

Willits Weekly

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Online & Print

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Revit-ED looks at blighted building problem

Damian Sebouhian
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Members of the Willits Revitalization and Economic Development Committee, during a recent meeting, discussed the concept of requiring property owners to register their vacant commercial buildings with the city as a tool towards abating chronic vacancies and curbing blight within the downtown area.

The Revit-ED committee was re-formed earlier this year and identified commercial vacancy abatement as one of three

Read the rest of **Blighted** | Over on Page 11

Beat the heat at City Hall

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It's hot in Willits this week, with temperatures rising to 101 on Wednesday at 1 pm, according to the National Weather Service's Willits page, citing temps from the Willits Justice Center. The weather station at Mendocino College's North County Center showed the high on Wednesday to be 98.2 at 3:15 pm.

One option to beat the heat is to visit the air-conditioned Willits Community Center, which is one of a half-dozen "cooling stations" around inland Mendocino County available for the rest of this week.

"According to the National Weather Service,"

Read the rest of **Heat** | Over on Page 15

Kelsay admits to lying during embezzlement trial

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A Brooktrails woman serving four years in county jail after being convicted of embezzling almost \$500,000 from the owners of a Laytonville market pled guilty to three counts of perjury Tuesday.

Christine Kelly Kelsay could be sentenced to almost a decade in state prison after admitting to having lied during both the first and second days of testimony in her April embezzlement trial. Kelsay

Read the rest of **Perjury** | Over on Page 15



Above: Local exhibitors ready for the fair, from left: Marian Ochoa. Hailey Musgrave and Bella. Lorelei Croskey and Smore. Ryan LaCount. Nora Martin with her goat Greta. Keely Ahders. Below: Buyers cards from one of the most recent and from one of the first purchases made by Round Tree Glass. Lana Stroecker and Tom Rountree with the buyers letters. Clay Neese's card from an old fair.



Tom, Matt and Russ Rountree of Round Tree Glass stand in their office, which is tiled with cards of purchases past. Photos by Maureen Moore



Buyers Help Make It Happen

Round Tree Glass has participated as Redwood Empire Fair buyer for almost 30 years

Exhibitors are only half of the equation of a successful livestock auction; it's the buyers who make it happen and who write the checks that make the experience complete for the 250-plus exhibitors.

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Over the years, thousands of businesses, individuals and community groups have supported the Redwood Empire Fair's

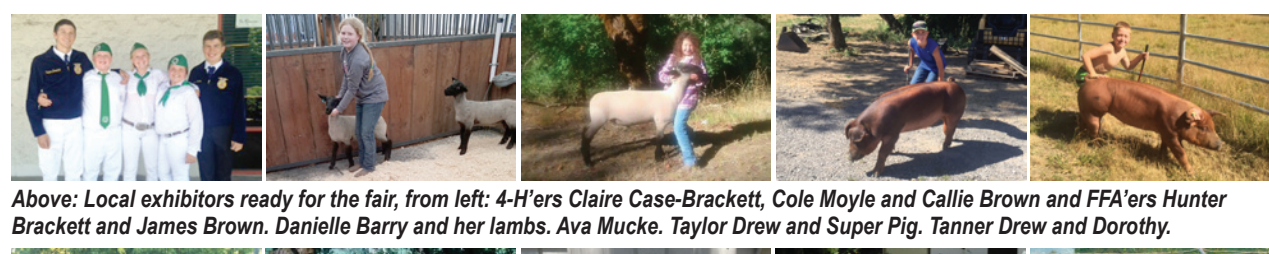
Junior Livestock Auction and paid premium prices for 4-H and Future Farmers of America exhibitors' farm-raised animals.

Read the rest of **Buyers** | Over on Page 6

Willits FFA market exhibitor list

Market Steers: Jaden Doak, Caitlyn Forrester, Liah Garman, Grace Horgan, Elisabeth Rountree and Ian Seymour. Meat Goats: Ryan LaCount, Cody Pederson, Alexis Reyes, Morgan Riley and Austin Willcutt. Market Lambs: Lance Burgess, Jasmine Mendoza, Hailey Riley and Kayla Smith. Market Hogs: Kyleena Amador, Austin

Read the rest of **Exhibitors** | Over on Page 6



Above: Local exhibitors ready for the fair, from left: 4-H'ers Claire Case-Brackett, Cole Moyle and Callie Brown and FFA'ers Hunter Brackett and James Brown. Danielle Barry and her lambs. Ava Mucke. Taylor Drew and Super Pig. Tanner Drew and Dorothy.



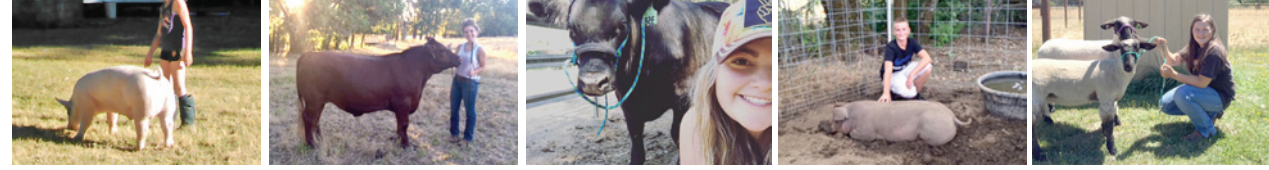
Above: Local exhibitors ready for the fair, from left: Emma Garman and her lambs. Grace Aguilar. Grace Croskey and her market goat Flower. Haley Whitcomb with Hallow. Caitlyn Forrester and her steer.



Above: Local exhibitors ready for the fair, from left: Taylor Quinliven's FFA sheep say "bah." Stephany Brundage and her rabbit. Caitlyn and Madison Forrester. Kassandra Basler, Long Valley 4-H member, with her market goat. Jack Croskey and his pygmy goat Licorice. Ben Branscomb and Bella.



Above: Local exhibitors ready for the fair, from left: Jimmy Whitley and his Angus cross steer Charlie. Sierra Mayfield and her lamb. Connor Basler and O-Ring the hog. James Brown and Ricky-Bobby with Callie Brown and Thor. William England and his pigs, John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara.



Above: Local exhibitors ready for the fair, from left: Paige Whitcomb with her pig, Bogart. Jaden Doak and Rowdy. Liah Garman and her steer. Lucas Branscomb and Alfie. Samantha Arms with Bubba and Dell.

County ducks and weaves on Measure V

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Measure V became law on July 22, but the county has not yet determined if it will adopt an ordinance putting the measure into the county government code.

That is the upshot of a number of statements made by County Counsel Katharine Elliott over the past few days.

When asked by Fifth District Supervisor Dan Hamburg on July 19 how Measure V would be enforced, Elliott responded to Hamburg: "There is no direction in the initiative in terms of how that is to be enforced or whether we can enforce it, so...."

Read the rest of **Measure V** | Over on Page 11

No agreement on reopening Grist Creek

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According to Mendocino County Air Pollution Control Officer Robert Scaglione, there is "no agreement now or pending" with Grist Creek Aggregates and the Mercer-Fraser Company concerning a possible third startup of asphalt operations at the Longvale site off Outlet Creek north of Willits.

The plant manufactured rubberized asphalt for approximately 2.5 months in 2015, from late September to early December. It shut down during the winter months, and was permitted to start up again for about a week in late March 2016 so the company could fulfill a contract with Caltrans.

Read the rest of **Grist Creek** | Over on Page 15

Unique highway signage needed to promote Willits

Damian Sebouhian
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"I think the conversation should be about putting up unique signs that brand Willits," said Alan Falleri, addressing the topic of highway signage for Willits during last Tuesday's Revitalization and Economic Development Committee meeting.

The Revit-ED committee has identified highway signage as a high-priority topic, given that the Highway 101 bypass is set to open this November

Read the rest of **Signage** | Over on Page 11

Round Tree Glass in Willits is just one of these businesses.

Starting in 1988, Tom Rountree, senior owner of Round Tree Glass, started purchasing animals. That first year he recalled purchasing six or seven lots, keeping some of the meat and donating some, too.

"Back then, they were a little cheaper," reminisced Rountree. "You could get a hog for \$600 maybe; now they've increased to about \$1,800 a hog."

This increase hasn't decreased Rountree's interest in attending, however. He and son Matt like to go to the auction on the first Saturday in August and show their support to all the kids and families participating in the aggie lifestyle.

Usually a hog buyer, Rountree also has purchased sheep and a steer or two over the years. He donates half a hog to the Covelo Rodeo's raffle drawing and another half usually goes to his crew at the glass shop.

"We've already gotten quite a stack of letters this year," said Rountree as he motioned to the pile of some 50-plus buyers letters that sat on the counter, brought in by hopeful exhibitors. The exhibitors are asked to visit local businesses in their official whites or other uniforms, and to present an invitation to prospective buyers. "We usually get a bunch more the week right before fair, and another stack when we go to Covelo. It's great to see the kids come in, introduce themselves, and welcome us to the fair."

Rountree also purchased animals through another business he owned in the past, Western Auto, based in Covelo.

Many familiar names and accompanying photos hang on the placards that line the edges of the Round Tree Glass office, including John Fife, Janelle McCormack, Clay Neese, Tyler Yadan, Sara Caldwell, Shelby and Cody Merrifield, Taylor Buzzard, Patrick Ramming, Brook Stroecker, Keegan Reed, Emmy Heiken, Jessica Bloom and Elizabeth Rountree, a testament to the long history Round Tree Glass has had supporting the community.

Everyone is invited to come be a buyer at the auction; just show up, sign up and get a bidder's card. The public is welcome to come enjoy the fun, too. The auction starts at noon on Saturday, August 6 at the Ukiah Fairgrounds. More info: 462-FAIR or www.RedwoodEmpireFair.com

Andrade, Hunter Brackett, Ben Branscomb, James Brown, Taylor Brown, DJ Buzzard, Taylor Buzzard, Jorge Carrillo, Sarah Comp, Karissa Cornwall, Coltin Doak, Bailey Ferguson, Haily Findley, Evan Flamer, Tatyana Guevara, Devin Heiken, Kris Novo, Keegan Reed, Sierra Skinner and Justin Verdo.

Willits 4-H market exhibitor list

Market Steer: Claire Case-Brackett. Meat Pen Turkeys: Aurora-Belle David, Sophia Scott. Meat Pen Rabbits: Stephany Brundage. Meat Goats: Grace Croskey, Grant Forrester, Madison Forrester, Mariah Ochoa and Catherine Spackman. Market Lambs: Grace Aguilar, Elena Arkelian, Jesse Arms, Samantha Arms, Danielle Barry, Emma Garman, Laney Hendry, Sierra Mayfield, Ava Mucke and Taylor Quinliven. Market Hogs: Jacob Arms, Lucas Branscomb, Callie Brown, Jessica Buzzard, Jacob Comp, Tanner Drew, Taylor Drew, William England, Christian Erickson, Cruz Erickson, Ethan Ferguson, Kodan Fryman, Aaron Griggs, Jay Griggs, Tanner Heiken, Walker Klee, Ella Lane, Caleb Lovell-Yoder, David Mann, Cole Moyle, Kailea Nelson, Jacobi Smith, Collin Spackman-Rowles and Ashtan Weeks.

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Controlled Substance).

5:30 pm: Officers responded to a burglary at a business in the 300 block of North Main Street. During their investigation, they determined the reporting party was also the restrained party of a restraining order and was prohibited from contact with the second reporting party to the same burglary call. GRAY, James (38) of Willits was placed under arrest pursuant to 273.6(a) PC (Violation of a Court Order).

10 pm: SOTO, Javier (29) of Clearlake was contacted during a traffic stop in the 700 block of South Main Street and placed under arrest pursuant to 23152 VC (DUI).

July 20

7 am: RAY, Michael (53) of Willits was arrested in the 200 block of South Main Street after officers saw him with an open container of alcohol. A subsequent check revealed Ray was the subject of an active Tulare County felony warrant.

10:40 pm: Officers responded to a reported collision in the 200 block of South Main Street. During their investigation, officers determined BEARNSON, Braden (37) of Willits had been driving while under the influence of alcohol and placed him under arrest pursuant to 23152 VC (DUI).

July 21

3:10 pm: MCDONALD, Layton (31) of Lucerne was contacted in the 800 block of South Main Street and issued a citation for an active Mendocino County warrant.

July 22

7 am: Officers responded to a disturbance in the 10 block of Madden Lane. During their investigation, they determined DUWE, Robert (50) of Ukiah had been in an altercation with the victim, during which he assaulted the victim, which resulted in a minor injury to the victim. DUWE was placed under arrest pursuant to 273.5(a) PC (Domestic Violence w/Injury).

10:30 am: Officers responded to a hit-and-run collision in the 1400 block of South Main Street.

7:30 pm: Officers initiated an investigation into the vandalism of a vehicle parked in the 10 block of Alameda Street.

new knowledge and experience everyone has gained over the years in rural living.

"I think there's a lot more focus on sustainability because we know how important that is now, and that wasn't even a buzzword back then. Now it's very common to be included in just about any subject. How can we support that which supports us? And that's absolutely key to how we move forward as far as I'm concerned."

She also understands why they changed the name. "So many of us have been here for 30 or 40 years, and know that lifestyle is not necessarily simple," she mused. "But it's very worthwhile."

For the keynote panel, dTerra plans on emphasizing the importance of localization in regards to farming and gardening.

"My belief is that those herbs that we can grow in our garden and harvest in the wild are going to be [important] for so many reasons.... That's the direction we need to go in – rather than buying herbs that have come across the ocean, and we don't know much about them, or the true embodied energy of what it took to get them here."

After her jump into rural living, dTerra developed a passion for herbs, and has now been teaching classes for over 30 years, with a focus on local, sustainable and restorative herbalism. On the 160 acre Motherland Botanical Sanctuary, located just north of Willits, there's over 200 different species of herbs grown, used in the nine-month Herbal Apprentice class she's been teaching for the last 20 years.

However she does plan on making a change to the teaching regimen at Motherland starting next year.

"What we plan to offer is a little broader focus having to do with tending the land.... It will be what we've learned from being out there for 35 years."

In addition to the keynote panel, dTerra will also be teaching a workshop on Saturday with friends Vicky Salcido-Cobb, who is the garden manager at Motherland, and herbalist/activist Georgia Lane. It's from 2 to 3:20 pm and is called "Wild Plants for Food and Medicine." It will cover weed/greens, berries, and trees/nuts.

"We're going to talk about the ethics of harvesting in the wild and the idea of the honorable harvest," said dTerra. "And then we're going to have lots of taste treats."

For Jeavons, the Grow Biointensive method and the philosophy behind it will certainly be a part of his keynote speech. The method is now practiced in 151 countries around the world thanks largely to him and those he's worked with throughout

WPD: Recent Arrests

JD Schmidt, 30, Willits

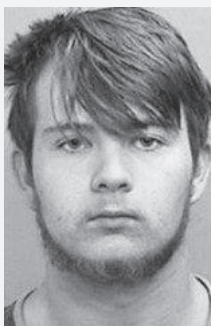
On Saturday, July 23 at about 5 pm, Willits Police Department officers conducted a traffic stop in the 1300 block of South Main Street. During the stop, officers conducted a search of the vehicle after observing drugs in plain sight. During their search, officers located a firearm concealed in a hidden compartment in the vehicle, and determined that firearm had been reported stolen during a residential burglary in the Ukiah area.



Officers placed the driver, J.D. Schmidt, under arrest and booked him into the Mendocino County Jail pursuant to 25850(c) PC (Possession of a Stolen Firearm) and 25400(c)(2) PC (Carrying a Concealed Firearm). Additionally, officers located numerous boxes of ammunition in the vehicle, which was in violation of the terms of an active restraining order of which Schmidt was the restrained party. Schmidt was also booked pursuant to 166(a)(4) PC (Disobey Court Order).

Shane Singleton, 18, Willits

On Saturday, July 23 at about 2:30 pm, Willits Police Department Bike Patrol officers contacted the occupants of a vehicle, parked outside of a closed business in the 200 block of Shell Lane. The officers noticed the odor of marijuana coming from within the vehicle, and requested the occupants exit the vehicle.



One of the occupants, Shane Singleton, attempted to flee by running away but was quickly caught and apprehended. At that point officers discovered he was in possession of a loaded firearm. Upon searching the vehicle, officers discovered numerous items that had recently been reported stolen during a residential burglary at a residence several miles north of Willits.

Officers examined the firearm and noticed the serial numbers had been destroyed, but they were able to determine the firearm had also recently been reported stolen from the same residence.

Singleton was arrested and booked into the Mendocino County Jail pursuant to 25850(c)(2) PC (Possession of a Stolen Loaded Firearm), 25400(a)(1) PC (Possession of a Concealed Firearm), 23900 PC (Destroying Firearm Serial Number), and 148(a)(1) PC (Resisting Arrest). He was also booked in accordance with the reported residential burglary.

the years. Grow Biointensive uses limited farm space and resources to produce maximum yields of healthy crops, all while producing your own compost and maintaining or even improving the health of the soil year after year – and it's applicable just about anywhere you can grow food.

Jeavons said he's also planning to talk about a couple "new" crops on Sunday, which he said should reduce the farm size in relation to the yield by even more. He's saving the details about what these crops are for his speech.

Grow Biointensive is taught and practiced through the non-profit Ecology Action on a farm at Ridgewood Ranch, and at the Jeavons Center in Willits. Jeavons has written a best-selling book and over 200 other publications on the topic, won several awards, and spoken at many conferences. Ecology Action teaches people the method from all over the world every year. This year, they're hosting seven interns from Kenya, the Congo, Ghana, Canada and Wisconsin.

In regards to the "Keep On Keeping On" theme of the panel, Jeavons said that "perseverance" has been key in making the Grow Biointensive movement into what it is.

"Persevering makes all the difference in the world," he said. "[Masanobu] Fukuoka, the Japanese farmer [and writer] – what he said is you just commit yourself to doing something and then if you're lucky and keep doing it, you're likely to discover exciting things. So perseverance and keeping on keeping on like Donna and Mac have, makes all the difference in the world. Everyone is able to learn from their perseverance and their excitement just what is possible."

He noted that there's plenty of potential topics to get excited about at the fair this weekend.

"You just go read over this [presenter] list, and your mouth sort of falls open because of the opportunities that everyone's going to have to educate themselves or to become better at what they're already good at. From all over the county and from around Willits there's a wealth of skill.... I can see from this year's offering that they seem to be more diverse, if that's possible."

Among the presenters will be two people from the Ecology Action team: Jes Pearce, who's the garden mini-farm manager at the Jeavons Center, and Matt Drewno, who's farm manager at the Green Belt Mini-Farm in Mendocino. They'll be teaching a workshop Saturday from 3:30 to 5 pm called "How To Grow All Your Own Food," going through techniques and strategies of Grow Biointensive for the home gardener.

"I know what they've been preparing," said Jeavons, "and that's going to be just a very, very special opportunity because people are going to learn the patterns [of Grow Biointensive], and be able to go out and start doing it."

Here are some others in the Willits area who are presenting workshops at the fair, all on Sunday:

Phil Jergenson will be demonstrating Grid Beam, "an open source building technique that will allow anyone to dream up and build what you need." It's a clean, reusable construction system used to build everything from furniture to small vehicles and house structures.

Carol Cox, who managed the Ecology Action Research Garden for nearly 20 years, and now collaborates on a community garden in Willits, will be teaching two workshops. One explores composting and the other looks at solar cooking.

Tim Ward, who teaches and directs at the Grange School of Adaptive Agriculture, will be teaching the workshop "Soil Building Primer: A farm tour and presentation of manual no-till vegetable production."



Above: Woodworker Jerry Saunders, left, and Relay volunteer Sharron Kidd, pose with the two memory boxes and the beautiful park bench Saunders has made for the Relay for Life Survivors Raffle this year. Piper the cat did a good job posing, too.

At right: Two wooden memory boxes destined for Relay in Saunders' shop.

Photos by Jennifer Poole

Mama Taco

Taco came in as a mama kitty, when she is really just a kitten herself. She is only about a year old and not only raised her own litter (Tostada, Enchilada and Taquito), but a few "extras" that needed a mommy also. She is really sweet, easygoing and just happy to please. Come meet Taco today!

The Humane Society for Inland Mendocino County, where you can meet, play with and/or adopt Gus or other dogs and cats, is open to prospective adopters from 1 to 5 pm,



Delightful Sparkles

Sparkles got her name from her sparkling, delightful personality! This gorgeous 2-year-old shepherd mix is a sweet, loving girl who is an easy walker and curious about her surroundings. Sparkles likes to think she is a big lap dog – 60 pounds – so make sure you save room for her on the couch! Sparkles can be a bit skittish and would do best in a home with older children or adults, and daily exercise as well as oodles of affection. If you think Sparkles sounds like the dog for you, please stop by the shelter today and meet her!

The Ukiah Animal Shelter is located at 298 Plant Road in Ukiah, and adoption hours are Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10 am to 6:30 pm and Wednesday through Friday, from 10 am to 6:30 pm. To view photos and bios of more of the wonderful adoptable animals, please visit www.mendocinoshelter.com or visit the shelter. More info about adoptions: 467-6453.



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Photos by Mattie Pinon



Redwood Empire Fair Horse show kicks off 2016 event

Even though the main event is still a week away, the first event of the 2016 Redwood Empire Fair – the horse show – was held last weekend at the Willits Frontier Days rodeo grounds.

Youth exhibitors from Future Farmers of America and 4-H chapters around the county were invited to participate in showmanship and under saddle classes. 4-H has three age categories for showmanship classes, and winners included Hayden Hayes of Ukiah Shamrock 4-H in novice, Paige Whitcomb of Long Valley 4-H in intermediate, and Gracie Silva of Long Valley 4-H in advanced. FFA only had an advanced winner: Jacob Crowhurst of Ukiah FFA.

Breeding class awards are also given to the horses with the most correct confirmation, typiness of breed, and overall appearance. Champion Gelding went to Gracie Silva of Long Valley 4-H, Reserve Champion Gelding went to Erin Evans of Anderson Marsh 4-H, Champion Mare went to Madison Forrester of Willits FFA, Reserve Champion Mare went to Caitlyn Forrester of Willits FFA, and the Pony Champion went to Casia Lazarro of Potter Valley 4-H.

Between English and Western classes, points were tallied and an overall high point was awarded to winners in two age groups. FFA and 4-H competed together for the overall score. Winners each received a bag of washing accessories to keep their horses clean for the show.

The overall High Point award for 14 and over went to Gracie Silva of Long Valley 4-H, and reserve went to Erin Evans of Anderson Marsh 4-H. The overall High Point award for 9 to 13 went to Danielle Barry of Willits 4-H, and reserve went to Samantha Arms, also of Willits 4-H.

Barry also won the open high point division in one of the Willits Frontier Days series shows, which was being judged simultaneously that day. The open high point prize was a hay bag with a customized patch made by Mary Anne Underhill of Underhill's Western Craft.

The public is welcome to come down to the Ukiah Fairgrounds to watch the rest of the species show, including hogs, sheep, steer, dairy cattle, goats, dairy goats, pygmy goats, dogs, cavies, chickens, rabbits and turkeys from August 2 through 5. The Junior Livestock Auction will be on Saturday, August 6 at noon, and the awards ceremony will conclude the festivities on Sunday, August 7.

More info: 462-FAIR or www.RedwoodEmpireFair.com.

– Maureen Moore



Photos by Maureen Moore



Clockwise from below, right: Keely Ahders rides her horse in the English division at Sunday's show. Riders wait in the line-up after competing to learn how they placed. Danielle Barry of Willits 4-H, winner of the 9 to 13 High Point award and the open high point award, holds her prizes. Erin Evans of Anderson Marsh 4-H, winner of the 14 and over reserve high point award. Gracie Silva of Long Valley 4-H, high point winner for 14 and over. Samantha Arms of Willits 4-H, the winner of the reserve high point award in the 9 to 13 age group. Arms rides her paint horse. Erin Evans rides along the rail. Caitlyn Forrester in the English division. Danielle Barry jumps over the fence on Rebel. Emma Garman jumps over the fence on her horse.



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