

NEW BEGINNINGS

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by Carol Bower Foote

In January, heart and mind naturally turn to the possibility of new beginnings. It is a time, as poet John O'Donohue says, to "awaken your spirit to adventure; hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk; soon you will be home in a new rhythm". In this spirit, RioVision welcomes new businesses in town and celebrates the beginning of two new long-awaited improvements in our city.

We welcome Kelley Graupensperger who has re-opened and now manages the 2nd Street Gym at the corner of 2nd and Sacramento Streets. We also welcome Agnello's Deli opened by Jolly Heshmaty at the corner of 4th and Main. And re-opening Natasha's Attic, a 'this and that shop' by Anna Ulrich, is at 221 Montezuma St. We also welcome Eagle Tire (new and used tires and accessories) on Hwy 12 just off the Rio Vista Bridge (at the old "dollar store"). All businesses can undergo growing pains to "find their new rhythm" when they are first opened to the public. We encourage our community to support new enterprises in town with patience and courtesy.

Last November, we were excited to see ground broken for the new Dog and Skate Park in the 3-acre Val De Flores Park located behind D. H. White Elementary School. Spearheaded by Rio Vista Youth Services and the Parks and Recreation Commission, the park plan was approved by the City Council in February 2017. David Melilli (Director of RV Public Works) assembled an Ad Hoc committee of youth and adults from RVYS, including founders Brent & Hope Cohn, who worked on the design and planning of the park assisted by Siegfried Engineering of Stockton. Over the last ten years, RVYS raised \$30K which was donated for the park along with funds from the Tony Hawk foundation. Construction has begun and completion is expected early this year. To celebrate the achievement of the City and Rio Vista Youth Services in initiating and bringing this project to completion, RioVision is planning a 'Party at the Park' for spring 2018 and plans to bring amenities toward making the park the best it can be.

After donating \$10,000 (raised by our 2015 Holiday Home Tour) to the City last year to support a new City Boat Dock, RioVision is pleased to learn that a resolution was presented at the January 16th City Council meeting authorizing award of a contract to The Dutra Group here Rio Vista for the Boat Dock replacement construction. In early January 2014, a grant was approved by the City to fund replacement docks. Since then, funding agreements were finalized, proposals were received for design and permits, and plans were submitted to the State for review with various changes coming back through August 2017 when the City was given permission to go out for bid. After due diligence, the City Engineer and Public Works Director recommended that the contract be awarded to The Dutra Group, resulting in the recent resolution. Work is anticipated to begin April of this year and be completed by the end of September 2018. Last November, we wrote about the Dutra family and the major role dredging has played in California and Delta history. Bill Dutra is the 3rd generation of his family to dredge on the Delta and SF Bay. They have built one of the largest dredging companies in the nation from its 1904 beginnings here. The Dutra Museum was created from their residence in 1978 to educate and share the significance and history of the family, dredging, reclamation, and dredging equipment design and innovation. Its Craftsman style made it a welcome addition to our Home Holiday 2017 tour.

Finally, beautiful new work by local artists, artisans, and photographers is on display for January at the Visitor Center and Art Gallery on N. 2nd Street. Happy New Year!