



Rio Dell - Scotia News

March 2026 Vol. XXXV Number 3



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St. Patrick's Day event planned for Scotia Lodge

Everyone is invited to a St. Patrick's Day event at Scotia Lodge on Sun., March 15 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. featuring a traditional Irish meal of corned beef and cabbage prepared by CC Catering, and Irish music by Ceo, a trio featuring Humboldt native Blake Ritter on fiddle. The band name (pronounced "kYOH") means a fog or mist in the Celtic language and describes the atmospheric conditions shared between Ireland and the Northern California coastline.



The event is sponsored by the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce. Tickets are \$25 per person in advance or \$30 at the door. The bar will be open at Scotia Lodge during the event. There will be drawings and a raffle as well.



Advance tickets can be purchased at DJ's Burger Bar, Scotia Lodge, EmeraldZ Humboldt County Gifts & Games, or on Venmo, using the QR code on posters around town.

New owners at Scotia Lodge

Things are humming at the Scotia Lodge, now owned by Sony Sunny, who with his wife Unni operate Bloxx Capital. He describes the company as one that manages unique and boutique hotels, and Scotia Lodge is their third acquisition. The first two are Bearadise Cove, a mountain retreat in Big Bear, outside San Bernardino, and El Noa Noa in Palm Springs, both in Southern California. The latter is described online as a romantic escape once home to Mexican singer and songwriter Juan Gabriel. "We've been running it two years, we turned it around, there's now 85% occupancy," Sunny says.

As for Scotia Lodge, "We fell in love with it," and reached out to former owner Jon O'Connor. "It's a beautiful building, there are lots of local memories, lots of weddings take place there," he said. His goals for the business include getting occupancy up to 75% and bringing as many tourists as possible to the area.

Sunny has already started offering breakfast to guests and those not staying at the hotel as well, Thursdays through Sundays from 7 to 11 a.m. He describes the menu as "waffle-based," reminiscent of Root 101's former Wildwood Waffles, but in this case called Main + Mill Waffles. Wonderbar is similarly now open Thursdays through Sundays from 5 to 10 p.m. He plans to expand both food and bar service in the summer, offer food in the bar, and have happy hour and karaoke.



New owners Sony Sunny and wife, Unni Sony

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Deadline for April newsletter is March 9th.
Call the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce at 707-506-5081 to advertise.

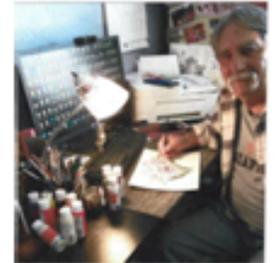
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Local house painter turns to fine art in retirement

Jim Brickley has painted a lot of homes and businesses in his career, including many locally since moving to Humboldt County from Piercy about a decade ago. But he's hanging up his coveralls now that he's "on the downside of 70," and turning to a smaller brush for his next act, producing flower art.

After showing some of his initial work to friends he started getting requests for depictions of their favorite flowers – iris, fuchsia, orchid, amaryllis. So he's putting it out there that he will offer "unique, one-of-a-kind, non-AI watercolor art of one's favorite flower" in matte acrylic paint on cold press, heavy weight watercolor paper at prices starting at \$40.

Brickley's a busy guy, serving as chamber of commerce vice president, on the city's nuisance committee, and on the local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). He can be contacted at brickley@sonic.net.



Land sale in Rio Dell part of church bankruptcy deal

The Catholic diocese of Santa Rosa is selling eight acres at 800 Rigby Avenue in Rio Dell as part of bankruptcy proceedings, the Lost Coast Outpost has reported.

The City of Rio Dell has expressed willingness to adjust the current one-acre lot size zoning which would allow eight homes to be built, to work with a developer to produce as many as 50 smaller lots, according to the article, which points to the city's need for additional housing, the existing road frontage and planned sewer upgrade for the area.

The parcel is among several the diocese is selling across its six-county territory.



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Surf n Turf Dinner Fundraiser

Lobster tail and tri tip, salad,
and baked potato, \$35
Sat., March 28 - 5 p.m. til sold out
Fire Hall 50 Center Street Rio Dell

Purchase tickets through Venmo

Raffle tickets \$20 for
Ruger American G1 243
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donated by Grundman's.

Event benefits cancer treatments for
volunteer firefighter Kevin Gregorio and
Mountain of Mercy, a drug and alcohol
rehabilitation program Gregorio supports.



Save the date! 5th annual Bingo Blast April 24

River Lodge, Fortuna
Social Hour and Dinner
at 5, Bingo at 6:30

\$40 in advance \$50 at door

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New owners at Scotia Lodge continued from page 1

He plans to maintain the existing staff, and to "crank up the advertising," offering special rates, inviting IT companies in the Bay Area to host events here, and renting office space to those who want to work while staying in the area. He is planning a concierge service, a person dedicated to connecting guests to local tours and activities in the area.

Longer-range plans include landscaping the lawn to provide a bigger area for larger outdoor events, having hot tubs and saunas on a deck that can be used by locals as well as guests, and developing the third floor into luxury suites.

A ribbon cutting is being planned.



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Firefighter seeks to help others

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Editor's note: This is the first in a series of articles interviewing local firefighters in our communities.

Kevin Gregorio is the guy who stops when he sees someone who may need help. "I'd always be finding emergencies," he said - a tree down in the highway, someone pulled over on the side of the road. In search of training to more adequately assist in these cases, he joined the Rio Dell Volunteer Fire Department right after the earthquake in 2022. He had lived in Honeydew for 20 years (and is still part of the fire department there) but moved to Rio Dell with his wife and two children, now 24 and 28 years of age, eight years ago so they could attend high school locally.

Gregorio is an engineer in training, meaning he is learning to drive the various trucks through the tight places in which they often need to go, and to set up equipment in the correct sequence to optimize firefighting. "I'm on a lot of medical calls, each is different, so I have to be open to what is happening in each," he says.

He also likes cooking and welds the kitchen gear when the department puts on a fund-raiser. He's found himself cooking a range of culinary treats, from Crab Louie, Surf and Turf and Fish and Chips to tri tip, barbecued chicken and burgers, between stints at the two departments.

Other ways Gregorio has given back is through Mountain of Mercy, a Christian-based drug and alcohol rehabilitation program in Honeydew, one of 24 across the nation. He benefitted from it as a young man, addicted to meth at the age of 13 on the streets of Eureka, where he grew up.

Now the guy who stops to help others needs some help himself, in his battle with cancer. A fundraiser will be held this month to help offset Gregorio's medical bills and to benefit Mountain of Mercy (see related information).



Gregorio, left, is sworn into the department by Chief Shane Wilson, right.



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Holidays

Daylight Saving Time begins - March 8
St. Patrick's Day - March 17
Spring equinox - March 20
Palm Sunday - March 29

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