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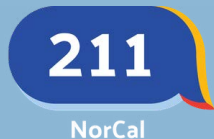
AUGUST 2026
VOLUME 33 NO. 8

NORTH STATE Parent

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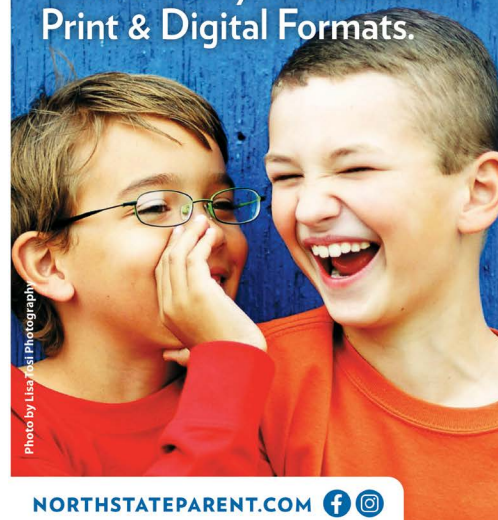
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On the Cover: The Reiser sisters have years of camping experience after working closely as a family, leading trips each summer in Alaska. Now, the family is leading camping and river trips locally with their company, Explore California Outdoors. (From left) Isabella, 15, will continue her studies this fall at Inspire School of the Arts. She is an accomplished artist, avid gardener and nature lover. Morgen, 18, will attend UC Berkeley and major in Environmental Science.

Photo by: [Missy Bee Photography](#). Based in Northern California, but always willing to travel. For weddings, family, birthdays, graduations and much more, she's there to capture all your special moments. Reach her at 530-591-2821.

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DEAR READERS

August is fast approaching, with thoughts of getting back in the routine for school. But a few weekends remain before class begins and the summer lingers through August and early September, providing lovely weather for family camping trips and weekend excursions to enjoy the end of summer beauty of nature.

Taking the family camping or fishing or for a day hike with a yummy, packed picnic offers beautiful opportunities to bond over teaching new skills to your young ones, climbing a mountain (or even a hill), tying a lure, putting up a tent or just jumping from rock to rock across a babbling brook. Or laughing over a collapsed tent or landing on your behind while attempting to cross that silly stream! Making the experiences positive and fun-loving will anchor the memories.

Now is the time to take the opportunity while the campin' is good to make beautiful memories you and your children will treasure the rest of their lives. Never camped before? Check out our article "First Campout with Your Family: Make it a Winner" on page 8 for tips on how to make an overnight or weekend in nature a great experience for your whole family.

For more summer fun, find us at these family-friendly events:

- [Mother's Stroll in Chico, Aug. 1](#)
- [Concerts in the Park in Mt. Shasta, Aug. 2 & 16](#)
- [Blackberry Festival in Mt. Shasta, Sept. 6](#)
- [Champions for Children in Redding, Sept. 12](#)

See our calendar for a terrific list of family-friendly events, workshops, activities and more at northstateparent.com/calendar

We wish you many happy family times as this summer draws to a close.



Pamela Stacey

and the North State Parent magazine team



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Rachel White



Rachel White and her therapy dog, Jewels, work together to comfort and support children with special needs and children grieving a loss.
Photos by Lydia White

The mission of our be the change column is to feature community members from the North State who are actively making a difference in community life as it relates to children and youth. If you would like to nominate someone who is making a difference, please write to pn@northstateparent.com.

Helping Students with Visual & Mobility Impairments Toward Greater Independence

What is worth stepping outside of your comfort zone? When the road diverges into a known and an unknown path, what makes the unfamiliar road worth the risk? For Rachel White, visual impairment (VI) teacher and orientation and mobility (O&M) specialist for Tehama County, people are the reason to take the unfamiliar road.

Visual impairment and orthopedic impairments that affect physical movement, such as cerebral palsy or muscular dystrophy, are considered “low incidence disabilities,” meaning they occur rarely. Because of their infrequency, the specialized supports required by individuals with these disabilities are often not widely known.

Teaching new skills for independence

In 2017, Tehama County SELPA Assistant Superintendent Veronica Coates needed to hire a new VI and O&M specialist. With a national shortage of these professionals, she knew it would be difficult to fill this niche role.

The position requires constant creativity and resourcefulness; the ability to work one-on-one and establish close, trusting relationships with students; and a willingness to keep learning new technology and methodology. As she considered these requirements, one person who already embodied these traits came to mind: Rachel White.

At that time, Rachel had been working for over ten years as a special education preschool teacher for Tehama County. Now, six years into her new role and two decades into working for Tehama County, Rachel supports

7▶

students from infancy to age 22 as they learn to navigate a world built for those with sight and mobility.

Motivated by the joy of seeing her students make progress, Rachel loves helping them learn new skills and ways to gain independence. “So many of them are so capable—they just need a little extra help, and they can do amazing things,” she says. The work requires staying abreast of new technologies and crafting how to use the available tools to make curriculum accessible for students with vision loss and mobility challenges – such as how to make a tactile periodic table for a blind chemistry student. Thankfully, Rachel says, “there are so many cool programs now – students can navigate computers, research and learn independently.”

Empowering the community to learn new skills to support students

Veronica describes Rachel as “the perfect person for this position because she’s a learner. She’s very creative and innovative. She’s always thinking about that next step, and she always puts her students first.” Aubrie Fulk, Tehama County’s director of student, family and district support, has worked alongside Rachel for years. “She’s a very dear friend and a person you can always count on,” Aubrie says. “She is always a fierce advocate for students; there’s no student she wouldn’t help; she would do anything to help anyone.”

While she would help anyone, Rachel recognizes she cannot help everyone by herself. Since many of her students need their textbooks transcribed into braille, she has developed a training plan to teach people to learn and transcribe braille, helping meet students’ needs while providing a valuable line of employment in a rural environment.



With this goal in mind, Rachel invites people from the North State into transcriber positions – no advance knowledge required – and furnishes them with a course from [UEBOnline](#) and supportive in-house training to learn braille and transcribe educational material for students. “In a very small community, especially in the rural North State, we just don’t have people who know braille and can do this work,” Veronica says, “but Rachel finds people in the community instead of us having to contract out to a company. She encourages people to apply for the position, and she has really built up a position in our community.”

Canine therapy brings comfort for students and the community

Rachel has also recruited an unexpected partner for caring for students: her dog, Jewels. Rachel describes her golden doodle as a “a big, fluffy lovebug” with “innate ability” to seek out people who need a little extra support. Upon recognizing Jewels’ calming effect on people, Rachel enrolled Jewels in a training program through the Alliance of Therapy Dogs, which she recommends to others interested in training a therapy dog.

“Jewels has been really important when there have been a lot of tragedies in the schools,” Rachel says, describing hours she and Jewels have spent on campus with students who have lost peers due to illness and car accidents. The duo has become a beloved presence on school campuses throughout the county, regularly appearing at events like mental health fairs and the Special Olympics. “We joke that Jewels is not a real dog because she’s so calm and sweet – way different than my two doodles!” Aubrie jokes. “But that’s just another way Rachel saw a need and she thought, ‘How can I better my community?’”

Rachel’s specializations are tailored to a small percentage of the population, but they make a big difference in creating space for dignity and value for individuals who simply need different entry points to engage with the world. Whether or not her students can see her face, they “see” her heart, experiencing through Rachel the empowerment of love in action. ■



Jenna Christophersen is a Chico native who loves her community, living in the North State and writing about remarkable people who build our communities and make them places where families can thrive.



Rachel sees her special need students as capable; in need of just a little extra help to learn new skills and ways to gain independence.



Therapy dog Jewels’ calm, loving ways provide much-needed hugs and comfort to students grieving a loss or who have experienced a school-wide tragedy.

FIRST CAMPOUT WITH YOUR FAMILY: MAKE IT A WINNER!

If your family has a long history of camping and is totally outdoor savvy, then you need read no further. But if your children haven't been camping before and you'd like to take them, there are some important points to take into consideration.

Much as we would like it to be otherwise, many of our children have become indoor creatures. They don't play outside unless they're playing an organized sport. It seems that old-fashioned free play is a bit of a dinosaur these days. There are some good reasons for this, one of them being safety; it's often not safe for children to play unsupervised in their neighborhoods. The indoor trend is also the result of technology. All our computers, video games and other screened entertainments occupy children without challenging them to physical activity.

So there we are, with children unused to the outdoors. That said, there are so many good reasons to get out into nature, learning about the flora and fauna of an area, relaxing in the company of family and friends and building healthier bodies and minds. As you begin to think about a camping trip, you'll want to plan ahead.

Camping Close to Home with Established Facilities

A first-time venture probably should be relatively close to home and shouldn't be overly challenging in terms of comfort and endurance. It might be best to choose a place with bathrooms and showers. After all, you want the children to have a good time and a Spartan trip, especially if the weather doesn't cooperate, will only ensure that it's the last trip for your children. When you've found a suitable place, be sure to include some bona fide camping experiences such as day hikes, fishing, boating and the traditional evening campfire where allowed.

Camping in a tent requires a fair amount of gear, so the preparation curve can be tough if you don't have camping gear or can borrow from a friend. Rather than investing in a tent, air mattresses, sleeping bags, etc., you can rent a complete gear kit from your local sporting goods store. Renting an RV or campervan can ease the learning curve. These "homes on wheels" keep you warm and dry no matter the weather and provide comforts a tent cannot.

Reserve Camping Spots in Advance

Some campgrounds require reservations. Check campgrounds online to ascertain whether they are first come first served or require reservations. Be sure to arrive at the campground area as early in the day as possible. It's no fun trying to set up camp in the dark!

Camping is free anywhere you would like to stop in the Trinity National Forest, but permanent campgrounds with facilities with amenities are often first-come, first served. (Again, arriving early in the day is best to snag a camping spot.) California State Parks have 20 first-come, first-served campgrounds, and California's 18 national forests have hundreds of first-come, first-served sites.

Make a Pack List, Prepare for the Drive

Taking some time to plan for this first camping adventure will pay dividends. First, plan activities for the drive. A small game to play in the car or games such as "find the license plate" will keep children occupied during the drive and avoid the "Are we there yet?" See page 10 for examples.

Plan quick and easy meals and include disposable plates and cups, etc. If you

really want to be more "green," then make the cooking and cleanup including washing up dishes part of the fun. Perhaps there could be partners, one adult and one child responsible for each meal.

Remember how much fun the evening campfires can be with songs, stories and special treats like s'mores. Some of the larger campgrounds have park rangers who will lead daytime activities or have evening slideshows and talks. Check the park website for scheduled ranger talks and programs and any other details, notices or alerts.

Be prepared if the weather turns bad. Simple rainwear can be a lifesaver as well as games and activities to do inside the tent if necessary.

Enjoy Every Minute of Your Family Camping Experience

When you've done all your planning, be sure to take along plenty of enthusiasm. Children will pick up on the fun if you are eager and ready to have fun too. No matter what happens, a positive attitude can turn even a "downturn" into an adventure.

Be creative – maybe you'll see some wildlife or catch a trout or spot a certain bird or butterfly. This is also a great time to share your areas of expertise. Do you know all about wildflowers or can you teach the children how to paddle a canoe?

Leave No Trace

Teach your children to respect the environment and natural surroundings by example. Leave your camp as clean or cleaner than how you found it. Make a game of who can find the most pieces of trash as you prepare to leave camp and head home. Don't throw food or food waste on the ground or in the bushes. Put it in park garbage receptacles or take it home with you. Food waste is not good for animals and it attracts wasps.

Now you're all set. Kids are certain to enjoy the camping event and all the stories and memories of their first camping experience. ■

Jan Pierce, M.Ed., is a retired teacher and freelance writer. You can find her at www.janpierce.net



QUICK AND EASY MEALS FOR CAMPERS

English Muffin Pizzas: Use English muffins, squeezable pizza sauce and shredded mozzarella. Toast muffin halves on oiled grill. Turn over and spread with sauce, cheese and any toppings your family enjoys. Serve when the cheese melts.

Grilled PBJ: This one is a cinch. Choose a hearty bread and be generous with the fillings. Butter on both sides and toast on your grill. They'll stick to your ribs.

Coffee Can Stew: Cut stew meat into small pieces. Place meat in a clean coffee can with 2 tablespoons of butter. Brown meat over the fire. Add red potatoes, baby carrots and onions with 2 tablespoons more butter and add a little water or broth. Cover with foil and place in the fire for 20 minutes.

Banana Boats: Slit unpeeled bananas lengthwise without cutting through. Fill the opening with mini marshmallows and chocolate chips. Sprinkle with brown sugar, wrap in foil and place either on a grill or in the coals of your fire. They're ready in just seven minutes.

Eggs in a Hat: You may want a change from morning cereal or pancakes. Try this fun recipe. Grease a hot griddle. Cut a hole in pieces of bread using a cup or glass. Toast the bread on both sides and crack an egg in the hole. When the egg is solid, flip the bread. Top with a slice of your favorite cheese and a slice of ham. Serve when cheese is nicely melted.

Hobo Dinner: Shred or slice potatoes and carrots. Add some sliced zucchini (optional). Mix ground beef or pork with some onions and garlic and make patties. For each person, fill the center of a large sheet of aluminum foil with vegetables and meat side by side. Sprinkle all ingredients with salt and pepper. Sprinkle veggies with onion and garlic powder. Fold ends and fold top to make a sealed packet. Place on a grill or coals. Turn after about 20 minutes. Dinner will be ready when you can hear the contents sizzling. To add corn on the cob to the meal, leave corn in husks and lay on cooler coals, turning as husks brown. It only takes a few minutes to cook the corn to tender yumminess.

A picture is worth a thousand words! These photos are the winners from our online family camping photo contest. Enjoy!

1. Young Redding resident Fauna Kirk enjoys a cuddle with her father, Oden, at Stoney Meadows in Big Bend, OR, on Fauna's first camping trip.
2. L to R: Cameron, Kate and 2-year-old Azlin Ellis enjoy an evening campfire at Mill Creek Resort. *Photo by Courtney at Bright Side Photography.*
3. Anderson youths Hayden, 9; Natalya, 11; and Aria, 9, got silly and had a blast during Overnight Camp at NorCal Petting Zoo.
4. 7-year-old Hope Wade of Susanville, already an accomplished and confident fisher, casts her line at Eagle Lake.
5. Harper, 7 and Khaleesi, 10, of Cottonwood, relax with their canine camping companion, Trixie, in their family tent trailer at Hat Creek.
6. Simran Wraich's fondest camping memory was when she was able to treat her mother, who raised her as a single mom, to her dream vacation. "She always talked about wanting to go to Lake Siskiyou Camp Resort," Simran says. "I made that dream a reality and we had the best time!"

CAMPING TIPS FOR FIRST TIMERS

Avoid SNAFUs and smooth the way with these “campwise” tips from The Campout Card Deck by Marnie Hanel & Jen Severson.

Pack Planning

Prepare for the worst weather by choosing your outerwear wisely: fleece is your friend, cotton is your foe. Never leave home without a poncho. Plan to layer and protect from the sun. Everyone should have a hat, tank top, flannel shirt, shorts and long pants, hiking boots, comfy shoes to wear in camp, bandanna, light coat, and extra pairs of socks so you’ll always have a dry pair on hand.

Designate Your Spot

Many campgrounds must be booked ahead and you can usually see the location of camp spots from which to choose on camp maps posted online. But even if you head to a first-come, first-served campground, these tips apply:

- Choose a campground that doesn’t have Wi-Fi or cell service, so no one is Instagramming or Facebooking or texting. It allows for true human interaction and precious family time.
- Choose a level, dry, rock-free or (fairly rock-free) spot.
- Watch for and avoid “buzzy” neighbors (wasp nests, ground wasps, standing water that might breed mosquitoes.)
- Choose a spot well above stream beds or flood plains and not within 100 ft of trash bins and bathrooms.
- For first-timers, amenities such as picnic tables, a water faucet, a fire pit and a food locker will make for happy campers,

On the Way There

To avoid the “are we there, yet’s” and backseat squabbles born of boredom, try this twist on the old favorite license plate game. Upon encountering a lettered license plate, players come up with a word that includes all the letters on the plate. But for added fun, the word must be camping-related! For example, FLH can be “flashlight” or CTN can be “canteen.” Get silly! BRE can be “Bobcat Repellent.”

Now We’re Cookin’

If campfires are not allowed, food can be cooked or reheated and wash water can be heated on a camp stove. Be sure to bring plenty of gas canisters. Camp stoves can be rented from sporting goods stores. If fires are allowed in fire pits, don’t plan to use your pots and pans from home on the fire. Food can easily burn with thinner cookware and they’ll be a bear to scrub clean. Use cast iron to prepare food over fire or coals. Cast iron pots, pans and Dutch ovens are easily and cheaply available at thrift stores and since you are not packing it in to a primitive backcountry campsite, weight is not an issue.

Around the Campfire

Telling ghost stories is a traditional evening activity but might be too scary for young ones. Instead, try serenading the stars with renditions of campfire-friendly classics. If you’re not familiar with the words, come prepared by doing an internet search for the words and print them out ahead of your trip.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| “Do Your Ears Hang Low” | “This Land is Your Land” |
| “Home on the Range” | “Oh! Susanna” |
| “They Call the Wind Mariah” | “On Top of Spaghetti” |
| “Kookaburra” | “Moodshadow” |
| “Puff the Magic Dragon” | “Raindrops Keep Fallin’ on My Head” |

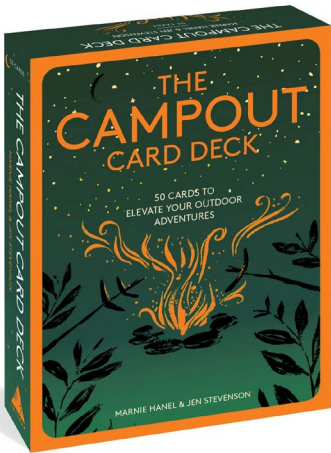
For the Littlest Campers

- There’s clean and then there’s campout clean. Don’t stress about sticky marshmallow faces attracting a little camp dirt. Application of a damp cloth will take care of most of the sticky dirt.
- Bring extra of everything: wipes, diapers, paper towels, socks, changes of clothes.
- Stick to your bedtime routine as much as possible to avoid cranky kids or overly early risers.

Canine Camping Companions

Check campground rules. Some campgrounds don’t allow dogs. Being prepared to care for canine campers will avoid stressed-out doggies and dog parents alike.

- Snap a photo of your dog’s vaccination record, just in case you need it for proof at the campground or for emergency vet service.
- Don’t forget the water and food bowls and dog food.
- Bring LOTS of doggy poop bags and clean up after your pet IMMEDIATELY. Dispose of filled bags properly and courteously.
- Be aware of your dog’s limits. Provide your dog cool, shaded resting places. Leash him/her if he/she becomes agitated. Provide unlimited access to water and shade.
- Should your dog have a run-in with wildlife: yell, whistle or throw objects at the scuffle. NEVER physically intervene.
- Pack a quart of hydrogen peroxide and a box of baking soda and a large bowl/bucket in case your dog has a conversation with a skunk. You can get rid of most of the skunk smell by “washing” your dog with one quart hydrogen peroxide, 1/4 cup baking soda and a couple teaspoons of dishwashing liquid. Apply to dry dog, then rinse with water. DON’T wet your dog first, as water sets and enhances the skunk smell. ■



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THE "AT A GLANCE" DOCUMENT: ONE PAGE THAT CAN MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE

It's the beginning of a new school year, which for your child typically means a new teacher and maybe even a new school. For parents who have children with disabilities, sending them into a classroom with someone who may not be familiar with their needs, or even their diagnosis, can be nerve-wracking. One of the best ways to break the ice is to create a simple, one-page "At a Glance" summary of your child. Although it may seem impossible because every child is unique and cannot be reduced to a single page, it can be one of the most powerful ways to set the tone for the year ahead.

What is an "At a Glance" document?

The "At a Glance" document is a brief, parent-written summary of who your child is and what teachers need to know to help them succeed. It is not a replacement for an IEP, a medical file, or the months it takes to truly know a child. Instead, think of it as a head start and a way to skip past the trial and error that usually comes with a new person in your child's life. It won't tell the whole story, but it tells enough: how they communicate, what calms them, what lights them up. It is a window for someone to begin to understand who they are.

Why having an "At a Glance" page matters

A lot of people will cycle through your child's life in a given school year; new teachers, new aides, substitutes, new therapists – the list goes on and on.

All these people may be starting from ground zero, and your child, who may not be able to communicate or self-advocate and who may behave very differently in new situations, sometimes pays the price for that learning curve.

The "At a Glance" document shortens that curve dramatically.

A teacher who knows beforehand that your child needs a five-minute reminder before transitions or that your child gets overwhelmed in noisy environments will handle situations very differently from one who finds out with no warning.

What to put on your "At a Glance" document

- Start with the basics: your child's name, date of birth, grade or placement, your contact information and a recent photo if you're comfortable including one. Then start with the other information.

- How they communicate: Do they use verbal speech, an AAC device, picture cards or gestures? The goal is for a stranger to understand your child on day one.

- What to avoid: Note specific triggers. "Loud, unexpected sounds" or "being touched from behind without warning" give someone something they can act on.

- What works for your child: List a couple of strategies, tools or approaches that help your child during common triggers.

- Medical and safety essentials: Allergies, dietary restrictions and emergency protocol. Keep this brief but complete. If there's a full emergency plan on file, note where to find it.

- Strengths and personality: This matters more than people realize. What does your child love? What makes them happy or upset?

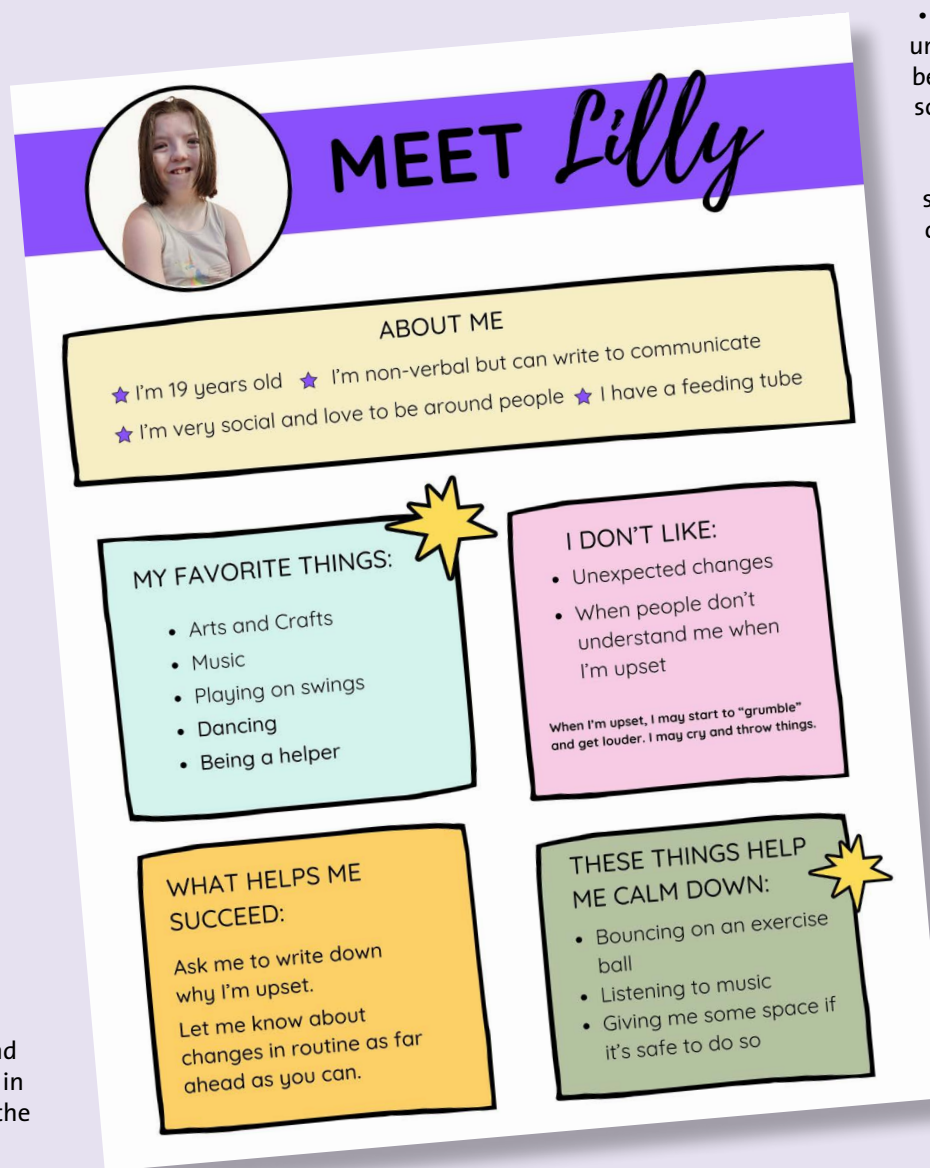
- What distress looks like for your child: Every child shows stress differently. Describe the signs specific to your child and give clear, simple guidance as to what helps and what doesn't.

A few tips for creating your document

You don't have to be a graphic designer to create a great document. Free templates on Canva, Google and Microsoft can do the heavy lifting for you. What matters more is the writing itself: keep it in your own voice, not clinical language.

Update the document at least once a year and date every copy so whoever's reading it knows they have the current version. The document can also be used in different settings. The same page that helps a new teacher can ease the first

visit with a new doctor, specialist or therapist; anywhere your child is meeting someone who doesn't know them yet. Lastly, have fun with it. Use your child's favorite colors and incorporate elements that represent them. This small touch of personality reminds anyone reading it that this isn't just a form, but a glimpse of the one-of-a-kind person your child is. ■



Shasta County author Jennifer Arnold is the mom of four, two of whom have been diagnosed with multiple special needs. She hopes to raise awareness of many issues that parents of special needs children face on a regular basis.



Siskiyou County News

Siskiyou Economic Development: Supporting Small Businesses Throughout the North State

Since 2020, small business has been driving the bulk of U.S. job growth, according to the US Census, employing 45.9% of Americans. By June 2025, there were 36.2 million small businesses in the U.S., making up nearly all businesses in the country – 99.9%. Despite these encouraging statistics, small business owners face many challenges starting, growing and maintaining successful businesses and passing them on to the next generation. Fortunately, business owners and prospective business owners in the North State have unique and powerful allies and resources to support them in their ventures. We have explored the excellent support offered through the Women’s Business Center in our November 2025 article “[Regional Women’s Business Centers: Impact with a Heart.](#)”

Another North State business assistance powerhouse is lending expertise and invaluable support to businesses throughout the region, with special programs to assist a vital sector of our local economy and a key component of a secure nation: agricultural producers.

SEDC Innovation Hub Provides Customized Services

Headquartered in the beautifully restored Yreka Carnegie Library building, the [Siskiyou Economic Development Council \(SEDC\)](#) is working diligently to provide unique and invaluable support to businesses across all sectors in Siskiyou County and the wider North State region.

If you have a great idea and are contemplating starting a business, the SEDC’s [Shasta/Cascade Innovation Hub](#) can help you figure out if your idea is marketable and help you with the ins and outs of starting a business. There are 12 such hubs across the state, each tailored to the area they serve. “We’ve shaped our Siskiyou County hub to meet the needs of our region in a way that makes sense for this area of the state,” says Gillies Robertson, director of Agricultural Innovations and manager of the California Office of Small Business Advocate program for the SEDC. “We work with business owners who have a great idea but just don’t have the resources to move forward on it.”

SEDC provides one-on-one consultations for any type of business, including services for new businesses in natural working lands such as agriculture, biomass, wood production utilization and outdoor recreation. The innovation hub also

offers cohort-based business services, workshops and some state grant funding opportunities. “We provide services in whatever way that makes sense to each individual producer across Siskiyou, Butte, Glenn, Shasta and Trinity Counties, helping them to work within the specific parameters of grants they may have received,” Gillies says.

[Siskiyou Farm Co](#); Preserving and Growing North State Family Farms

Maintaining and growing the existing family farms and ranches throughout the region is as essential to the regional, state and national economy as supporting the formation of new small businesses. The SEDC has developed several key programs to address the challenges of sustaining the vital regional agricultural lands and businesses, all housed under the umbrella of [Siskiyou Farm Co.](#)

Agricultural Preservation Through Healthy Soils

[The Healthy Soils program](#) provides farmers and ranchers direct support and funding to build soil resilience and water security in the face of climate change adaptation and water scarcity, making these otherwise threatened lands fertile and viable far into the future. Around 35 producers (small local family farmers, market producers and family farms and ranches up to several hundred acres) have participated in the program in the last three years, receiving around \$200,000 per producer to maintain healthy soil that will support more abundant, healthier produce for many years to come.

Succession Planning; Passing Agricultural Lands to the Next Generation

SEDC’s Farmer and Rancher program provides long-term support for beginning ranchers and farmers. Consultants help producers with succession planning and advise them how to manage their books and how to manage grants they receive. Succession planning (how to transition your agricultural business to the next generation and how to prepare the next generation for success) is often the most difficult business challenge many longtime farmers face.

“Our producers are getting older and there is a deficit of young people wanting to enter the agricultural field,” Gillies says. “Oftentimes, the ideas and concepts of how to run a ranch or farm and the ideas of the new generation looking to take over the

business might be different and these conversations can be very personal. The new generation might be looking to bring new products to market or open new markets. It's important to have a safe space to have these conversations. We provide a safe space and tools to assist in a successful succession."

Getting Local Products to Market

Production is only half the story. Products must be successfully brought to market. Siskiyou Farm Co helps producers meet the challenges of marketing their product by providing market support for farmers and ranchers who want to do direct-to-

agricultural producers are facing." After struggling to get his products processed, driving animals all over California and sometimes to other states to reach processors, Gillies moved his farm from Yolo County to Siskiyou County in 2018 because Siskiyou County had solved that problem by having several processors right in the county. And, Gillies says, "We are keeping our eye on these processors to make sure they stay viable and watch out for other issues like how to help address the recent mill closing in Weed."

Thanks to SEDC's understanding of the unique needs of our region and their



Clint and Kay Isbell, owners of Isbell Mountain Acres in Scott Valley, raise a unique cattle breed on diverse pastures containing multiple types of grasses, legumes and forbs that gives their beef a rich multidimensional flavor that is consistently tender. They ship direct to consumers.



Siskiyou Farm Co Agriculture and Innovation program staff Tandy Thackeray and Gillies Robertson work to promote Siskiyou County Agriculture as a unique brand throughout the Northern California region.



Jason and Kristina Walker are the third generation of Walkers to steward StarWalker Organic Farms, a Regenerative Organic Certified ranch that ships direct to consumers.

consumer marketing, as well as working to address other market issues. For growing and supporting Siskiyou County agricultural products, they have a two-pronged approach. "In addition to direct succession and innovation support," Gillies says, "we are doing outreach and publicity to promote these producers to a wider region."

Through professionally produced videos and brochures, booths at large agricultural conventions and events, and various other ambassadorial strategies, Siskiyou Farm Co is striving to make Siskiyou Farms an agricultural brand known and recognized in the local community and across the wider California region: "To tell the story of the unique Siskiyou agriculture offerings so that people understand what Siskiyou agriculture looks like, who the producers are, what they are producing and how you can get their products," Gillies explains.

Siskiyou Farm Co and SEDC Continue to Seek Solutions to Local Business Challenges

Gillies, with over 18 years as a small livestock farmer, knows that of which he speaks. "I've been there, so now I want to help others navigate the issues

innovation and foresight, North State businesses have a powerful advocate in their corner working to strengthen our economy, build local business resilience, keep family farms and ranches viable and plan for future challenges.

"I love this work because ag isn't just about growing food - it's about taking care of the land and resources we all rely on," Gillies says. "At Siskiyou Farm Co, I get to support the folks doing that work every day, which means a lot to me since I am part of that community myself and know how much it means to receive support from organizations like ours. Without our local family farmers and ranchers stewarding the land, none of us have the food or open spaces we often take for granted." ■



An avid environmentalist, Stacey appreciates the care and stewardship of land and animals that only family farms and ranches can provide and the importance of preserving these legacy businesses.



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Beyond the Screens:

Boredom Busters for the Midsummer Slump

By the time July rolls around, the novelty of summer break has officially worn off. The pool passes are punched. The camps are finished. And somewhere around 10 am on a Tuesday, you hear it: "I'm bored." It's tempting to reach for a tablet or queue up another movie. But experts say that boredom isn't a crisis. It's an opportunity. "When kids aren't scheduled every minute, they learn how to problem-solve, explore their interests and build confidence," says therapist Nicole Runyon.

THE SCIENCE OF DOING NOTHING

Research backs up what many parents instinctively feel: unstructured time is not wasted time. A [well-cited study](#) found that children who spend more time in less-structured activities show better self-directed executive function, which is the

brain's ability to plan, focus and regulate emotions. The American Academy of Pediatrics emphasizes that child-led play enhances brain structure and protects against stress. Children's brains still light up during daydreaming and downtime.

So when a child stares at the ceiling while doing nothing, their brain is actually doing important work. That said, parents don't need to abandon structure in the summer entirely. "Just a little bit of structure can lead to lifelong memories," notes the [Children's Trust of South Carolina Parent Advisory Council](#). The key is balance.

BELOW IS A TIERED GUIDE TO SURVIVING THE MIDSUMMER SLUMP, ORGANIZED BY HOW MUCH EFFORT YOU HAVE TO GIVE.

LOW-PREP (MINIMAL PARENT EFFORT)

These activities work when you have a deadline, a headache or just can't generate the energy for much more.

The Everything Box:

Hand your child a large cardboard box, markers, tape and stickers. Then ask: "Is this a rocket, a library or a cave?" Research shows that physical containment increases focus. Inside the box, the world fades away, allowing deeper imaginative play.

Nature Scavenger Hunt:

Send them outside with a specific mission: "Find 10 rough items, 10 smooth items and 10 green things." Challenge them to arrange their finds into a museum display.

The Boredom Box:

Fill a bin with tape, cardboard tubes, string, clothespins and stickers. Rotate items monthly. Studies show that open-ended materials force children to practice planning, working memory and cognitive flexibility.

Pro tip:

If your child follows you around whining, try saying, "If you're bored, I can find you a chore." A 75-year Harvard study found that children who do chores are happier as adults, more empathetic and more successful in their careers.

MEDIUM EFFORT (PARENT SETS UP, KID EXECUTES)

You'll only need to gather supplies, but then you can step back.

Potion Station:

Set up bowls of water, baking soda, vinegar, food coloring and cornstarch (preferably outdoor or in the garage). Challenge them to create a "sleeping potion" or "volcano juice" with no instructions. This is chemistry and sensory regulation disguised as magic. It teaches cause-and-effect and encourages refining "recipes" through trial and error.

Narrative Stones:

Give your child smooth stones and paint pens. Ask them to paint symbols (a key, a moon, a cat, a door). Once dry, have them pull three stones at random and invent a connecting story. Weaving different elements into a narrative draws on skills ranging from writing to logic.

Backyard Cartography:

Provide a clipboard, paper and markers. Task them with mapping the backyard or a local park. Then have them hide a treasure marked with an "X" for you to find. Translating a 3D world onto 2D paper requires complex spatial visualization and shifts their perspective from participant to observer.

Gardening:

Give each child a small patch of garden or a few pots to plant flowers or vegetables. Young children can plant larger seeds and water with small cans. Older kids can handle weeding and learning about composting. Gardening teaches biology, patience and responsibility. Even better, it gets everyone outside.

HIGH-ADVENTURE (MULTIDAY OR PARENT-INTENSIVE)

Best for weekends or when you have real energy and time to invest.

Game Theory and Design: Challenge your child to invent a board game from scratch – designing the board, sculpting pieces with clay, and most importantly, writing the rule book so it’s playable. This is the ultimate critical thinking exercise. They’ll quickly realize that a game without clear rules leads to chaos. They must playtest, find “bugs” in their logic and tinker until the game is fair.

The Rube Goldberg Machine: Challenge them to perform a simple task (ringing a bell or popping a balloon) in the most complicated way possible using dominoes, string, springs and recyclables. A longitudinal study on play and creative problem-solving found that children engaged in imaginative play demonstrated significantly higher gains in flexibility and originality. This task will fail twenty times before it works, which teaches kids that failure is simply data for the next attempt.

The Great Bake-Off: They choose a recipe, check the pantry and execute the bake entirely on their own. If the store is within safe walking distance, let them do the shopping solo. Baking is chemistry. It demands focus, exactness and patience. Serving a creation they managed from start to finish offers a sense of pride no video game can match.

A NOTE ON SCREENS: None of this works if screens are the default setting. Instant stimulation short-circuits the quiet period that leads to self-directed play. If you’re going to use screens, use them together. Watch a family movie, try a cooking tutorial as a family or limit screen time to certain hours.

You don’t need to be your child’s summer entertainment director. The research is clear. Encouraging a little boredom is a summer gift because it’s when kids start to figure out who they are. ■

THE “IF-THEN” SUMMER BOREDOM CHEAT SHEET:

If they say . . .	Then you say . . .
"There's nothing to do."	"What would you want to do if you had one magic wish right now?"
"Everything is boring."	"OK. Boring is allowed. What are you going to do while being bored?"
"I need you to play with me."	"I can play for 10 minutes after I finish my coffee. What will you do until then?"
"Can I just have the iPad?"	"Not right now. You can check back at 4:00. What's your plan until then?"
"You're not being nice!"	"I know it doesn't feel nice. Holding the limit is my job right now."

THE EMERGENCY BOREDOM BACKUP LIST

If your child truly cannot launch, offer this written list. Let them pick one. Then step away.

- Build a fort. Sleep in it for quiet time.
- Write a letter to a grandparent. Draw a picture on the envelope.
- Sort a drawer of socks or a bin of Legos by color.
- Go outside and find 10 living things. Name them.
- Put on music and choreograph a 30-second dance.
- Create a menu for a "restaurant" using only what’s in the pantry.
- Trace your shadow in chalk. Check it again in an hour. Trace it again.
- Call a relative. Ask them to tell you a story from when they were your age.
- Make a paper airplane fleet. Test which design flies farthest.
- Lie on the floor and stare at the ceiling for five minutes. No talking. No devices. See what your brain does.

Do You Have Concerns About Your Baby’s Development?

Most Babies At...

- 3 Months** Look from one object to another. Hold up their heads. Give eye contact.
- 6 Months** Reach and grasp objects. Look when their name is called. Roll over.
- 9 Months** Sit alone. Imitate gestures. Wave bye-bye.
- 12 Months** Take their first steps. Play with a variety of toys. Begin to say “mama.”
- 18 Months** Walk alone. Build a tower of three blocks. Use up to 15 words. Enjoy interacting with caregivers.
- 24 Months** Begin to use two-word phrases to communicate. Eat and drink independently. Walk up and down stairs.



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THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE PUMPKINLAND



What does a former Harper’s Magazine model from the Bronx have in common with a Morton Salt traveling salesperson from California? The answer is the courage, heart and brains to run a business for 47 years with four children in tow. If that brings to mind a lion, a tin man and a scarecrow on a yellow brick road, you would be on the right track.

Magical Movie Inspires a Dream Come True

The release of the movie *The Wizard of Oz* in 1939 left a lasting impression on a young Wayne Brown and three decades later he opened a Wizard of Oz-themed pumpkin patch, [Pumpkinland](#) (now known as Pumpkinland Chocolate Co.) outside of Red Bluff. His trusty companions on that yellow-bricked journey were his New York-born wife, Jean, and their four children, Wayne Jr., Mark, Colleen and Sean.

Wayne had fallen in love with the Red Bluff area while living in Sacramento with his young family. Country living was the dream and in the early 1970s Wayne moved the family to five

acres along Highway 99E. Jean took a job as the Antelope School District superintendent secretary while Wayne continued selling salt.

Working the Family Business Leads to Confident and Independent Kids

One day, the four Brown kids made the mistake of heckling their parents for money. Wayne and Jean suggested the kids plant a garden and sell their produce along 99. “As the youngest,” Sean says, “my job was to entertain customers with suggestions for recipes I never prepared, much less ate myself, but that required our fresh vegetables. Dad was gone from Monday to Friday and he had a lot of faith in us.

“We began to improve the property in his absence. For instance, my father left a copy of an instructional book on electrical wiring with my eldest brother, Wayne Jr., with the expectation that any tasks would be completed by the time he returned home from the road on Friday. We all grew in independence and confidence, especially Wayne Jr., when given our own responsibilities.”

Going Fulltime with Creativity

The idea of making a living on the land grew for Wayne, and soon, “there was no place like home,” and Wayne became a full-time “Farmer Brown.” He asked Wayne Jr. and Colleen to design and build life-size Wizard of Oz figures and a Munchkin village.

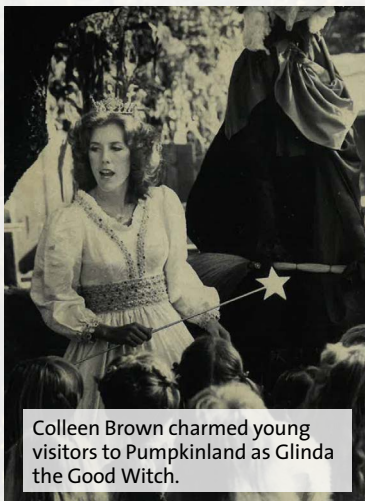
Jean sewed a gigantic canvas big top which was ultimately attached to the house roof to create a backyard theater. And when Colleen wasn’t airbrushing pumpkins, she starred as Glinda the Good Witch for the stage plays that Wayne had envisioned as part of the tour for visiting school children.

“We were the first pumpkin patch in the area,” Sean says. “My parents’ goal was to provide for our family while never losing sight of the financial struggles and happiness of others. Our objective was to do our individual part to ensure that Pumpkinland would always remain a family-friendly and inexpensive destination. My parents stressed the importance of practicing the ‘golden rule’ and focusing

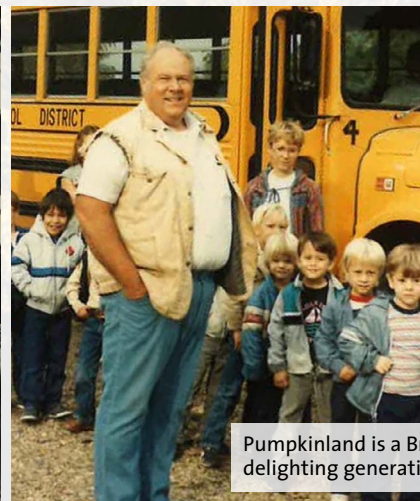
17 ►



Founders of Pumpkinland, husband and wife, Wayne and Jean Brown.



Colleen Brown charmed young visitors to Pumpkinland as Glinda the Good Witch.



Pumpkinland is a Brown family legacy, delighting generations of children.



Vintage photos provided by Sean Brown; organized and archived by April Button. Current photos by Kate Hiller.

on the ‘fast nickel and not the slow dime.” If the pumpkins failed, they would quickly transform the property into a Christmas tree farm. “Dad dressed as Santa Claus for Polaroids with the children and Colleen’s classmates served as elves,” Sean says.

Passing on a Precious Family Legacy

"As a kid, I was convinced that I was uniquely plagued by parents that had unrealistic expectations of me. I couldn't understand why our family never went on vacation as other families did," Sean says. "In retrospect, it was the best childhood we ever could have experienced. We were able to work alongside our parents and hard work paid off for all of us. Wayne became a successful cabinet maker, Colleen earned her doctorate and is an accomplished artist, Mark teaches Science and Math and I conducted medical research in academia and private industry."

By 2007, their parents were suffering from myriad health issues, so Sean returned to be their caregiver. In the process, "I grew even closer to my parents. I came to understand the unconditional love and sacrifices that parents have and make for their children. After their passing, it felt natural to stay on and run the business to continue their legacy."

Like his dad, Sean sources chocolate for candy from Guittard and crafts a wide assortment of candies, including truffles, turtles, nut clusters, toffees, caramels, brittles and chocolate lollipops. "We are still a family venture," Sean says. "Wayne Jr. continues to be the mastermind behind the candy-making machinery and any other fixes that need to be done. A nephew created our new website [to debut soon] and another nephew sells his Dilla Tackle here."

"As always," says Sean, "my job is to lure people off the highway and into the store. Quality ice cream at a low price seems to do the trick. My hope is to keep candy on the shelves and honor the memory of my parents. They remain the most important people in my life. Their life goals were never about wealth but rather building relationships and enjoying daily life."

Pumpkinland is open every day, 12-5 on weekdays and 11am-5pm on weekends, 12000 CA-99 – just look for Wayne’s big ice cream cut-out. Follow them on Facebook to find out about their latest offerings and new goodies. ■



The perfect summer day for Isabel and Olivia Camacho is to swim in the creek at Cone Grove Park and then take the short drive to Pumpkinland for ice cream.

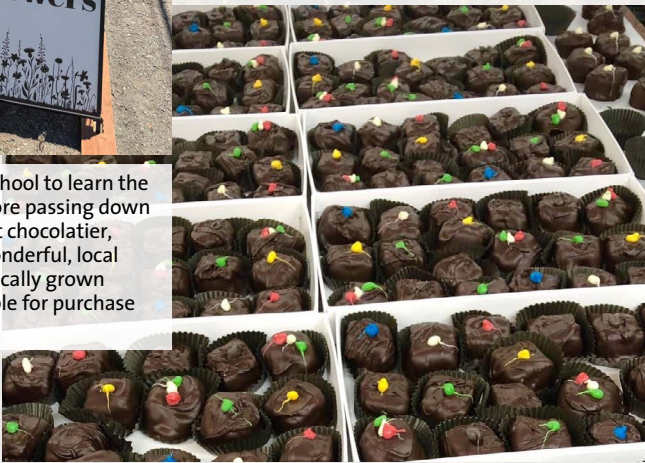


Look for the iconic Pumpkinland signs along Hwy 99 East between Eldrid and Electric Avenues in Red Bluff.



Visitors to Pumpkinland can relax and refresh on the lush green lawn by a shady waterfall.

Wayne Brown, Sr. went to school to learn the art of chocolate making before passing down his knowledge to the current chocolatier, his son Sean. Many other wonderful, local goods, including seasonal, locally grown fresh cut flowers, are available for purchase at Pumpkinland.



Kate Hiller dares you to visit Pumpkinland and leave without a smile. She has fond memories of hot summer days and ice cream by the pond at Pumpkinland when her three kids were still in tow.

SCHOOLS OF CHOICE DIRECTORY

The Schools Of Choice Educational Directory focuses on local public schools created through a partnership among parents, teachers and students. These charter and other types of schools aim to involve parents and give teachers and students the freedom to innovate, while providing a personalized learning environment for each student.

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Serving Butte, Glenn, Mendocino, Plumas, Shasta,
Tehama & Trinity Counties
19500 Learning Way
Cottonwood • (530) 377-7850
<https://eie.evergreenusd.org>

FOREST RANCH CHARTER SCHOOL

GRADES TK-8



We offer a caring, small school solution for Chico and Forest Ranch families that strikes a balance between high academic expectations and positive social/emotional development. We promote a growth mindset in a multidisciplinary, technology-rich environment that supports differentiated learning, mindfulness and student leadership. Take our FREE bus and elevate your child's education today!



15815 Cedar Creek Road
Forest Ranch • (530) 891-3154
www.forestranchcharter.org

GOLDEN EAGLE CHARTER SCHOOL

GRADES TK-12



Golden Eagle Charter School (TK-12) offers flexible, personalized learning through home-based learning, online courses, in-person classes in Mt. Shasta and Yreka, diverse curriculum options, exciting field trips, Career Technical Education (CTE), and dual enrollment with College of the Siskiyous, including our Early College High School Program.



Golden Eagle Charter School
Serving Siskiyou County &
Castella • (530) 926-5800
www.gecs.org

NORTH STATE VIRTUAL ACADEMY

GRADES 2-8



Introducing NSVA!
Now enrolling for Fall 2026

A free public online school for students grades 2-8 in Butte County and neighboring regions. Learn from home with flexible, high-quality comprehensive instruction and stay connected to a supportive community. NSVA provides small group classes and one-on-one support with our experienced credentialed teachers. We also have an online library so students always have access to books.

 **North State**
Virtual Academy
(530)538-3701
Learn more and enroll at
northstatevirtual.org

NORTHERN UNITED CHARTER SCHOOLS

GRADES K-12



NUCS believes in honoring individual education choices and is committed to providing an innovative public education environment for students, their parents, and teachers, through independent study facilitation, small group instruction, tutoring, online and blended learning, as well as community college co-enrollment.



Serving Siskiyou & Humboldt Counties
(530) 842-4509 or (707) 629-3634
www.nucharters.org

OAK BRIDGE ACADEMY

GRADES K-12



Oak Bridge is an independent study school within Chico Unified. The K-5 families partner with CUSD teachers weekly in their comprehensive grade-level education of students. Enrichment opportunities include field trips, learning labs, and art classes. Our award-winning secondary 6th -12th grade program is WASC accredited, college-preparatory and NCAA approved. Students can take classes, play sports and engage in other extra-curricular activities at their school of residence in CUSD.



Serving Butte, Colusa, Glenn,
Sutter, Tehama & Yuba Counties
(530) 897-8877
oakbridge.chicousd.org

PHOENIX CHARTER ACADEMY COLLEGE VIEW

GRADES TK-12



A California Distinguished School

Phoenix Charter Academy College View offers a chance for students to rise. Our K-12 site-based/independent study homeschool charter in Redding provides educational choice for families who wish to educate their children in a blended educational model.



145 Shasta View Drive,
Redding • (530) 222-9275
www.ourpca.org

PIVOT NORTH VALLEY

GRADES 6-12



Pivot North Valley is a tuition-free, public charter school. Pivot uses a blended learning model, giving students the flexibility to learn on-site and online.

Teachers provide daily oversight, motivation and academic guidance that is customized to each student based on learning style and progress. Field trips, events, clubs and other social activities are available. Call or visit Pivot North Valley to enroll today!



1350 E. 9th Street, Ste. 150
Chico - (530) 636-4479
www.pivotnorthvalley.com

REDDING SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

GRADES K-12



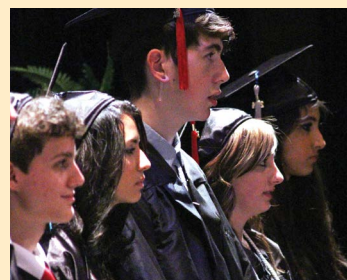
Redding School of the Arts (RSA) is built on one core belief: the arts are essential to a child's full educational experience. When students engage in music, visual arts, and performing arts, they not only grow creatively – they thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Research shows that participation in the arts can improve attendance, boost self-esteem, strengthen cooperation with peers, and positively impact performance in other academic subjects. By integrating creativity with rigorous academics, RSA prepares students not only for academic success, but for a lifetime of curiosity, expression, and meaningful contribution. Come explore the unique opportunities at Redding School of the Arts – Where Education and the Arts Connect!



955 Inspiration Place
Redding - (530) 247-6933
www.rsarts.org

SHASTA CHARTER ACADEMY

GRADES 9-12



Join us for amazing on-site classes, Shasta College enrollment, traditional home schooling, high-quality tutoring, and more. We are SUHSD sponsored and WASC accredited. Let's have a great school year together!



307 Park Marina Circle
Redding - (530) 245-2600
www.sca-edu.org

SHASTA VIEW ACADEMY

GRADES TK-12



SVA offers a personalized learning/independent study program dedicated to serving families who make the choice to school their children at home. We provide credentialed staff, a wide array of curriculum choices, small group classes, one-on-one tutoring, field trips, and extracurricular enrichment opportunities.



Serving Shasta, Modoc, Lassen, Tehama, Siskiyou, and Trinity Counties
675 Shasta View Dr., Redding
(530) 233-3861 • shastaview.org

SHERWOOD MONTESSORI

GRADES TK-8



Every child is a unique person with their own interests, skills, abilities and personality.

The Montessori approach facilitates individualized instruction with multi-age groupings in an environment that naturally fosters a love for learning. Sherwood Montessori is a tuition-free charter school with beautiful classrooms, engaging hands-on materials, on-site, high-quality child care before and after school, as well as music, art, cooking and gardening instruction. Call for a school tour!



1010 Cleveland Ave.,
Chico - (530) 345-6600
www.sherwoodmontessori.org

TEHAMA eLEARNING ACADEMY

GRADES 7-12



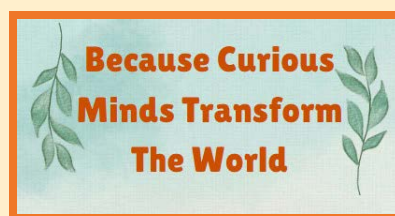
Tehama eLearning Academy is a WASC accredited independent online charter school, with a 7-12 program, that serves Tehama and the adjacent counties. Students at TeLA complete their coursework online or at the Red Bluff Campus. The school has accredited teachers, a-g programs, credit recovery classes, individual education coursework and onsite electives. We also have an adult education school where adults can earn their High School Diploma or GED.



979 Douglass Street
Red Bluff - (530) 527-0188
www.telacademy.org

WILDFLOWER OPEN CLASSROOM

GRADES TK-8



Wildflower cultivates curious, compassionate, and confident learners. Through our integrated thematic curriculum model, students find excitement in their studies and enjoy opportunities for holistic learning, self-discovery, and personal responsibility they take forward in their education and beyond.

Fill out the Enrollment Interest Form on our website

Contact the office to schedule a tour!



2414 Cohasset Road
Chico - (530) 892-1676
www.wildflowerschool.com

WILLIAM FINCH CHARTER SCHOOL

GRADES K-12



Serving North State families since 1985! Based in Orland, William Finch offers hybrid personalized learning serving grades K-12 with flexible choices to support your child's learning. Optional on-site programs include weekly elementary enrichment, a Middle School Academy and High

Schoolers can participate in career pathways earning Dual Enrollment college credit.



607 E. Tehama St. • Orland, CA
(530) 636-4479 • www.wmfinch.org



Trinity Lutheran Early Learning Center in Redding



LOCAL DAYCARE AND PRESCHOOLS



BUTTE COUNTY

Chico Montessori Children's House

PR

814 Glenn St. • (530) 342-5518 chicomontessori.com
 (D)(S)(M) Ages: 2 years 6 months - 5 years • M-F, 8am-5:30pm
 Montessori-trained teachers for the development of the whole child. Emphasis on inner motivation, using the child's natural curiosity and delight in discovery. Sessions offered: morning, afternoon, and full day. Lic# 045406630

Palermo Union Elementary School District

PU

Call for more info about our three different locations.
 (530) 533-4842 ext.6001 • palermoschools.org
 (D)(S)(M) Ages: 18mo-5 yrs • M-F, 7:30am-5:30pm. Our qualified staff works with you and your child to develop the foundation for future academic success, recognizing and valuing each child's unique traits & potential. Lic# 041370378, 041372369, 045407779

SHASTA COUNTY

Columbia's Lion Cubs Preschool

PR

10142 Old Oregon Trail, Redding • (530) 223-4070 x315
 (D)(S)(M) Ages: 2-5 yrs • M-F, 7:30am-5:15pm
 Experienced, qualified and nurturing teachers. Full, extended and half-day programs, small class sizes, kindergarten readiness. Lic# 455403185

Enterprise Elementary Preschool

PU

795 Hartnell Avenue, Redding • (530) 224-4178
eesd.net/ourschools/preschool. Licensed programs build confidence, skills and school readiness in a safe, nurturing environment. Free options available for qualifying families. Lic# 455403855

Kids Interconnections Preschool & TK

PR

4672 Loch Pl • Shasta Lake City • (530) 227-9191
kidsinterconnectionspreschool.com
 (M) Ages: 3-6 yrs • AM class 8:45am-11:45pm •
 PM class 12-2:45pm. Experienced preschool teacher with a BA in early childhood education; accepts SCOE Alternative Payment. Your child will be prepared for kindergarten and develop social, emotional, physical, language and cognitive skills in a warm, home-like small class. Lic# 455408509

Meadow Lane Preschool

PU

2770 Balls Ferry Rd. Anderson • (530) 378-7030
cuesd.com (D)(S)(M) Ages: 2-5 yrs • M-F, 7:45am-5:30pm
 Afternoon care available until 5:30pm. Every child deserves a nurturing and engaging environment to learn and grow. Our play-based curriculum encourages creativity and social development, laying a foundation for future success. Lic# 455402120

Anderson Heights Preschool

PU

1530 Spruce St. Anderson • (530) 378-7050
cuesd.com (D)(S)(M) Ages: 2-5 yrs • M-F, 8am-11:30am
 Every child deserves a nurturing and engaging environment to learn and grow. Our play-based curriculum encourages creativity and social development, laying a foundation for future success. Lic# 455408602

Redding Christian Preschool & TK

PR

2960 Hartnell Avenue, Redding, CA 96002
 (530)248-2960 • reddingchristian.com.
 Preschool: Ages: 2.5-4 yrs • M-F, 7:30am-4:30pm; mid-Aug to beginning of June. 3-5 half or full days.
 TK: Ages: 4-5 years • M-F AM class 8-11am; PM class 11:45-2:45pm; mid-August to beginning of June.
 Private Christian preschool and pre-kindergarten offers hands-on learning and academic skill-building, focusing on spiritual, academic, social and physical development. Lic# 455406244

Shasta Head Start Child Development, Inc.

PR

375 Lake Blvd. Redding • (530) 241-1036
shastaheadstart.org. (D)(S)(M) Ages: 0-5 yrs • M-F, 8am-4:30pm. Private, non-profit provides high quality childcare and social services to low-income children and their families in Shasta, Siskiyou and Trinity counties. Lic# 4455406084

Trinity Lutheran Early Learning Center

PR

2440 Hilltop Drive, Redding • (530) 221-6686
reddingtlc.org • crystal@reddingtlc.org. (D)(S) Ages: 0-5 yrs, M-F, 7:30am-5:30pm. A meaningful Christian education. Experienced teachers teach the love of Christ and curriculum to ensure each child is ready for kindergarten and beyond. Lic# 4151373105

West Redding Preschool

PR

3490 Placer Street, Redding • (530) 243-2225
westreddingpreschool.com
 (D)(S)(M) Ages: 6wks-12 yrs • M-F, 7am - 5:30pm
 An educationally based curriculum. Our goal is to prepare each child today for the educational challenges that they may face tomorrow. Lic# 455401406

SISKIYOU COUNTY

Shasta Head Start Child Development, Inc.

PR

710 Everitt Memorial Hwy, Mt Shasta • (530) 918-2550
shastaheadstart.org
 (D)(S)(M) Ages: 0-5 yrs • M-F, 8am-4:30pm
 Private, non-profit provides high quality childcare and social services to low-income children and their families. Locations in Mt Shasta, Weed and Yreka. Lic# 445406084

Siskiyou Child Care Council

PR

Fort Jones, McCloud, Dunsmuir, Lane Street (Yreka)
 SisQ Kids (Weed) • (530) 938-2748
tstacher@siskiyouchildcare.org
siskiyouchildcare.org

We believe that every child is unique and of supreme worth. Our state preschools provide care in a nurturing environment designed to foster development of positive self esteem, emotional well-being, social skills, independence, creativity, and problem solving. Call for more information about any of our schools. Lic # 475403153, 475404269, 475404757, 475408055, 475408138.

TEHAMA COUNTY

Kotasik Daycare

PR

2 Sutter Street, Suite C, Red Bluff • (530) 727-9607
 (S)(M) Ages: 2-5yrs • M-F, 7:30am-5:30pm
 All staff are fully qualified, first aid and CPR certified. Drop-ins welcome. Subsidized payment accepted. Breakfast and Lunch served family-style. Lic# 525407977

(D) = Diapers Accepted
 (S) = Snacks Served
 (M) = Meals Served

PR = Private

PU = Public



Turtle Bay's Famous Artist Portfolio Program

inspires the
artist in all
of us

for community

By Brady Kennedy, Marketing Mgr.
Turtle Bay Exploration Park



23 ▶

St. Joseph School second grader
Jak was inspired by Picasso's art to
create this self-portrait.

Artwork is meant to inspire, be shared and enjoyed as a community. Tucked upstairs in the Turtle Bay Museum at Turtle Bay Exploration Park, 844 Sundial Bridge Drive, Redding, is a community resource gem called the **Famous Artists Portfolio Program**. Filed neatly in shelves are leather art portfolios containing large-scale prints of works by famous artists from all over the world, with lessons and activities for students to express themselves through art.

The comprehensive portfolio collection features a range of artistic themes and artists, providing a breadth of study for artistic mediums and movements through history. The portfolios can be checked out in a manner similar to a library and then used in the classroom, homeschool settings, community programs or for self-study.

Passionate Volunteers Provide Vital Support

Each week, dedicated volunteers spend hours at Turtle Bay to help manage the program. Many of these volunteers are artists or former teachers that are passionate about teaching art in our community. Longtime volunteer Penny Harris learned firsthand the value of this educational resource as a teacher.

She used the program with her middle school students from 2004 through 2008, then as a volunteer with first graders for three years. Her passion for art and teaching brought her to Turtle Bay as a volunteer, where she has helped manage the Famous Artists Portfolio program for the past 18 years alongside other dedicated volunteers.

"As a teacher and classroom presenter of the program, I found the Famous Artist Program to be very adaptable and engaging," Penny says. "The program is relevant, easy to use and free. I am glad that Turtle Bay continues to make it available so that the unique world of art is available to students in our area."

Every week, Penny manages requests for portfolios from the community, as well as the upkeep of prints and materials. As a resident expert on each portfolio, she explains that more than 70 cases of portfolios are grouped by theme, such as Landscapes, Self-Portraits, Colors and Shapes, as well as more specific artistic styles such as Mexican Muralists and Artists or the Italian Renaissance. Each portfolio contains 6-10 prints of famous artworks with a brief biography of the artists and discussion questions for students.

The portfolio program has grown over the years to include specific artist studies, including Van Gogh, Pablo Picasso and Ansel Adams, and recently a local school donated over 100 prints to assist with efforts to expand and update portfolio contents.

Portfolios Meet Curriculum Standards, Inspire Artistic Endeavors

A valuable resource for the classroom, each portfolio references a list of applicable California Arts curriculum standards to build lessons upon, as well as California Historical Social Science Content standards and Next Generation Science standards that may additionally apply. Many local schools use the portfolios to guide art lesson plans, from which

student artwork can be submitted for display in the annual Famous Artists Student Art Show at the Turtle Bay Museum.

This annual exhibition highlights the artistic talents of local students, showcasing work from transitional kindergarten through eighth grade. Last year’s exhibition featured artwork from 23 classes across seven schools, resulting in a total of 145 pieces on display in a wide range of mediums. Students are invited to view their artwork on display with a free museum admission ticket for themselves and an adult during the exhibition, typically from January through April each year.

Through the support of volunteers, Turtle Bay is proud to offer this enriching educational art resource. The program encourages an appreciation for the arts while providing students with an opportunity to share their artistic talents with the community. ■

Those interested in using the Famous Artist Portfolio Program resource can attend a Fall Orientation on Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2026, 4-5pm in the Turtle Bay Museum. More information, including curriculum standards and portfolio themes, can be found online at turtlebay.org.



The innovative Famous Artists Program relies on dedicated volunteers like Penny Harris, who spend hours organizing and preparing portfolios for students to use to inspire their artistic creations. *Photos provided by Turtle Bay Exploration Park Museum.*

Budding artists can create original art inspired by the works of famous artists or capture the essence of a famous work of art as a Redding student has done with Van Gough’s famous *Starry Night*.



STARGAZING: STARRY, STARRY NIGHTS IN THE NORTH STATE

One of the best parts of camping is gazing up at the night sky filled with stars sparkling like diamonds, undimmed by ambient city lights. Keep an eye out for falling stars, easy to spot in a light-pollution-free starry sky.

But you don't have to camp in the wilderness to experience the beautiful star-filled night sky. You can enjoy an easier "glamping" experience at Mill Creek Resorts far enough from the city lights to provide dark skies and great stargazing opportunities.

Observatories and stargazing clubs throughout the North State offer spectacular stargazing opportunities with the added benefit of "star guidance." You'll learn the names and locations of constellations and what planets are easily visible.

Chico Community Observatory, 1 Observatory Way, invites the public to gaze at the planets, stars and distant galaxies through high-powered telescopes. This awe-inspiring experience is open to the public on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings, weather permitting, and is free of charge. Check their website for hours and dates. The functionality of the observatory is heavily dependent on cloud cover, so days and times might change even up to a few hours before opening. You are welcome to come use the nearby telescope pad to set up your own telescopes or lean back in the circular reclined seating of the Open Sky Planetarium to enjoy the night sky yourself! chicorec.gov/chico-community-observatory

Mt. Shasta Stargazers Club has monthly Star Parties, free for everyone whether you're a club member or not. View stars, galaxies, nebulae, double stars, planets (when visible), planetary nebulae and star clusters. The Milky Way can be seen from horizon to horizon. There's something fascinating for everyone. Children welcome with adult supervision.

The Star Party viewing location is about 30 to 45 minutes from the City of Mount Shasta. Check their website for Star Party days and times and other club events. mtshastastargazers.com.

Mt. Shasta Audubon Dark Sky Events

This month, Mt. Shasta Audubon presents "Starry, Starry Night", an exploration of the summer sky, led by Barbara Paulson, Aug. 12, 9-10:30pm on Mt. Shasta. A retired high school astronomy teacher, Barbara has an effervescent flair for teaching and sharing her love of the universe. She will guide the group through constellations and planets with a special focus on the Perseid meteor shower whose peak is that very night!

This event is free and kid-friendly. Registration required. Register at 2026 Starry, Starry Nights. Logistics and meeting place will be confirmed by email prior to the trip. For more info and to check for future Dark Sky and other events, go to mtshastaaudubon.com. Scan QR code to sign up. Email MountShastaAudubon@gmail.com with questions or to get on the notification list.



Schreder Planetarium, 1644 Magnolia Ave. Redding, has exciting full-dome dynamic, immersive shows the first and third Friday night each month, along with 16 interactive exhibits that bring science to life.

- Kids Night, Aug. 7, starts at 6pm with Up in the Air (Take Flight: Zula Patrol: Under the Weather).
- Family Night, Aug. 21, starts at 7pm with Exploring Space (From Earth to the Universe: Wonder of the Universe).

Tickets are \$12 (children on your lap are free) are available online only and often sell out, so book ahead. shastacoe.org/programs-services/planetarium

Shasta Land Trust Starlight Social

For those who want to relax with a glass and a nosh while gazing at the beauty of the cosmos with the best views of the Perseid meteor shower, this event is the ticket! Experience a magical summer night under the stars at the Shasta Land Trust's newly protected property, Gore Ranch, far from city lights with incredible views of the Perseid meteor shower at its peak.

Kick off the evening with mouthwatering appetizers and desserts and a selection of local beer and wine. Then, sit back and gaze at the dazzling night sky through powerful telescopes as expert guides from the Shasta Astronomy Club take you on a journey through the cosmos.

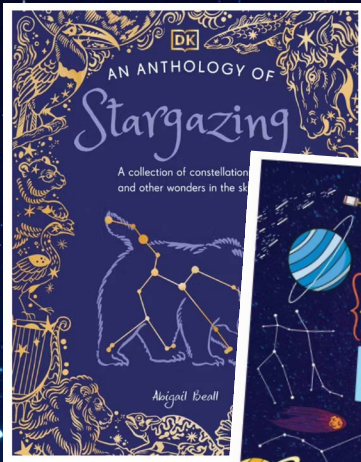
Aug. 13, 8:30-10:30pm. Tickets \$15-\$40 available at [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com). More info at shastalandtrust.org.



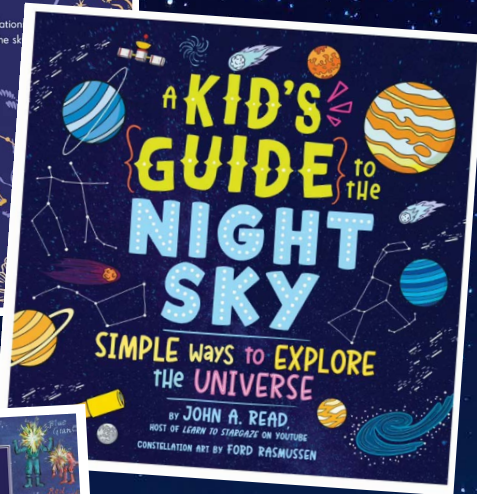
The Shasta Astronomy Club hosts free public star parties beginning at sunset at Oak Bottom Marina parking lot at Whiskytown Lake. The next Star Parties are Aug. 15 and Sept. 12. Follow them on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com) to find out about future parties and learn about exciting national and local astronomical news.

"Please feel free to come out a little bit before sunset and watch us set up," says Greg Williams, president of the Shasta Astronomy Club. "We love to talk and share our knowledge of the telescopes, the sky, and science in general."

- There will be a park information booth and young and old visitors will have the opportunity to complete [Night Sky Junior Ranger](#) activity books and then receive a badge to add to their collection. ■



In addition to these great books for children about stargazing, there are some great stargazing resources online.



Sky & Telescope provides stargazing basics, astronomy for beginners and a weekly informational newsletter about what to look for in the sky.

National Geographic has a Practical Guide to Stargazing with tips on where and when to go stargazing.

The American Museum of Natural History has a Kids Guide to Stargazing with tips for staying safe and tracking the stars.



Since moving to the Mount Shasta area from the light-soaked Bay Area, Stacey has enjoyed being able to see the beautiful, star-filled night sky undimmed by city lights. In fact, she has found that on local camping and rafting trips, the stars are so bright, no flashlight is needed to find her way at night.



FARMERS & GROWERS MARKETS

SUPPORT OUR LOCAL PRODUCERS. VISIT A MARKET IN A NEARBY TOWN EACH WEEK.



	BUTTE	SHASTA	SISKIYOU	TEHAMA
SATURDAY	Chico Farmers Market. Year-round, 7:30am-1pm, rain or shine. Chicofarmersmarket.com . Municipal parking lot, 2nd & Wall Streets. (530) 893-FARM.	Redding Farmers Market. Year-round, rain or shine, 7:30-noon. shastagrowersassociation.com . 777 Cypress Ave., behind the City Hall. (530) 226-7100.	Etna Farmers Market. May-Sept, 10am-noon. facebook.com/EtnaFarmersMarket . Scott River Watershed Council, by Dotty's Restaurant, 514 N. Hwy 3. (530) 598-3185	The Saturday Market by the River. May-Oct 8am-noon; Nov – Apr. 9am-noon. redbluffchamber.com . 100 Main St. (530) 527-6220.
SUNDAY	Chico Farmers Market. June-Oct, 9am-noon. Chicofarmersmarket.com . Farmers Brewing Restaurant and Taproom Parking Lot. 1950 Market Place. (530) 893-FARM. Durham Farmers Market. April-Oct., 9am-1pm. DurhamGrangeNo460@gmail.com . 9386 Midway, Durham. (530) 815-8289.	Sunday Turtle Bay Market. May 10 - Oct 11, 9am-1pm. healthyshasta.org . Sundial Bridge Overflow Lot, 800 Sundial Bridge Dr. (530) 226-7100.		
MONDAY			Mount Shasta Farmers Market. May-Oct., 3:30-6pm. e-jedi.org/farmers-market . Castle Street parking lot between Mt. Shasta Blvd. & Chestnut St. (530) 926-6670.	
TUESDAY		Marilyn Miller Market; Redding. June 9-Oct 6, 7:30am-noon. healthyshasta.org . Shasta Center parking lot, 1700 Churn Creek Rd. (530) 226-7100. Shingletown Farmers Market. May-Oct, 3pm-7pm. facebook.com/shingletownlibrary . Shingletown Library, 7074 Wilson Hill Rd., Hwy 44. (530) 710-4949		
WEDNESDAY	Chico Farmers Market. June-October, 7:30am-noon, rain or shine. chicofarmersmarket.com . North Valley Plaza parking lot. 801 East Ave. (530) 893-FARM.	Burney Farmers Market. June 10-Sept 23, 3-6pm. healthyshasta.org . Burney Sporting Goods Parking lot, 37264 Main Street, Burney (530) 226-7100.	Weed & Shastina Community Farmers Market. May 20-Sept. 30, 3:30-6:30pm. www.facebook.com/weedfarmersmarket/ . Bel Air Park, 450 College Ave. Yreka Community Farmers Market. June-Oct., Fri. 4-6:30pm. facebook.com/YrekaCFM/ . Miner Street Park. (530) 598-2897.	Red Bluff Farmers Market. June-Aug, 5-8pm. 633 Washington St. at the Old Courthouse. (530) 527-6220.
THURSDAY	Chico's Thursday Night Market. April 9-Sept 24, 6-9pm. downtownchico.com . Broadway and 3rd Streets. (530) 345-6500.	Farmers Market at Palo Cedro Park. May-Oct, 3-6pm. 22037 Old 44 Drive, Palo Cedro (530) 710-4949.	Dunsmuir Farmers Market. July-Oct, 4-6:30pm. DiscoverSiskiyou.com . 4835 Dunsmuir Ave. (530) 925-4355. Happy Camp Farmers Market. June-Oct. 5-8pm. facebook.com/happycampfarmersmarket . Gail Zink Park. happycampfarmersmarket@gmail.com	
FRIDAY				



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September 12, 2026



Step Into Magic:

The Chico Renaissance and Fantasy Faire is the Must-Attend Family Event of the Year

Sept. 12 the Patrick Ranch Museum will be transformed into a realm of wonder as Chico hosts its very first **Renaissance and Fantasy Faire**. This world of enchantment showcases the immense talent, passion and creativity residing in Butte County and the North State.

An inclusive event where you can truly be yourself, surrounded by a community that embraces the diversity of our region. Everything

you'll see – from the blacksmiths and shepherds to the performers and workshop hosts – is home-grown talent. Free workshops, crafts for kids, and live performances from aerial and fire dancing to local musicians.



- **Free to attend!**
- **Live Demonstrations:** The ancient craft of blacksmithing and sheep dog herding
- **Interactive Fun:** Exciting mini bicycle jousting!
- **The Trinket Trade:** Guests take a trinket and leave a trinket – a perfect way to interact with vendors and take home a special memory.
- **Costume Contest:** Judged by representatives from the community.

We can't wait to see you there!!!

For more info:
[YourLocalMarketplace](#)
or
[Facebook](#)

**10am - 7pm
PATRICK RANCH
MUSEUM
10381 Midway
Chico**



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