

# Rio Dell-Scotia News

## Rio Dell city goals in the news

An Aug. 9 article in the *Times-Standard* noted Rio Dell's "crumbling 75-plus-year-old water system — in bad shape even before the earthquakes in late 2022 and early 2023 — will be almost entirely rebuilt on the state's dime." It went on to report that a \$12.9 million state grant will allow the city to build nearly three miles of new water pipes, construct a new water tank, install 30 new fire hydrants, update 279 service lines and erect five new highway crossing segments.

City Manager Kyle Knopp notes the start date may be in January due to scheduling issues, though some work may begin sooner. "While we were hoping to see the bulk of construction start this summer, we have the pricing locked in," he said.

A comprehensive article in the Aug. 1 online *Lost Coast Outpost* addressed the nearly 18-acre land acquisition made over a year ago by Cal Fire in Rio Dell, with plans to relocate its Fortuna fire fighting headquarters. The article described how the city has attempted over the past 40 years to purchase the land, called the Todd property, for residential and commercial development but was never successful. The city is asking Cal Fire to surplus a few acres from the purchase to help achieve state-mandated housing goals and enable it to benefit from tax revenue.

The article traces the various visions that the city had developed for the property over the decades, were the city able to purchase it, and outlines the Cal Fire plans which call for paving and utilizing the entire piece, including a two-acre solar array, with none to spare. City Manager Knopp described efforts to intercede so the city can have a voice in the project, but stresses that he values the positive impacts the Cal Fire purchase will bring to the community. "We just believe that there could be even more positive benefit for the community and for Cal Fire if surplus land could be made available for job creation activities such as a hotel development, gas station, restaurant, etc." Design approval is expected to come in spring of 2026 with construction completed two years later, at a cost of \$57.4 million, according to the *Outpost*.

## Meet your neighbors

It would be easy for the property at the corner of Wildwood and Cedar to catch the eye of a passer-by. Lush vegetation including fruit trees peek over a woven-board fence, and a Little Free Library was recently added to the exterior. But more striking is the artwork emblazoned on the garage door and the sides of a bevy of small travel trailers parked in the yard.

Meet James Oakes, who purchased the property in 2016 and has been developing it to be "a little sanctuary" in town from which he can enjoy the community's doings. The Shelter Cove native, an Air Force veteran, has a passion for travel reflected in the eclectic art items adorning his yard, some contributed by his mom, Kim Wright, who designs interior spaces for clients like the Benbow Inn, at Christmas. The recently-added Little Free Library was one of her touches.

The murals were done by an artist from Colombia, no longer in the area, whose Instagram site is named Bochica Arte. "I have a legal grow in Redcrest, and these trailers were there, and he was working for me," Oakes says of the artist, whose themes range from Buddhist to Latin American and Native American spirituality, among others.

Oakes has a casual approach to the landscaping he has introduced to the site. "I planted roses and cherry trees, and threw down some poppy seeds, as I noticed they grow well in gravel," he said, indicating the colorful vegetation taking hold in what had once been a concrete-intense property and offering a plate of home-grown cherries to a visitor. He dug a pond in a corner and, when the earthquake led him to inspect a rental he owned where people had to leave due to damage, he found a goldfish left behind, so added it to the pond.

He thinks of ways he can share this space with others, and would like to use his spare housing, for instance the travel trailers, as an Air B n B, except the city doesn't allow that in the downtown area. "They want to bring tourists to town, and this is what I'd be doing," he says, puzzling over the apparent contradiction and adding that he is considering asking the city to revisit that restriction.



James Oakes garage door



JAMES  
OAKES  
Rio Dell

## Have a Happy Labor Day September 2nd

# Notes and News

## “Best of” winners include local organizations

The *North Coast Journal* announced the winners of its annual “Best of” competition last month, with several local names and Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce members among them. First district county board Supervisor Rex Bohn was honored for Local Politician, and Proper Wellness was named best local cannabis delivery as well as for vaping supplies.

Chamber members winning awards include CC Catering of Rio Dell for best catering; Advanced Security of Eureka for best security store; and Bear River in Loleta as best casino and (for its family entertainment center) as best place to play games. Congratulations!

## Local business closes as owner deals with medical issues

Brian Davis, who for 18 years has operated an automotive repair business at 609 Wildwood Avenue, closed that business, which also served as a U-Haul rental facility, following a stroke this summer. Wife Susan Davis and friends including Lisa Wilson have posted updates on Facebook concerning his recovery, which involved stints in a hospital in Redding and a rehabilitation facility in Crescent City, before he would be able to return home. It is not anticipated that he will be able to return to work

Wife Susan had to learn how to accomplish things like helping her husband move from bed to wheel chair before he could come home, but getting to the Crescent City facility to visit him and receive this training was difficult with the distance and price of gas. Noting that money is tight, she has been returning auto parts he had in stock that were purchased recently enough that a refund was possible; older items she plans to sell on E-bay, as well as tools.

A fundraiser was held when he had a prior health emergency in 2022, and Susan Davis doesn't expect people to continue to contribute financially to help out. But, “people are asking me what they can do,” she notes, and she supplies a Venmo account number and her address (177 Birch Street, Rio Dell) where checks can be mailed.



## Get involved with the chamber!

The chamber board meets each month on the first Friday, at noon in the board room of the Town of Scotia LLC, 108 Main Street, Scotia. Meetings are open to the public and a great opportunity to suggest ideas, offer help, or learn about upcoming events and plans.

## From the desk of Rio Dell waste water manager Sunshine Kelly

Hello Rio Dell!

I would like to introduce myself as head of the sewer crew and discuss the wastewater collection system which consists of all the laterals that drain into sewer mains, pump stations and pipes that flow wastewater to the treatment plant.

Taking care of sewer laterals is imperative to properly working sewer mains.

There are two types, private (those on private property) and lower (those that extend from private property to the sewer main). Private laterals are the responsibility of the home owner to keep clean and maintain. It is key that home owners have in place two clean outs, one at the house and one at the property line, at the lower lateral.

The lower lateral is the city's responsibility.

The sewer crew would like to remind you during the dry months to be especially cognizant of what you are putting down your drain, for good lateral “housekeeping” habits. Fats, Oils and Grease (known in wastewater treatment as F.O.G.) must be wiped or scraped off dishes and thrown in the trash, not rinsed down the drain. Otherwise, they create giant plugs in sewer laterals and mains, also called F.O.G.-bergs.

When this happens the sewer crew must apply pressure to the mains, what we call “jetting,” to clear the sewer of F.O.G. buildup. Without the inflow and infiltration that happens during the wet season, our sewer mains are very dry and super-prone to F.O.G.-bergs.

So, please be careful of what you put down the drain; kitchen sinks, dishwashers, garbage disposals, bathtubs, and washing machines all drain into the sewer,

And, if it doesn't come from your body it doesn't belong in the potty! This is especially true for feminine products, please place them in a waste basket, not down the toilet. Same for “disposable wipes,” they are not disposable and are the main cause for backups in sewer laterals. F.O.G. will build up on these wipes and plug your private lateral as well as the sewer main.

Thank you for your attention to this matter!

# Wildwood Days winners announced

Wildwood Days 2024 Edition is a wrap, with many people and organizations once again donating a great deal of time and effort to pull off the annual event that doubles as a community festival and a fundraiser for the volunteer fire department. Here are the winners of the events for which results were available.

Thursday evening saw the Barbeque Cookoff. Wally Coppini netted first-place honors with Big R's BBQ second and Jessie Hasting third. People's choice was Hot Rods.

Saturday's parade saw Root 101 winning Best Western Theme and taking home a prize sponsored by Coast Central Credit Union; Kenny Demello won Best Vehicle with his 1923 T-bucket, earning a fuel card sponsored by Humboldt Redwood Company; and Smoking Aces Horse Association received Best Overall, garnering a prize sponsored by Root 101 Nursery and Hardware. Chamber's choice was Hoby's Market, which received a prize provided by Tri Counties Bank and Gratitude Gift Company.

Sunday's duck race saw the following race supporters winning prizes: \$500, Melissa James; \$200, Ferndale Jewelers; \$100, (Coco) Collette Niles; 4-hour patio boat rental from Ruth Lake Marina, Steve Deike; a night's stay and dinner for two at Bear River Casino, Ferndale Jewelers, Fortuna; and \$100 cash from SHN Engineering, Kyle Bettigas.

Bert Silva and Tara Kemp each won a \$150 fuel card from the Town of Scotia. Johnny Mahan won two, \$100 gift cards from Shamus T-Bone, for having the ninth and tenth ducks in; Jeff Griffith won a fishing rod and reel from Grundman's Sporting Goods; Chris Broadstock won a solar radio and weather alert from CCrane Co; Shane and Lisa Wilson won a gift bag from Eel River Brewery; Mike O'Neale won a birdhouse by John Broadstock; Aqua Dam and Quest Crandall each won a \$10 gift card from Jitter Bean Coffee; Darol won a hummingbird kit from the Wildwood Days car show; Theresa Fox won a cheeseburger, fries, soda and blizzard for two from DJ's Burger Bar; Rusty Broadstock won a board from the Gratitude Gift Company.

Shane and Lisa Wilson, Doug Gibbs, Chris Cortina and Mona Daggett each won a \$50 fuel card from Valley Pacific Petroleum; Robey Agnew won a gift basket from Humboldt Crabs; and Don Freeman won SVFD apparel and cookbook.

Sunday morning was also the annual car show, managed each year by Mary Burns. There were 73 cars entered in this year's show, coming from Brookings, Oregon to Lakeport, California. This year the event was dedicated to Ray Elliott, whom Burns describes as a dear friend who passed away earlier this summer. "Ray and his family have been coming to the show since I took it over," Burns noted, adding, "Ray, you are missed and loved."

Winners included People's Choice, sponsored by Automotive Workshop, Rio Dell: Randy Bennett, Fortuna, with a 2016 Corvette; Participants' Choice, sponsored by 101 Auto Supply, Rio Dell: John Palotas, Fortuna, with a 1956 Chevy; Peace Officers' Choice, sponsored by the Rio Dell Peace Officers Association: Ron Elderidge, Fortuna, with a 1969 Chevelle; Fire Chief's Choice, sponsored by Ferndale Jewelers, Fortuna: Ken DeMello, Fortuna, with a 1923 t-bucket; Platinum Award, sponsored by Blue-Star Sequoia Gas, Fortuna: Travis Jellis, McKinleyville, with a 1963 Chevy Impala; the Ray Elliott Memorial Trophy, sponsored by Jack Hurst Trucking, Alton: Brett and Bill Elliott, Rio Dell, with a 1931 Ford; and Best of Show, sponsored by Kreations Auto Body, Rio Dell: Rick and Toni Smith, Carlotta, with a 1962 Corvette.

Burns thanks trophy sponsors and Cindy at Ferndale Jewelers in Fortuna for designing the trophies, as well as Grundman's, Patron Kitchen, Rio Dell Shell, Sara Chapman, Kathy Tuel and Ginger Parker, of Rio Dell; Hummel Tire, O'Reilly's, Ray's Used Cars, and JB Fabrication of Fortuna; Tammy Robinson, Loleta and Cooks Catering and BBQ, Ferndale for their generous donations. Burns also thanks her husband, Mike and family for their donations and help. "I could not have hosted this show without their help," she says, adding she hopes to see everyone next year.



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## Rio Dell-Scotia News

Is free of charge, published monthly by the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce and the Rio Dell Community Resource Center. Funded by local businesses and the St. Joseph Health System. 650 copies distributed in Rio Dell, Scotia, and Fortuna. **Deadline for October newsletter is September 13.**

**Call the Rio Dell-Scotia Chamber of Commerce at 707-506-5081 to advertise.**



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