

Rio Dell-Scotia News

Happy Holidays!

Come to the annual tree lighting ceremony

All are invited to the annual tree lighting ceremony on Saturday, December 2, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Chamber of Commerce and Community Resource Center, 406 Wildwood, at the corner of Columbus, in Rio Dell.

Join your friends and neighbors for refreshments, family-friendly activities, music and more. Santa arrives at 5:30 p.m. in the fire truck parade and lights the tree on the median at 6 p.m.

The event is sponsored by the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce in collaboration with the Rio Dell Community Resource Center and Volunteer Fire Department. Thanks to Humboldt Redwood Company for donation of the tree.

Enter the third annual holiday decorating contest!

All residents and businesses in Rio Dell and Scotia are invited to participate in the third annual holiday decorating contest. There are separate categories for homes and businesses, and businesses can indicate if they wish to be judged on outdoor or indoor decorations.

Cash prizes of \$250 for first place, \$150 for second, and \$100 for third, are again being offered by the volunteer fire department in each of the two categories.

Register by Dec. 14 to have your home or business judged: Go to the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce Facebook page to sign up online or fill out a short paper form available at Shotz Coffee Rio Dell or the Rio Dell Community Resource Center, 406 Wildwood. (For businesses, indicate if decorations to be judged are indoors or out.)

The entries will be put on a map and made available online at the chamber Facebook page and in paper formats at Shotz and the resource center. Get a list of locations to vote on, in one of these two formats, start checking out the homes and businesses, and cast your vote.

Vote Dec. 16-midnight, Dec. 24 if you are casting your ballot online. If you are voting with a paper ballot, make sure you turn it in during the hours Shotz or the Resource Center are open (which may vary during the holiday weekend).

Winners will be notified. This is a project of the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce. Prize money has been donated by the Volunteer Fire Department. Technical expertise is courtesy of Mavis Amen of Famous Amens Handcrafted Seasonings, Fortuna.

Meet a chamber member - Famous Amens

Colt and Mavis Amen of Fortuna launched their seasoning business about two years ago. Initially the exploration of hand-crafted seasonings at the heart of Famous Amens was intended to help the pair develop a food truck or catering business.

But the popularity of their concoctions took off and the seasoning business became a stand-alone, earning them the Fortuna Chamber of Commerce's 2023 Home-based Business of the Year award; first place wins for each of their two submissions at the Humboldt County Fair last August; and the secret sauce behind the People's Choice award at the Wildwood Days rib cookoff (for which they were tied with another contestant). The company has been named for a Listeners' Choice Award, a feature on radio stations under the Bicoastal Media banner.

Colt Amen, a Eureka native, is a self-taught home cook, who was looking at business models that would help him bring his love of culinary work to a new level. "I was using a cup of garlic salt," he said of commercially prepared seasonings, in recipes he was developing, and found that by making seasonings himself, he could get a fresher flavor and use as little as a teaspoon to get the same taste. He attributes the difference to his seasonings being fresher and healthier than commercial ones that are made under different conditions, use fillers, and need to withstand long shipping and shelf life.

Amen's day job managing Fortuna's Village Mini Storage at 816 Fortuna Boulevard, which encompasses much of a block and holds more than 300 storage units, offers down time, and with the blessings of his boss, Amen began producing his seasonings in the back room. It is set up with shelves of jars, a freezer, hydrator, and blender, among other tools of his trade. He shows a photo on his phone of the smoker he bought, and is now modifying, filled with onions in a range of hues so diverse they resemble tree ornaments, and holds up a gallon jar of peppercorns soaking in whiskey.

They, along with other ingredients, more than three-quarters of which he typically buys from local farmers, are bound for the hydrator, blender, and other steps in the process of landing in jars, small batches at a time, which are sold in a dozen stores from Willits to Crescent City, at events where the couple has a vendor booth, and online at famousamens.com. "We are making batches now for events we have coming up next week," Amen explains, pointing to the importance of freshness.

New recipes are being developed, with ideas coming from friends, family, and customers, to add to the dozen or more already being marketed. "Some people want a hotter flavor than jalapeno, so I'm working on habanero," Amen says as an example of the process of product development.

Wife Mavis, a Mendocino native, is the business' marketing maven, having developed a website, become active in the small business community, and begun to volunteer her help to other small businesses. She stepped up when the Rio Dell-Scotia chamber needed expertise developing a social media platform for the third annual holiday decorating competition for homes and businesses, bringing knowledge the board lost when the person who led the effort the past two years was unable to continue.

What about the proposed catering business the couple started with? That's coming in the not-so-distant future, with permits in the works and a range of ideas including a pop-up kitchen that can offer new, varied food options in area communities.



Meet a gold-level member: Lost Coast Communications

Parent company of a bevy of media platforms, Lost Coast Communications reached out to the chamber with an offer of \$1,000 in free radio advertising in exchange for a membership, an example of working together and recognizing the benefits of strengthening communities with strategic partnerships. Hear those ads on "The Point" radio, promoting the tree lighting ceremony Dec. 2 at the chamber and resource center in Rio Dell? That's an example of the free ads.

Launched in Ferndale in 1996 by Cliff and Amy Berkowitz and Jacqueline Debets, the locally owned and operated business's flagship offering was KHUM, with the motto "radio without the rules." Five years later, a second FM radio license was added, for KSLG, said to be the area's first modern rock station.

Patrick Leary became majority shareholder and general manager in 2003. He is proud that "our roots run deep in the heart of Humboldt," adding "over the years, we've grown alongside the place we call home, and it's our privilege to continue serving our fellow Humboldt residents with unwavering pride and dedication . (Cont.pg3)

Lost Coast Communications, Continued from Page 2.

Over the next two years, Blue Lake Rancheria became a new partner and with this backing, Lost Coast Communications acquired KWPT and hired live disc jockeys for the first time. In 2010 the parent company acquired KXGO and a year later launched *Lost Coast Outpost*, said to be the area's first online only news site. In the following years, some of the radio stations changed formats – KXGO became *Fox Sports*, and then 94.1, *The Lounge*. In 2019, *Wild Rivers Outpost* was born, serving Del Norte and Curry counties, the latter in Oregon.

Online platforms were launched for other purposes. One, HumboldtPawsCause.com, was begun more than a decade ago and is a go-to place for pet owners wanting to locate their lost animals, and those who find animals and seek their owners. The NXT platform helps advertisers target national audiences on sites such as NBC Sports, Fox News and SFGate. Those with a message and a budget to promote it, would meet with Lost Coast advertising reps to determine the best way to reach their market.

Meanwhile the young and growing, diversifying organization was picking up awards. In 2006 KHUM won the National Association of Broadcasters Service to America award for its coverage of the New Year's storm. The following year, KHUM partnered with KEET TV and won the Edward R Murrow award for Best Radio Documentary for *Picking Up: Meth on the North Coast*. In 2020 and 2021, KSLG won two, consecutive Radio Mercury awards for Best Spot for a Cause.

The organization continues to change with the times and has signed a lease to move its facilities to Eureka, as well as for the Blue Lake Rancheria to take over ownership of the company in the coming year.



Notes and News

Chamber launches annual membership drive

The Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce will be sending renewal notices this month to all present and former members, reminding them that membership runs for the calendar year, and it is time to renew for 2024. Those not currently members can join as well. Dues are only \$35 for individual members and \$50 for businesses. Payment can be made by Venmo, PayPal or check, with checks being sent to PO Box 95, Rio Dell, 95562.

Chamber thanks partners for donations

The chamber thanks those who have partnered in putting on the holiday events this month. Lost Coast Communications donated air time to promote the tree lighting, the California Conservation Corps provided volunteers to help with two days of decorating, and the Kiwanis gave \$500 towards these providing these holiday activities.

Humboldt Redwood Company provided the tree on the median at Wildwood and Columbus, the Community Resource Center provided refreshments and activities at the tree lighting, and the Volunteer Fire Department will bring Santa in the fire truck parade and sponsored the home and business decorating competition with \$1,000 in cash prizes.

Mavis Amen of Fortuna donated technical expertise in setting up the holiday decorating competition, and the resource center and Shotz are making space available for those wanting to register for the competition, and to vote in it, without the use of online means. Thanks to all these organizations and individuals!

Ad renewals due on insert

The chamber will be sending out annual billing this month to those with advertising on the insert that appears each month with this newsletter. Please watch for that and indicate if there are any changes you wish to make, as you send in your payment for the year ahead. Small ads are once again \$10 per month, or \$120 per year, and large ones are \$20/month or \$240 per year. The chamber thanks those who have supported its work in this manner, urges readers of this newsletter to support those advertisers, and notes that there are some slots available of both sizes for those wishing to advertise. Contact the chamber at rdschamber@gmail.com or 707.506.5081 for more about advertising.

Office space to lease in former Scotia Hospital Gage Duran, owner of the former Scotia Hospital, has posted on Facebook that he is leasing space in the area formerly used by the health care clinic on a month-to-month basis for \$1.50 per square foot of space. Features include its accessibility for those with disabilities, inclusion of high-speed internet, heat, and electricity; a break kitchen, high ceilings and large windows for lots of lighting in many rooms, and more. Those interested in a hobby, studio, office or other workspace are encouraged to contact JB Mathers of [Pacific Partners Real Estate](#) at 707-407-7804 for a showing.

Chamber board slates monthly meeting

The chamber board meets each month on the first Friday, at noon. Meetings are open to the public and a great opportunity to suggest ideas, offer help, or learn about upcoming events and plans. In-person meetings are at 440 Wildwood Avenue, Rio Dell, two doors north of the chamber and resource center. Call-in can be done at 605.313.4802, access code 860467.

Happy Hannukah, a celebration of hope, December 7– 15

Happy Kwanzaa December 26-January 1, 2024



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Happy Holidays



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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