

# Rio Dell-Scotia News

## Element 7, second dispensary, opens



Element 7 Outside View

Element 7, the dispensary in the former Green Bean restaurant at 281 Wildwood Avenue in Rio Dell, launched in May. The business is open six days a week from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays according to Josh Black, head of operations for the Los Angeles-based parent company whose motto is *Cannabis with a Conscience*.



Robyn Botsch, Asst Mgr.  
David Johnson, Budtender  
Christopher Bloom, El 7  
Chief Project Officer  
Mikayla Bates, Head  
Budtender

Its website [www.e7ca.com](http://www.e7ca.com) explains Element 7 is “a retail cannabis company with an operational footprint that spans California. With a focus on educating customers, social justice, and inclusion, and operating with a very local voice and footprint,” the company is “a driving force for change in the industry” with businesses planned or operating in 12 cities.

With “market-leading products and a lively premium in-store experience that engages the senses,” Element 7 Rio Dell is focused on bringing great products at affordable prices to the local community as well as tourists visiting the majestic redwood forests and the Avenue of the Giants, notes Robert DiVito, founder and chief executive officer. He explains, “We set out to create a destination that was visually stunning, welcoming, and highly engaging. We’ve curated a selection of brands within the store that represent the best of Northern California’s unmatched craft cannabis scene, along with market-leading brands from across the state. Element 7 Rio Dell is where wellness meets education in an approachable and fun environment. The cannabis retail industry is evolving like none other, and we look forward to building a long-term, sustainable business in this amazing location by leveraging sound retail principles from both inside and outside the cannabis industry.”

Today’s cannabis customer wants to be educated, entertained, and engaged, DiVito says. Element 7 focuses on each of these three aspects “to create an inviting retail environment where products are perfectly curated, integrated and displayed. Senses are engaged across the full spectrum to create a shopping experience that is uplifting and memorable.” As DiVito explains, “We’ve tried to create an immersive retail environment that is different from what the rest of the market is doing. We want to be disruptive both in our approach to how we manage our operations and the immersive experience we deliver to our customers.”

Rio Dell was identified by Element 7 as an ideal location. “This is where cannabis culture was created. Humboldt County is home to some of the world’s top cultivators and brands. We want to collaborate with the industry as much as possible and we felt that opening our Element 7 store here was a statement about how we want to work, as much as how we want to create a sustainable, collaborative and impactful cannabis business,” DiVito adds.

Among its Humboldt brands are Arcata Fire, Northern Emeralds, Humboldt’s Finest, Papa & Barkley, and Nasha Hash. “Element 7 is in discussions with multiple local cultivators and manufacturers to help them expand their reach and network with a trusted and reliable partner across California and that will remain a core focus for the business moving forward,” DiVito says. The company is currently under construction on its next four retail dispensaries which are all scheduled to open in the next four months in Marina, Firebaugh, Mendota, and Port Hueneme.

## Scotia teachers win county honors

Two long-term Scotia school employees were honored by the Humboldt County Office of Education last month.

### Sharon Ross

“It has always felt like a privilege to get to do something so meaningful, fulfilling, and fun,” Ross says of her “lifetime of learning as well as teaching.” She started young: “As the oldest of five siblings, I was always playing the teacher, dragging my sister and three brothers through the ABC’s and 123’s. Even the neighbor kids came to listen and be my willing students and I was hooked.” (Continued on Page 3.)

**Be safe this fire season: see page 3 for more.**

# NEWS AND NOTES

## KIWANIS KORNER – JUNE 2021

BY: CAROLE ARRINGTON, RIO DELL/SCOTIA KIWANIS

Vaccination is a new buzz word! Have you had it? Will you get it? Where can you get one? Will they work? Are they safe? We have all heard these questions asked and may even have asked a few ourselves. We know that one of the ways that we are going to be able to get back to living our lives the way we want to and to be comfortable living those lives is to get vaccinated.

Kiwanis clubs all across the world aren't just talking about vaccinations, they are stepping up and helping to ensure that those who want to be vaccinated have the opportunity. Kiwanis members have volunteered to staff COVID hotlines, to provide transportation to vaccination sites, to work at vaccination clinics, and to provide education about the vaccines. They have helped get the word out to their communities on how to sign up for an appointment to receive a vaccine. There are many ways Kiwanis members help their communities - not just in times of crisis, but in the good times too. We would all like to get back to those good times. You can help by getting vaccinated and by joining your local Kiwanis club where good times is what we are all about.

Becoming a member is easy! If you have been thinking of becoming involved, do it now. We would love to have you. Inquiries can be made through the Rio Dell/Scotia Kiwanis Club Facebook page or email

[riodell.scotiakiwanis@gmail.com](mailto:riodell.scotiakiwanis@gmail.com).

### Wildwood Days planning is under way

The fire department is submitting Wildwood Days plans to the county health department for approval with its Covid compliance requirements – stay tuned for news as it develops.

### New website to find how to get Covid vaccination

While Covid vaccinations are open to everyone 16 and over now, and Pfizer's has been approved for those 12 to 15, knowing where and when to show up for a shot can be confusing. A new state-wide website (replacing the one run by Humboldt County) lets you be notified so sign up here: [MyTurn.ca.gov](https://MyTurn.ca.gov). It provides a place where those needing a ride to the site for the shot can indicate that. According to the announcement, more than 100,000 appointments statewide are completed every day using this site. For additional questions, go to

[Chat.MyTurn.ca.gov](https://Chat.MyTurn.ca.gov).

### Exercise with your friends via Zoom

The exercise group that was meeting at the Chamber of Commerce office on Wildwood prior to Covid is still exercising on Zoom. You can meet with them online Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 11 a.m. via Zoom meeting number 785 092 5856 according to leader Susan Nessen.

### Schools slate in-person graduation at Bear River

Both Rio Dell and Scotia schools are planning an in-person graduation for 8th graders this month at the Bear River Recreation Center in Loleta. Scotia's will be June 16 at 7 p.m. according to eighth grade teacher and athletic director Shawn Barsanti. Rio Dell's will be Thursday, June 17 according to Principal Lauren Bryie, who adds that there is a limit on the number of guests permitted so graduating students will be given tickets to pass out among their guests.

Kindergarteners will graduate at 6 p.m. on Tues., June 15 in a ceremony being finalized, but most likely outside on the school grounds, Bryie added.

### What's in a Helmet?

*Ed Note: This is a monthly feature produced in coordination with the Safe Paths to Schools effort which included extensive road improvements around Rio Dell's main corridor, to increase awareness of and safety for alternate methods of transportation. The Redwood Community Action Agency's Natural Resources Services Division was contracted to conduct this educational component.*



The coronavirus pandemic has created an increase in people interested in bicycling to commute, for exercise and just for fun. Because bicycles are considered vehicles, they belong on the roadway and have the same rights and responsibilities as motorized vehicles. This can make it dangerous, however, and is the reason that wearing a helmet is strongly advised. In California, youth under the age of 18 are required by law to wear a helmet and while the law does not order it for those over 18, wearing one makes you a role model and is a great way to encourage younger people to wear theirs. **(Continued on Page 4)**

## Sharon Ross Continued from Page 1

Ross notes she has spent 35 years teaching K-3 students. “Interacting with young children every day has been a lovely rollercoaster ride of ups and downs but mostly ups,” she says. “One of my lifelong passions has been the mind/body connection. In my first year at Scotia, I inspired the entire K-8 student body to participate in a nationwide ‘Let’s Move’ day. I would teach jump rope classes in my free time which led me to my involvement with the American Heart Association’s Jump Rope for Heart program. I spearheaded and coordinated the program for 20 years at Scotia. In that time, we raised \$250,000 in the fight against heart disease.”



This past year, she returned to the classroom after retiring to become a reading interventionist. “I love helping children become confident, competent readers and best of all, I get to learn through my continuing education how to become a better interventionist,” she says. “Receiving the Jean Olson Award for Excellence in Teaching is such an honor. I am humbled and delighted: humbled because I am getting this award for just doing what I love and delighted because someone thought I was worthy! Thank you, Amy Gossien!”

## Lisa Stockwell



Stockwell, who has taught at Scotia for 23 years, notes she was “very honored to be nominated for the teaching award and very excited” to receive it. “I started teaching at Scotia in 1995 as a first-grade teacher,” she recalls, and had substituted there the year before as well as teaching at two other districts during her career.

“Scotia had two classrooms for many grade levels in my early years, so I was able to work closely with Sandra Close as she was the other first-grade teacher. She included me in all the first-grade activities and was very supportive and a great role model for teaching,” Stockwell remembers.

After moving to various other grade levels, she has taught fourth grade the longest and notes, “I continue to really love it.” Stockwell grew up in Fortuna, and now lives in Loleta, where her husband, Eric, grew up. She says, “We have a daughter, Claire, who is graduating this year from UC Berkeley, and a son, Collin, who is graduating from Fortuna High. I am a third-generation teacher, and I spent much time as I was growing up in my mother’s kindergarten class at Ambrosini School. I have worked with many wonderful educators over the years, and I continue to be inspired by them.”

## Be safe this fire season: sign up for emergency notices, plan now

Fire season is here; there are talks of this being a draught year and memories of past tragedies are still in our collective minds – or can be recalled by a drive to Ruth Lake, among other places where the stark images of past destruction are clearly visible a year later.

Be prepared, and make sure you are aware of fires that may threaten your home, business or loved ones. Sign up for Humboldt Alert, a web-based system of notification run by the Humboldt County Office of Emergency Services.

You can do it here: <https://humboldt.gov/2014/Emergency-Notifications>

A prior notification system with more limited functionality did not roll over all the information that had been gathered so you need to check you are on the current system to make sure you will be contacted. In addition to wildfires, you will be notified of other public safety issues including severe weather and flooding. A message contains a way to indicate that you have received it, by pressing a phone key or hitting ‘reply’ to an email. If you do not do this the system will continue to send notices to make sure you are reached.

Key among the features is the number of ways you can choose to be contacted – by email, cell or landline phone, or text. You can enter several different numbers to call, or ways to be contacted, and also be alerted for several different locations – for instance home, work, children’s school, and the homes of loved ones.

You can also fill out from among pages of prompts any circumstances that could be a barrier to your evacuation including mobility issues, lack of a car, language issues, dementia or other cognitive concerns, and large animals that need to be moved.

While this information is readily available to emergency personnel, no plans exist to use it to assist in evacuations, according to Samantha Karges, public information officer for the Office of Emergency Services which operates under the county sheriff’s department. For instance, the 95562 Zip code has over 2,400 persons registered under Humboldt Alerts (many auto-loaded into the county’s system from other sources, Karges says). Of those, 37 have indicated they would need assistance evacuating; 14 use assistive devices for hearing or vision; 54 require medical equipment using electricity; 35 require refrigerated medication; 21 use a service animal and 16, a wheelchair or other mobility device. Nineteen have a cognitive or intellectual disability. (Continued on Page 4)

**(Be safe this fire season** continued from Page 3.) Karges stresses individual preparedness and that people focus on the development of plans for their specific needs, together with those in their home or neighborhood. Early evacuation is another method the Office of Emergency Services recommends, rather than waiting until the last minute, which is why signing up to receive the alerts and be apprised of emergencies at the early stage is vital.

“We do have agreements with the Humboldt County Office of Education, Humboldt Transit Authority, and other agencies to provide assistance in an emergency,” Karges says, noting there is no specific plan for each area of the county as each incident is unique and presents different challenges. “However, we work together with all of our partner agencies to find the best course of action tailored to that specific emergency,” she adds. One example is during last year’s August Complex Fire, when Humboldt Transit Authority allowed residents evacuating to bring extra items with them while utilizing public transportation if leaving from a zone under evacuation order or warning.

“We do recognize that even the best plan can go awry and needs can change. That’s why we always have a public number for individuals to call during an emergency: 707-268-2500. If someone needs assistance during an evacuation emergency, they can call this number and relay their needs,” Karges says.

Here’s your chance to take stock – who among your neighbors, friends or loved ones hasn’t signed up for alerts? Who might have a barrier like lack of computer access or familiarity? You don’t need a computer to GET alerts, just to sign up, so one and done for each person you tell about the system or help to complete the sign-up.

What plans do you have for evacuation – of yourself, your loved ones, your animals? What about neighbors and others you know without a means of evacuation? Have a plan – a place to go, a way to contact loved ones, a manner of caring for your pets – in advance.

What else can you do to stay safe? Have a go-bag pre-packed – there are lists of suggested items including prescriptions and other health-care needs, a cell phone charger, and more, in many places online including here: <https://www.ready.gov/disability>. Keep your car fueled, so you don’t have to stop for gas on the way to safety. Keep cash on hand just for evacuation needs. If the power goes off, gas pumps and ATMs won’t work. Keep your cell phone and other technology charged so you can receive notices and inform others of your situation. Start now to plan!

## **What’s in a Helmet?** Continued from Page 2



Bike helmets started being used in the late 1800’s and were originally made of a leather ring wrapped around the head with a wool ring on top of that. As time moved on the style evolved to strips of leather arranged longitudinally on the head. The interior of the leather eventually contained a type of foam and finally in the 1970’s we started to see helmets made with ‘picnic cooler’ type foam on the inside with a hard shell outside. Science tells us that bicycle helmets help absorb the shock your brain would otherwise take on if you hit your head in an accident or collision.

Because accidents happen unexpectedly and result in serious injury or a fatality, it is truly the smart choice to wear one every time you ride. Our brains are amazing machines capable of many complex tasks and are also responsible for the involuntary functions (such as breathing and our heartbeat) that keep us alive. Any impact to our brains, which are made of a delicate Jello-like substance, will likely cause a mild concussion at the very least. More severe impacts can cause our brains to stop basic functions that we often take for granted, such as our vision, balance, motor skills, and concentration. In short, the most important part of a helmet is what’s inside – your brain! Keep it protected and wear a helmet every time you ride.



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