

# Rio Dell-Scotia News

## Communities respond to crisis

As the Covid-19 pandemic took its economic and health toll, many local people and businesses have stepped up despite the crisis to help out. From sewing protective masks for friends, neighbors and health care workers to offering to run errands for seniors and others with compromised health issues so they didn't need to leave their homes, people in our communities pulled together.

Some put stuffed bears in their windows so children could go on a neighborhood "bear hunt," providing humor and exercise for families otherwise confined in their homes, and planned remote "Easter egg hunts" with pictures of decorated eggs in their windows, in a similar fashion. Some went outside at 8 p.m. each night and howled their appreciation to health care workers, first responders and others making a sacrifice in a time of panic, creating a sense of community among neighbors joining in a primal sound.

The City of Rio Dell has turned out newsletters of advice and provided a way for those willing to volunteer in various capacities, to sign up. The Community Resource Center launched an effort to supply free food, delivered to seniors afraid to leave their homes. The chamber has collected donations from members to expand the food supplies available, purchasing groceries locally.

Several businesses including Hettenshaw Farms (\$500), CC Market (\$300), Humboldt Logistics (\$200), and Big Fir Farms, Big Daddy-O Organics, and Alibaba Farms (\$1,000 each), Natura Blue (\$2000) and individuals including Tim Marks (\$100), donated funds to enable additional food items to be purchased.

Root 101 Nursery donated a barrel that stands in CC Market to accept food donations for the effort, supplied by shoppers and has been filled twice with donations of dry and canned food in two weeks, chamber President Nick Angeloff said, with food going to about 60 seniors, and 20 people signing up to volunteer in the distribution. Those requesting food should call the city during the week before Thursday. The Community Resource Center packs and delivers the food to city hall on Thursday afternoons, and food is then delivered on Friday.

Watch for information in coming issues about additional businesses that contributed to the effort.

Meanwhile, the chamber hosted a conference call and shared information with businesses on how to apply for Small Business Association (SBA) loans to help with expenses during the economic "pause" that was put in place to curtail the pandemic. City Manager Kyle Knopp indicated a big push now is getting people responding to the U.S. Census, which will enable the city to be eligible for additional funding, if numbers of economically disadvantaged residents increase compared to other data previously gathered. "The city has appealed to the state for forbearance of two infrastructure loans," he adds. "If the state moves forward, the savings from the forbearance would be passed to the ratepayers, saving approximately 33 percent on the average bill."

## Otter statue to arrive as part of regional tourism campaign

The Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce has paid to host an otter sculpture as part of a tourism effort this summer to draw travelers to seek out and take their photos with the various, three-foot-tall sculptures which, constructed identically, have been painted by individual local artists commissioned for the purpose, to each have a different look. Specific plans are on hold during the COVID 19 pandemic and "Stay safe at home" precautions, so watch for details later.



There are 100 sculptures total, which will be placed in the host locations (30 in Humboldt County and 70 in neighboring counties) and auctioned off to individual buyers in the fall. While most businesses hosting an otter will keep the statue at their location, chamber president Nick Angeloff notes, (Continued on Page 2)

(Otter Statues continued from Page 1) that the otter received for Rio Dell/Scotia will be moved each week to a new business location whose owner has signed on to host it, and a schedule will be posted online and at the chamber showing where the otter can be seen and photographed. The aim is to drive visitor traffic towards participating businesses.

The brainchild of Humboldt State wildlife professor Jeff Black, the effort seeks to raise funds for watershed improvement projects through organizations like Friends of the Dunes, student scholarships, and other benefits through the sale this fall of the otter sculptures, which will be promoted through an online auction and a catalog showing the various pieces available.

To learn more, check out “Humboldt otter art” online. To bring the Rio Dell otter to your business this summer, contact the chamber at [rdschamber@gmail.com](mailto:rdschamber@gmail.com) or by calling 506-5081.

## *News and Notes*

### **Many events, activities cancelled, uncertain**

The newsletter is short this month because so many events and activities are on hold during the Covid-19 “Stay safe at home” mandate. At press time, little is known going forward about when activities will be able to resume. Please review the advertising section, typically an insert but attached here due to the brevity of newsletter content – these are businesses supporting the chamber with advertising dollars, and deserving of your support, along with other area businesses, when they are able to reopen and resume normal operations. Please consider supporting them with purchase of gift cards, for instance for upcoming events like Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, weddings, graduations and anniversaries, when looking for a gift.

### **Food for those in need**

*The Journey Church* at 95 Belleview Ave., Rio Dell continues to be open on the third Thursday of the month from 9 a.m. to noon for those needing food. In addition, the Community Resource Center, on restricted hours during the pandemic, will provide a free bag of food while supplies last for those in need.

### **Sponsor a flag for new, ongoing city beautification project**

Once, Rio Dell had flags on Wildwood for holiday weekends, and the holes for the poles in the pavement still exist, though the flags are no longer in use, or available. As announced in the last issue of this newsletter, the chamber is seeking to bring back that tradition, with the purchase of flags to place along Wildwood, with poles and a plaque on each to name the sponsor. Here’s your chance to sponsor a flag that would be placed out for holiday and other celebratory events (Wildwood Days for example) for years to come.

The cost is \$50 – you can have a 2- to 3-line message of up to 15 characters each line on the plaque. This would be a great way to honor a family member, friend, or other loved one on Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, graduation, an anniversary, birthday or wedding . . . with an ongoing beautification of the community.

Contact the chamber of commerce at 506-5081 or [rdschamber@gmail.com](mailto:rdschamber@gmail.com) with questions, or send your check for \$50 with your inscription message to PO Box 95, Rio Dell, CA 95562

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

As we all live through this isolation period, this provides a perfect environment of us all to reflect on what kind of a neighbor we are and what kind we want to be. This provides us all a chance for change.

While disasters are by definition devastating, sometimes they can lead to changes that are a small silver lining. The 2004 tsunami ended a civil conflict in Indonesia that had left 15,000 dead. The 14th century’s plague set free many serfs in Europe, forced wages for laborers to rise, and caused a fundamental shift in the economy along with an increased standard of living for survivors. And the great flu pandemic in 1918 led to unexpected social changes, opening up new opportunities for women and in the process irreversibly transforming life in the United States.

As we look forward to summer and hopefully the end of this devastating virus, let’s all reflect on how we can begin a movement for positive change. Maybe the change we will see from this current crisis is a coming together of humanity for the benefit of others. Perhaps this experience will help make us all more appreciative of our family, friends, neighbors and community. The future is uncertain, but one thing that is certain is your local Kiwanis Club will continue to be here, helping to bring our communities together through good works.