

Erin Dunn  
Community Comment  
August 1, 2017

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

It's the start of a new month today, yet, an end of an era in Fortuna. With a tip of the hat to "Fiddler on the Roof" I can't help but think of the song "Sunrise, Sunset" ... One season following another, laden with happiness and tears.

Most of you know we lost two giants in our community a couple of weeks ago in a tragic car accident – Roger Harwood and Dennis Wendt. Wendt Construction was a Fortuna Chamber Business of the Year for 2006 and I thought I knew about the company, and I thought I knew about the man—he was the guy that supported every community need, either through cash donations or in-kind donations. He brought the big tower lights up to the cemetery for our first "Untimely Departures" Halloween show not even knowing what the show was about—but he wanted to help us anyway—at no charge.

I thought I knew him—until the person who introduced him at the Chamber dinner shared what many of us had no idea about – how good he was to his employees, and how many times he helped our community with no one knowing, and too many other stories to share today.

Today, August 1, Harry Harden officially hands over the keys of Eel River Disposal to Recology. Harry is another one of those Fortuna guys that supports our community in ways that are seen and unseen. He bids on auction items in the seemingly weekly fundraisers in town, he employs a lot of people and brought Humboldt the first single stream recycling.

Harry has earned his retirement and he will be missed.

In the last couple of months we've also had life-long Fortunans and community leaders move to areas like Arizona and Texas to live out their retirement years. They've done their good for Fortuna and it was time for a new adventure. So what's next?

While August 1 is the day Eel River Disposal is no more, it's also the day that Don and Melisa Wennerholm take over Bob's Footlongs. They saved a Fortuna Institution. And the Green's Pharmacy building is looking good and will reopen this year. Sunrise, Sunset.

More good news--we have a new generation of Fortunans who are stepping up. Business owners who know that giving back to the community has to be part of a successful business plan and are doing what they can to keep Fortuna special.

The McLean Foundation continues to nurture the needs of the Eel River Valley—helping bring the new Open Door facility to Fortuna and breaking ground in the next couple of months for a new Community Center near Newburg Park. Sunrise, Sunset.

Am I worried that the pot industry people won't give back like the Timber industry people did? Yeah, there's a little bit of that concern. But it's one season following another...and that's how it's supposed to be.

This has been Erin Dunn with a Community Comment.