

This is Erin Dunn of the Fortuna Chamber of Commerce with a Community Comment.

Happy Thanksgiving week. After the events of last week I have a lot to be thankful for.

First, District Attorney Paul Gallegos announced he would not seek a fourth term. Fourth term? How did he get elected three times? Actually he was elected four times, three general elections and one recall election. The ill-advised recall gave him the sympathy vote for his second election and I'm not sure how he got elected a third time. My outsider viewpoint at the time—and I still feel this way to this day—is that his 99- pot plant policy marked the beginning of a decline in Humboldt County. And now, as the Times-Standard editorial cartoon pictured this weekend, he's leaving us in a desert wasteland (maybe from all the illegal pot grows that he turned a blind eye to?). Maybe the illegal pot growing industry damaging our environment and losing public support has something to do with it. Thanks Mr. District Attorney. Thanks sincerely for not running again.

A big congratulations to Fortuna's MGC on their huge Color Me Humboldt color run on Sunday. I'm thankful that it was such a great fundraising success. The multigenerational center is doing tremendous things and the community support for the run assures they will continue to do so. They had 1050 runners! And many many business sponsors. It looked like every single person who participated had an unforgettable experience. Way to go MGC!

I am thankful too for Redwood Memorial Hospital in Fortuna. Fortuna is a community that loves and supports its hospital. The annual benefit ball earlier this month raised \$220K for the hospital.

These are not easy times for the health care industry with changes in health coverage and with the rural health model in danger.

There is talk of changes being made at Redwood. And it could mean big changes.

Under consideration right now is moving the obstetrics services at Redwood to St. Joe's in Eureka. No more babies being born at Redwood. Many in our community are not aware of that fact. Many in the Eel River Valley will be hugely impacted by that change.

The regional CEO for the Saint Joseph Health System—he is headquartered in Sonoma County--has agreed to talk with members of the Eel River Valley about this very real possibility. Please mark this on your calendar and plan to attend—Thursday, December 5. Noon – 2 p.m. at River Lodge. How do you feel about OB leaving Fortuna? Do you want the associated services that come with having an obstetrics program to leave Fortuna? Come to the meeting on December 5 and let the hospital administrators know. December 5, Noon – 2 at River Lodge.

Have a great Thanksgiving everyone.

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