year. It's part of California's goal to be an all renewable electric grid by 2045. Cal Matters reports energy authorities and officials say there is great potential along the coast. The work begins now, to develop ocean based projects from pilot programs to commercial power. The National Renewable Energy Lab estimates the total for Blue power sources would be equal to nearly 60 percent of energy production in 2019. The US Department of Energy's "Powering the Blue Economy" initiative is helping with grant funding and sponsors to explore the new technology.

Sheet1

The Grassroots Institute is working to derail a new gas station in Redwood Valley, after multiple years of environmental complaints and violations. Sixty four violations of health and safety codes were charged against the Faizan Corporation, which owns stations in NorCal. They are requesting a minor-use permit for a 10 pump gas station and store on North State Street, between Willits and Redwood Valley. MendoFever reports the company paid a half a million dollar settlement for environmental and business practice violations, most in Mendocino County. Swapping out Weights and Measures seals, falsely advertising the wrong octane gas and groundwater contamination have also been reported. The Grass Roots Institute and other locals want a county ordinance prohibiting any new stations in the county. The Planning Commission is set to discuss the issue at it's meeting next Thursday, the 7th at 10am.

PG&E is being protected from a class action lawsuit stemming from power safety shut-off's in 2019. Last week, the California Supreme Court ruled that the utility is not liable for damages suffered because the California Public Utilities Commission's use of planned blackouts. An Energy Policy Program expert at Stanford told the Press Democrat that although PG&E does bear some responsibility, allowing lawsuits for losses would put the utility in an untenable position. Instead, the focus should be on minimizing impacts of future shut-offs working with the California Public Utilities Commission under their authority.

The Mendocino Coast Rec and Park District is holding their 37th annual Aquathon and silent auction this Saturday to raise money for second grader swim lessons. And this Friday the Fort Bragg Food Bank is seeking volunteers to help low-income folks with veterinary services with the Second Chance Project.

Ukiah's skating rink will open tomorrow at 5pm. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports after the opening, the Parade of Lights begins at 6pm with 70 participants starting the procession on North State Street at Low Gap Road. Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus will finish up the parade on a fire truck and light the downtown Christmas Tree around 7pm.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors is looking for residents who live in Southern Lake County to fill a vacancy on the Cannabis Ordinance Task Force. They are aiming to appoint someone during their December 19th Board of Supervisors Meeting. The county is asking that interested candidates should apply by December 13th. Applications are at the Lake County Courthouse in the Clerk of the Board Office in Lakeport. Interested residents can also check out more information on the position at Lake County's webpage. It is a volunteer position for the Cannabis

12/04/2023 Ordinance Task Force advisory board.

The Mendocino Transit Authority Board of Directors will get a presentation on the draft Ukiah Transit Center feasibility study at their meeting next week, December 6th at the Ukiah Valley Conference Center at 1:30pm. Information published in the Ukiah Daily Journal reports the plan will focus on a recommended transit center site, north of Kohls on North Orchard Avenue in Ukiah. The public is invited as the project is aimed at including community and stakeholders input. The final plan is expected to be finished in January. The feasibility study is funded by the Mendocino Council of Governments with Local Transportation Funds.

This Friday the Mendocino Ballet Company will be performing the Nutcracker with local performers from Ukiah, Willits and surrounding communities. Trudy McCreanor is the Artistic Director and is planning the performance for Friday at 7pm. Tickets are available at the Mendocino Book Company this week or on the Mendocino Ballet Company's website.

Sheet 1

Lake County is announcing a disturbing trend that is killing young people. In a release issued by the county, officials say there have been multiple incidents of youth opioid overdoses, some fatal. We reported last week on the urgent and dangerous uptick in a powerful sedative, xylazine, known on the streets as tranq. Between fentanyl and xylazine communities across the county have been rocked to the core, including right here. 100,000 people nationwide were killed by the fatally dangerous illicit drug use, 79 of those in Lake County. It's becoming increasingly clear that even one dose can kill. Dangerously fake pills are making the situation increasingly dire. Lake County's Behavioral Health Services Director is urging the public to talk to your kids and everyone around you about the overdose reversal drug, Nalaxone or Narcan.

The Ukiah City Council will hold a public hearing on December 6, 2023. They plan to review the Fee Schedule for the Planning and Building Services Divisions of the Department of Community Development. Changes could include alterations to the initial deposit amount for major planning permits, pre-zonings, annexations, and rezonings. The council may also remove the initial deposit range of \$1,000 – \$3,000. California Insights reports the council is also considering establishing a single minor permit level. The flat fee for minor permits may also increase from the range of \$500-\$900 to a flat \$1,000. City Staff are recommending a new 5% fee of the total building permit cost for planning consultation services. They are also suggesting an increase in the hourly rate for building division staff services, under the annual rate published by the City of Ukiah Finance Director.

Cal Fire is announcing a new online platform in their monthly newsletter. Cal Fire has started a new feature on social media called Cal Fire Callings. The application allows the department to celebrate the individuality of their personnel and recognize the talents that contribute to the overall culture. This initiative provides a window into their lives, offering insights into outside accomplishments, hobbies, and passions that go beyond the scope of firefighting and emergency response.

Lake County issued a press release listing the number of vacancies they are hoping to fill on advisory boards and commissions. From the Central Region Town Hall and Emergency Medical Care Committee, the Heritage Commission and Lake County Ag Advisory Committee to the Library Advisory Board, there are many openings available to eligible county residents. Applications and the vacancy listings are available on the county website. You can also reach out in person at the Lake County Courthouse. All the positions are voluntary, but are valuable to the community.

Cal Trans and Mendocino County are offering a Free Clean California Community Dump Voucher in Laytonville, a week from this Friday, on the 15th. Vouchers will be handed out at Harwood Hall on the 15th, from noon to 5pm. The voucher allows residents to drop off large items for free. There is a limit of one voucher per family and is good for a load of household items to be taken to the Willits Transfer Station on Franklin Avenue. Hazardous waste, tires, business waste and construction debris will not be allowed. Cal Trans is reminding people to secure and properly cover your load to keep the roads and waterways clean.

The Lake County Registrar of Voters issued information about the Kelseyville United School District's Bond Measure Q. In the notice to voters, the Registrar notes that the deadline to submit arguments for and against the measure is December 12th. You can visit the Registrar of Voters for more information on the measure and more as upcoming elections are getting close.

Sheet1

Redwood Community Services is now operating the emergency shelter in Lakeport as of last Friday. Lake County Behavioral Services with the Lake County Continuum of Care say Redwood Community Services have approved a new name to mark the new chapter. Xamatin (hah m-i-tin), a northern Pomo word meaning lake. The transition to 24 hour service is a significant change, and much needed in the community. The Integrated Health Director says they're not able to take new guests for at least a week and staff is working to connect with new people encouraging them to return the week of December 11th for information and resource details. The shelter is able to provide up to 35 guests with food, and other valuable support services.

The National Weather Service says the high pressure system west of the central coast is ushering in a strong lower pressure system in the Gulf of Alaska. That means more rain is on it's way being funneled between the two systems. Weather officials say there is a good likelihood that one to three inches is possible with most of the precipitation headed toward northern areas of Mendocino County and north.

The Mendocino County District Attorney is urging stronger recruitment of attorneys to face the shortage of applicants. Vacancies are slated to continue through the next year nationwide and especially in Mendocino County. The DA posted a Reuters Article on social Media over the weekend discussing the issue facing the county as prosecutors are headed to nearby areas for greater compensation packages with what he calls serious competitive lawyer poaching. He notes Mendocino County's access to nature and high quality of life scores.

Senator Mike McGuire is sharing his plans for the next three years. During the Judge's Breakfast in Clearlake last Thursday, he went over projects and goals for the near future. He touted achievements in growing tourism, affordable housing and the roll-out of high-speed internet aimed at covering 10,000 miles. McGuire talked about bridging the digital divide and growing the Golden State Internet, to be owned by state tax payers. The Record Bee reports he shared the process of creating more housing units within the next year and talked about the City of Clearlake and other areas moving forward on that front. McGuire talked about state programs including the Care Court program that pivots mental health and substance abuse experiences away from judicial penalties and into behavioral health solutions. The Senator discussed how home insurers are leaving or limiting service in the state, and hardening properties to mitigate wildfire risk. Next month, he'll move into the State Senate Pro Tempore position.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors are planning to go over PG&E's initial decommissioning plan for the Potter Valley Project. They'll meet tomorrow morning at 9am and discuss the fate of Lake Pillsbury and residents of the county in how the future of the Eel and Russian Rivers diversion plans will affect them. They'll consider adopting the Lake County Hazard Mitigation Plan and appointments to the Lakeport Fire Protection District Board of Directors. Lake County News reports they plan to adopt a resolution to approve the County Sheriff's Office to apply for grant funding including a Homeland Security application. The board plans to present a Revised State Water Resources Control Board's regulations for the Clear Lake Watershed. In closed session they plan to work on interviews and appointments for the Health Services Director and more.

Sheet1

The City of Ukiah issued an update on street work in MendoFever. The city says crews will be replacing the sewer line between Gobbi and Cherry and are asking residents to drive carefully around construction crews. Weather permitting, at the end of this week work will begin on the joint trench that will run parallel with the west side of the street and house under-grounded electric and communication lines. Work is happening on sidewalks and driveways on the north side as they're poured, but may take five or more days to cure. Bases for new streetlights are being installed on the north side. Through traffic will continue on State Street and traffic signals at Gobbi and State as well as Mill and State will be on flash.

12/05/2023

CHP Clear Lake is investigating a fatality on the road with a Tesla hitting a woman on SR-29. Friday at about 6:20pm the driver of a Tesla Model S was headed north when they hit the woman. She suffered major injuries and was taken to Adventist Health in Clear Lake. Despite life saving efforts, the woman was pronounced dead due to her injuries from the crash. Initial reports in MendoFever indicate the woman on the road may have been under the influence of alcohol.

The Lakeport City Council is meeting today at 6pm and will go over a contract for just over \$128,000 for Carnegie Library improvements to begin in February and finish in June. Lake County News reports the staff will ask for a nuisance abatement hearing and consider adopting a resolution naming the Vista Point Shopping Center a public nuisance and order the property owner to abate identified nuisances within 30 days.

A California public interest, civil rights law firm and advocacy organization, Public Advocates wrote to 15 school districts who failed to submit critical credentialing information on teachers. In a release issued in KymKemp, the organization warned the districts of their obligation to certify numbers in the state's educational data system in accordance with the California Department of Education's deadlines. The Round Valley Unified District in Mendocino County was included in the warning letter. The data districts are mandated to supply help identify what student groups are most impacted by teacher mis-assignments and more. A senior policy member for Public Advocates says they've reached out to the districts to urge troubleshooting and compliance in the future to ensure transparency, support and accountability.

The California Department of Public Health has transitioned from the COVID dashboard, to the new Respiratory Virus Dashboard. According to the Press Democrat, the data will show hospital admissions, deaths and test positivity rates for COVID and the flu. The new dashboard appeared on Friday about a month into the season. An infectious disease specialist at UC San Francisco says COVID is still the main cause of incoming hospitalizations and deaths nationwide. RSV is also on the rise according to the state health department. COVID numbers are about the same numbers as last years figures. Health officials are urging people to get the COVID, flu and RSV vaccines as well as taking precautions like staying home if you're sick, and limited time in public places.

Sheet1

The Lake County Board of Supervisors are planning to go over PG&E's initial decommissioning plan for the Potter Valley Project. They'll meet this morning at 9am and discuss the fate of Lake Pillsbury and residents of the county in how the future of the Eel and Russian Rivers diversion plans will affect them. They'll consider adopting the Lake County Hazard Mitigation Plan and appointments to the Lakeport Fire Protection District Board of Directors. Lake County News reports they plan to adopt a resolution to approve the County Sheriff's Office to apply for grant funding including a Homeland Security application. The board plans to present a Revised State Water Resources Control Board's regulations for the Clear Lake Watershed. In closed session they plan to work on interviews and appointments for the Health Services Director and more.

Candidates for the 1st and 2nd District Mendocino County Board of Supervisors will meet for a forum on December 14th, 6pm at the Ukiah Civic Center. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports residents of the districts are encouraged to participate in the forum with issues of concern and questions to the candidates. Questions from the public will be given to the moderator and each candidate will have equal time to answer. Mendocino Women's Political Coalition member Christine Rodriguez will be the moderator. There will be campaign information available at the event one week from this Thursday.

The East Region Town Hall will meet tomorrow the 6th at 4pm in Clearlake Oaks. The guest speaker will be the newly appointed Lake County Chief Public Defender Raymond Bueanaventura. Lake County News reports the agenda includes updates on commercial cannabis, the Shoreline Area Plan, the Northshore Fire Protection District and Spring Valley updates. EARTH's next meeting is set for January 3rd.

Bottle deposit laws are changing in the state. California residents can soon turn in wine, liquor and other bottles for cash. The Governor signed an amendment to the California Bottle Bill into law last fall and added to it in October. The program starts next month to encourage people to recycle. The Press Democrat reports the Cal Recycle Director says it's the first of several changes they're rolling out to make recycling easier. Bottles and other containers under 24 ounces have a California Redemption Value of 5 cents, and larger containers can be redeemed for a dime. The changes include boxed wine containers, liquor bottles and large juice containers for a deposit of twenty five cents. . The state will use \$285 million for expanding recycling processing. Retailers in the state are required to accept recycling.

Tribal leaders from across California and the nation are headed to the nation's capital for the White House Tribal Nations Summit, which starts tomorrow. Many California tribes are asking lawmakers and President Joe Biden to further protect more tribal land currently managed by federal agencies. The California News Service reports that since taking office, President Biden has created five national monuments using the Antiquities Act. Congress is also considering legislation to create or enlarge national monuments, including an expansion of the Berryessa Snow National Monument in Lake County. The two-day summit draws tribal leaders from across the nation to discuss a range of issues.

Sheet1

A new study published in Nature Plants shows how coastal redwood trees have growth after catastrophic wildfire with the discovery of ancient buds and decades old carbon reserves. Save the Redwoods League issued a release in MendoFever describing the results suggesting that many redwoods were actually well prepared for a wildfire event. The study observed a mini carbon dating system, a first of its kind tool that helps measure the number of radiocarbon atoms in samples to find the age of carbon reserves used to grow new leaves. A team from Northern Arizona University and the University of Nevada collected samples at Big Basin following the CZU fires and have identified carbon reserves the redwoods used to produce sprouts more than a half century old. The effect has rarely been documented before and never in such large, old trees.

The EPA is announcing the final cleanup plan for a mine site and residential soils in Clearlake Oaks. Lake County News reports the Sulphur Bank Mercury Mine Superfund site cleanup will include removing or covering contaminated residential soils, combining and covering mine waste piles and reducing mercury in the lake. Toxic levels of mercury and arsenic spread into nearby neighborhoods and into Clear Lake from mining operations through the 1950's. The EPA held a 90-day public comment period and answered questions online and in person with hearings geared at the community and Tribal advocates. The department's prior cleanups of the Superfund site worked to control erosion, the removal of contaminated soil, capping mine waste and more. The aim now is to continue and focus on reducing mercury pollution.

The Mendocino County Cultural Services Agency is announcing a scavenger hunt and more this month. Everyone is invited to participate in a Cozy Scavenger Hunt starting tomorrow through the 23rd. Visitors can also create holiday cards at their festive station and interact with historic typewriters and old kitchen gadgets to create a recipe booklet with recipes from the collection. It's all happening at the Mendocino County Museum.

The Ukiah Brand Library is holding a Cold Weather Clothing Drive now through January. In a release in MendoVoice the library is asking for donations of clean and lightly used coats, sweaters, scarves, socks and more. Check out the mendolibrary.org site for more details as the colder and wet weather moves in.

Some Mendocino County patients covered by Blue Shield may be out of service, with Adventist Health terminating the contract with the insurer. KymKemp reports the contract between the hospital group and Blue Shield of California was set to expire on December 1st. A press release from Adventist notes that Anthem Blue Shield patients may be able to get care for a period of time as a continuity of care service, and is advising customers to call the customer service number on their benefit card for details. Patients must ask their health plan for continuity of care and the doctor and hospital must agree to keep them as patients, according to the California Department of Managed Healthcare. Last year, Adventist reportedly complained that the insurer did not pay enough. Most public workers in Mendocino County are insured by Anthem Blue Cross. The hospital built a link for frequently asked questions with new information on the situation. Adventist operates 26 hospitals and 400 clinics across the west coast and Hawaii, with Blue Shield the third largest insurer in California with 4.8 million members.

12/06/2023

Sheet1

There is an outbreak of the bird flu and Sonoma County supervisors have declared a local emergency. The order will mandate euthanizing more than a quarter million ducks and laying hens from a couple of local poultry operations. The Press Democrat reports the outbreak was first detected at a commercial duck farm before Thanksgiving. The emergency declaration will help get funding for public safety and emergency services spending to support businesses and over 200 workers affected as a result. State and federal agencies across the area known for eggs and poultry production have cited access and space issues and risk of contagion danger with a nearby watercourse. The birds will be taken to a landfill to properly handle the poultry with special linings in disposal pits to stop leaching. Around 1 million commercially raised birds within 5 miles of the area may be susceptible to the airborne virus. Officials urge poultry operators to keep flocks indoors and clean all equipment.

An internet outage that impacted a large part of Lake County and parts of Mendocino County is prompting the Lake County Board of Supervisors to meet for a special meeting tomorrow at 9am. Also on the agenda, Lake County News reports that public comments will be submitted in response to PG&E's draft surrender plan for the Potter Valley Project including the Scott Dam. The board will also consider adopting the Lake County Hazard Mitigation Plan. The board plans to go over grant funding applications with the County Sheriff and the Department of Parks and Recreation. Appointments will be considered to the Lakeport Fire Protection District Board of Directors and on the Mental Health Advisory Board.

The EPA is announcing the final cleanup plan for a mine site and residential soils in Clearlake Oaks. Lake County News reports the Sulphur Bank Mercury Mine Superfund site cleanup will include removing or covering contaminated residential soils, combining and covering mine waste piles and reducing mercury in the lake. Toxic levels of mercury and arsenic spread into nearby neighborhoods and into Clear Lake from mining operations through the 1950's. The EPA held a 90-day public comment period and answered questions online and in person with hearings geared at the community and Tribal advocates. The department's prior cleanups of the Superfund site worked to control erosion, the removal of contaminated soil, capping mine waste and more. The aim now is to continue and focus on reducing mercury pollution.

California State Parks are announcing over \$35 million to the National Park Service for Land and water Conservation Fund grants across the state. In a release in KymKemp, funding will provide public agencies with the ability to buy land or develop recreational amenities like playgrounds, sports fields, dog and skate parks and more. Recommended applicants, including Lake County will be forwarded to the National Park Service for approval. One recommendation is the Cobb Community Park Acquisition with over \$200,000 to buy nearly 13 acres to develop a new Cobb Community park. Following approval, grantees will take part in a mandatory grant administration workshop and begin work to complete their projects.

Sheet1

There is a possible arson case in a fire that destroyed a trailer in Cloverdale. The Cloverdale Fire Protection District crews responded to the blaze on Sunday at a former concrete plant. A witness reported seeing smoke around 4:30am on Berti Lane. The Press Democrat reports the former office building in the trailer was consumed, and had likely been burning for over an hour. Firefighters were able to extinguish the blaze and spend a few hours putting out hot spots and mopping up. Arson is suspected as there was no gas or electricity operating on the property that had been shut down nearly 15 years ago. There were also multiple suspicious holes in the fence surrounding the lot. No one was injured. Fire officials are investigation where the fire started and what sparked it.

The Ukiah City Council is set to meet today and consider approving an amendment to the Western Hills Annexation Area to allow more development. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports city staff are preparing for today's meeting with the purchases of land in recent years known as the Western Hills. The city reportedly plans to annex the land next to the western city limits for open space preservation, wildfire protection and limited development. The city proposed to allow 15 acres transferred to a developer for up to three parcels for single family units and more. The Ukiah Planning Commission recommended last month that the project be approved for one developed parcel instead of three. The council will consider the proposal and modification recommended by the Planning Commission at the meeting set for 6pm tonight.

Faculty at the largest US university system is striking for better wages. The AP reports California State University faculty will strike for four days across campuses for better benefits and pay. The union represents the California Faculty Association with around 29,000 professors, librarians, coaches and more who are seeking a 12 percent salary increase. The union is also working to expand parental leave from six weeks to a full semester. The chancellor's office says the pay increase is not feasible.

The Mendocino Transit Authority Board of Directors will get a presentation on the draft Ukiah Transit Center feasibility study at their meeting today at the Ukiah Valley Conference Center at 1:30pm. Information published in the Ukiah Daily Journal reports the plan will focus on a recommended transit center site, north of Kohls on North Orchard Avenue in Ukiah. The public is invited as the project is aimed at including community and stakeholders input. The final plan is expected to be finished in January. The feasibility study is funded by the Mendocino Council of Governments with Local Transportation Funds.

The Russian River Water Forum Planning Group is meeting tomorrow from 10am to 1pm in the Ukiah Valley Conference Center. In the latest Russian River Water Forum update, the agenda includes presentations on the Eel River and discussion on the PG&E draft decommissioning plan. Representatives from Sonoma Water, the Robinson Rancheria, Potter Valley Tribe and others will be on hand to go over next steps for the Water Forum. They'll go over the October Planning Group Meeting and accept public comments.

Sheet1

The Mendocino County Office of Education is engaging in their annual holiday charity for homeless kids. Foster and Homeless Youth Services have tags on their holiday display corresponding to age and interests. Volunteers within the office and local sponsors and residents are beginning to claim tags and go holiday shopping for kids across Mendocino County. Hundreds of children across the county lack a consistent and safe nighttime residence. The Office of Education works year round to provide basic needs like food, clothes and school supplies and work with the Foster and Homeless Youth Services Program to connect homeless students with resources. The community is invited to help out by choosing a tag from the lobby or donating with a check or money order. A \$25 donation will mean a gift for one child. The gift drive runs through December 15th when gifts will begin to be distributed.

The California Dungeness Crab Fishing Gear Working Group is meeting today to figure out a course of action, since an endangered Pacific leatherback sea turtle was found dead recently, entangled in fishing gear. It has implications for the Dungeness crab season, which may be further delayed. The California News Service reports this year's crab season has already been delayed twice and could be pushed into the new year. Federal research shows that Pacific leatherback sea turtles have declined off the California coast by 90 percent over the last 30 years and are at risk of going extinct due to gear entanglements, loss of nesting habitat, and poaching.

The Clearlake City Council is meeting today at 6pm and will consider an agreement with the Elem Indian Colony for its plans for a travel center and go over possibilities regarding increased costs of the Burns Valley Sports Complex Project with delays stemming from the Koi Nation's suit against the city. Lake County News reports they will appoint the 2024 mayor and vice mayor. The council is set to consider a public utility easement, and authorize a contract for automated license plate reader cameras. Also on their agenda is resolution of an application for the Outdoor Equity Program Grant. In closed session, they'll go over a lawsuit and liability claim against the city, as well as the Koi Nation lawsuit.

12/07/2023

The Silver Alert issued recently for a missing woman out of Sonoma County has been cancelled, as police found the missing woman, Michele Paul, deceased. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Department was alerted to a suspicious vehicle on Mountain View Road in Boonville on Monday. There they found her car down a dirt road on in a rural area. There they confirmed it belonged to the missing woman and deployed the Mendocino County Search and Rescue Team to find her in the heavily wooded terrain. There deputies found Paul's body. There were no obvious signs of foul play in their investigation into her death. The county coroner is now investigating how and when she passed.

The Lake County Sheriff's Office is releasing its Critical Incident Debrief video and audio of a fatal officer involved shooting in Lakeport last month. MendoFever reports it includes footage from a couple of deputies body cameras, a cell phone of the suspect armed with a gun and the audio of the 911 dispatch. It happened on November 16th when Lake County Sheriff's Deputies responded to a report of an assault involving a knife on Dixon Drive. There they found a suspect barricaded with several vehicles. The officers responded when the man pulled a gun from his waistband. Seconds later the suspect appeared with a gun when a deputy took a shot. They repeatedly called for him to drop his weapon, then followed him to the backyard where a second shot from authorities hit the suspect, he then fell into the pool. Soon thereafter he was pronounced dead. He was seen with an automatic handgun.

Sheet1

The Mendocino County Inland Water and Power Commission and the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors voted to take steps in the dismantling of the Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project and approve a Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement in forming the Eel Russian Project Authority. The board voted unanimously at a meeting on November 30th to approve the joint authority, according to the Ukiah Daily Journal. The formation was at the request of PG&E to have the legal authority to negotiate with as the decommissioning process proceeds including the Scott and Cape Horn Dams on the Eel River. In the utility's draft plan PG&E notes the joint authority will be responsible for modifications at the dam sites and the Van Arsdale Diversion to develop the New Eel Russian Facility. The aim is to allow water diversions through the Potter Valley Project's tunnel between the two rivers and allow for upstream and downstream fish migration. PG&E says they'll release a final draft surrender application next June with a final application expected in January of 2025.

Cal Fire and the Jackson Demonstration State Forest are inviting the public to be involved in management of the forest through the Jackson Advisory Group. There are looking for two applicants. The group is requesting a small private forestland owner and an industrial forestland owner. Interested candidates should apply via a letter of interest and resume by January 12th. Candidates should mail their information to the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection office in Fort Bragg.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office is investigating a probation violation. Last Sunday around 7:30pm, deputies were called to a situation off of Highway 175 in Hopland. There they found Antonio Lopez at his home. He was on formal probation. Deputies spotted methamphetamine and arrested Lopez, for felony probation violation and misdemeanor possession. He was booked into county jail and is being held on a no bail status.

There are now five counties in California reporting outbreaks of the highly contagious avian flu in commercial poultry flocks. The announcement was made yesterday by Federal and state food and agriculture officials affecting almost half a million birds. Last week, it was announced that outbreaks were in San Benito and Sonoma Counties with over a quarter million hens and ducks having to be euthanized. Fresno and Merced Counties also reported outbreaks of the airborne virus. This week, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors declared a local emergency to coordinate with other impacted counties to speed up aid to the operators and employees affected. The Press Democrat reports since the middle of last year, there have been nearly 70 million birds throughout 47 states affected with the avian flu.

In more optimistic agricultural news, there are two newly approved American Viticultural Areas in Lake County. Lake County News reports winegrape advocates are welcoming the Long Valley and Upper Lake Valley AVAs as the industry raises the bar of quality in California's wine production. The area is known for high elevation, volcanic soil and high quality winegrapes creating wines that are distinct and complex. The region is known for high end sauvignon blanc, cabernet sauvignon, syrah and more. The two new AVAs are fostering local viticultural innovation with the president of the Lake County Winegrape Commission saying the new viticultural areas further demonstrate the potential of the county.

Sheet1

Stellantis is accusing the California Air Resources Board of retaliation. The motor company filed a petition yesterday claiming the Board is retaliating against it through an "underground regulatory scheme" that put it at a competitive disadvantage. Stellantis says they are facing enforcement of more stringent greenhouse gas emissions standards than competitors like Ford. They claim board violated state law by failing to give public notice about the framework agreements and by not requiring public comment. Stellantis says its political speech freedom protected by the First Amendment was violated by the exclusionary framework agreements. It now faces enforcement of California's greenhouse gas standards, while the automakers with framework agreements don't, according to the Detroit News.

The former Speaker of the House of Representatives, California's Mike McCarthy is announcing he's resigning by the end of the year. McCarthy says he will vacate his seat and not seek reelection, leaving speculation as to who will represent California's agricultural constituents. In his resignation posted in the Wall Street Journal yesterday he says he will continue to recruit the country's best and brightest to run for elected office and will continue to serve America. It will now be up to Governor Newsom to decide on whether to call a special election to fill the remainder of McCarthy's term. Cal Matters reports a special election would need to be called with two weeks of a vacancy. According to the Secretary of State, the filing deadline for candidates is December 13th for next years March primary and the November general election.

The Senate ProTem's Office is announcing that Senate ProTem Designee Mike McGuire will formally be formally elected to the position on February 5th on the Senate floor. Additional details on the state senator's leadership will be released next week. Lake County's Assembly representative Cecilia Aguiar-Curry was appointed Assembly Majority leader last month, according to Lake County News.

Temperatures have increased across the state according to Climate Central's 2023 Winter Package. The 1 to 3 degree increase may mean the state's fruit and nut crops could be negatively affected according to the Sac Bee. Data from the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration's Regional Climate Centers predicts warmer temperatures could make winter storms more hazardous with sleet and freezing rain. The National Weather Service says wet conditions are a possibility with the strong El Nino moves through the state. Forecasters say there is a 75 to 85 percent chance the system will be strong this year.

California's budget deficit has leapt from previous estimates of over \$14 billion to \$68 billion dollars. The unexpectedly low tax revenues could force the state's deepest cuts in spending in nearly a century. The figure coming from the nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office released yesterday is going to drastically change 2024's spending. State budget analysts say there are options, liking dipping into cash reserves. According to Politico, the department says the administration will present a plan to close the budget gap when Newsom sends his proposal to the Legislature next month.

12/08/2023

Sheet1

The Board of Forestry and Fire Protection is hearing a deafening roar from organizations about the future of the Jackson Demonstration State Forest. Cal Fire, the Jackson Demonstration State Forest Advisory Group, The Save Jackson State Forest Coalition, Tribal members and more went over future decisions about timber harvests in Sacramento this week. MendoVoice reports several groups demanded more open hearings where the public can have a real voice. Cal Fire representatives described a wild JAG meeting in September when things got out of hand. The former facilitator, Cal Fire's Kim Rodrigues attempted to work the meeting but groups felt that Cal Fire rushed the approach of a broadened collaboration. Many attendees demanded fewer timber harvests to protect the ancient old growth trees, roads, waterways and more. Tribal advocates listed violations to treaties in place, including no consultation with them on the future of the forest.

The Lake County Sheriff's Office has identified a woman who was killed after being hit by a car on Highway 29 last week in Middletown. Susan Johnson-Cline was pronounced dead after crash, after being hit by a Tesla last Friday evening. Lake County News reports she was walking along the highway in wet, rainy conditions. Authorities believe alcohol may have been a factor in the woman's death, as she may have been under the influence when she decided to walk along the highway. She died of her injuries at Adventist Health Clear Lake according to CHP.

Cal Fire's Wood Products and Bioenergy Grants Program is announcing \$15 million has been awarded for 16 projects across the state. The projects aim will be to fund expansion in workforce development and businesses involved in creating healthy, resilient forests as part of California's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan. A Cal Fire spokesman says projects not only support forest health and wildfire resilience but also support the people who depend on the state's forestlands including tribal communities. Some grants will fund transporting low value forest biomass that would otherwise be cost prohibitive. Other projects include further reforestation efforts and projects to develop a new forest bioenergy production facility.

The Mendocino Board of Supervisors are holding a public hearing on December 19th at 9am to consider a changes in property tax benefits beginning in 2024. The board will consider implementing AB1265 to establish new Williamson Act Contracts including reduction of property tax benefits and related reduction of the term of contracts to nine years, effective in the new year. Residents may be limited to raising issues at the hearing or in written correspondence to the board before the meeting. You can elect to serve notice of non renewal instead of accepting a nine year contract.

Josefina Duenas is the first deaf Latina to serve as mayor after being ceremoniously sworn in this week. Tribal performers danced with singing and drums in City Hall for the first time to celebrate the beginning of a mayor's term in office. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports outgoing Mayor Mari Rodin stood next to Duenas with a mix of Spanish and Tribal rituals Wednesday. Duenas sat as Mayor for the official council meeting saying she was happy with Vice Mayor Doug Crane's help and grateful for her fellow council members helping her in the new position.

Sheet1

For the very first time, state officials broadened redeemable cash for recyclables like wine and alcohol bottles and more. Starting on January 1st people can redeem from 5 cents to 25 cents for each clean wine or liquor bottles, bladder and pouch packaging for wine and more. The Press Democrat reports if every eligible item were recycled for redemption, they estimate 500 million more containers would be recycled instead of heading to the dump or on the streets. There are a couple of new laws set to reform the state recycling program and increase access to cash in. California is investing \$285 million to support CRV centers so that when you pay the deposit with the cost of a beverage you can get that back. Sonoma County is set to get some new technologies to recycle for redemption initiative.

Matthew Burton of Laytonville is set to be sentenced after being found guilty by a Mendocino County jury of drunk driving. He had been in a traffic accident in September on Branscomb Road while under the influence of alcohol after an investigation with CHP and the California Department of Justice forensic lab. KymKemp reports it was a three day trial with Judge Pekin presiding in Mendocino County Superior Court.

The Bureau of Land Management and the USDA Forest Service will hear from the community in a public meeting in Woodland next week on the region's public lands. Lake County News reports the meeting will include a proposal to designate existing public lands as a national monument in the state. The gathering is a response to requests from local, state and tribal officials in addition to pending legislation in Congress for the protection of the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument's expansion area. The meeting is set for next Wednesday the 13th at the Community Services Department in Woodland from 2 to 4pm.

The Clearlake City Council is green-lighting the sale of a property at the former Pearce Field airport to Adventist Health Clear Lake for development of a medical facility. The \$50 million investment is expected to increase health outcomes and access along with the city's economy. Lake County News reports during a special meeting yesterday morning, the council voted unanimously on the project. The property is about three acres at the former airport on Old Highway 53 across from the main hospital. The purchase price... was \$1. But the city is set to cash in on tens of millions of dollars with the facility and draw in more. Adventist Health is planning a 38,000 square foot rural health clinic aimed at family medicine, pediatrics and other various specialties. The new facility is set to open in 2026. The city is reserving an additional 10 acres for future development.

A Mendocino County jury announced it found a man from Willits guilty of committing perjury trying to illegally transfer a title to a car that didn't belong to him. David Foster was also found guilty of submitting a forged document to seize the title to the vehicle, making it two felony counts he is guilty of. It took the jury only 20 minutes, according to the Mendocino County District Attorney. An evidentiary hearing is set for December 15th for the prosecutor to present evidence showing Foster has a prior "Strike" conviction. If the Strike allegation is found true, then the Three Strikes law will mean he'll receive an enhanced sentence.

Sheet1

Mendocino County Superior Court Judge Jeanine Nadel has announced her retirement, to begin on the 1st of the year. Judge Nadel was appointed to the bench by Governor Jerry Brown in 2012. Before the appointment, Nadel served as deputy county counsel in the county from 1990 to 2000. She was a deputy public defender in the Mendocino County Public Defender's Office and was assistant county counsel for Alameda County. Her career spans over 40 years. Nadel was instrumental in building a close and effective working relationship with the court, building strong intergovernmental work that continues today. MendoFever reports Judge Nadel says it has been a pleasure and rewarding experience to have worked in public service and she looks forward to pursuing new opportunities to help continue to serve the community.

The Mendocino County Sheriff Search and Rescue team are looking for a missing person. Deputies got a message from worried family members on Thursday, after Scott Graves disappeared from his home without his car or belongings. Graves had trouble leaving his home with unsafe roads that were waterlogged in Piercy. He last spoke with his family a week ago today, saying he would try to leave Tuesday. By Thursday the family went to his home but he was not there. Friday evening, deputies arrived at the property on Island Mountain Road and searched the immediate area for him for several hours. The Search and Rescue team was deployed again thru Saturday and are still actively searching. He is 5 feet and 11 inches tall and weighs around 180 pounds. If anyone has seen Graves or knows where he may be, they are urged to call the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office.

12/11/2023

Adventist Health Mendocino Coast's Hospital Administrator, Judy Leach says they regret they terminated contract with Blue Shield but do offer some options for residents covered by the insurer. In a public release, Leach says services with Blue Shield expired on the 1st. Medical imaging, labs and other hospital based services may be continued by calling Blue Shield and asking about Continuity of Care benefit and Out-of-Network Referrals. The Hospital Administrator says the contract with the insurer's clinic providers and physicians is still in effect and not currently terminated. They tried to negotiate with Blue Shield over the last year hoping for an agreement, but did not come to one. The hospital group says they've faced significant financial losses and have unprecedented increases in labor and supply costs.

CHP is looking for a passenger of a Ford Mustang who fled when a deputy was finally able to pull over the car. MendoFever reports the chase began around 5:30pm when the Mustang did not stop immediately on Highway 20 east of Fort Bragg. When the car finally did pull over, someone jumped out and fled into the woods. The other remained in the car where CHP was seen holding them at gunpoint over 10 minutes after the initial traffic stop was initiated. The deputy requested backup reporting the remaining person was being held at gunpoint. More details are yet to be released as CHP continues to investigate.

Cal Trans and Mendocino County are offering a Free Clean California Community Dump Voucher in Laytonville, this Friday, on the 15th. Vouchers will be handed out at Harwood Hall on the 15th, from noon to 5pm. The voucher allows residents to drop off large items for free. There is a limit of one voucher per family and is good for a load of household items to be taken to the Willits Transfer Station on Franklin Avenue. Hazardous waste, tires, business waste and construction debris will not be allowed. Caltrans is reminding people to secure and properly cover your load to keep the roads and waterways clean.

Sheet1

The Palace Hotel in Ukiah now has fencing to protect people walking in front of the historic building. Scaffolding is also in place in an effort to protect people walking by. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the City Manager says they're working to update formal communications with the owner and city officials on the future of the property and the safety of the community. The Chief Building Official says within hours of getting a permit application, it was approved for the pedestrian protection plan. The city is working to be transparent in the community and all involved as the future of the hotel still remains uncertain.

The role of Lake County's District Attorney's Office Victim-Witness Division Program is an essential element of justice. At the Judge's Breakfast in Clearlake last week, the Program Administrator Tatsuhiko Suzuki discussed the department's duties and their varied programs. Suzuki says the unit is governed by the state that mandates services including crisis intervention, orientation to criminal justice, resource referral, direct counseling and more. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the office on Second Street in Lakeport employs three advocates to help victims and work with the court behind the scenes to reduce trauma to criminal victims and safety to witnesses. The department also provides financial help with unexpected costs and medical treatment. The Judge's Breakfast is open to the public and held every Thursday morning at 7am at the Masonic Lodge.

The City of Fort Bragg is holding a special city council meeting today at 4pm. They plan to confer with legal council on litigation between the Mendocino Railroad and the city as well as anticipated litigation in closed session. They also plan to discuss public employment for the City Clerk position regarding the hiring of Diana Sanchez. During the regular city council meeting at 6pm, the council plans to consider adopting a resolution to extend the temporary waiver of the parking in lieu fee for the Central Business District. They'll discuss extending the Water Capital Improvement Fee and Wastewater Capital Improvement Fee Deferment for Restaurants and other eateries. Also on the agenda is consideration of approving Isaac Whippy for City Manager. The council plans to introduce changes to ordinances regarding residential district site planning and building standards, and regulations for accessory dwelling units. The Fort Bragg Planning Commission's recommendation for a Local Coastal Plan Amendment Application will also be considered. The council will receive a Financial Update for fiscal year 2023-2024 and more with a full agenda.

Mendocino County issued an update on the Bower Park Restoration and Improvement Grant update to begin development to work on eliminating hazards and addressing safety. Phase I includes hazardous tree removal. Phase II includes repairs on the spillway, fencing, the amphitheatre stage and improvements in ADA accessibility. The project includes electrical and plumbing upgrades and drainage, lighting and safety improvements to the playgrounds and park. Upgrades to the drinking fountains, parking lot, restrooms, storage, sports courts and more are planned with an emphasis on community input. They'll begin seeking funding, design and engineering, environmental review and more before bidding and construction can begin.

Sheet 1

Caltrans is hosting a large item dump day event next weekend in Caspar in partnership with the county and Solid Wastes of Willits as part of the Clean California initiative. Residents can drop off large items for free from 9am to 1pm or until capacity is reached. Free Dump Day collection is limited to household items like furniture, appliances, mattresses, scrap metal and other bulky items. They will not accept tires, construction debris, electronics, business waste, hazardous waste or asbestos. Caltrans is reminding people to cover your load to preserve the safety of the roads and land.

Candidate filing is open for a couple of Mendocino County supervisor districts until this Wednesday. The deadline for other elected positions was Friday in a number of local and statewide offices. MendoVoice reports in the primary election on March 5th, if no candidate wins a majority, the top two will go on to compete in the November election. Supervisors for Districts 1 and 4 are leaving office and candidates have until 5pm on the 13th to file. So far there are three candidates for District 1 who have filed, and two in District 4. District 2's incumbent Supervisor is running against new competition. Supervisors for Districts 3 and 5 will be up for election in 2026. State Assemblyman for the North Coast, Jim Wood announced he'll be stepping down and two candidates have filed to run in that race. There are two judicial incumbents who are running uncontested. US Congressman Jared Huffman has a couple of challengers for the 2nd congressional district.

Governor Newsom's administration is moving forward on their water tunnel project. Friday, an environmental review for the underground tunnel was completed. It would be about 45 miles long and 36 feet wide; large enough to funnel over 160 million gallons of water an hour. The project would move water from Northern California to the South. Newsom says it's a necessary upgrade to California's deteriorating infrastructure and will help protect the water supply from earthquakes and keep more water from rainfall. Environmental groups and Tribal advocates say the project will take more water out of rivers and harm endangered species of fish and more. ABC news reports the project must still finish a federal environmental review and get state and federal permits, a process that could take another two years. One estimate for the cost of the project is \$16 billion.

Today the Wreaths Across America truck will make the annual visit to Lakeport. The Lakeport Police and Fire Protection District will escort the semi loaded with wreaths to be placed on local veterans' graves. The route will start around noon on South Main Street on Highway 29 and head north to 11th, according to Lake County News. Community members are invited to line the streets and help usher in the annual delivery aimed at honoring veterans' graves with the evergreens.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office is investigating a body they found in the search area of Scott Graves home, after days of work with multi-county, multi-agency coordinated Search and Rescue teams. Graves was reported missing last week when family members could not find him. His vehicle and belongings were still at his home. Graves had told family members the roads were too waterlogged to drive on
12/12/2023 early last week. The search began Thursday night through the weekend.

Sheet 1

Candidates for the 1st and 2nd District Mendocino County Board of Supervisors will meet for a forum on December 14th, 6pm at the Ukiah Civic Center. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports residents of the districts are encouraged to participate in the forum with issues of concern and questions to the candidates. Questions from the public will be given to the moderator and each candidate will have equal time to answer. Mendocino Women's Political Coalition member Christine Rodriguez will be the moderator. There will be campaign information available at the event this Thursday.

The Lakeport Police are getting grant funding to help stop underage drinking. The California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control is being awarded a \$3.7 million grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety. The grant is aimed at projects to educate licensees about alcohol laws and enforcement. Lakeport Police are one of 26 law enforcement agencies chosen to get up to \$40,000 for alcohol compliance check operations to ensure people of legal drinking age are partaking at establishments in the county. Early last month, the Lakeport City Council approved the grant application. Lake County News reports this year police made 100 arrests for alcohol related violations alone not including those involved in fights while drunk. ABC programs include fake id enforcement, underage retail theft, licensee inspections and more.

Fort Bragg has a new City Manager. The city council approved the Director of Finance, Isaac Whippy for the position. Current City Manager Peggy Ducey announced her retirement and will step down at the end of the year. Whippy has been with the city for seven years in various departments. MendoFever reports he has a degree in accounting and economics from the University of the South Pacific and has worked to make the coastal community his home. Working for the city of Fort Bragg he's worked as a finance director, supervised the city's IT department and managed auditing and strategic financial planning since 2016. Whippy plans to meet with each city employee and get to know the expectations in the office. His first order of business is to begin budget considerations.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors will go over design specifics and more on the project for the Middle Creek Restoration. During their meeting this morning at 9am, they'll discuss the work of PG&E on the transmission and distribution line relocation that is required at an estimated cost of \$7.5 million. There is a proposal that the board fund \$200,000 from cannabis taxes for the deposit needed. Lake County News reports the board will also receive an update on the effort to combat the opioid crisis. The board is expected to approve the Department of Boating and Waterways application for funds of over \$467,000. In closed session, the board will conduct interviews and appointment for the Health Services Director position and more.

The City of Ukiah released an update to the streetscape project this week. On the south side, crews will be replacing the main sewer line between Gobbi and Cherry Streets. Weather permitting, they'll proceed to replacement sewer laterals on the west side of the street with temporary interruptions to driveways between Freitas and Cherry. At the end of the week, work will begin on the joint trench which will run along the west side of the street for those underground electric and other lines. The final sections of sidewalks and driveways are being completed on the north side with sidewalks pedestrian ready the day after they're complete, and driveways may take a few more days to cure. The city asks that drivers be wary of the workers, watch for stop signs and changes in lights and always be cautious around people walking. MendoFever issued the update with the reminder that construction hours will be 7am to 6pm during the week.

Sheet1

The Lake County Board of Supervisors are sending PG&E a message of urgent discontent regarding the removal of the Scott Dam in the decommissioning plans the utility has submitted an initial draft for. The Record Bee reports during a special meeting last Friday the board delivered a letter in response saying it is defined by what it lacks with no concern for property owners in the Lake Pillsbury area. Other concerns they conveyed included loss of property value and concern for the Tule Elk and ecosystem that have been dependant on the lake for a century. Another issue is the soil disturbance that would mean a catastrophic loss of cultural artifacts significant to the county's Tribal Nations, with no direct communication with the tribes.

The Middletown Area Town Hall is planning its final meeting this year on Thursday the 14th. The agenda includes discussing cannabis issues and hearing from a candidate running for the office of Lake County Sheriff. The group will meet again in the new year, on the 11th of January.

The Ukiah Police Department is working to make the area safer. Last week Ukiah Police began investigating suspicious activity after finding city vehicles had been tampered with. MendoFever reports there were open doors and multiple tools scattered nearby. A witness helped police to identify the suspect, James Morrison. Police found he'd broken into a fenced enclosure attached to a city building. Video shows Morrison leaving with bicycles and other items from the area. Last Tuesday, Ukiah Police saw Morrison on one of the stolen bikes. A background check on Morrison revealed he was on a Pre Trial release and also had an active felony warrant in Santa Barbara County. He was also found with several stolen tools from the city lot. He was arrested and is being charged. Ukiah Police remind residents to sign up for notifications on the Nixle alert system, to stay up to date on community safety and more.

Some low income renters in the state are seeing rent hikes that they simply cannot afford. California lawmakers passed a rent cap four years ago to protect some the most vulnerable but they exempted hundreds of thousands of privately owned low income housing. CalMatters reports rental increases in the Bay Area of up to 17 percent raises. Landlords say inflation, rising insurance costs and COVID era financial losses as reasons they're upping the rent. Advocates and anti-poverty groups sponsored Assembly Bill 846 early this year that would have helped cap prices, but was stalled over concerns raised by affordable housing developers. Tenant advocates want to bring the bill back in the new year.

Forecasters are warning storm season is on the way, after a somewhat dry start to the new rain year. ABC news reports NorCal is warming up this week after some freezing over the weekend. The snow pack so far is much lower than average with a statewide average of about 37 percent, last year the snow pack was at 162 percent. Meteorological models are showing a wetter pattern developing off the coast. The Climate Prediction Center is forecasting above average rainfall next week and warmer than average temperatures.

The California Highway Patrol is changing regulations to require intrastate motor carriers to use an electronic logging device, called an ELD, to record a driver's duty status when driving commercial vehicles. CHP is working to make state and federal regulations aligned. The department went through several public comment periods since 2019 to help the industry with the new regulations. Starting the 1st of the year the amended regulations will be effective and have updated the California Code of Regulations website with applicability, requirements and more. CHP's website also has a page dedicated to Regulatory actions under programs and services.

Sheet1

The Clearlake Police Department is searching for a man not seen in a month. James Foster was last seen on November 18th on Howard Avenue in Clearlake. Lake County news reports the 62 year old white man is about 5 foot 10 inches tall, weighs around 200 pounds with short brown hair and green eyes. If anyone has information on James Foster, they're urged to call in to Clearlake Police.

12/13/2023

Mendocino County Sheriff's Deputies are on the lookout for armed and dangerous criminals. Over the weekend, on routine patrol in Ukiah, they saw a man wanted for multiple felony warrants leaving an apartment complex on Laws Avenue. As soon as they tried to pull the car over, a female driver took off at high speeds. After a short pursuit the man bailed from the car and dropped a loaded gun. The suspect, Jamie Rodriguez and the driver, Leslie Medina were found after returning to her apartment. Deputies were able to arrest both. Rodriguez faces multiple felonies for probation and parole violations, and possession of a firearm and more. Medina was arrested for felony evading and harboring a wanted fugitive. They're both behind bars, Rodriguez on a No Bail Status; Medina is being held in lieu of a \$35,000 bail.

The Willits Police Department is working on community traffic complaints like excessive speeding and overall unsafe driving. The department received RADAR speed equipment, and have been certified to use the new tools to enforce the law. There will be an increase in traffic enforcement with the goal to increase safety for pedestrians and drivers on the roads. They'll be targeting high traffic and problematic areas. The Willits Police Department is also reminding people of seasonal conditions, with wet or icy roads that require additional stopping time, especially around School Zones.

The Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service are hosting a public meeting this afternoon in Woodland to hear about the management of Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument and more. The meeting will be at the Woodland Community Center from 2 to 4pm today. It's part of the current administration's commitment to support locally led conservation efforts across the country. In September, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland visited Berryessa and proposed an expansion area, and plans to hear from Tribal leaders, local elected officials and community members to hear about their vision for conserving the natural and cultural resources on the BLM managed public lands in Lake County.

The Ukiah City Council will continue negotiating the purchase and annexation of a 40 acre parcel of land as part of a deal to get hundreds of acres for conservation and public use. MendoFever reports the city began acquiring land years ago for conservation and is working with the developer and deciding how many parcels will be developed. David Hull and the Planning Commission are negotiating on how much to develop. If Ukiah does not get the latest 40 acre parcel, there may be no public access to the landlocked preserve. With Redwood Avenue the only access to future residents, some worry about evacuations and wildfire risks. The Planning Commissioner says Hull's development plan is not viable. Hull wants to develop 3 houses in exchange for the property, saying the county would allow for more development if the city did not agree.

Sheet 1

The annual winter rise in COVID infections is here, but so far, only ten percent of Californians have gotten the latest booster shot, according to the state vaccination Dashboard. The most recent COVID booster shot came out in September, but only 27-percent of people over age 65 had received it as of December 8th. California State Epidemiologist Dr. Erica Pan says now is the time to get not only the COVID booster, but a seasonal flu shot. The California News Service reports The R-S-V vaccine is also available for infants and people over age 60. To make an appointment, go to 'myturn.ca.gov.' Health insurance plans are required to cover the vaccines free of cost. If you have questions about any of the vaccines, check with your physician.

The University of California's Naturalist class is open for registration in Mendocino at the UC Hopland Research and Extension Center. In an announcement this week, UC California Naturalists class runs from February to April with six Saturday classes and field trips to the oak woodlands and rangelands at the over 5,000 acre site. Classes are collaboration between science curriculum with guest lecturers, field trips and project based learning to immerse students in the natural world of inland Mendocino County. The program is offering equity pricing on a sliding scale. There is a limited number of need-based scholarships available as well. Call the Hopland Research and Extension Center for more details and registration.

Catastrophic wildfires are leaving even more harm behind, as exposed from scientists at Stanford University in a study released this week in the journal "Nature Communication." Based on research samples in the area, they've uncovered unsafe levels of toxins in the air and soil that surrounds us, as reported in the Press Democrat. Wildfires transform naturally occurring metals in rock, soil and plants into hexavalent chromium. The study found fires accelerate the conversion from chromium 3 into chromium 6, especially in metal-rich geologic areas like the North Coast Range. The cancer causing toxins then are transported in the smoke, or stay on the ground for nearly a year, or until rainfall dilutes it back into the soil. Continued exposure remains a threat to people that live, recreate and work on the land. The study encourages people to wear N-95 masks if there's smoke in the air, and to use air purifiers inside.

The Toys for Tots organization that serves Mendocino and other counties is reeling after a robbery. Friday night, a truck full of toys was stolen. The Times-Standard reports the truck was recovered, but the toys were not. It happened at the Eureka location where burglars broke into a warehouse of toys with bolt cutters, loaded a semi up and drove it through a gate. The thieves also got away with the charity's security surveillance equipment. The lead coordinator for the location says it's the first theft of this magnitude in the 17 years he's been there. Toys for Tots is asking anyone who has information about the incident or see someone selling a large number of discounted toys to call the Eureka Police Department.

The highly contagious and deadly strain of the bird flu is spreading in Sonoma County. Another poultry farm has tested positive for the virus. The Press Democrat reports Liberty Ducks is a boutique producer of Pekin ducks that serve many of the area's restaurants. The positive test was confirmed last week. At least 4,000 birds were affected, about a third of the farm's production. It's a widening crisis for the nation's poultry industry. In late November over a quarter million birds in Sonoma County had to be euthanized with a quarantine zone established. On December 5th, the Board of Supervisors declared a state of emergency. So far, at least 5 counties in the state are dealing with the outbreak.

Sheet1

The California Transportation Commission is granting over \$1 billion to projects to improve the state's infrastructure. The funds include over \$300 million to make the state's systems more climate resilient and invest in bicycle and pedestrian pathways while increasing natural disaster preparedness. In a release issued in the Record Bee, the allocation approved yesterday includes Mendocino County projects, with over \$50 million toward roadway, guardrail and sign improvements on Route 162 from US 101 east of Poonkinney Road near Covelo. Around \$13 million will be allocated toward road improvements on Highway 101 near Willits. And about \$1.7 million will go to fish passage improvements along Route 1 near Anchor Bay at Sunset Drive near Fort Bragg.

Lake County's new crop report shows continued strength of wine grapes and for the first time, cannabis numbers are included in the latest report. Lake County News reports the report was presented to the Board of Supervisors yesterday morning. The estimated gross production value for agriculture shows a 28 percent increase from 2021. Nursery and timber production was down. The first ever inclusion of cannabis means a starting point for the future of the agricultural crop. In the report, square footage for both mixed light and outdoor cultivation was shown with help from the tax collector and Community Development Departments gathering the data for the first time. The top five commodities in Lake County are wine grapes, pears, field and seed crops, cattle and miscellaneous livestock.

A fourth commercial flock in Sonoma County has tested positive for the highly contagious avian flu. The deadly spread of the flu has resulted in over half a million commercial poultry to be euthanized in recent weeks. The Press Democrat reports this latest case is at an egg producer in the southern part of the county and is the largest loss of farm raised birds so far this season. Of the five counties in the state, Sonoma accounts for over half the toll of over a million chickens, ducks and turkeys being put down in less than two months. The high pathogenic avian influenza is usually spread by migrating birds that can shed the virus which can become

12/14/2023 airborne.

A convicted murderer will spend 25 years to life in prison for killing his half-brother in 2021. Mark Schwinghammer was convicted in November in Mendocino County Superior Court after reaching a plea agreement in one count of murder.

Schwinghammer killed Timothy Sweet in Westport on their mother's birthday in September, two years ago. The Mendocino County District Attorney says Sweet died from a stab to his neck and strangulation. The Mendocino County Probation Department noted during sentencing that the defendant's actions will have a lasting impact on the family.

Community leaders and residents are urging for the expansion of the Berryessa Snow Mountain National Monument. At the meeting in Woodland yesterday, Lake County News reports tribal leaders, local elected officials, conservation advocates and residents met with the deputy director at the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service in support of the proposed expansion area. Molok Luyuk, is on the east edge of the monument and includes nearly 14,000 acres of BLM land in Lake and Colusa Counties. Over 88,000 supporters have signed a petition for the president to use the Antiquities Act for the move. The goal is to establish co-management with the Tribes for the area known as Condor Ridge.

Sheet1

The Lake County Registrar of Voters Office is holding a random alphabet drawing for next year's State Assembly District 4 election. The drawing will happen today at the elections office in Lakeport at 11am. The drawing will be used in the arrangement of names of candidates on the ballot in Lake County's March 5th Presidential Primary Election for the legislative office of State Assembly member for District 4.

Cal Trans and Mendocino County are offering a Free Clean California Community Dump Voucher in Laytonville, this Friday, on the 15th. Vouchers will be handed out at Harwood Hall on the 15th, from noon to 5pm. The voucher allows residents to drop off large items for free. There is a limit of one voucher per family and is good for a load of household items to be taken to the Willits Transfer Station on Franklin Avenue. Hazardous waste, tires, business waste and construction debris will not be allowed. Caltrans is reminding people to secure and properly cover your load to keep the roads and waterways clean.

New laws coming into effect on the first of the year will see some workers make more money. The state minimum wage will be \$16.00 an hour, health care workers and food service workers will all see bumps in pay. Employers are no longer allowed to discriminate against employees who use cannabis outside of working hours and away from the workplace. Employers are prohibited from entering into any non-compete agreements with employees and voids any existing non-compete agreements.

Cal Fire will be doing a prescribed burn at Shamrock Ranch near Laytonville starting today and ending tomorrow. Smoke may be visible from Laytonville and US 101. The announcement issued in MendoVoice indicates the burn will treat around 100 acres of grasslands and understory vegetation within oak woodlands and mixed conifer habitats. Burning is set to begin at 11am this morning through 5pm today and tomorrow. It's the department's goal to meet state fuels reduction as directed by the California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Action Plan.

The Mendocino Cannabis Department is asking for license information. Earlier this week, the department sent out over 200 email notifications to applicants, asking for updated information. They're urging cannabis licensees and applicants to check their Canna Notes and submit your current license via email. They ask that cannabis operators respond to the email, and if you don't currently have a license, to request you remain in the program. If you don't want to stay in the program, they're asking that you submit a withdrawal. It's all in an effort to update the department's work in streamlining the process to make it more efficient for users and effective for enforcement.

Middletown Rancheria is getting a grant from PG&E for habitat restoration. Half a million dollars was granted to one of each of PG&E's five regions through its Better Together Nature Positive Innovation Grant Program. Lake County News reports the Middletown Rancheria of Pomo Indians plan to develop a project to protect native plants and animals on tribal land in Lake County. The Tribal Chair says they look forward to increased community engagement, cultural understanding, and protection of its ancestral territories native habitats and providing local environmental stewardship and promotion of cultural keystone species and habitats in the region.

Sheet1

The House of Representatives is considering a new bill that would modernize the federal poverty line, which hasn't been substantially updated since the 1960s. Many aid programs such as CalFresh, Head Start and Medi-Cal are pegged to the so-called F-P-L, and raising the maximum people can make would help millions more low-income families qualify for aid. The California News Service reports the poverty line dictates who can and cannot get federal assistance. This bill would update the federal poverty line so that it more accurately reflects the cost of living. That includes things such as housing, food, clothing, phone, internet, and health care. It also considers whether a family has children and is regionally adjusted to consider things like the cost of rent or child care.

It's the time of year for the Redbud Audubon Society to conduct its Christmas Bird Count this Saturday. It's the 49th annual tradition of Audubon Societies nationwide. In a release issued in the Record Bee, the group says they've sent past participants information about meeting times and places, and that new participants are welcome. They'll meet at either the Anderson Marsh State Historic Park or Clear Lake State Park at 8am, or can count in smaller individual groups. Counters are then invited to meet at 5pm at Kelseyville Pizza for a Count Dinner hosted by the Redbud Chapter. The Christmas Bird Count has been held for 126 years. The official counts usually start in mid-December and ends the first week of January. Every individual bird and species encountered is recorded during the event. The data helps scientists better understand how birds and the environment are faring throughout the continent and what can be done to protect them.

The C.V. Starr Center in Fort Bragg is changing its hours of operation to streamline service to its guests and the community. The Advocate News reports the changes will be effective on December 24th. The pool and gym hours during weekdays have been extended to 7pm for the pool, and 8pm for the gym. The pool will be open on Fridays from 9am to 1pm, and be closed on Sundays.

The Mendocino Board of Supervisors is holding a public hearing on December 19th at 9 am to consider changes in property tax benefits beginning in 2024. The board will consider new Williamson Act Contracts to promote land conservation. The changes would include a reduction of property tax benefits and a related reduction of the term of contracts to nine years, effective in the new year. Residents may be limited to raising issues at the hearing or in written correspondence to the board before the meeting. You can elect to serve notice of nonrenewal instead of accepting
12/15/2023 a nine-year contract.

Lake County nonprofits and schools are getting a boost from the Lake County Wine Alliance. The alliance has handed out the proceeds from its wine auction, totaling \$226,000. 41 organizations benefitted from this year's auction. It has been held every fall since 2000. Treasurer Rob Roumiguere says the help wouldn't be possible without those who support the auction, including the donors and nearly 200 volunteers who help out. Planning starts soon for the 2024 auction, which is already set for next September 21st in Kelseyville.

Home sales in Lake County were up in October. According to the The Lake County Association of Realtors. The most recent sales figure shows 78 single-family homes were sold through the multiple listing service, compared to 65 in September and 83 in October 2022. The trade group says there were 427 homes on the market at the end of November, which they classify as a seller's market. Agents are reporting a bit of a slowdown in interest, which is in line with what's happening nationwide. October's median sales price in Lake County—half sold for more, half for less—was just under \$318,000. The numbers also show that the median time homes were on the market was 36 days.

Sheet1

It's now up to the judge to decide if Mendocino County DA David Eyster can prosecute former auditor Chamise Cubbison. That's after California AG Rob Bonta tossed out a request from Cubbison's lawyers to disqualify Eyster because of past conflicts between the two. The next move in the case could come Tuesday when Cubbison and a co-defendant are due in Mendocino County court to enter a plea to a charge of misappropriation of funds. Cubbison's attorney says he understands the legal reasoning behind Bonta's decision but is not sure Bonta gets the politics involved in such a high-profile local case. DA Eyster says he has evidence to prosecute the case. He alleges Cubbison and co-defendant Paula Jane Kennedy worked together to cover up an additional \$68,000 pay for Kennedy. Kennedy is the former county payroll manager. The two are expected to plead not guilty in Tuesday's appearance in front of Judge Keith Faulder.

Plans for Ukiah to annex 40 acres in the western hills are moving forward. The city council has voted to continue negotiating to take over the land from the county and allow development there. It is the final piece of 700 acres that the city decided to annex two years ago. Some property neighbors are worried that more development will lead to a higher risk of wildfire with limited access to and from future homes. City manager Sage Sangiacomo will negotiate the terms of the annexation of the remaining land.

Caltrans is hosting a large-item dump day event this weekend in Caspar in partnership with the county and Solid Wastes of Willits as part of the Clean California initiative. Residents can drop off large items for free at the transfer station from 9 am to 1 pm Saturday, or until they reach capacity. The free Dump Day collection is limited to household items like furniture, appliances, mattresses, scrap metal, and other bulky items. They will not accept tires, construction debris, electronics, business waste, hazardous waste, or asbestos. Caltrans is reminding people to cover their loads for safety.

The deadline to file for Mendocino County offices up for a vote in the March 5th primary has passed, and the list of those running is out. . The deadline was extended until Wednesday because several incumbents decided not to run. Among the open positions – California Assembly in District 2 and Mendocino County Supervisor in Districts 1 and 4. You can see the whole list and learn more about the primary election on the Mendocino County elections website.

The booming stock market is benefitting a trust set up to help wildfire victims. The Fire Victim Trust has dumped its remaining shares of PG&E, which brought in 1.2 billion dollars. The trust covers victims of utility-caused wildfires between 2015 and 2018. Part of the settlement that created it included PG&E stock, which has gained significantly since then. The fund is now worth about \$14 billion—still \$4 billion short of what claim administrators have paid to fire victims.

A new report is outlining the next steps to develop the infrastructure to support wind energy off the Northern California Coast. Kymkemp.com reports the Schatz Energy Research Center at Cal Poly Humboldt looked at several scenarios for transmission of the power the offshore turbines would generate. The study finds that it will be VERY expensive, no matter how it's done. Depending on the size of the wind farms, it could cost anywhere from 7.5 billion dollars to 41.3 billion dollars. There would also be varying degrees of difficulty approving transmission lines based on where they go. The report also says it will be decades before the first watt is generated from offshore wind, so planners should think long-term considering the transmission options. California Energy Commission and the Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation of the U.S. Department of Defense paid for the study.

Sheet 1

A man from Cloverdale has been arrested and accused of illegal weapons and drug possession. Healdsburg Police executed a warrant as part of an investigation into a stolen vehicle, which led to the discovery of three rifles, a handgun, and several pounds of marijuana. 39-year-old Ramon Macias faces charges of illegally possessing an assault weapon, marijuana sales, and violating pre-trial terms. He was booked into the Sonoma County jail after his arrest.

The USDA has awarded more than \$700,000 for some new tech gear in the Upper Lake Unified School District. Congressman Mike Thompson announced that grant, saying it would provide education opportunities for more than 1,000 students. School leaders agree, calling the grant a chance to make sure students have all the tools they need for success. The equipment includes computers, software, and network equipment to set up a hub site and three end-user sites throughout the county. Upper Lake Elementary, Upper Lake Middle School, and Upper Lake High School will offer distance learning courses to about 970 students. The district is contributing nearly \$110,000 to the project which will cost \$825,000.

Lots of folks have New Year's resolutions that include getting more active, and there's an upcoming opportunity to do just that—outdoors. State parks including Anderson Marsh State Historic Park and Clear Lake State Park are taking part in the annual First Day Hikes, along with more than 60 others across the state. It's part of a national program to get outside with an experienced guide to explore state parks. There is a new website to learn more about state parks with a searchable map and other resources to help visitors. You'll find it at parks.ca.gov

The state is launching a revamped website to serve as a starting point for people dealing with opioid addiction. <http://opioids.ca.gov> is part of the state's multi-pronged approach to dealing with the crisis. The site will offer sections on treatment and support options, data, and information, along with other information about what the state is doing to tackle the epidemic. In 2022, overdoses killed almost 7,000 people in California, and health leaders think this year could end with equally tragic numbers.

The National Weather Service has issued a gale warning for the Mendocino Coast through 10pm tonight. ClimaGuard reports mariners should alter plans to avoid hazardous conditions. Boaters are urged to stay in port, seek safe harbor and secure the vessel for severe conditions in waters from Cape Mendocino to Point Arena. Conditions include southeast winds of 25 to 30 knots and sea levels of 11 to 13 feet. Strong winds are forecast to create dangerous conditions, with potential damage to vessels and reduced visibility.

12/18/2023

Chamise Cubbison, the suspended Mendocino County Auditor will appear in court tomorrow and is expected to enter a not guilty plea to the felony charge of misappropriation of funds. The pleas of Cubbison and co-defendant Paula Kennedy, former payroll manager, have been delayed since October due to issues over Cubbison's prosecution, and the DA's role in it. MendoFever reports the court hearing will also include others' handling of money. Mendocino Court Superior Court Judge Faulder will hear arguments to recuse DA Eyster from the case. Cubbison's attorney is arguing that DA Eyster's retaliatory behavior toward Cubbison demonstrates a personal vendetta against her, and that he is trying to prosecute her for the same misuse of public funds she alleged of him, according to court records filed Friday.

Sheet1

The Mendocino County Winter Holiday Department Schedules are available. Most county departments will be closed from December 26th through the 29th. Other departments like the Animal Care Services will be off on the 26th and January 2nd. County officials are urging people to call a department before the last week in December to see if services are available. You can also visit the county website for more details.

Residents of Covelo are celebrating the \$1.5 million Clean California project completion. The aim of the project was to beautify the city and improve the infrastructure with safety in mind. About a mile of Commercial Street got some needed upgrades, including traffic safety features and speed table humps to slow down speeding drivers. Crosswalks, solar lighting and local tribal banners are now part of the streetscape. Caltrans worked with the Round Valley Tribes, the Mendocino Council of Governments and residents involved in the feedback and planning. The Caltrans District 1 Director tells Lake County News that the pilot features are an investment into downtown Covelo, as one of 300 statewide with the Clean California project.

Groups that fight climate change are praising the EPA's new rules, which aim to reduce the amount of methane leaked into the atmosphere from oil and gas operations by 80 percent. Oil and gas companies will have to inspect pipelines for leaks and phase out routine burning of methane, known as flaring, from new oil wells. The California News Service reports the rule also allows for the EPA to vet data from third-party groups that monitor the atmosphere for methane leaks, and notify the companies responsible. The American Petroleum Institute, a trade group for the oil and gas industry, says it is still reviewing the rule but warns that the industry must work to "balance emissions reductions with the need to continue meeting rising energy demand."

Ukiah's new treatment center is not going to be expanded as much as previously planned. The Ukiah Recovery Center is developing a new treatment pavilion. The second phase of the project to increase the number of beds will not happen. Willits News reports the Board of Supervisors voted to use Measure B funds instead for the completion of the behavioral health unit at the county jail. The State Department of Health Care Services funded the first phase with a \$3 million grant, but the Ford Street Executive Director says the need for more beds is intense. The community has seen an urgent need for addiction treatment, and agencies were counting on those additional beds with the original request for Measure B funds. The center says they've tried to communicate with the Board on the need for more funding for beds, and make Substance Use Disorder Treatment a priority.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors is seeking out residents to fill in vacancies on the Public Defender Oversight Committee. The bylaws require 2 members of the general public and one attorney be appointed to the advisory board. The board reviews reports on the County's Public Defender Program and discusses the performance and ability to meet the needs of the county, its residents, and the courts. Applications are available at the Clerk of the Board Office in the courthouse in Lakeport. Membership on the advisory council is voluntary.

Sheet1

A gas station developer with plans in Redwood Valley will appeal the Planning Commission's initial denial of the project to the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors. Mahmood Alam of the Faizan Corporation had planned to build a 10-pump Chevron station and store in the strip mall on North State Street. MendoFever reports during the Planning Commissions meeting last week, the public brought up concerns over the planned gas station and the \$500,000 settlement the Faizan Corporation paid last year to settle a complaint brought by seven counties, including Mendocino, regarding spills, leaks, false statements and un-inspected seals on pumps. A member of the Redwood Valley Municipal Advisory Council said the Faizan Corporation has been a serious committer of environmental crimes and violations of the Business and Professional Code. The advisory group voted four times to deny the project starting in 2016. They plan to revisit the matter on January 4th.

The Lakeport City Council will meet tomorrow evening for the last meeting of the year. They plan to elect leadership and more. The meeting starts at 6pm tomorrow. The council plans to hold its reorganization as we go into 2024 and elect the next mayor and mayor pro tem. Lake County News reports they intend to discuss the Westside Community Park with an amendment to include future development of pickleball courts. The Chief of Police plans to ask the council to approve an agreement between the city and Lake County Behavioral Health staff to work out of the Lakeport Police Department.

In 2023, Behavioral Health sponsored or participated in 36 community wellness outreach events in ten different areas of the County, providing free prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery resources to community members. In the latest Mendocino CEO Report issued Friday, the Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Update notes they've brought Elevate Youth and Friday Night Live prevention programs to the communities of Willits, Anderson Valley, and Fort Bragg, providing life skills, social emotional learning, and substance misuse education to improve outcomes for youth in Mendocino County.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife is announcing projects that will receive millions in grant funds to protect, restore and enhance the freshwater habitats of salmon and steelhead in Northern California. Trout Unlimited was given over \$2 million for the Duffy Gulch Fish Passage Improvement Project in Mendocino County. MendoFever reports work is planned to remove a railroad stream crossing along the Mendocino Railway to restore fish passage in nearly 3 miles of spawning habitat in the tributary to the Noyo River. The new railway crossing will include a 45-foot diameter steel arch to allow fish passage that is capable of handling serious flood events.

CHP is investigating a collision between a car and a deer near Laytonville over the weekend. KymKemp reports there was a car totally engulfed in flames on Highway 101 near Spyrock Road around 10:30pm Saturday night. Pictures show a car ablaze in a lane and shoulder on the highway after a reported deer versus car collision. Emergency responders and fire crews put the flames out within half an hour. There were no injuries reported and the scene was cleared by about 3am Sunday morning.

Sheet1

The City of Ukiah released its plans for street work this week. With some rainy weather on the way they don't anticipate working on the project until Wednesday. The crews will be replacing sewer lines between Gobbi and Cherry streets starting on the south end and heading north. They are currently working on those sewer lines on the west side of the street. When they are done, traffic will be moved to the other side of the street so that east side lines can be laid. Both lanes of traffic will be open. Work has begun on the joint trench between Mill and Gobbi running along the west side of the street on the underground lines for electric and communication. Crews on the north side are finishing concrete work before completing construction until the spring. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports wherever possible, street parking will be restored with barriers removed as they finish.

A former Ukiah Police Department Sergeant is stripped of his credentials by the state. Kevin Murray has been at the center of criminal misconduct and was decertified in September. The new law, Senate Bill 2 named types of conduct that rise to serious misconduct like abuse of power, physical or sexual abuse and more. The legislation mandated his name appear on the Police Officer Standard and Training website with a number of other California police officers who've been suspended or their certification revoked since the start of the year. The Sonoma County Probation Department recommended he be sentenced to a year in state prison with offences including seven felony crimes including burglary and rape. MendoFever reports he pled no contest to the crime of preventing a victim from reporting a crime and was sentenced to a couple years of probation with a suspended two-year sentence. He can never serve as a law enforcement officer again.

12/19/2023

The State Water Resources Control Board's Division of Water Rights has developed new compliance assistance resources related to diversion measurement and reporting requirements, referred to as SB88. In this week's Russian River Water Forum Update this week, the new compliance assistance resources will reportedly include: Recording of the December 7, 2023 SB88 Measurement and Reporting Guidance Workshop; Updated Website for the Water Measurement and Reporting Regulation; and One-on-One Office Hours with Division Staff. The office hours provide an opportunity for diverters, consultants, and any other stakeholder to meet with technical staff to discuss obligations under the measurement and reporting regulation. They have an updated Water Measurement and Reporting Regulation website for guidance and an overview of the new regulations.

A grocery store in Laytonville has been closed, and there was no notice to the community or the county. Geiger's Long Valley market on Highway 101 closed its doors and it may be permanent. MendoVoice reports it's Laytonville's only full service grocery store and has been through controversial inventory shortages and more. Recently food was reportedly over priced and has even prompted new food bank users in the area. Residents reported the quality of the foods for sale declined as well. The owners were sued by General Produce last spring, alleging the grocer failed to pay for the nearly \$76,000 bill for wholesale items. The owners have mentioned that revenues were down by over 50 percent last fall. There is no word on reopening and residents are going elsewhere to stock their pantries.

Sheet 1

The Clear Lake Hitch are in trouble with inadequate flows and long term declines in their population among other problems. In a release from the State Water Resources Control Board, they yesterday adopted emergency regulations to get information from water users to determine how pumping affects creek flows that are critical to the species. MendoFever issued the release from the agency confirming there is a threat to the Hitch, or "chis" survival. The board, along with local tribes and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife with county departments and the community have tried to move to help the hitch since the beginning of the year. Check the California Water Board website for more details.

Mendocino National Forest is announcing trail closures on all National Forest System trails designated for off-highway vehicle use due to wet weather. The Grindstone District and Upper Lake Ranger District are included. Temporary wet conditions closures go into effect when two inches of rain falls within a 24 hour period or when the soil is saturated. The forecast shows a 90-100 percent of more rain through tomorrow. The limited closures will remain in effect until no measurable precipitation falls within 48 consecutive hours. The closures are in effect for public safety, the protection of natural resources during and after storms to allow time for trails to dry out before resuming use. Check the Mendocino Forest website for more details on the closures.

The owner of the Vista Point Shopping Center in Lakeport has about 30 days to bring the property up to code or face having the city take over abatement and perhaps demolish the building units that can't be stabilized. Lake County News reports the City Manager says based on the city's communications with Matt Riveras of Donica LLC, it's uncertain he will comply. It was sixteen years ago that the city council voted to sell the shopping center to the son-in-law of the then mayor. Riveras says he is working to make the repairs. The council made the decision to go forward on the abatement at a meeting earlier this month.

California's largest long-duration energy storage project is slated to being development of an iron-air battery project at a PG&E substation in Mendocino County. Energy storage developer Form Energy will build its first project in the state capable of discharging energy to the grid for 100 hours. Last week, the California Energy Commission approved a \$30 million grant for the project. In the publication UtilityDive.com, Form Energy is reportedly planning to build the battery storage project and be online by the end of 2025. The project uses reversible rusting, a system that absorbs oxygen from the air and converts iron to rust and charges by using electrical current to turn rust back into iron. The commission also awarded around \$30 million for similar projects in southern California.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors will meet for the last time this year at 9am this morning. They're set to consider funds to buy the Kelseyville Senior Center and lease it back to Kelseyville Seniors for continued use, among other actions. Another item on the agenda includes hearing results of an audit of the Elijah House, that ran the county's emergency homeless shelter for a couple of years, starting in 2020. Lake County News reports the board will discuss a three year, \$1.5 million contract for LG Sonic Technology to abate toxic algae in Clear Lake. The work would include a couple of sonic buoys to treat the lake and collect data to inform the county with early cyanobacteria levels. They'll approve terminating the contract between Blue Shield and Adventist Health. The Courthouse Roof Replacement Project is on the agenda as well as various grants to fund prevention, preparedness and other education events at local fire districts and more.

Sheet1

California will be the 2nd state to approve rules for turning wastewater into drinking water. ABC news reports regulators are set to vote on new rules today, to let water agencies recycle wastewater and distribute it for drinking water to homes, schools and businesses. With recent droughts and issues storing and delivering water the move signals a shift in public opinion with conservation groups advocating for recycled water. The state has used recycled water for other uses, like ice rinks and refilling underground aquifers. The new rules would allow water agencies to take wastewater, treat it for pathogens and viruses and send it into the drinking water system.

The suspended Mendocino County Auditor, Chamise Cubbison attempt to have California's Attorney General recuse DA Eyster from her court case. Mendocino County Superior Court Judge Faulder is set to hear the recusal motion this week. MendoFever reports Eyster filed a declaration last Friday with the Attorney General's office summarizing key findings of the investigation into allegations of misuse of public funds. The investigation began last year when Cubbison's co-defendant was suspected of embezzlement. DA Eyster claims Kennedy knew the payments were illegal, with Cubbison helping her keep amounts under \$1,000 to keep from getting flagged. The sheriff recommended the two women be charged with three felonies related to the misappropriation of funds and more.

The Lake County Registrar of Voters is releasing the final list of candidates for county races to be on the presidential primary election ballot. The deadline for candidates to file ended last week. The ballot will include uncontested judicial, sheriff's and supervisor seats. One judicial seat will be contested with Judge Shandra Harry running in her first reelection run and faces attorney Anna Gregorian in the seat for Department 4. Lake County News reports there are candidates for districts 1, 4 and 5 supervisors. The election is set for March 5th.

Two more days of rain is expected with a couple more inches forecast before we dry out up to Christmas. The National Weather Service says up to 2 and a half inches fell in the North Bay area yesterday. The Press Democrat reports areas near the coast averaged 1.5 to 2 inches. Scattered showers are expected today with a chance of thunderstorms. The next round of moderate to heavy rain is forecast for tomorrow. There was a gale warning yesterday along the Mendocino County Coast, and has been extended through early tomorrow morning. Valleys could see high gusts of wind along with heavy rain at times.

Clearlake Police are trying to find a missing 15 year old boy. Josiah Jackson was last seen on Monday at his home in Clearlake. He is a black juvenile with black short hair and brown eyes. Josiah is 5 foot 6 inches tall and weighs around 135 pounds. Lake County News reports he was last seen in a blue hoodie, blue sweatpants and black shoes. If you have any information on Josiah Jackson, please call the Clearlake

12/20/2023 Police Department.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office Coroner has identified the body of a man who was reported missing over a week ago. Scott Graves was reported missing on the 7th after family members could not find him at his home in Piercy. A large contingent of agencies, search and rescue teams from nearby counties and more searched for the 63-year-old for days. On Sunday the 10th, authorities found a body in the search area surrounding Grave's home. Yesterday, the Sheriff's Office confirmed the body belonged to Graves. The Coroner's Division and Sheriff's Detectives are continue to find out how Graves died, searching for the cause and manor of his demise. Anyone with information that could help in the investigation is asked to call the Sheriff's Tip-Line at 707-234-2100.

Sheet1

The 2023 America's Health Rankings report is out, and the news isn't great for the Golden State in three very different areas. California ranks worst among the states for high school graduation, colorectal cancer screenings and air pollution. Advocates for cleaner air blame the state's pollution problems primarily on the transportation sector. The E-P-A is currently considering strict limits on emissions from cars and big rigs. The California News Service reports the state has generated maps of regions with high colorectal cancer rates, to promote screenings in those communities. And school districts offer counseling to help struggling students make it to graduation. The report also praises California's strong climate policies, comparatively lower rates of mental distress, and a lower percentage of people with multiple chronic health conditions.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office and Ukiah Police Department are investigating an attempted murder. Early yesterday morning, before 6am Ukiah Police and emergency responders were sent to North State Street to a possible stabbing victim. They found a woman who had been stabbed with a blade. Ukiah Police called in the Sheriff's Office where Deputies learned the 56 year old woman who had been attacked was sleeping in the home of Remelee Guerrero Laxa. The woman had been staying there as a guest. Laxa reportedly attacked the woman with a utility knife leaving the victim with serious injuries. They learned that Laxa was on formal probation in the county and had probable cause to arrest Laxa for violation of probation and attempted murder. She was arrested and taken to jail, where she is being held on a No Bail status.

The Lakeport City Council has a new mayor for the new year. During the last city council meeting of the year, they unanimously voted Mayor Pro Tem Michael Froio starting on the first of the year. Kim Costa was voted in as mayor pro tem. The council approved a request to amend work to the Westside Community Park in the Phase II of the plan to include an area for future pickleball courts, and update the cellphone policy that city issued phones only be used for city business. Lake County News reports the Chief of Police got the council's approval to have the county Behavioral health for crisis staff work out of the Lakeport Police Department.

The National Coalition for the Homeless, the National Consumer Advisory Board and the National Health Care for the Homeless Council are inviting communities to host public events on the winter solstice to honor those who died while homeless. The event will take place tomorrow December 21, 5 to 8 pm at Hope Center 3400 Emerson St, Clearlake. The invitation issued in the Record Bee notes there will be a candlelight vigil, a remembrance tree that we hope to use every year to follow, and dedication and those who have lost people, as well as a panel of speakers with lived experiences of homelessness. They will be serving chili and warm beverages. Warming supplies and jackets will be available for people currently experiencing homelessness. If anyone attending has a jacket to donate, we invite you to do so. This event will be held outside and we encourage you to dress warmly.

Sheet1

The prosecution of suspended Mendocino County Auditor, Chamise Cubbison will wait until after the holidays to continue. Her attorney said there will be a remote conference today to reschedule court proceedings in January. MendoFever reports Defense Attorney Chris Andrian was set to present his argument on the DA's recusal, but that will have to wait for next month. Cubbison apparently hurt her foot and was unable to make the hearing, she is reportedly getting medical care for the injury. The co-defendant, Paula Kennedy entered a not guilty plea as expected yesterday. Cubbison's attorney wants to see DA Eyster recused due to a history of conflict with the auditor and with the county finance teams since 2011. Cubbison and Kennedy will face the felony misappropriation of funds charge next year.

In Supervisor for District 3, John Haschak's letter to his constituents he notes the work of the Department of Social Services helping foster kids and families with a holiday party. Haschak notes that Willits residents are working to make a warming center for those in need. The supervisor also says Laytonville is working on a community emergency response plan with local agencies. The city will also begin building a bridge over Ten Mile Creek to help the fish and be a safer route for drivers and pedestrians with funds from the Department of Fish and Wildlife and State Water Resources Board. Haschak says Covelo residents are looking for ways to get a fire hydrant system placed downtown, saying the county will work on applying for grant funds for that project. Talk with the Supervisor is held on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 10pm at the Brickhouse Coffee in Willits.

The Mendocino National Forest is looking to hire firefighting crews for its 2024 wildland fire on-call program. Lake County News reports they're looking for 9 on-call/organized crew wildland fire type 2 hand crews. There is training for the positions in basic fire courses. Once the 10 day program is completed, recruits will be certified as a Firefighter Type II. They'll hold hiring events in Willows on the 9th and 25th of January, and in Upper Lake on January 16th and 17th. The Mendocino National Forest asks that applicants register online and check their website for more details.

Representative Jared Huffman issued a release on water diversion from the Eel to the Russian River in the decommissioning process of the Potter Valley Dam by PG&E. Huffman says yesterday, the US Bureau of Reclamation announced a \$2 million grant to Sonoma County Water Agency for a diversion study on the impact to salmon and steelhead. The release issued in KymKemp reports the federal funds will help develop the Two-Basin Solution, supported by the Round Valley Tribes. A contingent of local agencies, community members and Tribes are proposing continued diversion to the Russian River to protect fish habitat. PG&E released its initial draft surrender application a month ago, with the final application expected by the end of next month.

The Lake County Health Services are warning everyone to stay home if you're sick this holiday season. The department notes infections are on the rise. RSV, the flu and COVID numbers are increasing, with cold and flu like symptoms. There are some viral infections circulating as well with respiratory and gastrointestinal viral infections so far similar to last year's levels. The county is monitoring wastewater samples and data is being tracked by the CDC. The department is urging people to get vaccines to reduce the likelihood of serious and extended illnesses. If you are sick and unable to isolate, you can take precautions like wearing a mask and washing your hands frequently.

Sheet1

The Ukiah Valley Christmas Effort, ongoing since 1945, is asking residents for help in the final stretch of the organizations holiday charity. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the group works to help those in need from schools, health clinics and other area agencies serving families in need. This year, over 420 families will be provided with gifts, food and more. The Christmas Effort President says they'll end up helping about 1,300 kids with age-appropriate gifts from newborns to 18-year olds. Increased food prices have also given intense needs for families. They're asking the community for specific things and emphasize the need for toys and cash donations. Things like gifts for teens like gift certificates are needed, as well as personal care kits. The old Curry's building will be open for donation drop-offs from 4 to 8pm until tomorrow, with deliveries beginning on the 24th.

12/21/2023 The immediate reinstatement of Chamise Cubbison in her role as the Mendocino County Auditor was filed in court papers this week, along with lost pay and benefits. The Board of Supervisors is accused of violating the elected auditor's right to due process. San Francisco labor law attorney Theresa Cannata filed the petition for a writ of mandate with the court demanding Cubbison be returned to her job a day after any ruling. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports the filing claims her personal and professional reputation have been damaged by the action the board took and is also entitled to all interest due to her at the legal rate and more.

The Mendocino County Sheriff's Office is investigating an alleged rape that had a woman jumping out of a moving vehicle to escape. KymKemp reports around 6:30pm Tuesday, a woman in need of emergency medical aid near Laytonville at Highway 101 and Davidson Lane was found. She said that she was the victim of sexual assault, when she jumped from a moving SUV into a ditch. Police reported the suspect was driving a white four door SUV and fled the area after the woman escaped. The truck was last seen heading south on 101. The woman was taken to Willits Howard Hospital. The sheriff's office is investigating and is on the look out for the subject in Ukiah and in Lake County areas as a suspect in a rape investigation.

CHP's Organized Retail Crime Task Force made over 1,000 arrests in the first 11 months of this year, a 109 percent increase from last year. The governor's office released the numbers Tuesday, the same day the California Assembly Select Committee on Retail Theft met for the first time. ABC reports flash mobs and violent mass looting has plagued the nation, and especially in LA and San Francisco. Newsom also announced that the task force has recovered over 187,000 stolen items. The Committee on Retail Theft discussed Proposition 47 during their meeting; that makes nonviolent property crimes valued under \$950 a misdemeanor and debated if that law is too lenient.

California is gearing up for wet weather expected through next week. Multilingual resources and a network of community organizations are sharing work to protect at-risk communities. Authorities say it's important to stay informed, have an emergency plan and to closely follow guidance and alerts from local authorities. Lake County News reports the state has flood fighting material pre-positioned. The Department of Water Resources has given flood fight training to 38 cities tribal partners and other agencies and groups in 23 counties. The legislature invested about \$436 million to support flood response and projects to protect communities as well as \$95 million to repair levees, and enhance flood diversion and more.

Sheet1

Lakeport Police and the Lake County Sheriff's Office are investigating teens with guns. Officers found images of two youths posing with firearms on social media, as well as indications they are affiliated with a street gang. Last Friday afternoon, Lakeport Police were dispatched to a home on Armstrong Street, on reports of shots fired. On Tuesday returned to the home where another call of shots fired came in before 11am. A 16 year old boy was seen leaving the home and arrested. No firearms were found on him at the time, but he was taken to the Mendocino County Juvenile Hall with Lake County Probation. That afternoon officers and deputies searched the home and found a couple of guns the kids had posed with as well as ammo. A pistol with a laser pointer and a .38 revolver were recovered. The other young suspect, a 17 year old, and with the help of Ukiah Police was arrested and taken to Juvenile Hall. Both teens were charged with a felony of a minor with a firearm and more.

People on Medicare who want to see a therapist often wait up to six months for an appointment, but relief is on the way. Starting January first, licensed marriage and family therapists, known as LMFTs, will be able to accept Medicare insurance. The California News Service reports the therapists can help people who may be lonely and isolated battle anxiety, depression, addiction, mood disorders, stress or trauma. To set up an appointment, people can check with their Medicare provider.

The Department of Fish and Wildlife issued a release in MendoFever announcing the commercial Dungeness crab fishery will open from the Oregon state line to the Sonoma/Mendocino county line starting on January the 5th. The commercial fishery will remain delayed from the Sonoma/Mendocino County line south to the Mexican border until at least the next risk assessment because of increased numbers of humpback whales and their entanglement risk. The department is also continuing the temporary recreational crab trap restriction from the Sonoma/Mendocino County line to Monterey County due to the whales. The department is reminding crabbers who use other methods like hoop nets and crab snares will be allowed during the temporary trap restriction. The next risk assessment will take place around January 11th. Check the department's website for more details and best practices.

It's been a heck of a weather year in California, as climate change kicks things up a notch globally. Beginning early in 2023, many atmospheric rivers passed through the area drenching valleys and flooding waterways. The good news was that the drought ended with those rains. Cal Matters reports four hydroelectric dams will be removed by the end of 2024, with more in 2025. The legislature passed first in the nation bills that would force large companies to disclose their greenhouse gas emissions with an aim to slow climate change and decrease pollution for the health of the planet and its inhabitants. The state met its goals for new electric car and truck sales ahead of schedule and began plans to harness offshore wind. The state is bracing for another wet year and lawmakers may even focus on the out of date water rights systems.

The Ukiah Food Bank Drive is close to its goal of \$100,000. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports their total as of yesterday was nearly \$97,000. The journal reports the Ukiah Food Bank has been able to improve services and help to seniors, working families, veterans and the disabled. The food bank has also been working on the nutritional content of the food it provides.

Sheet1

Mendocino County Superior Court Judge Shanahan is ordering the recusal hearing in the suspended auditor and her co-defendant's case to take place on January 12th. Then, the decision is set to be made on whether District Attorney Eyster has a conflict of interest and should recuse himself and his office from the embezzlement case. The Press Democrat reports the hearing that was supposed to happen this week was delayed due to Chamise Cubbison's injury preventing her from appearing. Cubbison's attorney filed the recusal motion late last month, alleging that the DA and the former auditor's relationship stems from financial reimbursement disputes as well as Eyster's opposition to her initial appointment in the county position.

The Mendocino National Forest staff will continue to seek out public input to help guide decisions on addressing restoration efforts. Over 90 percent of the forest suffered through wildfires in the past five years. Lake County News reports researchers have developed a process to help land managers gather community feedback in a shared vision for post-fire recovery. They're looking to identify restoration opportunities within areas of oak woodland, conifer and more in an integrated forest wide strategy. They're asking the community to fill out a survey on their website to share feedback on the places and activities residents care about.

CHP is preparing for another maximum enforcement period through the holiday weekend. It will begin tomorrow evening through Christmas day. Officers will focus on speed enforcement and be on the lookout for impaired drivers. In a release in KymKemp, the CHP Commissioner says everyone should make a collective commitment to prioritize safety, buckle up, drive responsibly and plan for a sober ride if needed. Last year during the Maximum Enforcement Period 26 people were killed in crashes with half of those not wearing a seat belt. Last year, CHP made about 639 arrests for DUI, or one every seven minutes throughout the holiday. They are reminding people to call 911 to report impaired drivers, speeders or unsafe behavior on the roads.

CHP is investigating a suspect who committed suicide after fleeing the site of an attack. The department is confirming Jason Gillenwater allegedly stabbed his ex-wife and her boyfriend yesterday morning, then fled the Pacifica area and headed into Mendocino County. The couple was taken to the hospital, but the man died of his wounds. The suspect, Gillenwater escaped that area and drove towards Ukiah. Around 1:30pm, MendoFever reports a BOLO was issued for Gillenwater driving a gray F150 truck. . Within minutes, CHP spotted him near the Perkins Street off-ramp. They began to pull him over when he reportedly shot himself. The highway
12/22/2023 was closed for hours. No officer shot their weapons.

Sheet1

California Climate Investments' Organics Grant Program is announcing \$130 million to grow jobs and help communities turn food and yard waste into clean energy and compost. In a release by CalRecycle in KymKemp, the department says the funds will accelerate California's climate progress by keeping nearly 8 million tons of organic waste from emitting methane gases that pollute the environment. Methane is often called a super pollutant with 84 times more heat trapping power than carbon dioxide. Some of the project highlights include funds to 23 infrastructure projects in 15 counties, as well as creating 114 new jobs for the state's clean economy. The projects will recycle organic material into products like compost and biofuel that will reduce transportation pollution.

An arson and burglary suspect has been found guilty by a Mendocino County Superior Court jury. The District Attorney reports Benjamin Dimmick was found guilty of felony arson on a commercial business north of Ukiah in February as well as felony burglary. The jury decided on a special allegation that the arson was committed during a state of emergency in Mendocino County. A second felony trial is set for next month. Dimmick now faces sentencing as well as two other cases.

CalFire is announcing funding for research on wildfire and forest health. They released information this week stating that they are making \$4.5 million available to Forest Health Research grant projects. The department is looking for applications for research in forest health and wildfire science critical to the state, local communities, agencies, organizations and more. There are five categories they're looking to fund, including research, a study site in a Demonstration State Forest, scientific synthesis and tool development and other projects aimed at restoring forest health and mitigating wildfire destruction. CalFire has opened the application process this week, with applications due by the end of next month.

Some California workers will see a pay raises in the new year. Governor Newsom signed a couple of union backed bills that will increase fast-food and health care workers' minimum wages. The Press Democrat reports larger fast-food chains will pay at least \$20 an hour beginning in April, that's higher than the state minimum wage of \$16 that begins on January 1st. Some fast food franchises plan to increase prices on their menus in response to labor costs. Then in June, health care workers will earn at least \$18 to \$23 dollars an hour, depending on the health care facility. The state's unemployment rate is at 4.8 percent, higher than the national average of 3.7 percent. And that's not all, next November voters will decide if the state should raise the minimum wage to \$18 dollars an hour.

The Mendocino County Fire Safe Council is celebrating the completion several projects and is looking for residents to join them in helping to organize your neighborhood to be safer. A release was issued in the Ukiah Daily Journal on the successful grant applications for three of its affiliated Neighborhood Fire Safe Councils. The Vegetation Management Grants were awarded by PG&E for work on the Black Bart Trail Firewise Community, the Wildwood Fire Safe Council and the Bell Springs Fire Safe Council for fuel reduction work. The aim of the projects is to reduce the risk of major wildfires after years of drought and tree mortality in high risk zones. Residents can join in a Fire Safe Council and be eligible for similar projects. More information can be found on the Mendocino County Fire Safe Council website.

Sheet1

Respiratory infections are on the rise and the flu and COVID are not far behind. Lake County's Public Health Officer is reminding residents to get the latest vaccines, and to be cautious around large gatherings. A new COVID variant, dubbed JN.1 is estimated to make up at least 20 percent of COVID cases in the country. Lake County News reports symptoms of this variant are like the Omicron one, beginning with a sore throat followed by congestion and a dry cough. The Record Bee reports the CDC is tracking COVID data on a county level, and is not reporting daily case rates from individual tests as they did during the pandemic. The county is tracking data through wastewater monitoring.

Habitat for Humanity in Lake County is celebrating its 40th finished home. Lake County News reports the family of a single mother and her three sons moved in just in time for Christmas. As they look to 2024 they are seeing increasing challenges for helping low-income families. They continue to also work on critical repairs to homeowners who cannot do it themselves. Habitat for Humanity is always looking for buildable properties, wheelchair ramps and lifts for veterans and seniors as well as funding to continue the organizations ongoing mission.

California may see their House delegations decrease based on population trends. In a study by the Brennan Center, it is projected that the Golden State could lose four of its 52 congressional districts in reapportionment, the Hill reports it is a once a decade process where the population determines representation in Congress. California lost over 75,000 last year according to census data. If the state does lose seats in the House, it would be only the second time in history. The first time California lost a seat was in 2020 after a decline in population. Other states may lose representation as well, including New York, Illinois and Pennsylvania. Some states are seeing an increase including Arizona, Idaho and Utah. The changes may impact the Electoral College as populations shift across the nation. If the current trajectories of demographics continue, the 2030 census will mean changes for many.

The Willits Police Department is going viral with a post on social media involving a couple of friendly donkeys. MendoFever reports the instagram post called Precious Donkeys has over 80,000 followers with hundreds of photos and videos of donkeys. Last week, a video was featured by the Willits Police Department showing a couple of officers escorting two donkeys back home. The donkeys were wandering near Howard Memorial Hospital where officers slowly corralled the animals and helped them head home.

Sheet1

The saga between suspended Mendocino County auditor and the district attorney continues. MendoVoice reports DA Eyster, and Chamise Cubbison have had issues with one another with at least 13 individual reimbursements over the years. Reimbursements records were uncovered including a banquet and award ceremony for the district attorney's staff that was audited and found in violation of county policy. Cubbison was the Assistant Auditor-Controller who audited the bill and communicated with the Auditor-Controller. The current case, according to Cubbison's defense attorney, has no evidence of criminal conduct, stating the money in question was paid to Cubbison's co-defendant, Paula Kennedy, for work that was approved by the previous auditor. Her attorney is alleging the appearance of a conflict and a hearing for the DA's recusal is set for January 12th.

There's a storm headed our way. The National Weather Service is reporting a strong storm brewing off the coast of Alaska and is headed towards the Redwood Coast. KymKemp reports a wind advisory is in effect from tonight through tomorrow. Travelers in the area are advised to prepare for hazardous conditions. Northern Mendocino County coastal areas are forecasted to experience high winds mainly early tomorrow through about 4pm. Weather Underground is warning of high surf tomorrow with dangerously large waves. Life threatening surfing conditions and significant beach erosion are expected. A Gale Warning is in effect through 3pm tomorrow with gusts up to 30 knots and seas 13 to 15 feet from Cape Mendocino to Point Arena out to 10 nautical miles.

Adventist Hospitals in Mendocino County will now fully accept Blue Shield medical insurance again. MendoVoice reports the insurer is one of the primary companies in the county. The agreement will impact many hospitals throughout the state, including Howard Memorial in Willits, Adventist Health Mendocino Coast and Adventist Health Ukiah Valley. The decision came down last week with a public announcement by Blue Shield and is effective as of the beginning of this month. Blue Shield covers nearly 5 million Californians through network relationships and hundreds of hospitals and providers across the Golden State.

The Lakeport Police Department is setting a meeting for December to discuss the use of military equipment. Lake County News reports they've scheduled it for December 28th at 1:30pm in Lakeport City Hall. The meeting will be open to the public with a question and answer session on the annual military equipment report.

Sheet1

As health authorities are urging people to get vaccinated for respiratory viruses, an area veterinarian is clearing up recent respiratory infections making dogs sick. In an article submitted in the Advocate News, Veterinarian Dr. Colin Chaves notes that there are recent, relatively infrequent, but significant reports of dogs with respiratory disease that seems to be resistant to standard treatments. Tests for common respiratory agents are not positive. The un-named respiratory disease in dogs has seen a steady upward trend over the past two years. Dr. Chaves suggests previously known organisms, bacteria, viruses or fungal infections may have mutated. He suggests keeping away from areas where dogs gather, like dog parks. Ask your vet about the kennel cough vaccine, other vaccines and keep your dog clean and well fed.

There are more details into the man who fled from Pacifica into Ukiah after reportedly murdering a man and injuring his ex-girlfriend. Last Thursday afternoon Jason Gillenwater shot himself in front of Mendocino County Sheriff's Deputies when they tried to pull him over on Highway 101 at Perkins Street. He was wanted for the brutal attack in Pacifica after allegedly stabbing his girlfriend and her boyfriend that morning, sending her to the hospital with serious injuries, and leaving the other man dead from his wounds. MendoFever reported that no CHP deputies fired their weapons and Highway 101 was shut down for hours.

The breach of the Navarro River earlier this month is putting some residents in trouble with the law. State Route 128 had closed a few weeks ago for six days because of flooding on the road. Sheldon and Zalmon Schultz jumped in their kayaks to try to help by opening up a sandbar that was failing. MendoVoice reports the two men dug a trench across the sandbar and allow the water to flow. After getting clogged again with driftwood and other debris, they got back in their kayak and cleared a passage again. Within a few hours, the river flowed into the ocean and the highway was cleared. The California State Parks Chief Ranger says it's prohibited by law to breach a river. Environmental agencies as well as CalTrans monitor the situation to preserve the ecosystem and control water on the roads.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture is announcing the award of \$9 million statewide for 103 projects including in Lake County. Lake County News reports the department, through the Healthy Refrigeration Grant Program, will fund energy efficient and climate friendly refrigeration equipment for small businesses and food donation programs in low income areas in California. Awardees will get new refrigeration and freezer units to stock California grown dairy, meat, produce and more. The Redwood Empire Food Bank and the Kelseyville Food Pantry are recipients of grants to replace aging equipment and allow them to increase the quantity of foods they can distribute.

The Change Our Name Fort Bragg is inviting residents to what they're calling a "Teach-In" a week from tomorrow, on the 3rd at 7:30pm in the Fort Bragg Library Community Room. The non-profit's goal is to engage with the public about the education and historical processes to change the name of the city so that it does not honor a military Fort that abused Indigenous people, or of Braxton Bragg, a Confederate General. MendoFever reports the meeting is set to last about an hour and will present a couple of speakers and a conversation with answers to questions. The program is not affiliated with the Mendocino County Library or Museum and is free and open to all.

Sheet1

The California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control is reminding licensees to prevent DUIs and check id's to prevent underage drinking. The department is also reminding people to find a ride if you aren't sober. ABC agents with local law enforcement will be out to monitor compliance in an effort to increase the safety to the public. In a release in Lake County News, the department has plans for increased public engagement, education and prevention programs available to promote responsible service of alcohol.

California's Secretary of State is responding to the lieutenant governor's call to remove Donald Trump's name from the presidential ballot. CBS news reports Secretary Weber wrote an open letter saying it is more critical than ever to safeguard elections in a way that transcends political divisions. Lieutenant Governor Kounalakis called for the former president's removal after the Colorado Supreme Court barred him from holding office in the state for violation of the insurrection clause. Secretary of State Weber says the decision to omit or include Trump on the ballot must be grounded firmly in the laws in place as well as the constitution. The certified list of candidates for the March primary must be turned in by December 28th, this Thursday.

The Lake County Board of Supervisors is voicing concerns about new legislation that would change juvenile justice. Assembly bill 702 would take the Lake County Probation Department out of the process that provides teens and young adults with treatment and support. The Record Bee reports the legislation would make three key changes. It would remove funding and coordination of the local juvenile justice system. Instead, it would direct the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act funds to change elements to multi-agency juvenile justice plans. The Chief Deputy County Administrator says if the bill is approved as written maintaining current services would become more difficult. Supervisors approved a letter of opposition to the sponsor assemblyman.

Wood burning pollution in the Bay Area has prompted a Spare the Air Alert for today; banning indoor and outdoor wood burning. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District issued a release saying off shore winds could push the air pollution further inland. There is a high pressure system over the state that will act like a lid today. The Press Democrat reports wood smoke has carcinogens, benzene and formaldehyde that is harmful when inhaled and exposure to it has been linked to increased health risks. People can use a wood stove or fireplace if it is the only source of heat, and must be EPA certified or pellet fueled and registered with the Air District. Open hearth fireplaces do not qualify. Check MendoAir.org for more details throughout the day.

Sheet1

California's jobless rate increased last month. The California Employment Development Department says the unemployment rate increased by a percentage point to 4.9 percent in November, despite the 9,300 jobs added to the economy. Lake County News reports the unemployment rate in Lake County rose to 6.1 percent, up from 5.7 percent in October. A year ago, the county jobless rate was at 5.3 percent. The EDD notes California gained over 3.2 million jobs since April of 2020.

The National Weather Service is warning of high surf today creating dangerous coastal conditions. MendoVoice reports California State Parks are closing Laguna Point, Russian Gulch Beach, Van Damme Beach and Navarro River Beach. Widespread moderate to heavy rain is expected with high winds. Authorities are warning people that high winds could down tree limbs and power lines with the highest impacts on high ridges and coastal headlands. The National Weather Service issued a couple of warnings for the Mendocino Coast and parts of inland Mendocino County, including Leggett, Willits, Laytonville and Potter Valley. A wind advisory is in place through this afternoon. Gusts of up to 50 miles an hour could be potentially dangerous. A high surf warning is in place through tomorrow evening with surf run-up of up to 32 feet.

12/27/2023

The state Attorney General Rob Bonta is joining other states supporting the government's right to communicate with social media companies in issues of public concern. Lake County News reports the brief signed by 23 other Attorneys General was filed with the US Supreme Court yesterday in Missouri v. Biden, looking to reverse the Fifth Circuit's decision to prohibit petitioners from talking with social media platforms about content. Bonta and others say if upheld government agencies would be prevented from working with the private sector to protect the public.

California banned flavored electronic cigarettes, or vape pens and cartridges about a year ago. A new study published in the Journal of American Medicine shows people, and even minors are still able to buy the banned substances online. Senate Bill 793 prohibited the sale of most flavored tobacco products, motivated to reduce consumption among young people. Lake County News reports tobacco industry data has been studied for the last several years as vapes began to trend upwards. Vaping is a public health concern with cancer causing chemicals and heavy metals like nickel, tin and lead sometimes. People become addicted to nicotine. The findings warrant urgent action by state agencies to enforce the ban on flavored tobacco products and more.

There are new laws about to take effect in California with the new year. Many laws will affect criminal procedures, healthcare, housing, schools and more. Governor Newsom signed over 1,000 bills set to become law on the first of January, and previous years bills are due to take effect in 2024. From affordable housing, to leave for workers experiencing reproductive loss there is a vast array of new laws. Police officers will have to say why they stop a driver, there will be more traffic speed cameras. City Council members will see an increase in pay, as will fast food workers and healthcare workers. There are new emissions rules for small gas engines and requirements for big oil companies to cap wells. In schools, a couple of bills would add Asian American History, media literacy and more to the curriculum.

Sheet 1

This year's Potter Valley variance is terminated after Lake Pillsbury's storage level exceeded the 36,000 acre-feet threshold on December 19th. In the latest Russian River Forum Update MendoFever reports funding for the group is running out. Working groups will no longer meet. A couple more Planning Group meetings are scheduled to go over PG&E's revised draft next spring. The forum was successful in bringing many different groups together and plans to keep the website up and running. The Eel-Russian Project Authority will be run with a five member board including Sonoma County, Sonoma Water, the Round Valley Indian Tribes and the Mendocino County Inland Water Protection District, and will be open to the public. Groups are still considering the implications of the removal of the Scott Dam and Lake Pillsbury with several options moving forward. Securing financing and water allocation are some of the major issues to be solved.

CHP is preparing for another maximum enforcement period through the New Year's weekend, starting Friday and continuing through Monday. The department will be watching for impaired drivers, speeders, distracted drivers and more. During the Christmas holiday maximum enforcement period, 20 lives were lost in car accidents. CHP officers made over 900 arrests for DUI, an average of one every five minutes, according to the Lake County News. Last year during the New Year's Eve period, officers arrested 570 impaired drivers across the state. Authorities are urging people to have a designated driver, use ride share services and avoid distractions while driving as well as seatbelt use.

Authorities are investigating an accident on Route 20. CalTrans shut down part of Route 20 last night around 9pm. MendoFever reports it happened near mile marker 6, west of Upper Lake by Witter Springs Road in Lake County. Scanner reports indicate two vehicles collided with emergency responders attending to people with major injuries. There is early reporting there may be a couple of fatalities. Through early this morning while Route 20 was shut down a detour on Witter Springs Road and Bachelor Valley Road was in place. More details are yet to be released.

The California Department of Justice is investigating a shooting that happened aboard an Amtrak train in Mount Shasta on Christmas morning. KymKemp reports there were at least two victims and a Mount Shasta Police officer was also injured. A southbound train in Siskiyou County was the site of a fight between a passenger, a train employee and a police officer. A passenger was fatally shot, another shot and wounded. What appeared to be a homeless person carrying a garbage bag was acting erratic and chaos escalated as police and an Amtrak employee tried to contain the situation. Emergency responders tried to save someone who was shot, but one man was pronounced dead. Passengers evacuated, and an Amtrak employee was taken to a local hospital. The state DOJ continues to investigate and will release more details on the incident soon.

While there are hundreds of new laws set to take effect on New Year's Day, some new reforms could put cash in your hands. In 2024, residents can redeem empty bottles of wine and liquor for money. The state is adding boxed wines and pouches to bottles and cans in the Beverage Container Recycling Program. The aim of the recycling reforms is to cut pollution and recycle more containers into new materials. Lake County News reports residents pay a 5, 10 or 25 cent deposit on beverages and the California Redemption Value, or CRV, means you can return the beverage containers and get that deposit back. Stores are updating labels and facilities to collect returnables and manufacturers and distributors are registering and submitting CRV payments. The state's Bottle Bill reforms will include large juice containers too.

Sheet1

COVID is rearing its head again this winter. A new subvariant dubbed JN.1 is estimated to account for almost half of the virus cases across the country. The Press Democrat reports there is an increase in people getting ill with COVID after holiday travel. Counties are finding more of the virus in wastewater monitoring. The CDC says JN1's continued growth suggests the variant is either more transmissible or better at evading our immune systems than other seasonal viruses. Current vaccines, tests, and medicines are continuing to work against the new subvariant, and health officials are urging people to get vaccinated. California counted nearly 3,000 new COVID hospital admissions, up 50 percent from last month.

A new state law will force insurance companies to negotiate payments with patients and their families in the New Year. The move is expected to save Californians tens of millions of dollars. On January 1st patients will only have to pay the equivalent of what they would pay for an in-network ambulance service. It'll be up to health insurers and ambulance companies to settle the bill. Cal Matters reports the California Association of Health Plans, representing health care insurance companies; oppose the bill due to the potential increase in premiums by about \$67 million across the state. Healthcare advocates say the law closes a gap in the state's consumer protections against surprise medical bills.

The National Weather Service is reporting strong storm surf off the Northern California coast through tomorrow. There is a wind advisory in effect through Thursday. Travelers in the area are advised to prepare for hazardous conditions. Northern Mendocino County coastal areas may experience high winds through tomorrow. Weather Underground is warning of high surf with dangerously large waves. Life-threatening surfing conditions and significant beach erosion are expected. A Gale Warning is in effect with gusts up to 30 knots and seas 13 to 15 feet from Cape Mendocino to Point Arena out to 10 nautical miles.

Weather conditions should settle down today, after places throughout Northern California experienced extreme winds. The National Weather Service reported wind gusts up to 88 miles per hour at Cape Mendocino. Widespread gusts over 45 miles an hour were reported along the coast. ABC news reports roads may be slick this morning along the coast. Dangerous surf is still an issue this morning with waves up to 30 feet high. There is a high surf warning still in effect along the coastline. With some more rain predicted tomorrow and Saturday, forecasts are for dry New Year's Eve conditions.

12/28/2023

The Mendocino County Homeless Services Continuum of Care is holding its annual homeless count set for the morning of January the 24th. The Point In Time Count is mandated by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and is used to set allocations of funds for homeless services. The information will help the local community identify needs and plan to engage and support people experiencing homelessness throughout the county. The Continuum of Care is made up of local service providers, non-profits, county staff, Tribal governments and more to address the homeless or those who are at risk of becoming homeless. The county is asking for volunteers to help with the count along the coast as well as throughout all parts of Mendocino County. Check with the Mendocino County Continuum of Care for details.

Sheet1

On the first day of the New Year, employers in the state will be prohibited from asking workers about their use of marijuana outside of work. The new legislation also bars employers from discriminating against employees who partake in cannabis on their own time. CalMatters reports Governor Newsom signed a bill last year that prohibits employers from using some cannabis testing in their decision to hire, fire or penalize workers. This year, Newsom signed Senate Bill 700 that makes clear the state's Fair Employment and Housing Act to bar employers from asking applicants about their use of cannabis. There are exceptions to the legislation, including workers in the building and construction industry or in positions that require a federal background investigation or clearance.

Starting Monday, California becomes the first state to cover health care for all income-eligible people regardless of their age or immigration status. In 2016 California opened up Medi-Cal to undocumented children, then to young adults in 2020, and then to adults 50 and older in 2022. Prior to this, undocumented adults ages 26 to 49 had to rely on restricted-scope Medi-Cal, which only covers people experiencing a life-threatening emergency or giving birth. The state will automatically upgrade those people to full-scope Medi-Cal. Opponents cite concerns about cost. The state has budgeted 1-point-4 billion from the general fund this fiscal year, and 3-point-4 billion a year going forward.

The City of Clearlake is seeking more funds and ways to reduce the costs of the Burns Valley Sports Complex. Lake County News reports the project on 25 acres is slated to include baseball and soccer fields, a rec center with courts, retail space, walking areas, improved ADA accessible areas and more. It began in 2020 but was stalled with the Koi Nation's litigation. Lake County Superior Court records indicate a conference is set for February with the Tribe. The city council approved doubling money set aside for the Koi Nation litigation, to half a million dollars. The City Manager says now the city is facing delays. The city found about 9 million in grants from the state and feds, city funds and contributions from the Konocti Unified School District and more. The firm that designed Lakeport's Xabatin Park has delivered over half the plans, but an updated cost of construction is now at nearly \$19 million that doesn't cover every aspect. They've established an advisory committee to work on funding issues. They are also looking for more grant funds.

CalTrans is asking for public feedback on improvements to Talmage Road. The department held a meeting earlier this month at the Mendocino County Office of Education to talk to residents. In an article submitted to the Ukiah Daily Journal, representatives from the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas were there, as were Talmage residents and businesses from along the road that serves thousands of drivers daily. A Caltrans District 1 representative says they're considering many options to improve safety as part of their State Route 222 Corridor Management Plan. Roundabouts, intersections, lighting, pedestrian and bicycle lanes are some of possible improvements. CalTrans hopes to have improvements in place by 2030.

Sheet1

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection are announcing new studies on the health of the forest. New research published by UC Berkley show the role fire plays in forested landscapes. A proposed Pyro-Silvicultural Timber Harvest Plan at the Jackson State Demonstration State Forest will help forest officials with prescribed fires and test if the methods can be used as a tool in future management. In a JAG summary of the PyroSilva harvest plan, CalFire says they'll work on Forest Road 552 in a process of upgrading to enhance the forest health and resilience. A Forest Thinning and Prescribed fire concept will be tested on an experimental sub-unit to assess fire vulnerable trees. The goal of the project is to enhance wildfire resilience and reduce post harvest fuels.

In the final days of 2023 we're looking back at California's budget issues. CalMatters reports the state needs to reduce spending with a nearly \$32 billion deficit through 2024. The general fund is still the second largest on record at over \$300 billion total. The state reserves this year grew to almost \$38 billion, and will be used if state tax revenues fall below projections. The IRS extension due to natural disasters is collecting money due, later than usual, as is the State Franchise Tax Board. Earlier this month, a report indicates that the state will have a budget deficit of \$68 billion for 2024-2025. The state budget set to be finalized in June will have cuts to one time spending, use reserves and delay programs.

CHP wants residents to know some of the traffic law changes set to take place in 2024. The Vehicle Registration on registered vehicles license plates will not be an enforcement action before the second month after they've expired. But, if someone is stopped of other reasons, it could be a violation with late registration fees still in place. Lake County News reports there will be more speed cameras in place in a Speed Safety System Pilot Program including in Northern California. An automobile Dismantler law will include people in possession of nine or more catalytic and creates penalties for illegal dismantling. Another law makes it illegal to remove a VIN marking from a catalytic converter. There are many other new laws that residents can learn about on CHP's website.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife along with Trout Unlimited and Cal Fire are holding a public salmon spawning survey. It's happening at the Jackson State Demonstration State Forest on the 6th of January at Camp 1 at 10am. Salmon will be headed up stream after circling in the estuary. The first several fish were seen at the monitoring station on December the 3rd. This storm is motivating the salmon to move, and officials say January the 6th will be an active day for the monitoring team in action.

Fifty years ago today, the Endangered Species Act was signed into law, establishing protections that saved species such as the bald eagle and gray wolf from extinction. A new report from the Endangered Species Coalition highlights work that continues today to help many species recover, including the chinook salmon in Northern California. The California News Service reports the Yurok tribe's Fisheries Department says the act's protections paved the way. The Klamath River Renewal Corporation will open up 400 miles of salmon habitat upriver by removing four dams near the California/Oregon border. Crews have already taken the first dam down. In two weeks, workers will start breaching three more dams and draining the reservoirs, with complete removal expected by next winter.

Sheet1

California is taking mental health issues and the fentanyl crisis to the ballot in March. Governor Newsom and lawmakers will consider a measure to allow funding for housing for people with behavioral health issues. Fentanyl overdoses soared, and lawmakers are reacting to grim statistics of nearly 7,000 deaths from opioid overdoses. There were multiple fentanyl related bills introduced. Both political parties are pushing for harsher penalties for possession and dealing. A new law will require community colleges and California State University campuses to have fentanyl test strips available. There are other laws requiring the overdose antidote naloxone on hand in public spaces.

Donald Trump will be kept on the 2024 primary ballot in the state, despite calls to declare him ineligible under the 14th Amendment. Yesterday was the deadline to certify the official candidate list for the March 5th presidential primary election.

12/29/2023 California joins more than a dozen states to reject attempts to bar Trump from seeking the GOP nomination.

Significantly dangerous waves hit the North Coast yesterday with some up to 33 feet and higher. The high surf warning expired at 3am this morning, but conditions remain dangerous, according to meteorologists. The Press Democrat reports some beachgoers were knocked down by the deadly surf. Officials are asking people to remain a safe distance away as the still hazardous conditions could sweep you out to sea. Another round of rain is expected today, with 2-3 inches expected in the coastal ranges. A high wind advisory is in place again today.

The City of Fort Bragg is holding a public hearing on Monday, January 22nd at Town Hall at 6pm, concerning a proposed updated resolution to adopt CV Starr Fees. In a notice released yesterday, the City Council plans to consider a resolution and more information on the change in fees. Anyone interested in attending are invited to appear and present comments and questions on the proposed rates and charges, and whether they are discriminatory or excessive.

The Stranding Coordinator at the Noyo Center for Marine Science delivered her annual report about the dead marine mammals collected for the California Academy of Sciences this year. The Advocate News reports information included the rescued animals taken to the Marine Mammal Center. The report also noted predation, human caused mortality and how the Grey Whales and Guadalupe Fur Seals conditions are after years of unusual mortalities. In Mendocino, there were 509 sea lion bodies found. Sixteen sea lions were rescued, but sadly most did not survive. Recovery is reportedly rare. The deaths were caused by overexposure to fluoride. There were hopeful anecdotes in the report with a couple of sea lion survivors who were rescued and returned to the Noyo Harbor.

Wet weather is set to continue today after this week's storm brought nearly an inch of rain to Fort Bragg and about three quarters of an inch to Ukiah. About a third of an inch of rain fell in Potter Valley. Today, a second winter storm is headed in and may bring up to 3 inches of rain with wind gusting between 50 and 60 miles an hour, according to MendoVoice. There is a silver lining to the cloudy skies, with New Year's Day predicted to be partly sunny. Authorities are warning of possible flooding and dangerous winds that could bring down limbs and power lines. The National Weather Service is continuing a wind advisory for northern Mendocino County through 4pm today. Thunderstorms are possible tonight on the coast through Sunday.

Sheet1

A Crime Alert has been issued in the search for an arson suspect. CalFire issued the release today, as they search for Cody Haney. He's a white man, five foot six and 165 pounds with blond hair and blue eyes. Haney is 33 years old, and was last seen in a beige hoodie, blue vest, camouflage pants, brown boots and a blue and pink Fila backpack. He is possibly armed with knives, and authorities warn not to approach him, but to immediately call police. He is a suspect in an alleged arson case at California State University in Sacramento on December 10th. An arrest warrant was issued for Haney for charges related to arson. Call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-AA-CRIME

CAL FIRE is inviting public involvement in the management of the Jackson Demonstration State Forest through participation on its Jackson Advisory Group (JAG). The JAG advises CAL FIRE and the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection on forest management there. CAL FIRE is looking for a couple of JAG applicants to provide expertise. The two applicants must have expertise in one of the following categories: Small Private Forestland Owner and Industrial Forestland Owner. Interested persons should apply by submitting a letter of interest and resume by Friday, January 12, 2024.

The East Region Town Hall will meet next Wednesday, January 3rd at 4pm in Clearlake Oaks. There will be an update on the EPA Superfund Site Sulphur Mercury Bank Mine cleanup, the Shoreline Area Plan, John T. Klaus Park and more. Lake County News reports there will be a presentation on the commercial cannabis report and Cannabis Ordinance Task Force. The agenda also includes an update on Spring Valley and the Fire Chief will update the latest information from the Northshore Fire Protection District.

The Mendocino Coast Humane Society is holding its New Year's Eve Bash with cocktails food and dancing. The event will raise funds for the Coast's nonprofit. Tickets are \$50.

Some of the most significant events in early 2023 included the major winter storms of January and February when the atmospheric rivers caused power outages in the thousands. The Record Bee reports the storms caused damage that power crews and emergency management officials dealt with in the region nearly all year long. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports in April there were a host of hoax calls about school shootings in Ukiah and Fort Bragg, and a Mendocino Coast police officer was ousted with errors in judgment. The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors discussed expanding the Fort Bragg Library and vacation rental limits were brought up. Opioid addiction was at the forefront of the regions top concerns as health providers expanded addiction treatment and antidotes.

The summer of 2023 was a busy one in Mendocino County. An overview of some of the biggest events by the Ukiah Daily Journal notes in July, illegal cultivation was of huge concern. The County Sheriff honed in on enforcement to stop organized crime, violence and environmental damage. A homeless man was attacked in Willits and a man from Washington state was arrested. A new California Welcome Center opened at the Ukiah Valley Conference Center. The Historical Society of Mendocino County held a grand opening. Hearings continued on the new Redwood Credit Union branch location proposal. A couple of men died in the rushing waters of the Russian River near Potter Valley. And an apartment complex was evacuated after a fire damaged the building.

Sheet1

The beginning of the fall season in Mendocino County was full of violence and community meetings on the Potter Valley Decommissioning Project. Fencing was added to county schools. The COVID statistics changed in a new dashboard as the virus waned down. The Mr. Frostie Sign was removed from South State Street in Ukiah. The Ukiah Police Department promoted Tom Corning to captain. Campgrounds reopened after damage cleanup. In September the Ukiah Daily Journal reports Mendocino College celebrated its 50th Anniversary. Ukiah was awarded a nearly million dollar grant to work on high hazard risks. A new clinic opened in Ukiah to include local tribes in health care resources. A man was found after a violent assault in a shipping container in Fort Bragg. A bank robber was arrested in Ukiah after being on the lam for 30 years.

The Mendocino Theatre Company is announcing its 2024 season with a slew of plays from heartwarming comedies, to dramas and contemporary themes. The Mendocino Beacon reports the new season kicks off with "Born with Teeth" and is being recognized as one of the hottest new scripts of the year. "A Thousand Clowns" follows with a poignant story that is thought provoking and heartwarming. "Hurricane Diane" is on the roster next with a comedic character disguised as a gardener. Closing out the 2024 season, "The Thanksgiving Play" plays on political satire featuring stereotypes and history through humor.

Elon Musk's X will not comply with California's content moderation law. Thursday, Musk declined to comply with the state law requiring social media companies to publicly disclose how they moderate certain content, according to Reuters. Last fall, X sued California; saying the law violated free speech rights under the US and California constitutions. The law mandates reporting of content moderation and that social media companies provide data on objectionable posts and how they were addressed. A court hearing is scheduled for February 26th. Since companies began to halt advertising on the platform X when Musk's content moderation was questioned, the company lost revenue over 50 percent each month.

Looking back at 2023, local news outlets are highlighting some of the most significant events. In May, a Willits man was convicted of murdering a man and his teen son at a grow site. Ukiah deployed drones. The Ukiah Daily Journal reports work was done around the area with damage cleanup from the winter and early spring storms. FEMA opened a disaster recovery center. By June, Mendocino Emergency rooms filled with people sickened by an unknown substance. A former Willits Police Officer sued the city alleging sexual abuse and retaliatory behavior. By early summer, a U-Haul truck theft was stopped in Ukiah, and a couple of fires were put out. And a Ukiah man was sentenced to 12 years in prison for stabbing another man to death.

And new laws are set to take effect in the new year with some beginning next Monday. Courts will continue to roll out Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment Act Programs, known as CARE, for mental health treatment and support to the most vulnerable residents. Defendants enrolled in mental health diversion programs won't be able to own or possess firearms. Guns can also be confiscated in a domestic violence incident. A new law will establish a tax on licensed firearm dealers, manufacturers and ammo vendors to fund anti-gun violence programs.