

WELL NEWSLETTER – December 22, 2006
Happy Holidays!

Calendar of WELL Events

January 2 – WELL Coordinating Committee Meeting

The next WELL Coordinating Committee Meeting will be held on January 2 at 6PM at 121 West Commercial Street. The agenda will be posted on the WELL website by December 30: <http://www.willitseconomiclocalization.org/node/69>.

January 8 – Community Forum: Highway 101 Bypass

6:30PM, Willits Community Center - 111 E. Commercial St

WELL has sent a letter to the Willits City Council supporting a two-lane bypass or a redesign of the city streets over a four-lane bypass. As a follow-up to this letter, WELL is hosting a community forum where folks can voice their opinion about the bypass. We will provide an update on the results of the MCOG Technical Advisory Board meeting on December 20 and the MCOG Board Meeting on January 8. Additionally, we will host two speakers, one in favor of the two-lane bypass and one in favor of the four-lane bypass. A question & answer period will follow.

January 16 – WELL Coordinating Committee Meeting

The next WELL Coordinating Committee Meeting will be held on January 16 at 6PM at 121 West Commercial Street. The agenda will be posted on the WELL website by January 13: <http://www.willitseconomiclocalization.org/node/69>.

Other Events

The Now and Then Film Series – Winter 2007 schedule:

All films start at 7PM at the Little Lake Health Center, 45 Hazel, Willits
Suggested Donation: \$5.

January 18th – “Ripe for Change” – This fascinating documentary explores the intersection of food & politics in California over the last thirty years. Today while organic food is the fastest growing sector in agriculture, most large-scaling farming is still addicted to the use of fossil fuels. 55 minutes

February 15th – “Taken for a Ride” – PBS award winning documentary about the intentional takeover & dismantling of America’s interurban short line rail systems by General Motors, Firestone Tires, etc. 60 minutes

March 15th – “Global Gardener” – Permaculture with Bill Mollison. Learn how permaculture weaves together microclimate, annual & perennial plants, animals, soil, water management and human needs into intricately connected productive communities. 120 minutes

April 19th - "Fed Up" - Overview of our food production system from the Green Revolution to the Biotech Revolution and what we can do about it including historical footage of Monsanto’s development of GMOs and interviews with farmers, scientists, government officials and activists. 58 minutes

December 20 – MCOG Technical Advisory Committee Meeting – Ukiah

At this meeting the MCOG Technical Advisory Committee will discuss options for the Willits Highway 101 bypass. This meeting will be held at 9:30AM at Victory Theatre Plaza, CTA Conference Room, Suite 101, 367 N. State Street, in Ukiah. Public expression is welcomed. For more information check their website here:

<http://www.mendocinocog.org/agendas/pdfs/a061220a.pdf>

January 8 – MCOG Board Meeting – Ukiah

At this meeting the MCOG Board will choose which Willits Highway 101 bypass option it will submit for funding to the California Transportation Commission. This meeting will be held at 10AM in the Ukiah City Council Chambers, 300 Seminary Avenue, Ukiah.

January 17 – John Jeavons' Talk on Biointensive Gardening – Willits

John Jeavons will be giving a public talk, "GROW BIOINTENSIVE Gardening Projects: What makes for Success?" which will cover the topic of successful GROW BIOINTENSIVE garden projects around the World. The Biointensive project in Kabul, Afghanistan which is supported primarily by Willits residents will be included in the discussion. There will be time for questions and answers. This event will be Wednesday, January 17th, 7 PM to 8:30PM at the Willits Methodist Church. The event is free but donations are appreciated. This event is a benefit for the GROW BIOINTENSIVE Afghanistan Project.

January 17 – Willits Transportation Workshop – Willits

The Mendocino Transit Authority, Odyssey, & IBI Group invite you to join them at a community workshop to look at ways to improve local transit in Willits. The event is at 6:30PM on January 17 at the Integrated Services Center on 221 South Lenore Avenue, Willits. Please RSVP by calling the MTA at (800) 696-4682 or e-mailing lauren@odyssey.org.

January 18 – Interview with "Ripe for Change" Filmmakers

Joanna Wildoak will interview the makers of "Ripe for Change" on KZYX&Z at 9AM on January 18. You can hear this interview and then see the movie later on the same day. See above for movie showing information.

February 10 - WELL at Sip Some Soup

On February 10 Willits Daily Bread will hold its annual Sip Some Soup fundraiser at the Willits Community Center at 5:30PM. A group of WELL members will enter a soup made from local food. If you want to help us create an amazing pot of soup, please contact Suzie at the WELL office. For more information on the event itself, please call Kathy at 459-9547.

Of Interest

Electric Bikes Come To Town

WELL member David Drell appeared in the Willits News featuring his new business, Electric Bikes of Willits, located in the Willits Environmental Center. "The impetus is to provide alternative transportation vehicles for people who want to reduce fossil fuels and they get exercise," Drell said. You can read the full article here:

http://www.willitsnews.com/search/ci_4832463

You can learn more about electric bikes in Janaia Donaldson's Peak Moment show entitled "Go Electric: Bike Commuting Made Easy." Download it here:
<http://www.globalpublicmedia.com/interviews/810>

On the Importance of Local Food

Local food is quickly gaining recognition as a key to sustainability, strong economies and community health. However, the structures that either support or discourage local food systems receive much less attention. Local food systems simply won't be viable unless communities have a greater ability to influence food-related policies that relate to local health, safety and environment.

Environmental Commons has just published a series of educational fact sheets on the importance of local control in supporting healthy regional food systems. The fact sheets are a clear and concise educational tool to raise awareness and inspire action for strong local food systems. The fact sheet "Shaping our Local Food Systems" outlines the importance of local jurisdiction over many aspects of food and agriculture and illustrates why food should be controlled locally. "Local Food Systems: Challenges and Threats" describes the forces that shape food systems in the interests of a few large corporations at the expense of the public interest, and "Local Food Systems: Getting Involved" charts the course for building food systems that truly support local communities. Finally, "The Place of Food in Our Lives" reflects on the consequences of understanding our food primarily as a commodity versus as an integral part of family and community life. You can download the fact sheets at <http://www.environmentalcommons.org/LocalFood/>.

Environmental Commons is a non-profit organization based in Gualala that encourages involvement in the democratic process to defend our environmental heritage - water, air, biodiversity, and genetic variability - known as 'the commons.'

Brookside Farm Seeks Support

Brookside Farm is seeking support from the Willits community in a number of ways. Local businesses can donate goods and services. People can volunteer labor. Financial support in any amount is greatly appreciated. The farm is also seeking Founding Members to give \$1000 in return for a share of the 2007 harvest and to help build the farm infrastructure. Monthly payment options are also available. If you would like to contribute to the development of a local food system in any of these ways, please call Jason at 456-0760.

Recently, gates and a weather station have been installed at Brookside Farm. Check out the Brookside Farm website at:
<http://www.energyfarms.net/willits> and its blog at <http://www.energyfarms.net/blog>.

San Francisco Supervisor Proposes Peak Oil Task Force

Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi has proposed that San Francisco create a Peak Oil Preparedness Task Force to ensure San Francisco is prepared when the world's oil supply reaches maximum production, resulting in major gas price increases that will threaten the local economy. Mirkarimi introduced legislation to establish a seven-member task force charged with laying out a game plan to deal with the impacts of peak oil, which some experts say could occur within the decade. The plan would address the expected decrease in tourism,

increase in food prices and the need for alternative-fuel transit. This information was reported by the S.F. Examiner here:

http://www.examiner.com/a-457846~City_Hall_News.html

Office Notes

WELL Organizational Structure Change

At the REDI Board Meeting on December 7, 2006 the REDI Board decided that it wants to modify its relationship with WELL such that REDI become a supporting organization for WELL rather than WELL being a direct program of REDI. REDI, an organization focused on education & research, stated concerns about WELL's advocacy activities.

In response to REDI's decision the WELL Coordinating Committee is exploring several options including finding a local, dormant 501(c)(3) to use or applying for its own 501(c)(3). Once the committee has finished its research, it will bring viable options to an upcoming WELL plenary meeting, so that WELL members can vote to decide which option they want. WELL must have tax-exempt status in order to receive foundation grants & tax deductible donations. We will keep you posted on this very important turning point for WELL.

WELL Privacy Policy

At the Coordinating Committee meeting on December 18, WELL adopted the following privacy policy with respect to how it will treat members' contact information:

WELL will not rent, sell, or share members' personal information including home address, telephone number, and e-mail address to any other organization or individual person. WELL will only use this information to communicate with WELL members concerning issues and events which in the view of the Coordinating Committee and/or the Administration Team may be of interest to WELL members. WELL may also relay communication from individual members to the WELL membership when requested.

This policy is also available on the WELL website.

If you would like to be taken off this mailing list, please let me know and I will gladly oblige.

Cheers,
Suzie

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