

Rio Dell-Scotia News

Margro Advisors seeks to help cannabis industry, local area

Left to right Danielle Bailey, Suzanne Maese, Kelly Flores and Jessica Warne.



Margro Advisors, a new face on Wildwood, is a cannabis compliance consulting services company previously based in Eureka. Last summer the firm purchased the historic Courier building at the corner of Monument.

The company was founded in 2016 by two friends committed to social justice, environmental concerns, and meaningful entrepreneurial opportunity, Suzanne Maese notes of herself and Kelly Flores, both originally from southern California

They came to Humboldt when a discussion with a cannabis farmer revealed potential challenges that he and his fellow farmers would have entering a new, regulated, commercial market. With the development of the Medical Marijuana Land Use Ordinance in Humboldt County, the two formed their business and began to meet with county officials, state agencies, and fellow consultants to better understand the new requirements still under development.

“We brought lunch and we had a captive audience of close to 20 interested farmers,” Maese recalls a meeting that summer in Dinsmore. “This led to permit applications for our first Humboldt farmer and his neighbors.” She and her partner went on to facilitate the group of neighbors in forming a road association to pay for much-needed improvements, and more recently to apply for and win a \$50,000 Trellis grant for the project.

As state licensing opened in 2018, the team worked with a fellow industry consultant to form a joint venture and expand their outreach to register and process over 150 state license applications within the year.

During that time, the company continued its work on eliminating roadblocks and offering support for the cannabis community, Maese said, from providing handouts with tips on preparing for inspections, to compliance calendars which help farmers track reporting deadlines, to supplying public comment during regulatory changes and petitioning for a tax credit program at the state level to assist smaller craft farmers to survive and compete. (Continued on Page 3.)

Some of the faces behind local Facebook pages

Ed. Note: This is Part 2 of a story begun in the February issue about the experiences of administrators of the Facebook page, Rio Dell Neighborhood Watch, and its Unplugged counterpart. In this final installment, the “Unplugged” page’s administrators Susan Teague and Leanne Langston continue to share their ideas and experiences.



Susan Teague

Teague sees the Facebook-imposed rules as straightforward. Bullying is termed “disruption” and there is need to avoid legal trouble, such as defamation, or threats to people. An example of needing to intervene was a claim of sexual assault by a student at Fortuna High during a beach party. The minor involved was close to being identified by the things that were posted, Teague said. Although the victim went public with her identity later, Teague said that was an example of why minors are barred from posting on the site themselves: “We need to protect them from what is said online.” Terming the group’s social psychology “fascinating” as she watches it take place online, Teague notes that “This is a different society than I grew up in – you can’t (let yourself) be triggered, things are different now, there is less civility.” She sees “crowd wisdom” happening as people observe how their point of view is received by others responding to a post. “Peoples’ feelings sometimes get out of hand,” she says, which is partly due she thinks to the variation in age and geography of those posting. “We do the best we can to keep members from hating us, and each other,” she says. “It’s a natural evolution – people are rougher with each other; they are angry and need an outlet to help themselves process” what they are experiencing. (Continued on Page 4)

NEWS AND NOTES

Check here for Covid vaccine availability

A state-wide website (replacing the one run by Humboldt County) lets you be notified of opportunities to get the Covid shot 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.](#)

Free information for veterans owning businesses

The Small Business Entrepreneurship Outreach Program at Digital.com offers a free guide to U.S. veterans starting or owning a small business. It promises to offer information on “the unique competitive advantages available to veterans such as exclusive grants, training resources and mentoring.” Just released this year, it can be downloaded here: <https://digital.com/veterans-business/>

Assistance to homeless veterans offered locally

Nation’s Finest is a non-profit that provides resources to assist in prevention and remediation of homelessness for veterans and their families. Locally, the services can be reached by calling 707.442.4322. Based in Eureka, the organization services those in Humboldt and Del Norte counties. More can be found about the organization at nationsfinest.org



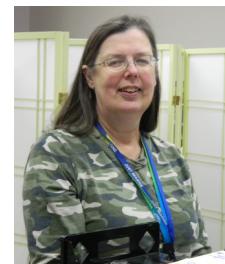
Get involved! Join chamber monthly call-in meetings to share ideas

The chamber of commerce board meets on the first Friday of the month at Noon. Meetings are always open to the public. Call to hear what is being discussed, share ideas, and see where you can help! The next meeting is March. 4 at noon. Call 605-313-4802 and at the prompt, enter access code 860467.



Advertiser’s Profile: Horizon Business Products

Started in October of 1978, Horizon Business Products has been a women-owned small business dealing primarily in office supplies since its inception. Currently owned by **Loene Gossett**, it also offers gifts, greeting cards, and many services such as UPS shipping and accepting payments for PG&E bills.



Gossett notes that a friendly atmosphere and personalized customer service are the hallmarks of the store, located at 1137 Main Street in Fortuna, adding, “Perseverance through adversity could also be a quality as evidenced by Horizon rising from the ashes after the devastating fire on Jan 28, 2015, when, along with four other Fortuna businesses, Horizon was burned to the ground.”

She adds “Now along with our Humboldt County small business brothers and sisters, we are struggling to survive the ravages of the effects of COVID. With numerous hand sanitizers, counter shields, mandatory masking, and safe distancing we are endeavoring to keep everyone as safe as possible.”

Gossett says, “We are happy to have served the Eel River Valley for over 40 years and hope to do so for many more years to come.”

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Margro Advisors (Continued from Page 1)

In 2019, the team partnered with a local farm family to embark on one of their largest projects to date, to develop, permit, license, and launch a local distribution and processing company in Eureka. After completing its portion of the project last year, the partners were happy to relocate to Rio Dell where they had consulting projects and proximity to their Southern Humboldt farmers

“Moving to Rio Dell and investing in the historic Courier Building on the corner of Wildwood and Monument has been a very exciting endeavor for us,” says Maese. “We have plans for renovations and beautification of the building. We began with renovations to our offices and were able to move in and begin operations during the first week of September. We are happy to have our team here in Rio Dell and we are looking forward to developing plans for the building, helping the community, and supporting our new town.”

The company is looking to help the city in developing events which will bring others from across the county and the state to enjoy the area’s natural beauty while supporting local artists and introducing visitors to local businesses.

It currently employs two staff members. Danielle Bailey, a recent finance graduate from HSU, provides key project and administrative support, and Jessica Warne, the team's project manager, is a Humboldt native with experience in law and land development.

While ongoing changes in regulations across multiple state and local agencies can make compliance work grueling, the team remains motivated knowing its work is helping others. “We have found passion in fighting for the legal pathway while being faced with extremely difficult bureaucratic hoops, unjust stigma, and lots of misinformation,” explains Maese. “But we are dedicated business professionals and are now in a place where we believe our efforts are making a real difference through the work we are doing.”

Cannabis businesses interested in receiving additional compliance support can contact Margro Advisors at (707) 500-2420 or via email at info@margroadvisors.com



*First Day
of Spring*

March 20,



MARCH
17

The HWMA Tire Recycling Program is back!

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. The program runs until next summer.

This program is funded by Cal Recycle.

Call or email us for details:: 268-8680 or info@hwma.net

www.hwma.net

Humboldt Waste Management Authority

1059 W. Hawthorne St., Eureka, CA 95501



Some of the faces behind local Facebook page (Continued from Page 1)

A second part of the admin role is removing other types of posts that aren't allowed, for instance advertising. This issue keeps coming up and Teague sees it as a downside of the admin function, to have to keep re-educating people on advertising rules. A subset group was formed to manage requests for information about housing, she said, as people expect to get information in that manner today instead of calling a rental agency.

Teague's co-administrator, Leanne Langston, notes that she is "Humboldt born and raised, a logger's kid" who grew up in Fortuna with "four out of five family members working at PL," referring to Pacific Lumber, the former name of Humboldt Redwood, and she recalls high school parties on the river bar. A Paradise fire survivor, she returned to her roots and for the past three years has made her home in a fifth wheel trailer at the River's Edge RV Park.

"We got out with the clothes on our backs," she recalls the fateful day she looked out the window of her Paradise home and saw the fire. "We had no warning. Neighbors were running down the road screaming to get out." Next came nine hours in gridlock on the road to safety. "The fire was all around us, propane tanks were exploding," she says. "At one point they said we'd have to walk."

She considers she and her husband to be among the lucky ones. "We lost our home and both our jobs," she says but by moving to Rio Dell "I got to spend time with my father in the last year of his life and now I'm here for my mom," who is living alone in the Fortuna home Langston grew up in. Langston's husband had been battling health issues at the time of the fire and is doing better now and she was able to get a job locally where she can continue her passion for working with seniors.



Leanne Langston

"Not a day goes by that I don't think of the fire," she says. "I ran the senior center in Paradise for 12 years. Most of the 83 people who died that day I knew personally."

"I'm really glad she thought of me," Langston says of Teague's invitation to co-administer the site. "She's a great lady, I can't think of a problem between us." They communicate daily and with the difference in time zones between Teague's Florida base and Langston's local one, can respond to issues over a broad range of hours. She takes the photos that go on the page header, reflecting the change in seasons, and has run competitions with prizes to encourage participation and engagement in the site, offering gift cards and goodie bags in drawings of new members.

"It's had its ups and downs," she summarizes the experience. She has been part of helping connect people. One example was when someone posted losing an older dog. Her husband had been outside and heard a dog crying somewhere on the river, so Langston posted back to ask if the family had been to the river when the dog was lost. They had, and although it was now after dark, they came out to search with flashlights, and Langston got approval for them to walk the RV park's frontage. The dog was found.

Some days are more troubling. "I hate that people use social media to vent," she says. "I've had to put out fires and permanently delete people who want to make it a religious or political forum."

One extreme example was when people were protesting that a retired, wheel-chair-bound veteran had a Confederate flag in his garage. He wasn't hurting anyone, it was his property, she said, but the fact that she deleted posts from people who said someone should "go in there and rip it off the wall" got her labelled a racist, and someone "tried to get me fired," Langston said, by contacting her boss at her day job.

"I'm tenacious, that's what my husband says," Langston responds. "I used to be a bartender. I've been spit on and had drinks thrown in my face. Words don't hurt me." Overall, she sees the site and her role in it as rewarding. "There's more that is good than bad," she summarizes. "People learn about places to help and donate. We are constantly growing. Even when I screw up, it's a learning experience. This has been so rewarding."



Rio Dell-Scotia News

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