

Rio Dell-Scotia News

Quake recovery continues

Earthquake recovery will take months if not years, everyone involved in trying to launch the effort into full-scale mode agrees, and two months in, it appears to many that little is happening to assuage the estimated \$32 million in damages caused in and around Rio Dell on Dec. 20 and Jan. 1.

That is standard in a situation of this scope, those versed in past disasters say: there is a period when behind-the-scenes work needs to happen that leaves those wondering what to do in the aftermath feeling abandoned and deflated. “People are struggling right now,” notes Cindy Woods, deacon of St. Alban’s Episcopal Church in Arcata, who has been part of a listening effort at the Rio Dell Community Resource Center to help alleviate stress of quake survivors. Others agree, saying that people who have held it together so far are losing their ability to be strong as they continue to live in a nether-world unable to get the help needed to resume their lives.

Emotional health is one thing that those attempting to aid in recovery can assist with while they wait for the other pieces to fall into place, and to that end Woods and others have been holding sessions at the resource center in which they offer their ears to those who want to share their stories of struggle as a way to work through their frustration and worry. It takes telling a story of loss and trauma more than 36 times before one can begin to heal, they say, a number based on research, so offering a place that others can share their feelings is a start.

A group has formed to organize solutions

Woods is one of dozens of people who have been meeting regularly in a newly-formed county-wide group, Community Organization Active in Disaster (COAD) which is expected to obtain non-profit status with a mission statement and board, and remain ready for future disasters affecting the area, putting into the play the processes and skills that were developed in this one. Sonoma and Napa counties are among many counties throughout the nation that have developed COADs after massive wild fires in their areas. More information is available here: <https://www.humboldtcoad.org/get-involved>.

Pay-It-Forward Humboldt has been key to COAD and other aspects of the recovery effort as has Nick Bown Crawford, executive director of Humboldt Made, who was responsible for getting 40,000 hot meals to survivors of various disasters throughout the county in the weeks after the earthquakes. Maggie Kraft, executive director of Area One Agency on Aging, has assisted seniors addressing issues with cleaning up quake-caused damage or needing to relocate. The California Fire Foundation gave \$87,000 in gift cards to help families meet immediate needs.

The Humboldt Area Foundation supplied a half million dollars initially which was used to hire staff to assist at the resource center, to pay for the meals supplied by food trucks in the early weeks following the quakes, to hire people to assist seniors and disabled persons to clear damage from their homes, and to translate materials for Spanish-reliant individuals. The foundation’s chief executive officer, Bryna Lipper, has pledged an additional \$1.3 million to the effort.

Twice-weekly Zoom sessions have kept representatives of these and many other church, civic and non-profit organizations, city and county officials and others interested in helping, connected to what the immediate needs are and what are the more long-range ones. Repair needs reported by residents are listed on a database, Crisis Cleanup, operated by a non-profit for use nation-wide. Organizations such as Team Rubicon and UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) use that source to determine where they can field a team that has the appropriate skills to match the range and scope of needs. While those organizations were on the ground in the early days following the quakes, there were so many other calls for their help throughout the state with flooding and windstorms that it has not been possible to get a team to return. Aside from scheduling, travel and housing for volunteers, part of the issue is aligning needs with skills, and quake damage, more than some other kinds of disaster damage, results in an assortment of tasks that is harder to match with a given team.

A Feb. 16 Zoom session sought to engage additional audiences, including potential funders and volunteers for clean-up efforts that continue to be needed. Fifty people on the call discussed the issues that remain. Because the disaster fell short of the \$65 million threshold required for FEMA to come in, city manager Kyle Knopp said, “we need the philanthropic sector to do what the government can’t.” (Continued on Page 4.)

How well do you know your neighbors? Help us, please!



Ever since the mural on the building at 99 Wildwood was completed last summer, the chamber's goal was to identify the individuals on a poster, linking the names and faces. That ran into some setbacks as the forms participants filled out listing their names and contact information were sometimes incomplete. We got some help and the side facing Monument is done, but questions remain on the side facing Wildwood.

Can you help? Just take this page and check out the wall. Can you fill in any more information, on the highlighted names, or see errors that need correcting on the others? If so, please complete the form opposite, on page 3, and leave it at the chamber office at 406 Wildwood, put through the slot in the door on the Columbus Street side.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------|
| 1. Len Lillie | 29. Londa Patmore | 57. Rebecca Stryker |
| 2. Fred Matthews | 30. Sharon Lorenzetti | 58. Patti Guidry |
| 3. Levi's Son | 31. Robert Hatten | 59. Gabriel LeRoy |
| 4. Levi | 32. Sherita Perez | 60. Decho Angeloff |
| 5. Sabrina's Uncle Bucky | 33. Jaybird | 61. Phil Angeloff |
| 6. Jack Thompson | 34. Amos | 62. Fred Barsanti |
| 7. Mike Walstrom | 35. Rodney | 63. Steve Willis |
| 8. Greg Rumney | 36. Lindsey Barker | 64. Linda Willis |
| 9. Celia | 37. Steven Barker | 65. Amauri |
| 10. Jim Brickley | 38. Aiden Aine | 66. Sarina |
| 11. Joseph Brickley | 39. Piper Aine | 67. Malyah |
| 12. Catherine Brickley | 40. Charlotte | 68. Debra Grimes |
| 13. Robin Pizzo | 41. Melissa | 69. Elizabeth Warren |
| 14. Cash Augustine | 42. Mingo Bianchi | 70. Estelle Fennell |
| 15. John Augustine | 43. Frank | 71. Nancy Kurtz |
| 16. Angie Brickley | 44. Savannah Schultz | 72. Grandpa Joe |
| 17. Zermine Del Porto Scatena | 45. Ryder Cree | 73. Susan DeAngelo |
| 18. Arturo Scatena | 46. Leslee & Lee's daughter | 74. Ernie Cannady |
| 19. River Augustine | 47. Kristin Schultz | 75. Nita Cannady |
| 20. Tom Grundman | 48. Scout | 76. Jim Barsanti |
| 21. Rodney's granddaughter | 49. Leslee & Lee's daughter | 77. Patrick Reeves |
| 22. Ziggy | 50. Leslee & Lee's son | 78. Patrick McMahon |
| 23. Baby Matthew Augustine | 51. Lee | 79. Wilfred the Rottie |
| 24. Aria Augustine | 52. Leslee | |
| 25. Sunny David Clark | 53. Greg Stryker | |
| 26. Pierre Augustine | 54. Tom Bishop | |
| 27. Julia Marie Scatena Wagner | 55. Albert the little Irishman | |
| 28. Emma Scatena Abare | 56. Miah Wild | |

THANK YOU!

Please complete this form and return it to the chamber if you can identify some faces on the mural more completely

Head number: _____ Name: _____

Head number: _____ Name: _____

Head number: _____ Name: _____

For additional names, please use additional paper in this format.

Person completing form/phone/email: _____

NOTES AND NEWS

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. March 3 will be the next monthly meeting. 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.

Kiwanis shares 2022 wrap-up of activities

Dana Webb of the Rio Dell-Scotia Kiwanis shared the following accomplishments of the group for 2022:

- Sponsored the Local U12 Traveling Softball Team
- Held its 3rd Annual Pancake Breakfast during Wildwood Days in August
- Gave a Christmas gift to every student at Rio Dell and Scotia school districts with Santa Claus in December
- Passed out needed items with the Kiwanis Club of Windsor after the recent earthquakes
- Opened a Free Library by the corner of Dollar General in July
- Hosted the first annual Bingo Blast in April

Webb notes, “We are looking at starting this year off with purchasing new balls for the Rio Dell Elementary playground and providing snacks to Scotia Elementary students during their after-school program. We meet the first Wednesday of every month at 6 p.m., and you are more than welcome to join us. For more information contact Shannon, our president, shannonbrasher90@gmail.com.”



(Continued from Page 1.) Those in the COAD are aware how long it seems to those awaiting help to receive it. “In all disasters there is a frustration period in getting all these processes in place – it is normal,” says Annie Barbour, a survivor of the 2017 Tubbs fire that destroyed portions of Napa, Sonoma and Lake counties and a board member of that recovery group, Coffey Strong, who now shares her lessons learned with other disaster survivors.

One issue that has made progress “hurry up and wait,” as resource center coordinator Sarah Reback described the feeling, is that the county has to date been unable to identify an organization with the experience and resources to lead the large-scale reconstruction effort going forward. “It’s a capacity issue,” Jen Rice, who has been a facilitator during much of the COAD’s meetings, told the audience, but that was changing and it was expected that an announcement of a lead organization would be named “soon,” as well as a case manager and staff who, trained in use of specialized software, would be able to take earthquake survivors step by step through the process of getting their homes put back together. These efforts, it is hoped, will be underway in April. Meanwhile county staff are going over the damage assessment forms filled out immediately after the quakes with the residents who completed them, to be sure they are updated so when the case management staff is in place, it will be able to hit the ground running.

Meanwhile, volunteer help continues to be sought to assist with the more immediate, short-term efforts that continue to be a need, like cleaning up spills and other debris where the owners are physically unable, or lack the proper tools, to do the work themselves. Calls come in daily from the Department of Health and Human Services that are routed through the “short-term needs” team that seeks to provide solutions. Church, civic, veteran and other groups with insurance for their volunteers who are able to put in time on basic clean-up tasks, are being sought.

Many needs, some progress

Those on the Zoom call heard the range of issues that are being addressed. Many people are concerned their home’s tag color isn’t a correct reflection of its condition, as many homes only received an outside viewing by the state inspectors who came in the immediate aftermath of the two quakes. Some know what is needed but two months on aren’t able to get help to complete the tasks.

School superintendent Angela Johnson said that she has provided gas cards and bus passes to families needing help to get their children to school from communities to which they have been relocated in the aftermath of the quakes. The funds for this were available to her because “these children are considered homeless.” Still, some parents are unable to continue keeping their children in school at Rio Dell, because there is no one to drive them, given the family work schedule; or there is not reliable transportation. Therefore, some children have been enrolled in other schools closer to where the family is currently living. Participants on the call noted that schools rely on enrollment numbers for state funding, so a declining enrollment as a result of such a disaster means less money coming to the district.

When residents are relocated, permanently or temporarily, as a result of their homes not being inhabitable, businesses are also unable to count on the level of support they had seen before and suffer financially, in addition to facing their own losses from the quakes. Many Rio Dell businesses lost between \$30,000 and \$50,000 in equipment, inventory, and in needed repairs, chamber president Nick Angeloff said. Small stipends to some were made possible by a \$5,000 donation.

The county, expecting to be reimbursed by the state, is spending an estimated \$20,000/week to house people whose homes are uninhabitable in motels. “It may be fun living in a motel for a few days,” several on the call agreed, but after a while it gets old, and expensive, as one has to eat meals out. People want to be home. Knopp explained that “ending displacements” was the city’s first priority.

Progress in some areas

Some residents of the Senior Terrace apartments at 325 Center Street had to be relocated to hotels after eight unstrapped water heaters spilled. They were all moved home by the middle of February, according to Lisa Bowman, manager. The timing was critical as the residents’ hotel vouchers reportedly ran out at the end of February. Bowman notes that professional movers assisted in the process. Her employer, AWI Management Corporation, which also manages the Rio Dell Apartments at 753 Rigby, took over responsibilities at Senior Terrace in April of last year.

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 programs@hwma.net



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

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Call the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce at 506-5081 to advertise.



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