



## CLIENT STORIES

### MENDOCINO COAST OFFICE

760 B Stewart St, Fort Bragg, CA 95437  
PHONE (707) 964-7571 • FAX (707) 964-7576

### MENDOCINO INLAND OFFICE

631 S. Orchard, Ukiah, CA 95482  
PHONE (707) 467-5931 • FAX (707) 467-5930

### GLENN COUNTY OFFICE

420 W Walker St., Orland, CA 95963  
PHONE (530) 990-5801



# Rejuvenation In Willits

By Kathy Brigham

Mary Wilson has been working toward the creation of her own business for over 20 years. After earning her Cosmetology license in 1987, she worked in salons owned by others and built her clientele. Noticing the increased popularity of spa treatments -- and pampering in general -- she also became a licensed massage therapist in 1995. But it was not until 2005 that she took the plunge and opened Jixi Day Spa and Salon in Willits.

## West Company Client Stories – Jixi Spa



“I had heard about West Company helping people start businesses and attended some classes back then,” recalls Wilson. “I learned about inventory and the paperwork part of the business, but I didn’t think it was a big deal. I thought I could handle it.”

And it wasn’t a big deal -- at first. But when Wilson decided to move and expand her business, she found herself in need of one-on-one business counseling. About a year ago, she began talking with West Company’s Loyd Hambrick (now Chief Operations Officer).

“The best advice that Loyd gave me was to stay focused on the positive aspects of the business,” says Wilson. “I was feeling overwhelmed by all of the paperwork, including personal and credit card debt. He encouraged me -- helped me to focus on moving forward and exercising discipline.”

This advice and encouragement -- coupled with technical assistance -- is paying off for Wilson. She has moved her business into a more prominent location on Main Street in Willits, has an RN and certified massage therapist (Janice Cinek) working with her, and is mentoring a young woman who is apprenticing to become a cosmetologist.

Wilson says that the connection between cosmetology and massage is a natural one.

“In cosmetology school [Wilson attended Redwood Empire Beauty School in Santa Rosa], you learn more than hair care and styling. You are also taught to massage the

## West Company Client Stories – Jixi Spa

neck, hands, and feet, as well as the basics of manicures and pedicures.” It’s as much about pampering as it is about beauty.

Wilson’s approach at Jixi Day Spa is to provide a full-service experience -- offering hair, skin, nails, feet, cosmetics, waxing, and full body massage. While Wilson specializes in traditional cosmetology and massage, Cinek offers Swedish integrated modalities, deep and light tissue massage, Shiatsu, orthobionomy, stretches and rocking, and chakra, aura and energy clearing and balancing.

Jixi also specializes in Aveda hair color, which is 97% naturally derived. “We have a full line of retail products,” says Wilson, “ranging from body, hair, skin care, and makeup, to chakra essential oils, tea, men’s skin care and gift certificates.

Self-employment is not for everyone. It takes a focused vision and considerable discipline. It helps to have experienced advisors, like the business counselors at West Company, to get a good start on the road to success.

Jixi Day Spa and Salon is located at 733 South Main Street in Willits and can be reached at 456-9757, [jixispa@yahoo.com](mailto:jixispa@yahoo.com) or on the web at [jixidayspa.com](http://jixidayspa.com).

*West Company/Mendocino SBDC/Women’s Business Center have offices in Fort Bragg (760B Stewart Street, 964-7571) and Ukiah (631 S. Orchard Street, 462-5931) and a web page at [www.westcompany.org](http://www.westcompany.org) . Kathy Brigham is a member of the West Company Board of Directors.*



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