

# Rio Dell-Scotia News



## Tis the season Mark your calendars!

The annual flurry of activity heats up this month, that ends with the annual tree lighting ceremony on Sat, Dec. 2 this year – always the first Saturday in December, at the chamber/resource center facility at 406 Wildwood Avenue, Rio Dell. The event features Santa, a fire truck parade, holiday music and refreshments and activities sponsored by the resource center, along with the lighting of the tree, donated by Humboldt Redwood Company, which happens at about 5:30 p.m., on the median outside.

## Pitch in, be part of the change you want to see

In advance of that, there are three weekends of activity decorating the community – wrapping lights around the trees in Memorial Park, putting decorations on light poles and across Wildwood Avenue, putting wooden, painted holiday-themed cutouts along the median, stringing lights on businesses downtown, and lighting the Eagle Prairie bridge.

We need people, so please check in if you can help – we start at 9 a.m. most Saturdays and Sundays, starting November 11. Call or text the chamber at 707.506.5081 or email at [RDSchamber@gmail.com](mailto:RDSchamber@gmail.com) with your name and phone number with questions or for an update (for instance, in case of rain) so someone can get back to you, or just watch for groups of workers and ask how you can help. Tasks include untangling lines of lights, testing that they work before they are used, and handing them up to others on lifts who are attaching them to the bridge, or the trees in Memorial Park, or the fronts of businesses, or the tree on the median at Columbus and Wildwood.

Bring chore gloves, wear layers, and if you have them, tools like an electric drill or pliers. The California Conservation Corps (CCC) has been asked to help but more hands are always needed and make things go more smoothly.

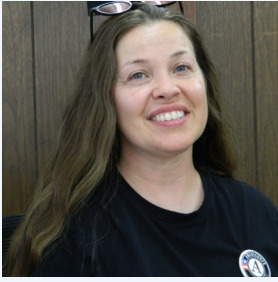
## Deck your own halls!

Another chamber effort (supported with prize money from the fire department) is the home and business decorating contest, in its third year. Being finalized at the deadline for this publication, it will be announced at the chamber's web site – [riodellscotiachamber.org](http://riodellscotiachamber.org) – on its and other Facebook pages – and on posters around town. As in past years, it will offer categories for homes and businesses, include everyone in Rio Dell and Scotia, provide a place to register your home for viewing/voting, and a map so those wishing to view the locations and vote on them, can do so. Winners will be decided by those voting, and will be contacted by the chamber after voting closes.



## Notes and News

### New member of the team at the resource center



Kim Megois started a year-long stint at the Rio Dell Community Resource Center in August, as an AmeriCorps worker. She is completing a master's in social work at Cal Poly-Humboldt, with the goal of becoming a licensed clinical social worker. Megois has lived in Fortuna for 23 years and has two children, a 16-year-old, and a 23-year-old who lives in Rio Dell.

Megois completed an AmeriCorps position previously, at the Family Resource Center in Fortuna, which was largely working with families with young children, while she is encountering a more adult population in her work in Rio Dell. She enjoys the chance to have new experiences and explore new settings, noting that social work offers such a diverse array of possible careers. Interests outside of work and school include paddle boarding, rock hounding, gardening, and hiking – “any excuse to get outside,” she says.

### Caught doing good

Jenni Gillam of Rio Dell has been looking after the garden in Triangle Park near city hall since the passing two years ago of Marlene Snell, who took care of the site for over a decade. Gillam, who declined a photo, notes she lives nearby and likes to garden, so it just came naturally. “Julie Woodall takes care of the petunias,” she says, referring to the spot honoring veterans which, like the pots of petunias throughout the community, have been managed by Woodall for several years. “Anyone who wants to volunteer to pull weeds can help,” Gillam says of the beds she oversees, and encourages those interested to call her at 707.497.4412 to coordinate efforts.



### New place to display art offered at Narrow Bridge gallery



Merlin West presides over her cozy space at 85A Wildwood Avenue, a bit north of Grundman's, where the mural wrapping around the building outside contains nearly 100 faces of current and past residents of the area, including her late husband. A hand-lettered sign in her window invites artists to display their work inside, for free. “It's not a business,” she notes; if artists want to sell their products, that's for them to work out. She started the practice of displaying art over the summer and plans on rotating it every month or so.

Those interested in the opportunity can call West at 707-506-3006. She calls her gallery the Narrow Bridge, indicating the inspiration came from a yellow traffic sign on the street in front of her window which bears those words. West, who describes decades of experience as a volunteer in community and summer stock theater and promotions, clearly knows her stuff, and has Cal Trans advertising for her.

She is donating part of her window for a schematic of the images on the mural overhead, with names associated with the faces. A way and place for capturing the images on the side wall which faces Monument is in the works.



### We Care completes move to former True Value

An open house marked the completion of the move from the former Scotia Hospital to the former True Value in the Scotia shopping center, as We Care Scotia Bluffs (newly renamed as well as relocated) brought its medical, dental, and behavioral health services under one roof after several delays. As Mary Bullwinkel reported in the *Times Standard*, the new name was chosen because it reflects what the organization is, and does, according to Chief Executive Officer Lee Upton. The former Southern Trinity Health Services also operates an ambulance service and has locations in Weaverville and Mad River, both in Trinity County.





## Food for People helps meet county needs for food security

*Ed. Note: This is Part 2 of an article that began in our October 2023 issue, marking the Food for People organization's new executive director and move to a new, enlarged location in Eureka. This concluding installment states the case for the importance of the organization, citing the high level of food insecurity and its impacts locally.*

In a July 20 article, the *North Coast Journal* cited data from the organization Feeding America, which found that 14 percent of the population in Humboldt County lacks consistent access to enough food for the household to live an active, healthy life. Nationwide, the average is 10 percent. Humboldt is the third-highest county in the state in food insecurity, with more than 19,000 individuals in that category.

The *Journal* noted that, according to The Economic Policy Institute's Family Budget Calculator estimates, a family of three (two adults and one child) in order to be considered self-sufficient in Humboldt County, would need to make about \$74,000 per year. The county's median household income hovers around \$54,000 per year.

The article quotes Heidi McHugh, the outreach and policy advocacy coordinator for CalFresh, which administers the SNAP (food stamp) program locally, who addressed the widespread implications for individuals dealing with inadequate supplies of food. Stress levels, feelings of hopelessness, children's inability to learn, behavioral problems and poor health are among the effects of inadequate food. "More people are showing up to hospitals for diet-related emergencies. Every part of a community gets impacted when people are hungry," McHugh said.

Disaster relief efforts come to the fore when the power is out due to an earthquake or other emergency and peoples' food supplies go bad from lack of refrigeration, or when landslides, wildfires or other situations force closure to roads used by trucks delivering food to stores in the area, or keep people from getting to stores.

A map on the organization's website, [FoodforPeople.org](https://www.foodforpeople.org), shows the locations it serves and the services it provides at each.

**Jose Mendez**  
**Food for People**  
**operations manager,**  
**lives in Rio Dell**



## New shop opens in Scotia

**Azila's Cauldron** opened last month at 122 Main Street in Scotia, in the shopping area anchored by the post office. Owner Kristen Haynie notes that she has been operating as a home-based business for a decade, giving tarot readings and selling books, candles, gifts, incense, oils, smudge sticks, herbs and "witchy things" of that nature. She plans to carry products made by local artisans and avoid mass-produced items. Her books will come from a woman-owned, independent book publisher.

Haynie has lived in Scotia for about four years; before that she was in Sacramento, Modesto, and Bishop. "My grandfather lived on the Yurok reservation," she explained, and she has wanted to get her family back to its roots. "Scotia was the cheapest place we could find," she notes.

The business name comes from a dream in which the name "Azila" (pronounced A-ZEE-la) figured prominently. Now 34 years old, Haynie has been studying the tarot and giving readings for 20 years. She envisions having other readers at the store from time to time.

Store hours will be Thursdays and Fridays, 1 to 6 p.m. and Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. She has a website, Facebook and Instagram sites under the business name and can be reached by phone at the store at 707.336.2023.

## Local Kiwanis group celebrates fifth year, names officers for "23-24"

The Rio Dell-Scotia chapter of Kiwanis is celebrating its fifth anniversary and announced its officers for the coming year: Shannon Brasher, president; Cortney Bolen, secretary; Dana Webb, treasurer; Jonothan (Jono) Brodeur and Perdeda Rosenlund, board members.

## Chamber slates monthly meeting

The Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce will hold its monthly board meeting at noon on Friday, Nov. 3 at 440 Wildwood, two doors north of the chamber/resource center, in Rio Dell. Or, call in at 605.313.4802, access code 860467. Holiday decorating and other plans are in the works!

## Smoke detectors old? New, free ones available

Winter is a time when home fires become more likely. Celebrations embracing the use of candles range from Thanksgiving to Valentine's Day dinners and people turn to wood stoves and fire places for warmth as well as ambiance. Add drying-out Christmas trees to the mix, and tragedy can easily strike. Many people know to replace their smoke detector batteries when Daylight savings time starts and ends. But did you know that even with new batteries, smoke detectors can become too old to sense smoke and work properly?

The American Red Cross wants to help you stay safe, with a program to install smoke detectors in homes needing them - for free, as many as it takes to properly alert your family to danger. Call or text Kathleen Kinkela-Love at 707.407.6849 or email her at [kathleen.kinkelalove@redcross.org](mailto:kathleen.kinkelalove@redcross.org) to schedule the installation. You'll get helpful advice as well about determining a meeting place outside the home for family members to assemble in case of a fire, and things to consider to keep your family safe.



## Mopping is a Dance

*Ed. Note: this submission by Albert Houghton of Rio Dell, reflects a lesson from his younger days.*

As a young man in 1968, I was working at Alameda Naval Air Station in the mess hall. I was mopping the deck when a hardcore marine sergeant approached. He dressed me up one side and down the other about my mopping. My life changed that day. He explained how to swab the deck. You must do a figure eight and flip the mop over as you back up. It is like when you dance with a woman. Her hips move left to right, so with the mop. When she throws her head bac all her hair goes back into place, as the mop when you flip it over. It is a dance Done right, it is poetry in motion, like the needle on a record When it is in the groove, the sound is great. When it is not, not so much. So: dance with your mop.

### Rio Dell-Scotia News

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**Call the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce at 506-5081 to advertise.**



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