

Meet a Bronze member: DJ's Burger Bar reopens



**Dorothy Johnson and her employee
Virginia Sifford**

DJ's Burger Bar has been a main-stay in Rio Dell for decades, and its owner Dorothy Johnson an advocate for activities in the community. Closed from Oct. 4 when a sewer line needed repair until Jan. 21, the business is now sporting a new coat of paint and some other upgrades Johnson and her staff tackled during the break.

DJ's is known for the car cruises held each summer on Wednesday nights when owners of antique and remodeled cars bring them to show off. On the first night of Wildwood Days each year, the restaurant hosts a barbeque, live band, and car cruise which was named for Ernie Cannady, who worked with Johnson for 13 years, until his death in 2017, to plan and carry out the event.

"I've known Ernie since I was 12," Johnson says of the effort, noting that 2017 was a painful year as it saw not only the death of Cannady but also her husband, Bill Johnson, and a long-time employee and her husband as well.

DJ's is a chamber member at the bronze (\$250) level, allowing the purchase of decorations which the chamber expands each year with the goal of making the city a Christmas tourist destination with its holiday lighting display. Johnson and employee Virginia Sifford volunteered to paint wooden, cut-out decorations of candy canes, elves and other motifs that go on the medians as part of that display, funneling their energy when completion of the repairs needed at the business, ultimately done by Johnson's son Wesley, a cook at the burger bar, dragged on. **Continued on Page 3**

Rio Dell-Scotia News



Cookie business opens on Wildwood

A home-based business for the past five years, **Cookies Are My Canvas** moved to a storefront recently in Rio Dell. Stormi Davis and business partner Kimber Timmerman have opened their sweet treats to a more public view in the part of a building that formerly housed a bakery, next to the post office, at 341 Wildwood.

They prepare cookies for any imaginable event, working off a description provided by the customer of the design sought, and they reel at the variety of requests received and challenges they have faced over the years. People contact them through their Facebook page, website, or by phone (707.506.3040) to place an order. People can also sign up to be notified of parties they host a couple times each month in their facility, where participants receive cookies to decorate with furnished supplies.

In addition, people can work with them to host a party for an event such as a birthday. These have been popular options, with eight parties held in six days during the Christmas season. They sometimes have a "pop-up store," posting on Facebook that their shop will be open to the public to sell cookies during a certain period, often on Fridays, which is when the traffic at the post office is high, and the "Cookies today" sign can be put outside with the expectation of business. Having established hours is not within the plan for now, given the seasonality of the business and the responsibilities the pair has to their families.

"Social media is our friend," they say, because it puts the pair in contact with others in the business and connects them to their customers. "We're going to Cookie Con," Timmerman announces enthusiastically of an upcoming, sold-out trade show in Reno, another source of ideas and networking.

"I'm self-taught," Davis says, noting one can learn anything online today, using sources such as YouTube videos and sites like Pinterest and Craftsy. She met Timmerman through their children at school. "I told her, 'I'm home during the day if you need help,'" Timmerman recalls of that time four years ago which led to her becoming a cookier, as makers of cookies are called in the trade.

The pair has worked, until recently, chiefly in Davis' kitchen, and note how much better it is to have a separate place to prep their treats. The move to a brick-and-mortar shop was one they had considered but were not actively seeking at the time, when Melissa Marks, former city council member, planning commission member, and property manager, suggested the site to them.

(Continued on Page 3)

News and Notes

Search for library solution moves forward

As reported in a previous issue, the Rio Dell library does not meet ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) standards, and as with many other Humboldt County buildings, it is under a consent decree with the U.S. Department of Justice that requires the facilities be brought into compliance, either by being upgraded or moved to a compliant site. Nick Wilczek, director of county library services, notes that the county, Rio Dell city council, and the Rio Dell fire district (which owns the current library property) are working to find a solution. "The library is important to Rio Dell and it is equally important that we ensure all people can take advantage of this service, regardless of their physical ability. We are working hard to develop a solution that works for all parties involved," he says. "Options will be proposed during the County Board of Supervisors meeting on January 22 and we hope to have a finalized plan in place soon," he added earlier in January, encouraging interested people to contact any of the involved parties with comments, questions, or concerns.

Rio Dell schools slate February activities

There will be a 6th grade boys' basketball tournament Feb. 1 and 2. The school board will meet Wed., Feb. 13 at 5:30 p.m. Early release will be on Fri., Feb. 15 at 1 p.m. for all students. There will be no school Feb. 18 through 22 for Presidents Week.

Chamber slates networking event

Mark Friday, Feb. 8 for a social event sponsored by the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce which will take place at the Rio Dell fire hall. It's open to all and will feature a talk by Marc Barsanti of the Shively volunteer fire department. While many volunteer fire departments are struggling to keep enough recruits to staff their service, Shively launched a new department, with help from Rio Dell's. Learn about this unique and energetic new fire company, meet or reconnect with others. The Free event is open for all. It will start at 5:30 p.m. and feature refreshments. The chamber formerly offered monthly networking sessions at noon on the third Tuesday of each month at The Pizza Factory but is trying this format to see if the time is more convenient for more people to participate than during the day.

Chamber names officers for 2019

The Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce elected officers for 2019 at its January board meeting. **Nick Angeloff** was re-elected president, and **Jim Brickley** was named vice president. **Tracy O'Connell** was named secretary and, with **Eldon Whitehead**, is in charge of publicity. Other committee assignments include **Angeloff and Brickley** co-chairing the holiday lighting project, **Sharon Holt** as chamber liaison to the Wildwood Days planning group, and **Whitehead** managing chamber history. **Melissa Marks** remains as bookkeeper.

Community Resource Center recaps holiday food, gift dispersals

Holiday food giveaways followed a new process this year at the Community Resource Center according to director **Sara Faught**, because the closing of the Scotia food pantry site necessitated a switch to the Journey church location, but she believes the result was effective with many families helped.

"For Thanksgiving, we gave out a canned ham, dinner rolls, potatoes, onions and carrots with our monthly commodities bags," she said, and were able to assist 80 families, totaling 248 community members.

For Christmas the food distribution included the same items and assisted 110 households, totaling 311 people. During the toy distribution, which took place the following day at the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce/art gallery, toys were provided for 82 households, totaling 254 children, Faught said, adding this was "thanks to the extreme generosity of the Rio Dell community, Toys For Kids, Toys For Tots, Dollar General, St. Joseph hospital employees and St. Joseph and Redwood Memorial volunteers."

Kiwanis reports activities

Nearly 500 students at the Rio Dell and Scotia elementary schools received a present, treat, and visit with Santa Dec. 12, thanks to the newly-formed Kiwanis club. Donations from Grocery Outlet in Fortuna, Dollar General in Rio Dell, Sholtz Coffee, Humboldt Creamery, Walmart and Target helped make it possible. Eight members of the club staffed the ice rink in Ferndale on December 29 in a shared effort to make the facility available to the families of the region. Club members are scheduled to vote on the 2019 budget at a January meeting, to establish activities for the year.

"We made that snowman out there," she adds; Wesley cut it out of wood and she and Sifford painted it. Taking it to the next level, this year they are adopting the median in front of the restaurant and will decorate for each holiday – Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, and so on. "We're hoping other businesses will take it up and do the same on a median near them," she says.

DJ's is named for Johnson and her daughter Jackie, who began as a high school freshman to work in the Hamburger and Sausage Company, as it was formerly called, under prior owner George Darling. When the business came up for sale while Jackie was in college and still working there, she convinced her mom to buy it. That was 22 years ago. "For a while our whole family worked there," Johnson says. Now Jean Cain rounds out the team along with Johnson, her son and Sifford.

DJ's is open 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Wednesday and 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday through Saturday.

Rio Dell connection nets resident family treasure

Nancy Kurtz of Rio Dell got a surprise visit on Jan. 22, the 27th anniversary of the death of her husband, Albert, a Navy veteran. The flag she was to have received upon his death, marking his status as a veteran, had been in the care of a family member miles away and was returned home when a chance encounter occurred between Debra Garnes of Rio Dell with Kurtz's niece in Williams, California.

Garnes was traveling when she met Kurtz' niece, and the conversation that followed brought out her status as a retired member of the Navy and a resident of Rio Dell. When the need to get the flag back to Kurtz came up, Garnes offered to take it.

Kurtz, 90 years old, was very appreciative of the gesture, and spoke at length about the three children she and her husband raised and the extended family that resulted. "It feels like a miracle getting this today," she said of the flag. Garnes notes, "It was pretty cool that this was my first official mayor's act."

(Cookies Continued from Page 1)Relocating was a big job, they agree, as they had to buy all their baking equipment and make other upgrades. "We put all our money into doing this for 10 months while we continued to work from home and our husbands did a lot of the work here at the shop" to get it ready, they say, but they are enthusiastic about the support received from the building owner, who lives in San Francisco but has visited to see the work in progress, and from Pat Nevin, who also rents space within the site, but made room for them, confining his space to a smaller area that has been walled off.

Membership drive sees many joining at high sponsorship level

People joining or renewing their annual membership in the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce are in many cases doing so at bronze (\$250), silver (\$500) or gold (\$1,000) levels according to president Nick Angeloff, reflecting their commitment to the area and to the chamber's work, such as expanding the holiday lighting each year with the goal of the community being a tourist destination to view the decorations.

Examples include Gold member Bear Creek Farms LLC, headed by Antonio Petrusevski; Eureka attorney Rory Hansen; and Redi-Rents, with an in-kind donation; Shotz Coffee, which donated \$750; and silver members Natura Blue LLC, Zhan Hristovski; JtD Enterprises, Dennis Honchar; Archaeological Research and Supply, Nick Angeloff; Myers Flat Farms LLC, Deyan Petrusevski; the Rio Dell Fire Protection District. Joining at the bronze level are the Rio Dell Pizza Factory, Dan Collings Tree Service, DJ's Burger Bar, Root 101 Nursery, the Rio Dell Volunteer Fire Department, Ryan Heuer Construction, Kreations Auto Body, and Dias Artistries, the latter with in-kind donations.

While many of these are familiar business names, others are new, reflecting new businesses in the area whose owners are eager to become a part of the community. Those interested in joining or renewing may still do so; contact the chamber at rdschamber@gmail.com, or call **707.506.5081**.

Memberships are \$35 for an individual or \$50 for a business, service or non-profit organization, and new members receive a redwood plaque suitable for displaying.

Rio Dell council seats new mayor

On Jan. 15 the Rio Dell City Council elected Debra Garnes as mayor, and Julie Woodall as mayor pro-tem. Garnes, newly re-elected for her second term on the council, has lived in Rio Dell since 2003. She is a Navy veteran and was a hazardous materials specialist for the Sacramento Municipal Utilities District as well as a former small business operator, according to a news release from the city, announcing the vote. Woodall, a long-time city councilperson and past mayor who most recently served on the planning commission and nuisance committee, is returning to the council after four years away. Pictured are council members (left to right) Bryan Richter, Woodall, Garnes, Susan Strahan, and immediate past mayor Frank Wilson.



Debra Garnes & Nancy Kurtz



Rio Dell-Scotia News

Is free of charge and published on the first of each month by the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce and the Rio Dell Community Resource Center. Funded by local businesses and the St. Joseph Health System. 650 copies distributed in Rio Dell, Scotia, and Fortuna by the Rio Dell Baptist Church.

Copyright © 2018

Submissions deadline for March newsletter copy is February 15
Call the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce at
506-5081 to advertise.



Ongoing Events

CalFresh/CalWorks:

Do you know if you are eligible for either CalFresh or CalWorks? Come to the Community Resource Center to find out how to qualify and apply for both programs. You can also apply for CalFresh, CalWorks and MediCal at www.cyourself.com.

Senior Brown Bag Program: Food boxes given the **2nd Thursday** of every month for local seniors. Boxes distributed from 11:30 am- 1 pm at the Church of Christ, 325 2nd Ave. in Rio Dell. To sign up call Food for People at 445-3166.

Rio Dell Library: Tuesday-11-4, Wednesday 1-6, Saturday- 11-4

There is a First 5 Puppet Story Time every **Saturday** at 11 am 715 Wildwood Ave., 764-3333.

Emergency Food: Running low on food this week? Get a bag for your family or just for yourself at:

- **The Community Resource Center:** 99 Wildwood Ave., Rio Dell, no income verification is needed.
- **The Journey Church:** 95 Belleview Ave. Rio Dell, **Tuesday & Thursday** 9 am- 11:30 am
- **Bread for Life Food Pantry:** Journey Church, 95 Belleview Ave., **3rd Thursday**, from 9 am -2 p.m., For more info call 764-5239.

Clothing Closet: Ruth's Room: Rio Dell Baptist Church, 100 Butcher St., Rio Dell, **Tuesdays** 9 am- 12 pm Call 764-3811 for more information.

Women's Health Project: Breast and Gynecology Eel River Valley Outreach Center: 707-726-7919 or 825-8345.

SAIL: Staying Active and Independent Living helps prevent falls and broken bones. This free program meets 11:30 am to 12:30 pm **Mon., Wed., and Fri.** at the at the Rio Dell Baptist Church, 100 Butcher St. Call Susan at 407-8707. Join us! .

Free Produce Available: Those whose households qualify based on income are reminded of the monthly Mobile Produce Pantry that comes to the Rio Dell Volunteer Fire Department on the **second Wednesday** of each month, from 10 am to 1 pm. For more information, contact Food for People at 445-3166.

Chamber membership drive features new plaques

The Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce has new membership plaques to give those individuals, businesses and organizations joining the chamber this year. They are produced by Adam Dias of Dias Artistries, using a technology featured in an earlier newsletter. Ongoing members who want the new style plaque can purchase it for \$15 each from the chamber. Call 506.5081 or email rdschamber@gmail.com for more information on joining, renewing, or getting a new plaque.



Chamber slates quarterly programs

The Rio Dell Scotia Chamber of Commerce is scheduling quarterly evening meetings (in lieu of the monthly networking meetings formerly held at the Pizza Factory on the third Tuesday of the month), to provide a chance for people in the community to connect, hear a speaker on a topic of interest, and network. Watch for upcoming information on Facebook, in the traditional media, and in fliers around the communities. Meanwhile the board conducts business each month on the first Friday, at noon at the chamber/art gallery, 406 Wildwood Ave., Rio Dell. These meetings are always open to the public and minutes are posted on the chamber website, riodellscotiachamber.org, under "chamber business."