

Westwood PinePress

Vol. 39, No. 49

Feather Publishing Co., Inc.

530-257-5321

Wednesday, May 15, 2019

\$1

Inside



Smart meters

The implementation of smart meters caused some controversy during a LMUD meeting. See page 8B

Sheriff's Blotter

Check out what happened around the county and what calls were made in the Sheriff's Blotter. See page 14B

CSD prepares for water, sewer rate increase

Susan Cort Johnson
Westwood Editor
wp@lassennews.com

Westwood residents will receive a letter from the Community Services District announcing a water/sewer rate increase. In addition to the letter, a report supporting the rate hikes will be mailed titled "2019 Water/Sewer Rates Analysis and Recommendations." It was compiled by Ed Anderson, the district's consulting engineer.

See Rate, page 4A



MEMORIAL DAY

All Feather Publishing offices will be closed Monday, May 27, for the observance of Memorial Day. This will affect the deadlines for the Wednesday, May 30 issue of the Westwood PinePress.

The Westwood PinePress will go to press Tuesday, May 29, with distribution Tuesday night and be published on Wednesday, May 29.

Deadlines are set as follows:
Display advertising
Noon Wednesday, May 22

Legal advertising
Noon Wednesday, May 22

Real estate display
Noon Wednesday, May 22

News releases/letters
Noon Wednesday, May 22

Classifieds
9 a.m. Friday, May 24

All Feather Publishing offices closed, Monday, May 27, Memorial Day.

Department hosts wildfire preparedness day



Clear Creek community members pick up brochures and track their efforts to clear their property of green waste during Wildfire Community Preparedness Day Saturday, May 4. The booth in front of the fire station was staffed by Clear Creek Volunteer Firefighters JD Hackett, left, Burt Cooper, Julie Raymond and Nicki Moroney. Photo submitted

Susan Cort Johnson
Westwood Editor
wp@lassennews.com

Clear Creek volunteer firefighters handed out brochures Saturday, May 4, in front of the fire station on Highway 147 that explained how to protect houses and property from wildfires. It was one of a multitude of events across the United States for Wildfire Community Preparedness Day.

The nationally recognized day is sponsored by the National Fire Protection Association. Tips on preparedness include clearing pine needles and dry leaves; trimming shrubs and branches that come within five feet of the house; and moving anything that could act as a fuel source, such as woodpiles and lumber, 30 feet from the house so property cannot be ignited by floating

embers.

Clear Creek is a member of Firewise USA, which is a program that provides a collaborative framework for residents to reduce wildfire risks. The Clear Creek Community Green Waste Event is June 5 to June 9. During this time period bins for green waste will be available at Clear Creek Park and assistance in hauling yard debris to the bins will be available.

During Wildfire Community Preparedness Day a sign-up sheet was available for seniors needing help clearing their property. Also residents logged the time and money they spent clearing their property of pine needles, cones, branches, etc., which is information required as part

See Wildfire, page 4A

Westwood Little League holds opening ceremonies

Teams gathered at Westwood Park Saturday, May 4 to officially launch Little League season. All approached the day with joy.

The event began with the traditional parade of teams. Players climbed into the back of decorated pickup trucks to travel the streets of Westwood behind a fire truck from the Westwood Fire Department.

The 2019 season has seven teams. The red T-ball team is coached by Nicole and Neil Young, the blue T-ball team by Thomas and Janeen Wright. There is a farm team coached by Chuck and Becca Nelson; minor boys "Outlaws" coached by Ryan Gibbs and Brian Worth; minor girls "Renegades" coached by Melissa Rickert and Heather Aggerholm; Junior Girls Westwood coached by Harmony Bruns, Holly Cordoza and Cory Hedrick; and Junior Boys Westwood coached by Robert Baehler.

Westwood Little League has a lot of community support, according to Brittany Baehler, president. Teams were able to begin practice early this spring because Roland Cantu plowed all the snow off the baseball fields at the park. Major donors were Fuel Good, Westwood Family Resource Center and Turner Excavating. The

Chimney fund donated the funds to provide breakfast burritos for the kids the morning of opening day.

The ceremonies opened with Sid Walker playing the national anthem on his electric violin. After teams were introduced and given their team cap, Doug Hernandez, who frequently umpires, threw out the first pitch. He has been a Westwood Little League volunteer for four years. Baehler said Westwood Little League is having a fundraiser May 18 at the Shell Station on the Peninsula, and children are selling packets of goodies to raise funds as well.

The closing ceremonies for Westwood Little League are Saturday, June 8.



The "blue" T-ball team streams bubbles from their float during the Westwood Little League opening day parade. Photos by Jessica Murgia-Compton



Westwood Little League teams parade through the streets of Westwood Saturday, May 4 as part of the opening day celebration.

BMX pros secure a captive audience

Susan Cort Johnson
Westwood Editor
wp@lassennews.com

BMX extreme sports athletes got the attention of Westwood school students with tricks such as backflips, 360s and tail whips in order to deliver an anti-tobacco message. The purpose of the program is to help students realize the negative effects of tobacco use.

Erick Soto, owner of BMX Pros Trick Team, told students in Kindergarten through 12th-grade that he became a BMX pro because he stayed away from drugs and tobacco and focused on his riding skills instead. He delivered his message after performing tricks for the students. He is an X-Game finalist. Also performing was Michael Mogollon, a young man from Colombia who is a prospect for the BMX freestyle Colombian Olympic team. BMX Pros Trick Team is based in San Diego, California.



Students in Kindergarten through 12th-grade on the Westwood school campus are inspired by Michael Mogollon, a BMX pro, during an assembly in which the athletes told students to choose to excel at something they love and avoid negative behavior. Photo by Susan Cort Johnson

The company Website describes the core message as: "We focus on encouraging students to find something they love to do and concentrate on the

personal fulfillment they can receive from that instead of choosing to engage in negative behaviors such as

See BMX, page 4A

Siren Tower fundraiser



Burt Cooper, a Clear Creek volunteer firefighter, places a fundraiser thermometer in front of the firehouse to track the progress of donations for a siren tower, which will be used as an early warning system for evacuation in case of an approaching wildfire. Photo by Rod Twain

BMX, from page 1A

tobacco use.”
The assembly, held Thursday, May 9 in the back parking lot of the campus of Fletcher Walker Elementary and Westwood Jr/ Sr High School, launched a new tobacco prevention education program by the Lassen County Sheriff’s Department for three school districts in outlying areas. They are Westwood Unified School District, Big Valley School District and Fort Sage Unified School District. Assemblies were held May 10 at Bieber Elementary and Junior/ Senior High School and Fort Sage Elementary and Herlong Junior/Senior High School.
To fund the anti-tobacco use program the sheriff’s department applied for and received money from a Prop

56 Tobacco Enforcement Grant in the amount of \$972,000 over a three year period.
The funds provide prevention education in classrooms and School Resource Officers.
According to Lisa Bernard, Community Services Officer for the Lassen County Sheriff’s Department, funds for school assemblies to launch the prevention and enforcement activities were requested in the grant proposal.
“I researched different assembly presentations available and chose the BMX Stunt Team because of their strong anti-tobacco message and dynamic presentation. I think kids are more likely to respond in a positive way to the material presented if it is presented in a memorable way,” wrote Bernard in an email to the Westwood PinePress.
According to Bernard, the

In addition to Bernard, sheriff Dean Growdon also attended the assembly and deputy Michael Mai who is the school resource officer.
The assembly was just the starting point for education about the harmful effects of tobacco.
The sheriff’s office chose Botvin LifeSkills Training curriculum for classroom education. The curriculum is approved by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and is evidence-based and backed by peer reviewed research. Staff presenting the material must be trained and certified in the curriculum. Presenters are trained Youth Services Officers and behavioral health counselors. Pre and post-test results during the education provide data on changes in attitudes toward tobacco use and tobacco use rates.
According to Bernard, the

sheriff’s office tries to be proactive and prevent

problem behaviors before they begin. However such

programs are only possible with grant funding.



BMX freestyle athletes perform at a Westwood school assembly Thursday, May 9. They are Michael Mogollon, left, and Erick Soto. The athletes delivered an anti-tobacco message.
Photo by Susan Cort Johnson

WILDFIRE, from page 1A

of the community’s recertification for Firewise USA status.
Volunteer firefighters JD Hackett, Burt Cooper, Julie Raymond and Nicki Moroney worked the booth from 9 a.m. to noon. Jessica Greene, a member of the Clear Creek board of directors, made Philly cheese steak sandwiches on the griddle for

anyone who came to the event hungry.
Funds were also raised for the siren tower project, which will give Clear Creek an early warning system for evacuation when a wildfire threatens the community. Tickets for a pancake breakfast during the Clear Creek Crafts Fair July 13 to July 14 were sold, and a firefighter’s boot was available for cash donations to be dropped into.
The Clear Creek Firefighter’s Association is raising funds to reconstruct

the wooden structure for the siren, address any electrical issues for the operation of the siren and test it to determine if repairs are needed. A bid from a licensed contractor to rebuild the tower was \$8,500, but does not account for any unknown costs. Therefore members of the Firefighter’s Association have set a fundraising goal of \$12,000.
A fundraiser thermometer has been placed in front of the firehouse to track the progress of donations in meeting the goal.

RATE, from page 1A

The board of directors for the Westwood Community Services District voted at the Monday, May 6 meeting to notify the public of the proposed rate changes. A public hearing on the water/sewer rate increase will be held at 7 p.m. July 1 at the regular board meeting. The board meets at the Lassen County Visitor Center-Westwood Station.
If approved by the board, residential customers will pay \$40.40 a month for water, currently they pay \$37.76, and \$39.30 for sewer, currently they pay \$36.74.
The recommended rate increase is based on several factors including operation and maintenance costs, capital expenditures, inflation and depreciation of system components.
Anderson comments on a 2017-18 water and sewer financial statement in the report, writing: “Based on the above financial statement and approximately

800 active water/sewer customers, the district has just barely met its goal to operate in the “black” and establish a modest reserve for future capital replacement.”
The last rate analysis was completed in 2009 with the rates adjusted annually in proportion to the current Consumer Price Index (CPI). “It is proposed to continue to incorporate this annual adjustment each year in an attempt to keep up with inflation and other costly regulations,” wrote Anderson.
Since the last rate evaluation two water system capital improvements were constructed. A new concrete enclosure at Walker Springs was constructed and an automatic auxiliary generator installed at a cost of \$455,700. Also a fixed network water meter system was installed throughout Westwood at a cost of \$643,500. The cost of the second project was covered by a government program which gave the district the ability to pay the money owed for the spring house

project.
Currently the Westwood water and sewer departments have no outstanding debt. However there are pending projects. Anderson listed the proposed capital improvements and their estimated cost: 1- “Construction of a new 750,000 gallon water storage tank to provide a minimum of 1,250,000 gallons of storage. The additional storage is required to meet the State of California water storage requirements for single source water systems. The preliminary estimated cost is \$300,000.” 2- “Cleaning of accumulated sludge in the primary waste stabilization ponds and disposal at a state certified disposal facility. The preliminary estimated cost is \$250,000.”
Anderson wrote: “It is important that user rates provide sufficient total revenue to provide adequate water and sewer service to assure the maintenance, development, conformity and perpetuity of the systems.”
Objections to the water/sewer rate increase must be provided in writing even for members of the community attending the public hearing, said Susan Coffi, secretary for the Westwood Community Services District. Also, only one objection per property address is accepted.
If the rate increase is approved by the board at the July 1 meeting, the new rates will go into effect on that date.

PART-TIME OFFICE POSITION
at the
Chester Progressive
Feather Publishing is looking for a dynamic part-time person. Must be able to multi-task, be computer literate, organized and enthusiastic. Good typing and writing skills a plus.
Monday - Friday, approximately 25 hours per week.
Pick up an application at the Chester Progressive
135 Main Street, Chester

PROMO PLAY MAY-NIA
Promo Play JACKPOTS
For the month of May we will be giving away approximately **\$5000** A Day in Promo Play
Must be a Diamond Club Member to be eligible.
10th Annual Pow Wow
May 17-19, 2019
Lassen County Fairgrounds
VETERAN’S MEMORIAL MONTH MAY 2019
Starting May 1st, tell your server you are a veteran while eating in our café, and we will donate \$1 to Blue Star Moms.
On Memorial Day (May 31st), tell your server that you are a veteran, and we will double your discount in our café!
Visit us online at: www.DMCAH.com
252-1100
900 Skyline Drive Susanville
You must be accompanied by an adult 21 years of age or older with a valid photo I.D. to enter the casino.
*See Casino for all promotional details

CHRISTENSEN INSURANCE
“A Friend You Can Depend On For Life”
Expert Assistance with Medicare Supplements and PDPs
Susan Christensen Edwards
40 S. Roop, Susanville • www.christensenins.com
530.257.2263 or 888.257.2263 • CA Lic #0762221

Westwood PinePress
Serving Westwood, PineTown and Clear Creek
Published: Every Wednesday morning by Feather Publishing Co., Inc.
Mailing address: 100 Grand Avenue, Susanville, CA 96130
How to contact us: (530) 257-5321 FAX: (530) 257-0408. Advertising & News: lctimes@lassennews.com Legal notices: lassenlegals@lassennews.com
Ownership and Heritage: The Westwood PinePress was established June 8, 1980. Published weekly, it is part of the Feather Publishing family of newspapers serving Lassen and Plumas counties.
Deadlines: Advertising: Thursday 3 p.m., Classified: Monday 9 a.m., News: Friday 10 a.m. Legals: Thursday, 3 p.m. Breaking News: Anytime! (All deadlines subject to change due to holidays.)
Michael C. Taborski, Publisher
Susan Cort Johnson Resident Editor Tom Forney Production Mgr.
Patty Dailey Advertising Cobey Brown Vice Pres./Operations
Keri Taborski Legal Advertising Department Mary Newhouse Human Resource Director
ENPA Member, California Newspaper Publishers Assoc. PRINTED WITH SOY INK Printed on recycled paper

Lassen Humane Society
14th Annual Yard Sale!
YARD SALE
Lassen County Fairgrounds
FRIDAY MAY 17th 9am-4pm | **SATURDAY MAY 18th 9am-3pm** | **SUNDAY MAY 19th 9am-3pm**