

Rio Dell-Scotia News



Happy holidays to all!

Holiday doings unfurl

Here are three ways to celebrate the season with friends and neighbors:

Come Dec. 3 to the opening of the Community Resource Center at its new location combined with the annual tree lighting. It all takes place 4 to 6 p.m. at 406 Wildwood, on the corner of Wildwood and Columbus in Rio Dell, where the Chamber of Commerce now shares space with the newly relocated Community Resource Center. Check it out – your old favorites: enjoying the downtown decorations and the fire truck parade; meeting Santa; caroling; visiting with your friends and neighbors plus a chance to see the Resource Center in its new home. Sarah Reback, the center’s coordinator, says, “I am very excited to get our new location up and running. Please join us for refreshments and decorate an ornament to be hung on our center's tree.” And around 5:30, the tree on the median, provided by Humboldt Redwood Company, will be lit.

Register to win cash prizes in the second-annual holiday decorating contest open to everyone in Rio Dell and Scotia. There are business and residential categories. Businesses can choose whether to be judged on indoor or outdoor decorations. As with last year, the \$1,000 in prizes was donated by the volunteer fire department. The first prize is \$250; second prize is \$150, and third prize is \$100 in each of the two categories. A “Chamber’s Choice” business prize will be offered as well.

Go to the Rio Dell Scotia Chamber of Commerce Facebook page and fill out the form under “Events” to register your home or business to be judged, OR go to the chamber office, 406 Wildwood, and leave your name, street address, city, phone number, and category for which you are entering, on a sheet of paper you can deposit through the drop-off slot on the Columbus side of the building. You need to do this by midnight, December 15.

A map showing the addresses and locations (but not the names or phone numbers) of the people who register will then be created and posted on the Facebook page and made available on paper at the Chamber door for pickup. Anyone can vote, voting continues until midnight December 25, and votes will then be tabulated, and winners announced

Check out the homes and businesses in the decorating competition and vote for your favorites! Join friends and family in enjoying the holiday lights and other decorations. Those homes and businesses in Rio Dell and Scotia that have signed up to be part of the judging will be mapped and listed on the chamber’s Facebook page and a paper version will be available on the front door of the chamber at 406 Wildwood just as soon as humanly and technologically possible after the December 15 deadline to sign up has passed.

Grab the list and set out to see what seasonal delights await and cast your vote by midnight on Christmas – on the Facebook page or by paper, with paper tallies needing to be dropped off at the chamber office, through the slot on the Columbus side of the building at 406 Wildwood, by midnight on Christmas.

SEASONS GREETINGS

Resource Center seeks input

Sarah Reback, the new coordinator of the Rio Dell Community Resource Center, says, “I have included a community survey in this month's newsletter to find out what resources you have accessed at the center in the past, resources and activities that you would like to see happen in the future, and to find out if anyone has any interest in volunteering their time at the center.

Please take a moment to fill out the survey and drop it off at the center at its new location, at your convenience or pop it in the mail: 406 Wildwood Avenue. I am very excited to meet you all and find out what your needs are and how I can assist you.”

Join the chamber monthly board meeting

Join in at noon on the first Friday of the month to be part of the discussion about how to make our communities even better. You can ask questions, make suggestions and be among the first to know new plans. Dec. 2 will be the next. Call in at 605.313.4802 and use access code 860467 or come to 440 Wildwood, two doors north of the chamber office at noon to participate.

Help bring joy to seniors in area nursing homes

Area One Agency on Aging is collecting funds and gift cards to buy presents for seniors in area skilled nursing facilities this holiday season. The effort is led by Area One's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program of which Leanne Langston of Rio Dell is the volunteer coordinator. Gifts themselves cannot be accepted. Mail your check or gift card to LTCOP 333 J Street, Eureka, 95501 or drop it off at that address from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Checks should be made out to A1AA/LTCOP. Contact Langston at 707. 269.1330 for more information.

Chamber membership, newsletter ad renewals due

Chamber memberships and ads in this free, monthly newsletter expire this month, so be part of all the things the chamber is doing and sign up to renew (or join or re-join) now! In addition to the tree lighting event and holiday lighting projects around the community, and the home and business holiday decorating competition, the chamber has spear-headed the history kiosks, community mural, holiday flag displays, veterans' display twice annually on the city hall lawn, the Wildwood Days parade, and much more.

Activities and projects are often done in partnership with other organizations (the city funded half of the mural, the fire department funds the awards in the decorating competition) so they represent a broad cross-section of people, organizations and ideas, and are discussed in monthly meetings that one can attend in person or call into.

Chamber membership remains just \$50 for a business, and \$35 (\$40 couple) for an individual. Many join at higher bronze (\$250), silver (\$500), gold (\$1,000) and platinum (higher yet) levels. Go to the chamber website here to see which those are: <https://www.riodellscotiachamber.org/search-members/>

If you are on the list, it's time to renew! If not, please consider joining or rejoining!

Ads are just \$10/month for the small size (\$120/year) or \$20 for the large (\$240/year). They appear each month on the insert of this newsletter, of which 650 issues are printed and distributed across three communities and which also are posted each month online. If your ad is there, thank you, and please renew now! If it is not, please consider placing an ad – a few spaces remain. And, please support those who are advertising, as a way to thank them for helping make so many things possible in our area!

You can pay membership/ad renewal with a check (made payable to the Rio Dell/Scotia Chamber of Commerce and mailed to PO Box 95, Rio Dell, CA 95562) or via Venmo or Paypal **Questions?** Call the chamber at 707.506.5081 or email rdschamber@gmail.com.

First two of four kiosks placed

Delayed by darned near everything, the installation of the first two kiosks of four gifted to the chamber by the Eagle Prairie Arts District during Covid were set in concrete last month, one at Triangle Park near city hall and the other by the library. The kiosks will present the history of the area and aim to attract the attention of local walkers as well as travelers passing through – as with the sculptures on the median, mural and flag displays on holidays, the idea is to attract attention, create interest, instill local pride and get people talking and wanting to spend more time investigating what the community offers.

The kiosk at the park holds a dedication to Marlene Snell, who tended the flower beds in the park for so long, until her death in 2021. (Continued on Page 3.)



(Kiosks continued from Page 2) The kiosk project remains a work in progress with some photos yet to be identified and mounted, logistical ways to secure these very heavy structures (solidly made by the High Rock Conservation Camp in Weott) and remaining sponsors found.

PG&E urges free in-home gas inspections

With colder weather months approaching, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) is reminding customers to call to schedule a free in-home safety inspection of their gas appliances. During the visit, PG&E will also relight pilot lights for customers who have heaters or other appliances that have been turned off during warmer months.

Inspections help ensure that gas appliances, including water heaters, furnaces and ovens, are operating safely and efficiently, reducing the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning within the home. Carbon monoxide is especially dangerous as it can't be seen, smelled or heard. [According to the Center for Disease Control](#), every year in the U.S. at least 430 people die from accidental carbon monoxide poisoning and approximately 50,000 people will be sent to the hospital. Call 1-800-743-5000 to schedule an inspection.

Region addresses concerns with power availability

Editor's Note: This article by City Manager Kyle Knopp summarizes a critical issue to the area.

In March of this year, Rio Dell Mayor Debra Garnes attended a meeting of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), a state agency with regulatory oversight over Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E). Her attendance was the culmination of years of missed timelines, commitments and unclear direction from PG&E over development projects in Rio Dell at the Humboldt-Rio Dell Business Park. Mayor Garnes voiced the community's frustration that after five years of proactive communication from the city and developers, no progress had been made on delivery of services to future projects that would help develop the site and provide jobs and revenue to the community. The city council also issued a letter to the CPUC on May 3 further requesting action.

On June 6 the city received formal communication from the CPUC Commissioner John Reynolds that stated "PG&E should be as transparent as possible about the timeline and next steps with local governments." Representatives with PG&E were copied on the communication. City staff then met with Dr. Naveed Paydar, an executive with the CPUC, to develop a strategy to approach PG&E. PG&E agreed to meet with the City of Rio Dell and Dr. Paydar along with staff from the CPUC on September 15. Interestingly, PG&E also scheduled phone calls with the City of Fortuna and County of Humboldt around the same time, without the CPUC invited.

As has been documented in numerous media outlets, the "transparency" finally revealed to the City of Rio Dell, Fortuna and the county involved a stark and distressing story.

At the time, the utility said it could "cost more than \$900 million and take up to a decade" to make the upgrades necessary to increase capacity for two of its three transmission lines. The utility's perceived shortcomings in not anticipating and addressing this issue earlier has roiled the plans, and the tempers, of many who are potentially affected, from city leaders seeing economic development efforts quashed and climate action plans (which rely on migrating fleet vehicles from gas-powered to electric) tossed to the wind; to builders, growers, and private investors who have counted on being able to hook up homes and businesses that are under construction.

After Rio Dell and the CPUC had compelled PG&E to provide answers, it became clear that the issue did not just impact Rio Dell, but Fortuna and the entirety of the unincorporated Southern Humboldt area. Under the leadership of Supervisor Michelle Bushnell and State Senator Mike McGuire, a subsequent "all hands on deck" meeting was called by the senator that brought representatives from Rio Dell, Fortuna and the county together with CPUC and PG&E representatives. At that September meeting it was clearly communicated to PG&E that its update was not acceptable and that it was to return before the end of the month to provide greater detail and better solutions regarding these issues.

PG&E again met with working group of representatives from Rio Dell, Fortuna and the County on October 24 to provide that update. The good news was relayed that both Fortuna and Rio Dell would have additional capacity installed by the end of 2024, alleviating the concerns for development in the two communities. However, the unincorporated Southern Humboldt area would continue to see challenges for some time to come, in certain cases requiring a \$300 million investment to serve just 37 new customers.

"We're grateful to PG&E for sharpening their pencils and prioritizing the Rio Dell and Fortuna areas for enhanced capacity and growth in the coming years." Rio Dell City Manager Kyle Knopp stated. "This is in stark contrast to our meeting with them in September and means our developers now know the timeline for power delivery, and it appears satisfactory to them. I want to thank Mayor Garnes, the CPUC, Senator McGuire and Supervisor Bushnell for bringing PG&E to the table and coming to the resolution."

Scotia Band member enters 51st year

Phil Sams of Ferndale celebrated his 50th year with chamber member Scotia Band last summer. Each year Scotia Band honors its members with a pin for every five years of participation, Emily Silver explained in a news release marking the event. Phil Sams' pin "entered him into an elite league including Henry Bender, Merle Adams, Charles Langdon, Al Pollard, Woody Thompson, and, most recently, Cecil Williams."

Sams, 62, noted music was easy for him, starting with piano lessons at home in the second grade and continuing when he joined the Ferndale Elementary School band in the sixth grade where he opted to play trombone. Silver notes this is often considered one of the most difficult instruments to learn because "while other brass instruments have valves to distinguish note from note, the trombone has a slide. The slide's physical position must be memorized for each note."

From there Sams moved to the baritone (a valved instrument voiced between bass and tenor) when the Ferndale Elementary band teacher loaned him one to take home for the summer, and by fall he had taught himself to play. He began attending Scotia Band rehearsals on Monday nights where he played the baritone while continuing to play the trombone in the school band.

He left Humboldt County for college and pharmacy school but returned to Ferndale to raise a family with his wife, Lani, also a pharmacist, and participate in numerous musical groups, including serving as pianist for his church, playing in the Eureka Symphony, and continuing to anchor the Scotia Band brass section with trombone, baritone, and euphonium, a medium-sized, 3 or 4-valve, tenor-voiced brass instrument similar to a tuba but slightly higher in range which he taught to his wife.



Phil Sams, Scotia Band archives




➤➤➤ **HWMA is Extending the Free Tire Recycling Program until 2023!**

The Hawthorne Street Transfer Station in Eureka will accept up to nine auto or light truck tires per day at no extra charge. It's ok if they're on rims. No business-generated tires please. This program is only for household generated tires.

Call or email us for details:

268-8680 or info@hwma.net

 Humboldt Waste Management Authority
1059 W. Hawthorne St., Eureka, CA 95501
www.hwma.net

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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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