

15 MINUTES

Healing touch

For massage therapist Candi Williamson, healing others through touch has become second nature. It started around high school, when she'd give her mom regular massages to ease the tension of chronic back pain. After consistently (and voluntarily) giving massages to friends and sports teammates, Williamson was encouraged by a friend to pursue the work professionally. That friend literally drove her to the doorstep of Chico Therapy Wellness Center and Massage School. Williamson signed up in 2003 and has been working as a licensed massage therapist ever since. She recently expanded her business, Massage by Candi (2062 Talbert Drive, Ste. 100), into Creating a Sustainable You, which offers a variety of healing practices to roughly 700 clients. A second location is set to open Friday (March 1), inside StandAlone Mixed Martial Arts Academy, at 845 Cherry St. Check out massagebycandichico.com for more information or find Massage by Candi on Facebook for tutorials and a weekly dose of laugh therapy.

Why is this work important to you?

I've always been active and demanding on my own body; I've ridden in the Wildflower, hiked, done bodybuilding and Crossfit, and I've always felt the value of movement while wanting to be pain-free. Massage work is part of that maintenance. I'm grateful for the friend who encouraged me to sign up for massage school; it was definitely the right choice!

What services do you offer at Creating a Sustainable You?

We have five massage therapists, three yoga instructors, reiki practitioners, an emotional freedom technique/tapping practitioner, myofascial specialists, meditation and more. We have a great team! A lot of our clientele are people who have been in physical therapy but [are] not ready to be on their own [to heal], so we do a lot of scar tissue work with massages. And we create a safe

PHOTO COURTESY OF CANDI WILLIAMSON



space for people to do yoga. Our yoga is for people who've hardly stretched before. Our instructor looks at your MRIs and guides you safely; everyone's getting attention. We have a wide range of clients, though, and some people do just want to come in for a relaxing massage.

What's your favorite part of the job?

I like working with people who are in chronic pain, who have tried a lot of things and found our work to be successful for them; I want to be able to give them hope.

Any inspiring anecdotes from the people you've worked with?

One of my favorite stories comes from this woman who fell in an empty pool and broke her arm. She had surgery and then went to physical therapy and wasn't progressing, so she scheduled a second surgery. She came in to see me twice a week for two weeks, and by adding what I did alongside her physical therapy, she was able to cancel her second surgery. I also gave her tips on things she could do herself to maintain her healing. We give lots of homework (about stretching, meditation practices, reducing inflammation) because we want our clients to be as successful as possible.

—RACHEL BUSH

THE GOODS

Surprise, kids!



by
Meredith J. Cooper

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I had an opportunity last week to stop by the recently opened **Chico Children's Museum** downtown and get a tour of the facility. I must say, though I don't have any kids of my own, it was still a really fun place to be.

It was a Thursday morning and the place was buzzing with activity. The museum is split into several different areas—one is a faux cafe where kids can get behind the counter and take orders; one is a vet's office, where they can take X-rays and treat the animals' ailments; another is a garden that needs tending.

In addition to those main areas, there's a sensory room designed with autistic kids in mind and a space for smaller kids to romp around. Plans are in place, too, to create an upstairs space-themed room that links to the large tree house with a slide to bring kids back to the ground floor, according to Executive Director **Leslie Amani**, who showed me around.

I can still remember when **The Underground** slung records in that space on Main Street, between Third and Fourth, and I admit I questioned the vision for a museum in that area at first—but I'm pleased to have been proven wrong. Check it out Wednesday-Sunday for now—the museum is still in its soft-opening phase. Go to chicochildrensmuseum.org for more info.

THEY'VE GOT THE MEATS I was traveling through Oroville gathering photos and updates for the CN&R's upcoming issue of **Discover Butte County** recently when I came upon my own new discovery: **Foothill Meat Co.** What a great find! Employee **Drew** walked me through the place, which is celebrating its 15th anniversary, and told me they're best known for their marinated tri-tips and handmade sausages.

I picked up a package of the chicken cordon bleu sausages on Drew's recommendation and they made a seriously delicious dirty rice dinner this past weekend. I also tried the smoked pork belly, which was a nice accompaniment to my homemade ramen. A third purchase was more exotic and is awaiting my attention in the freezer: frog legs. (They also sell alligator as well as ground venison and elk.)

Last but not least was the "pork candy": smoked bacon dipped in chocolate. Wow. The bacon is intensely smoky, so I actually preferred the white chocolate to the milk, but both made for a completely surprising—yet yummy—treat. Check this place out for yourself at 3311 Foothill Blvd.

BACK IN BUSINESS I interviewed **Anton and Chrystal Axelsson**, the sweet and obviously hard-working couple behind the **Old Barn Kitchen**, a couple months ago (see "Second home," 15 Minutes, Dec. 20, 2018) and I'm happy to announce that while they work on their Paradise space, they opened this week at 301 Main St. in Chico. I can't wait to try their specialty Benedicts!

Speaking of reopening, the CN&R's sales team recently launched a new feature called **Rebuilding the Ridge**, which provides a list of businesses that have reopened since the Camp Fire. Find it in the print version each week.

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