



Meet a chamber member – Flood Plain Produce

Mel and Hollis Krebs, doing business as Flood Plain Produce, are chamber members and state certified organic farmers operating a produce and 'you-pick' flower business at 31117 State Highway 254 – the Avenue of the Giants in Pepperwood – though their formal address is Scotia.

"We live on and have sold from a farm stand on our property for over 40 years; our excess produce and flowers are sold at local farmers markets. Our farm has become an integral part of the local community, and we plan to continue in that role. The grandchildren of our original customers now buy from us," the Krebs note in a profile of their business.

The season is just beginning for the couple, who start spring crops such as onions, leeks, shallots, cabbage, beets, peas and lettuce in their greenhouse, and harden everything off on outdoor trays and in open hoop houses. They till in cover crops to provide organic fertilizer as they begin transplanting and create very fertile soil with an earthworm vermiculture system. Sales at the produce stand won't begin until late June or early July but the public can visit to see the Krebs grow the food they are buying. "Children love the place and the blackberry popsicles. We look forward to seeing old friends and new faces when we open," they say.

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Community garden growing

The Rio Dell Community Garden, managed by the Community Resource Center, is getting a make-over thanks to a team of volunteers and \$20,000 in donated materials and labor by J & G Lawn & Garden. Marti Kelly, Jackie Emerson and Kelsey Machado came together out of interest in helping, growing plants, and more, and each is drawing on her talents, Kelly says, to shape and manage the garden's direction.

"I'm a retired social worker," who moved to Rio Dell a year ago and started helping at the Resource Center with the food distribution program, Kelly notes, and asked about all the plant starts she was seeing, nurtured by Resource Center staffer Andrea Edington. That's how she learned of the community garden.

Emerson retired as a dispatch supervisor after 26 years with the Oakland fire department and moved with her husband to 25 acres on Blue Slide five years ago. She got involved in the county's Master Gardener program to learn how to develop her property.

Machado cites a gardening class she took a year ago as an inspiration point. She has taught community health worker classes at a private medical school and worked in public health outreach. "I'm interested in the intersection of green spaces, rural health disparities and community integration as a health prevention measure," she says. She now works as a birth and postpartum doula.

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Kelsey Machado, Jackie Emerson,
& Marti Kelly

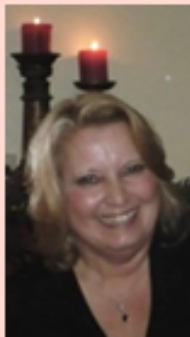


City clerk retires, another comes on board

Karen Dunham retired in February after 45 years in several positions within the city clerk's office, including officially holding the role of city clerk since 2008. She is replaced by Jessica Hill. Dunham was honored with a proclamation signed by Mayor Debra Garnes citing her integrity and professionalism in fulfilling the varied duties of this office. Dunham looks back on her tenure and reflects on friends and memories – "some happier than others" in those years. Plans include home repairs dating to the earthquake that remain unfinished; hosting visiting family; and travel.



pictured to
the left,
Jessica Hill.
Pictured to
the right,
Karen Dunham



Jessica Hill, the new city clerk, has lived in Humboldt for about 14 years, and recently obtained an associate's degree in business administration. Previously she worked with the County of Humboldt for five years as a social service aid with Child Welfare and for four years as a case manager in Behavioral Health. Before that, she provided home health care for five years.

"In my time with the county, I learned I thrive in an office setting (filing, organizing, compiling information, etc.). I enjoyed the behind the scenes and processes in supporting my community," she says.

"My husband and I recently bought a home in Rio Dell and joined the volunteer fire department." Of the city clerk position, she says it has all the aspects of her previous work that she loved and is in her own backyard. Interests include photography, from nature (some of her extremely close-up work is on display at EmeraldZ Humboldt County Gifts and Games) to celebrations of family and friends. She and her husband are fish tank enthusiasts, and plan to add some four-legged family members soon.

She says, "I am incredibly excited to live and work in such a beautiful place and hope to share the love I have for Humboldt communities with all who reside - and visit!"



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Fire runs for March 2026:

Medical aid 37
Traffic collisions 2
Medical from traffic collisions. 2
Residential fire alarm 1
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The couple has hired a new, full-time employee who is working towards an associate's degree in agriculture with a focus on organic and sustainable practices, and they lease additional, local property as they expand their operation into locally-distributed wholesale markets. They point to young people they have employed and trained who have gone on to be successful farmers on their own.

"My wife and I serve on numerous boards that keep the agricultural community intact," Krebs says. "These include Farm Bureau, Buckeye, Southern Humboldt Gardening Association, Eel River Watershed Improvement Group, North Coast Growers Association and Redcrest Grange 504."

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"My role is volunteer recruitment and engagement," Machado says. "The goal of the garden is to get more fresh fruits and vegetables to community members - grown by the community for the community at large." She says a Redwood News TV spot a couple months before "really got the ball rolling" with interest from the community.

The trio held a pair of plant sales to help fund the changes needed at the garden, netting more than \$700 in the first one, success which surprised them. Friends, families and businesses such as the Humboldt Veterinary Medical Group, where Emerson works part-time as a vet tech, also donated to the effort. "I'm donating the funds raised from the sale of my duck and chicken eggs," Emerson said, indicating the variety of income streams involved.

Kelly stresses the appreciation she feels to the community and especially to J&G for the donated work and materials that have made their efforts possible. The landscaping firm has created a site plan and done physical work such as clearing out old brush, as well as donating materials.

Anyone interested is encouraged to contact the Resource Center for more information or to email riodellgarden6@gmail.com.

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Clean-up of city

The annual city-wide clean-up event will take place Saturday, May 9 at Eagle Prairie School from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. according to City Manager Kyle Knopp. The event is free and open to Rio Dell residents only. Several hundred people typically participate, and some make several trips during the four-hour window, Knopp says, urging participants to help move things quickly by sorting the items they are unloading before arriving at the site with metal loaded first so it is on the bottom, then green waste and finally trash on top. Household trash, e-waste, hazardous materials, tires and contractor or construction debris are not allowed. Call City Hall or Recology with questions.

Letter carrier food drive May 9

The nation's largest one-day food drive is conducted each year by the union of letter carriers for the U.S. Post Office. For 34 years it has taken place on the second Saturday in May, dubbed Help Stamp Out Hunger. Rio Dell postmaster Katharine Coleman confirms it's happening again and residents are encouraged to put non-perishable, not-outdated food items out to be picked up by letter carriers on that day.

Spaghetti feed slated at Redcrest Grange

A pre-Avenue of the Giants Marathon spaghetti feed will be held Saturday, May 2 from 12:30 to 6 p.m. at the Redcrest Community Grange, 115 Sorenson Road, Redcrest. Chamber member Holly Krebs of Scotia notes it is a fundraiser for the grange and open to all. Spaghetti, salad, bread and dessert are available for \$20 for adults, \$12 for children aged 6 to 12, and free for those under 6. Tickets are available at the race station where runners sign in, or at the door. Meals are available to go, and meals for groups of four adults are \$75. Beer and wine will also be available for purchase.



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