Meet a chamber Silver-level member – Adam Dias

Wood turning artist Adam Dias is a pro-bono member of the chamber, producing the redwood membership plaques at no cost, through his business, Redwood Laser. It utilizes computerized production methods to create a variety of items including magnets, trophies, signs and tree ornaments that he has been selling online and in galleries such as at the Immortal Tree on the Avenue of the Giants.

Dias has fit many careers into his lifetime, moving from one to another as they present themselves, or, alternatively, turn out to not be the way he wants to live his life. A 20-minute visit to his home turns into two hours as he shares stories of his experiences and his reflections on trends large and small.

Initially known as a musician, Dias played and wrote his own songs and worked in the engineering end of the music business. He moved into wood turning, following the path of his father, John Dias, now 76 and still making art sold in galleries under the Redwood Creations name.

The younger Dias founded the Eagle Prairie Arts District which provided gallery space for up to 30 local artists at a time, in the building now utilized by the Rio Dell Community Resource Center. He was renting the former gas station at the intersection of Wildwood and Columbus owned by Merilyn Ross that has since been sold and torn down. At that point he moved his shop to a spot on the Avenue of the Giants with a business partner, and about three years ago moved to the family-owned home near the end of Walnut Street in Rio Dell which he is renovating.

Then came the earthquakes, which caused damage to his equipment. Looking for a winter job, he began as a security officer at the Southern Humboldt Community Healthcare District, parent organization to Garberville's Jerold Phelps Community Hospital. Here, his responsibilities morphed into writing and administering grants and overseeing policies and procedures.

Dias says he tends to work too hard at the things for which he has passion and ultimately burns out. Faced with health issues, he stepped back from the hospital roles. Now, his life is circling back around. He was notified a song he wrote years ago is in the sequel to the slasher movie *Slaughterhouse*, which was filmed at property owned by a fellow band member from that time, who performed it for the movie-making crew. "I haven't seen it," he says of the movie, "but I have the check."

He is co-writing and recording songs with his daughter, Layla, who teaches music at Scotia's school as well as performing locally and with groups outside the area. He talks about updating a book he has written, *Redwood Burl*, which he describes as the definitive guide to the subject. He is concerned about the way a person's intellectual or artistic output can be taken over by corporations, so people no longer have ownership over what they create, or rights to the money those things earn. He must therefore re-do the book under new rules to continue to keep it his own.



As for his wood turning, the future is "to be continued," he says. Galleries will take all the pieces he creates, but right now his Etsy shop is paused and people learn of him through word of mouth. "I'm a perfectionist, I love the laser work, it involves critical thinking, but custom work has a deadline like with the grants," so he doesn't want to burn out.

Meanwhile, ever the marketer, Dias thinks of ways Rio Dell can create something of interest to draw others. "You know how pennies are no longer produced," he says, suggesting that people in the community contribute their pennies to make a sculpture. It would be one of a kind.

Holiday decorating contest to launch: be ready to sign up!

Sign-ups start this month for the annual holiday decorating contest for homes and businesses. There's once again some hefty cash prizes, thanks to the fire department, and that would surely be handy this time of year. Be sure to follow the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce on Facebook to get notification of when the sign-ups go live, and get busy decorating. Voting will again be by peoples' choice in December, when you'll be able to see a list of participating homes and businesses on the Facebook Events page and go check them out to vote for your faves.



Community Thanksgiving dinner slated for Nov. 21

The annual free community Thanksgiving dinner will be held from 3 to 6 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 21, in the cafeteria at the Rio Dell elementary school. Again this year a number of organizations are coming together to put it on, including the Rio Dell Community Resource Center, fire department, Journey Church and Liberty Tabernacle. The event is open to all wanting a place to have a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. Those wishing to volunteer should contact the resource center.



Save the date! Tree lighting is Dec. 5

The annual tree lighting, with Santa arriving on the fire truck parade, will again be held on the first Saturday of December, starting at 5 p.m., in the Rio Dell Community Resource Center, 406 Wildwood. It's always a good time to gather with friends and neighbors, so mark your calendar.





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

Providence Medical Group

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Group meets for health, fun

The first arrivals show up half an hour early, and start moving chairs and tables, taking out the equipment to be used, and laying it out on the seats for others whom they know will show up. It's Friday morning and the Senior Exercise group is gearing up at the Rio Dell Community Resource Center.

Open to all, most are between the ages of 60 and go, says Rena Dewell, who has been coming for a dozen years. The group has met in various places and formats, sometimes taking up a collection to pay a leader trained in the strength and balance workout offered in senior centers and other locations such as the Adorni Center in Eureka. The past couple years, the group has been exercising on Mondays and Fridays from 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. under the leadership of some long-time members such as Dewell and Betty Clutts of Fortuna, who had the role that day.

With a whistle to get attention, Clutts calls the group to order at 11:45. With a few water breaks, the participants, who sometimes number as high as 40, work out with weights and elastic bands. Members adapt the workout to their own abilities. Some arrive using a walker, some remain seated throughout.

"Providence bought us the weights and rack," says Dewell. The Area Agency on Aging checks in when there are funds to see if equipment is needed to support the group, as does resource center coordinator Sarah Reback, who funded the elastic bands.

"We don't just exercise, we have fun," Clutts says. Debbie Sarland agrees, noting she's up to exercising with six-pound weights compared to the four-pound ones she started with, but that socialization is a benefit, too, and now her husband has started to come as well.

Camaraderie is evident throughout the group with a prayer of thanks for those present and those unable to come, lots of good-natured kidding, some barnyard squawks, and counting of repetitions in three languages. But there have been real results seen, as well. Two men in the group have had strokes, one noting he has recovered from two. Geoff Moffitt had a stroke three years ago and has been coming since his physical therapy ended. "It's been a life saver," he says.







Pictured Above:
Rena Dewell,
Richard Genereux,
& Betty Clutts





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She's helping others deal with loss

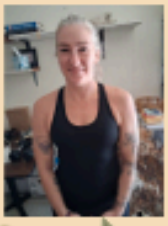
Grief is love with nowhere to go, Amanda Carter says, defining the group she leads at the Rio Dell Community Resource Center. She is this month's featured volunteer.

Carter, 44, has been a Hospice of Humboldt-trained volunteer for nearly 18 years. "I contacted them, offering to look after the pets of people while they were in the hospital," Carter recalls. "They told me there wasn't enough call for that, would I like to consider other opportunities to volunteer, as well?" She took the grief counselor training and called on hospice families in Fortuna "until Covid shut it down." After the earthquakes in Rio Dell in 2022-23, she found so much loss and trauma locally that she sought the opportunity to bring her skills to the local community.

The group varies in number from zero to 15 and encompasses all ages, she says. Weather and holidays have a lot to do with the number present – on sunny days people are out doing things, but when the rain sets in and the holidays roll around, participants turn to the group for connection and comfort. Carter sees the camaraderie and friendships that form in the group as a benefit.

Talking about grief is not something our culture does well, Carter says, pointing to the Day of the Dead and other remembrances foundational to other cultures. She has experienced the loss of friends and relatives and credits her parents with encouraging discussion about feelings of loss as she grew up, for instance marking the passing of pets.

In addition to being Rio Dell's vice mayor, Carter teaches senior fitness classes at HealthSport and the Bear River Recreation Center and works privately with stroke patients and those with traumatic brain injuries, at their homes. She is an ordained minister and has officiated at weddings and funerals, and notes she's therefore been a part of some families through a succession of life changes.



Be prepared this winter to help!

With so many disasters that come our way in December (floods, quakes) and the added concern of an El Niño weather pattern, be prepared to help yourself, and others in your community. Join the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) - Rio Dell has one, as do most communities in the county. Sign up now to take three full days of FREE training Nov. 6-8 at the Bear River Rancheria OR two days online in advance of a full day Nov. 8 for in-person, hands-on instruction. Topics include disaster prep, basic first aid, light search and rescue, fire suppression and utility controls, disaster psychology and team organization. Register at humboldtcert.com/cert-training.

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Firefighter shares "why we do what we do."

Mike Jensen is this month's featured firefighter, noting "I'm excited to share a bit about myself and my journey within the community." He moved to Scotia in 1989, where he raised three children, and in 1994, began what he terms "my lifelong commitment as a volunteer fireman." "My fire service story started with Scotia Fire," he says, "and over the years, I've had the privilege to move through the ranks—advancing to engineer, lieutenant, captain, and duty officer."

He relocated to Rio Dell in 2019 and served both departments until the district merged, expanding to four stations. Following the merger, "I was promoted to Scotia Battalion Chief, and in June of this year, took on the role of Second Assistant Chief" with the fire protection district.

Jensen's initial motivation for joining the fire service was to become involved in the community, but "I quickly realized it was much more than that. It demanded a lot of training, hard work, and unwavering commitment—from live fire drills and medical response to rope rescue operations. I discovered the impact we have goes far beyond emergencies. Whether educating school kids about fire safety and recognizing they are our future or gently helping a grandmother after a fall and reassuring her, these moments are why we do what we do."

"Regardless of title or the color of your hat, splinting a broken arm or putting a band-aid on a skinned knee, it's about giving back and making neighbors feel safe—it just feels right," he adds.

Jensen concludes, "On a personal note, I've been married to my wonderful wife, Ronda, for 37 years. I've spent 45 years as an electrician, working in mills, power plants, and now with Caltrans as an electrical supervisor. In my spare time, I enjoy woodworking, building birdhouses, and spending cherished moments with my three grandkids."

Fire runs for September 2026: 4

Medical – 44
Traffic collisions – 2
False alarms, billable:
Commercial – 3
Residential – 1
Hazardous conditions – 1
Public assists – 6
Mutual aid veg. fire – 1
Vegetation fire – 1
Structure fire – 1
Meetings – 1
Drills – 1

Special events/ work details – 1

Total – 63



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