

# Rio Dell-Scotia News

## Get ready to vote!

Humboldt County Registrar of Voters Kelly Sanders encourages everyone planning to vote in the November 3 election to start getting ready with a plan now, because new processes are in place due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

As has been publicized, all registered voters in the state are scheduled to receive a ballot. Check now if there is any doubt that your voter registration is incorrect at <https://voterstatus.sos.ca.gov/> or call [707-445-7481](tel:707-445-7481) to verify both your residential and mailing address.

If it needs to be changed, go online to [registertovote.ca.gov](http://registertovote.ca.gov) or call the number above and request a voter registration form be mailed to you.

Sanders says of those requesting updated addresses, “Election mail can’t be forwarded, so if a person has moved and is no longer at the address on file, the vote by mail ballot will be returned to us. Our system will trigger a ballot reissue if voters make a change to their registration. It will only trigger a reissue if the voter changes the residential or mailing address. Once we have verified the signature on a vote by mail ballot, and accepted it for processing, no other ballots can be issued or processed for that voter.”

The county plans to start sending ballots out over a period of time starting Oct. 5. Those newly registered will be sent later. You can sign up for voice, email or text notification of when your ballot is mailed, and when it is received back and counted at [WheresMyBallot.sos.ca.gov](http://WheresMyBallot.sos.ca.gov).

It is encouraged, to avoid potential delays in the mail and the lines potentially found at in-person voting, to return your ballot by mail as quickly as possible (no postage required). New this year are drop boxes placed throughout the county where ballots can be deposited rather than sent through the mail for those who prefer that option. They will be retrieved by teams of election workers who will maintain “chain of custody” logs, as happens at traditional voting places when there is a hand-off of ballots to get them delivered to the county office for processing, Sanders explains.

The nearest drop box will be at Ray’s Food Center in Fortuna; another will be at Shop Smart in Redway as well as at the county Office of Elections at 2426 6<sup>th</sup> Street in Eureka, a different location than the courthouse. The drop boxes are scheduled to be placed Oct. 5 and will be sealed at 8 p.m. on Nov. 3 which marks the conclusion of voting.

Those wanting to vote in person can do so but that also will be different this year. There will be no in-person voting in Rio Dell or Scotia. Instead, nine “voter assistance” drop-in centers located around the county will be staffed daily from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. from Sat., Oct. 31 to Mon., Nov. 2, and until 8 p.m. on Election Day, Nov. 3. The closest is Fortuna Middle School at 843 L St., Fortuna as well as College of the Redwoods and the county Office of Elections on 6<sup>th</sup> Street in Eureka. There will also be four additional “pop-up” centers on Election Day, open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. with the nearest at the county fairgrounds in Ferndale.

Sanders explains the process there: “If a voter has received a ballot in the mail, decides not to vote that ballot and goes to the polling location, he or she needs to surrender the vote by mail ballot in order to vote a precinct ballot. If the voter does not have the vote by mail ballot to surrender, a provisional ballot will be provided. A voter who has not registered to vote by October 19, can come to the Elections office, or any voter assistance center, fill out a registration form, and vote a provisional ballot which will be processed after the election. Our office will process the voter registration form, and verify that the voter has not already voted in this election prior to processing that ballot.”

At these in-person centers voters may turn in a completed ballot they received at home, use an accessible voting machine (one that is geared for use by those with a variety of disabilities), get a replacement ballot, register to vote or update your registration, and more. Sanders urges those doing so to bring their ballot received in the mail, have a mask and be prepared for potentially long lines.

## KIWANIS KORNER – October 2020

BY: CAROLE ARRINGTON, RIOD DELL/SCOTIA KIWANIS

This year we saw more devastating fires ravage the northwest. Our local Kiwanis club put together some “Kid Care” packs that, through a partnership with Pay it Forward Humboldt, were distributed to local fire evacuees. We got some very positive feedback from appreciative people whose children received one of the packs. While COVID 19 continues to impact our lives, it was nice to be able to find a small way to do what Kiwanis does, serve kids.

Kiwanis International has a children’s fund gifted by Kiwanis members. This year the fund helped continue to make a difference in the lives of children around the world. As the crisis endures, service can be difficult, but Kiwanis International was able to provide books and educational materials for schools in Georgia and California to aid in distance learning. They provided computers and internet service to students in Columbia, Canada, Tobago and Japan. In Italy and the Philippines, diapers and formula and other crucial items were provided to mothers in need. And around the world, Kiwanis Clubs helped feed tens of thousands of people impacted by the Coronavirus.

### **Food distribution sites to offer information on domestic violence**

The county’s Department of Health and Human Services will provide information in each of the upcoming months on specific topics in conjunction with the Food For People produce give-away on the second Thursday of the month at the fire hall in Rio Dell which takes place from 10 a.m. to noon, and on the third Thursday of the month at the food commodities program at the Journey Church on Belleview, from 9 to 11 a.m.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and that will be the featured topic with information on local resources and an understanding ear for anyone wishing to know more about this topic

### **Chamber provides new flags to Scotia**

Crisp, new flags are flying over Scotia on the poles at the shopping center, courtesy of the chamber, which had to buy additional flags in response to the heavy demand to sponsor them by the community. Susan Pryor, Scotia resident and member of the Community Services Board there, recommended the move and worked with Town of Scotia staff to get the flags mounted.

### **Area reaches out to help evacuees in regional fires**

Among the many organizations, businesses and governmental units that reached out to evacuees of the fires last month, the City of Rio Dell opened a water station so those traveling could get fresh water for themselves and their animals. Root 101 offered a safe storage place for campers, trailers and other rigs. The fairgrounds in Ferndale provided a staging area for people and animals, and groups such as Pay It Forward, Humboldt joined the Red Cross, Office of Emergency Services, and Salvation Army to provide for their needs. Miranda’s Rescue and Wild Souls Ranch, the therapeutic equine facility for youth, both in Fortuna, hauled animals from areas being evacuated.

### **School, Fortuna Cub Scouts pitch in on flag posting**

Adult leaders are encouraging youths to do service by helping the chamber of commerce put up and take down flags on holidays. In September, one week saw two such events, Labor Day and 9/11. Adam Drake, Rio Dell teacher, brought several young people he works with and Amber Paltz, Cub scout leader in Fortuna, brought members of her pack, with the young people providing enthusiasm and energy in the flag operation both morning and evening both days. Thanks to these leaders and the young people they bring. The next flag event will be Wed., Nov. 11 for Veterans Day –if you want to head up a team from your church, club, business or neighborhood, get young people involved, other otherwise be a part of this camaraderie, email the chamber at [rdschamber@gmail.com](mailto:rdschamber@gmail.com)

### **Fire protection district completes merger**

In a process underway for the last year and a half, the volunteer fire departments of Scotia, Redcrest and Shively have been merged into the Rio Dell Fire Protection District. Those present at the signing of the agreement, as reported in the Times-Standard, cited the economy of scale and other advantages such as better service to the areas affected, that will be gained from the merger. The plan, including the steps, costs, advantages and information meetings for the public in each community was discussed in the November, 2019 issue of this newsletter, which can be seen at the chamber website, [riodellscotiachamber.org](http://riodellscotiachamber.org), under “Resources

**Have a Happy and Safe Halloween -October 31**

# Local offices on the ballot – and not

Several openings existed for candidates to run in local elections, as featured in the August issue, but in many cases there were fewer applicants than open offices, so those races – for the Rio Dell and Scotia school boards, the Scotia Community Services District and the Rio Dell Fire Protection District - will not be appearing on the November ballot.

An exception is in **Rio Dell**, with three city council openings and three candidates. City Clerk Karen Dunham explains a rule that more than half of the council needs to be elected (vs. appointed) and this provides the chance for a write-in vote. Veteran council members Frank Wilson and Gordon Johnson filed to take on a new term, as did newcomer Amanda Carter. She and Wilson will be seated for a four-year term, while Johnson’s term is for two years to get it into the rotation for staggered elections on an alternate basis in future years. The three were invited to share thoughts on their candidacy, and Johnson and Carter responded.

**Johnson** explains he was appointed to fill out the term of Bryan Richter who was elected to the council in 2018 after Johnson stepped down but Richter moved out of the city the following year to assume care-giving responsibilities for his grandmother, necessitating filling his spot with a replacement. Johnson’s appointment at that time took his service to this, upcoming election.

He cites development as a key concern, which “means to me having a full buildout at the Humboldt-Rio Dell business park.” He wants to see the council review and possibly adjust water and sewer rates. “We are very fortunate in Rio Dell to have a modern sewer and water plants,” he says, “but portions of our pipes for both systems are in need of serious repair or replacement.”

“The council knows that the streets in Rio Dell are improving, but we still have a long way to go to be classified as good,” Johnson continues. “We have lived in Rio Dell for 42 years,” Johnson says and cites the city’s attributes including a solid financial position in spite of an economic downturn, as the work of a strong council and city staff.

**Carter** sought a spot on the city council because “I love Rio Dell and want to help the community and the people who live here,” she says, adding, “I have lived in Rio Dell for 12 years, and during that time I have seen many positive changes; I want to be a part of helping the city to continue on that trajectory.”

She works as a fitness professional with a specialty in traumatic brain injuries and neuromuscular rehabilitation, earning her master’s degree in teaching writing from Humboldt State in 2008. “I spend my summers teaching English as a Second Language,” she says. “I have been a volunteer with Hospice of Humboldt for 15 years. What unites both my job and my volunteer work is my drive to use the strengths I possess to help other people on a daily basis.”

She served on the city’s Nuisance Committee for the last year, and participated in the Rio Dell COVID19 Volunteer Corp since March, adding, “Through both of these endeavors, I have learned a lot about the needs of the people who live in Rio Dell and about how local government works to meet those needs. My strong communication and leadership skills, combined with my desire to be involved with my community and help other people, makes me an asset to the city. I look forward to the opportunity to serve my community and help make a Rio Dell a place people are proud to call home!”

**At the county**, second district supervisor **Estelle Fennell** is in a run-off with her challenger **Michelle Bushnell**, the top two vote-getters in the five-way election held in March.

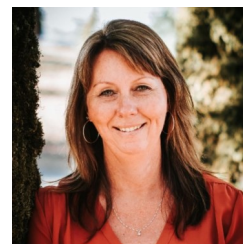
## Candidates for Upcoming Elections



Amanda Carter  
Rio Dell City  
Council



Estelle Fennell  
2nd District  
Supervisor



Michelle Bushnell  
Candidate for 2nd  
District Supervisor

**The candidates supplied the following comments concerning their candidacy.**

**From Estelle Fennell:** 2020 has turned out to be a very challenging year for us all. But in spite of all of the challenges and hardships, I have seen and experienced people’s incredible ability to come together and find solutions.

As your supervisor, my number one priority has been working with our emergency response team and community leaders, putting action plans in place to help essential services, citizens, schools, local businesses and workers navigate through and recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. The work we accomplished in putting a top tier emergency response team in place has also helped us to respond quickly to the historic August Fire currently threatening our county.

I have the experience, the strong leadership skills, the energy and a proven track record of being able to work with people and getting things done in my district and at the county level and beyond. ( **Continued on Page 4.**)

## Rio Dell-Scotia News

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



### **Local offices on the ballot --and not. (Continued from Page 3 )**

During my first two terms in office, I have worked hard to develop trusted working relationships at the county, regional, state and federal levels, which is essential for me, as your Second District supervisor, to bring needed resources, services and funding to our rural district and county.

I believe strongly in the power of teamwork to find solutions to difficult issues that will benefit all. For instance, we now have a really strong regional fire district that includes Rio Dell, Scotia, Redcrest, and Shively Fire Departments. I am proud of my work with all involved to consolidate the operations of these four departments into one efficient emergency services system for the whole South Eel River Valley.

My on-going work priorities are public safety and fire protection; a diversified and stable economy; roads and infrastructure; affordable housing and homelessness solutions; renewable and resilient energy supply; restoring the natural flows of the Eel River; property rights; cannabis regulation and environmental protection.

I love my job and am honored to represent you as Second District supervisor.

### **From Michelle Bushnell:**

I am asking for your vote for Second District supervisor. In these times of crisis I have not been able to host in-person campaign events to meet constituents and learn from you all, as I had hoped to do. Please check out my website, bushnell2020.org and Facebook and Instagram for more about me and my candidacy. I am an open book and if you have something you'd like to ask or say, please call me at (707)223-3977 or shoot me an email at mbushnell4seconddistrict@gmail.com.

I would love to hear from you. I believe that is really the job of a supervisor, to listen and represent the district. I want to work diligently for our needs and I am ready to do this job. I want to hear from you all and be a strong voice for you on the Board of Supervisors. Some of the long-term and widespread concerns that I believe deserve our attention are as follows: promote economic stability throughout the Second District; improve rural infrastructures; streamline the operations of the county Planning Department for responsible business development. We need to create solutions for our elderly, the mentally unwell, and the homeless. Let's honor our veterans by prioritizing their affairs and increase the presence of law enforcement to decrease response time in unincorporated areas.

There are many things we all can do to help our county in the short run, too. With the onset of pandemic restrictions, taking the necessary steps to make public safety a high priority and PPE accessible to all, I have been a conduit for those who needed help. While fires ravaged the perimeters of our county, I did what I could to facilitate support and supplies for those fighting fires and those displaced from their homes. I've always stepped up where needed, and I always will. I am a fourth generation Humboldt County resident and, like you, I love our home! With my background in business and dedication to volunteer work, I'm ready to apply myself to being your supervisor. I will be dedicated and transparent. I will contribute integrity and common sense to our local government. Let's honor our rich history, enjoy our present, and work hard to protect our futures. Let's make some positive changes. I want to be your voice, and I am asking for your vote.

### **Little Free Library open in Scotia**

There's now a Little Free Library with the official plaque and two sections, upper and lower, of two shelves each to allow for a lot of books, standing outside the door to the Community Services District office in Scotia. It provides an opportunity to share books with others, by leaving the ones no longer wanted and picking from among the ones others left there. Little Free Libraries is actually the name of a registered nonprofit in existence for over a decade with more than 90,000 such places for book exchanges registered internationally.

Scotia Community Services District board member Susan Pryor notes she was always attracted to the libraries of this type that she and Dave Terry would see when walking around Santa Rosa while visiting family there. She mentioned this to Terry who built one, which was set up in mid-July. Pryor notes and CSD office staff concur that it's gotten a lot of visits.



Dave Terry