

# Rio Dell-Scotia News

## Volunteers important to area organizations

Volunteers are the backbone of many organizations that benefit the community. Here are some who exemplify the spirit of giving.

### Community Resource Center Food Bank volunteers:

**Scott and Sandy Pitcarin** of Scotia retired from careers in social services and were looking for a way to get involved in their new community. “We were one of the first home buyers in Scotia,” Sandy says, and asked about volunteer opportunities. They were told about the food pantry operated by the Community Resource Center, which at the time was in Scotia, and is now at the Journey Church on Belleview in Rio Dell.

“We’ve been doing this for about two years,” Sandy reports, finding it fun and rewarding. “Sara (Faught) and Meri (Black) are amazing, as are the other volunteers,” she says of the resource center staff. “We look forward to doing this every month.” She does the paperwork and signs people in as they come for food, noting that paperwork is her thing. Husband Scott unloads the truck that comes from Food for People and stocks the shelves.

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A member of the congregation at Journey Church, **Perdeda Rosenlund** became involved in the food pantry when it moved to the church a year ago. “I open up the day before, set up the food tables and wait for the Food for People truck to come,” she says. Thursdays she goes back to set up last-minute items and gets food in bags, asking people what items they want from what is available. She helps the elderly and disabled to carry their food out. “It’s kind of fun,” she says, adding that it makes her feel good to help and give back. Living in Rio Dell since 1990, she cleans and helps in other ways at the church, as well.

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**Judy Ingraham** has volunteered with the food bank for seven years, starting with it when it was located in Scotia. “My neighbor worked for Food for People,” she says of her start. “I’ve been blessed, I enjoy giving back,” she says of volunteering. “We get along like a family. We treat the people who come for food with dignity and make them feel comfortable. No one wants to come for free food if they can help it.”

In addition to the food bank, she helps at the Community Resource Center with other projects like Toys for Tots and Santa Stuffers and staffs the snack bar at the Senior Resource Center in Fortuna during bingo.

Ingraham lives with her 94 year old father, works in her yard, and exercises with a group in Rio Dell that meets at the Chamber of Commerce office three times a week. “My grandchildren are my hobby,” she says. A resident of the area since 1984, she lived in Scotia for more than 17 years, and is in Rio Dell now. Her late husband was raised in the area. “I enjoy it here, she says, there are really nice people.” (Volunteers Continued on Page 3)

**Pictured** are food bank volunteers Shannon Brasher (back left), Judy Ingraham (back middle), Perdeda Rosenlund (back right), and Sandy (middle, sitting) and Scott (front) Pitcarin.



**Celebrate Presidents Day Feb. 17**

## *News and Notes*

### **Save the date! District 1 candidates' forum slated**

A candidates' forum will be held Thurs., Feb. 6, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the **Winema Theater in Scotia** featuring incumbent Rex Bohn and challenger Cliff Berkowitz who are seeking the District 1 spot on the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors in the March 3 election. It will be sponsored by the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce. The candidates will be asked to respond to a set of questions concerning the issues facing the county board, and how they would contribute to addressing them if elected. Members of the public would then get to ask additional questions. There will be non-alcoholic refreshments. The event is free and open to all.

### **Save the date! District 2 candidates' forum slated**

A candidates' forum for District 2 of the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors will be held Sat., Feb. 8 from 1 to 4 p.m. at **the Chamber of Commerce office**, 406 Wildwood Ave., Rio Dell. It will be sponsored by the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce and bring together incumbent Estelle Fennell and four challengers, Michelle Bushnell, Sean DeVries, Rick French, and Michael McKaskle. Participants will be asked to respond to a set of questions concerning the issues facing the county board, and how they would contribute to addressing them if elected. Members of the public would then get to ask additional questions. There will be non-alcoholic refreshments. The event is free and open to all.

### **Mailboxes set out, but not for long**

Sets of joined, locking mailboxes were initially set out on Rio Dell's Wildwood Avenue in early January by postal authorities, with signage noting that the new units provided security from mail box and package theft. Online and in-person discussions have addressed possible ways to decoratively paint the boxes such as was done with utility boxes in Eureka; show concern that the installations made accessing the curb on the passenger side of parked cars difficult; and the appearance of the boxes in front of buildings on the main street of the city, especially after they have weathered.

According to City Manager Kyle Knopp, the postal higher-ups got ahead of themselves in setting out the units and that they would be retrieved from Wildwood by the end of the initial week. While the post office did not reply to a request for input into the story, Knopp noted the installation is in the permit process of putting the new boxes at pre-existing locations. Putting them at the new locations as the postal authorities also intended is "a complicated process that takes time," Knopp noted, adding that Police Chief Jeff Connor had not indicated an increase in mail box or package theft.



"We would like to encourage homeowners and renters to keep the pathways from the street to their mail boxes safe and clean," Knopp said. "That means free of aggressive dogs, dog feces, garbage, etc. We want our postal employees in this community to feel safe in the conduct of their work and I think that will go a long way in helping to prevent the perceived need for these boxes to be placed throughout town."

### **Kiwanis Korner by Carole Arrington, secretary**

The Kiwanis Club of Rio Dell and Scotia was created to help preserve, develop and improve our piece of paradise that those who live in our area get to enjoy. Kiwanis is made up of your neighbors and friends. You don't have to possess any special skills to be a member and everyone is welcome. The main focus of Kiwanis International is children. Create a better community for the kids and the rest will follow. Being involved in your community is one of the best things you can do for that community.

The Kiwanis Club of Rio Dell and Scotia is a fledgling club. We just finished our first official year and we have a lot to learn! However, in that short amount of time we have been able to make a difference in our community through events like "Santa Day" at both local schools and movie nights in the park. It is fabulous seeing friends and neighbors under the stars and see the smiles on the faces of the children when they receive a gift from Santa. These might seem like small things but they are the beginning of many wonderful things to come. In March we will hold our second annual "Fruhlingsfest" with all the proceeds from that event used to benefit the children of Rio Dell and Scotia.

We extend an invitation to all residents of Rio Dell and Scotia to come check out a meeting. Get involved. Be a positive part of your community. The Kiwanis meets every second and fourth Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. at the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce office, 406 Wildwood Ave., Rio Dell. We'd love to see you there!

Make an investment in yourself and future generations by volunteering in your community!

## Kiwanis Volunteers

The local chapter of Kiwanis International had a busy first year tackling many new activities.

Chapter president **Connie Griffith-O'Neal** joined Kiwanis to make a difference for local children. "I grew up in Rio Dell and raised my children in Rio Dell and Scotia. I worked at both Rio Dell and Scotia schools as an aide and know some of the problems that our community has and how it impacts the lives of children especially," she says.

Her goal for the chapter next year is to work on the group's slate of current service projects and hopefully add a new one, adding that most projects will be done for the second time and will allow members to see their growth since their first attempts.

"We just finished our second Santa's Sleigh" in local schools, she notes. "I was able to help with that and it was great putting smiles on their faces. We are getting ready to plan our second Fruhlingsfest- a beer festival – this spring."

Volunteering has always brought me great joy," Griffith-O'Neal says. She's the site administrator for the Ferndale Community Health Center, and loves her job helping others, while enjoying do-it-yourself projects and crafts in her spare time. "I volunteered with the Ladies Auxiliary during my first marriage and was room mom for both of my kids. Volunteering with Kiwanis has enriched my life and even brought me out of my comfort zone." Married to "an amazing guy, Mike," with four grown children and four grandkids between them, the couple decided to both join Kiwanis and try to make a difference, while meeting new people.

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**Carole Arrington** likewise sees volunteering with Kiwanis as a way to help families and children. Active in Rotary while living in Eureka, she had to take time off from volunteering when the demands of her career and being a single mom became too much. Remarried with her four children grown and she and her husband relocated to Rio Dell, she joined Kiwanis because she believes it is "important for us all to be advocates for our community. We have problems" she said of the area, "but have to be part of the solution."

She grew up in a family-owned apple orchard outside Eureka that hosted weddings and other events, with horses in her life, then lived in Scotia where her first husband, a "local boy," worked at Palco. She remained attracted to the area where she had many friends, and was happy to move back a couple years ago. She is a cheerleader for the community, pointing out the beauty of the bluffs and river, the joy of taking the dogs on area trails or to the river bar, and the ease of "de-stressing" in a small town. "People ask how I can commute to Eureka every day," she says of her job in advertising sales for the media company that includes KIEM-TV, but counters, "Where else does your commute go by the ocean?"

Arrington points to the children being the future as a reason to put energy into Kiwanis events. She is impressed with the "amazing kids" she has seen at Kiwanis events, whom she notes are so polite and sweet. "We should be curators and caretakers of our community, if we are in a position to give back," she says.

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**Rachael Sovereign**, another Kiwanis board member, is an example of how even the busiest people find time to volunteer when they believe in the purpose of what they are doing. She says it is important for her to be involved, as the Kiwanis focuses on opportunities for children. "There's not much for kids to do locally," she says, and notes there is a lot of poverty in the community; additionally, some children don't have a lot of structure in their lives and it is easy to get in trouble. Growing up in Rio Dell and Scotia herself, she notes, "I was one of those children," who could find trouble. "Rio Dell has had a bad name," she says, but she finds the scenery gorgeous and enjoys getting the kayaks out on the river, fishing in the Eel, growing a large garden, and doing a lot of canning.

Commuting each day from Rio Dell to Eureka to a full-time job at St. Joseph's Hospital supervising home infusions, she helps patients learn to administer medications themselves. Husband Chad works full-time at Renner Gas. In spite of their full schedules, and time spent with son Jackson, 7, they turn out for Kiwanis activities such as movie nights in the park last summer and the pancake breakfast fundraiser held during .  
(Continued on Page 4)



LEFT TO RIGHT:  
Kiwanis President  
Connie Griffith-  
O'Neal, Carole  
Arrington, Secretary  
and Kiwanis Board  
Member, Rachael  
Sovereign Pg. 3

### Rio Dell-Scotia News

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**Submissions deadline for March newsletter copy is February 14.**  
**Call the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce at 506-5081 to advertise.**

## Ongoing Events

**CalFresh/CalWorks:** Did you know if you are eligible for either CalFresh or CalWorks? Come to the Community Resource Center to find out how to qualify and apply for both programs. You can also apply for CalFresh, CalWorks and MediCal at [www.cyourself.com](http://www.cyourself.com).

**Senior Brown Bag Program:** Food boxes given the **2nd Thursday** of every month for local seniors. Boxes distributed from 11:30 a.m.- 1 p.m. at the Church of Christ, 325 2nd Ave. in Rio Dell. To sign up call Food for People at 445-3166.

**Rio Dell Library:** Tuesday-11-4, Wednesday 1-6, Saturday- 11-4

There is a First 5 Puppet Story Time every **Saturday** at 11 a.m. 715 Wildwood Ave., 764-3333.

**Emergency Food:** Running low on food this week? Get a bag for your family or just for yourself at:

- **The Community Resource Center:** 99 Wildwood Ave., Rio Dell, no income verification is needed.
- **The Journey Church:** 95 Belleview Ave. Rio Dell, **Tuesday & Thursday** 9 a.m.- 11:30 a.m.
- **Bread for Life Food Pantry:** Journey Church, 95 Belleview Ave., **3rd Thursday**, from 9 a.m.-12 Noon, For more info call 764-5239.
- **Clothing Closet: Ruth's Room:** Rio Dell Baptist Church, 100 Butcher St., Rio Dell, **Tuesdays**, 9 a.m.– 12 Noon . Call 764-3811 for more information.

**Women's Health Project:** Breast and Gynecology Eel River Valley Outreach Center: 707-726-7919 or 825-8345.

**Free exercise program open to all meeting at Chamber of Commerce:** An exercise group meets Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce, 406 Wildwood Ave. in Rio Dell, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The group is open to all ages and seeks new members. Formerly called SAIL, it focuses on improving balance, flexibility and range of motion to help prevent falls and broken bones.

**Free Produce Available:** Those whose households qualify based on income are reminded of the monthly Mobile Produce Pantry that comes to the Rio Dell Volunteer Fire Department on the **second Wednesday** of each month, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, contact Food for People at 445-3166.

### (Rachael Sovereign Continued from Page 3)

Wildwood Days, and they bring young Jackson along to help. "He's the soda boy," she said of movie nights, and he restocked supplies during the breakfast event.

It was a lot of work, Sovereign notes of movie nights, and there were some glitches. But it was all worth it when people who were leaving "thanked us for putting it on," she says.

She enjoys the small community, where many of her family members still live, and she calls on some of them when she needs a hand at a Kiwanis event. She likes being able to make a difference for children, working with the business owners, and seeing neighbors getting to know each other at Kiwanis-sponsored activities.

Treasurer for Pay It Forward, Humboldt, the disaster-aid organization, Sovereign has a business degree from Humboldt State and is going for an associate degree through an online program from Santa Barbara City College in health information technology.

**Advertise in our insert! Prices are \$10 or \$20 per month. Contact the [rdschamber@gmail.com](mailto:rdschamber@gmail.com) with your copy/art, and send your check, payable to Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber, to PO Box 95, Rio Dell, CA 95562-0095**