

THE GATHERING PLACE

November 22, 2017
By Carol Bower Foote

Happy Thanksgiving! Many of us are gathering at homes of family or friends this week to celebrate our blessings over good food and conversation. Some of us may be going to places to help those who are less fortunate have a Thanksgiving meal. Our own Food Pantry on Airport Road can always use donations of non-perishable food items, especially over the holidays.

The Rio Vista Information Forum, chaired by RioVision, offers a regular gathering place for organizations within the city to share updates on what they are doing and become informed on topics of mutual interest. The meetings are on the Community Calendar; the public is welcomed. Regular participants include non-profits like Rotary and Soroptimist International, community organizations like Citizens for Seniors who run the Senior Center, RVHS Boosters, and RV Food Pantry, and city departments like the City government and Department of Public Works. The hour long format beginning at 5:30pm includes time for organizational announcements and a speaker followed by Q&A.

At the November 13th Info Forum at the Veterans Hall, updates were given by Teri Malkin, President of Soroptimist International of Rio Vista, Jan Vick of the Hwy 12 Association, RioVision's Art Darden who is kicking off a citywide initiative to provide trained volunteers for guest services to assist visitors at community events, Dave Hampton of Citizens for Seniors who run the Senior Center, and Dave Melilli, Director of Public Works for our city, who announced the ground-breaking for the new city Skate Park (and Dog Park) at 4pm on 11/27.

The featured speaker was newly appointed Rio Vista Mayor Ron Kott who reported on the progress of the RAM Hotel renovation (across from the Public Library), the Dept of Water Resources grant received for a feasibility study into installation of a flood wall along Rio Vista's waterfront, and the development of Rio Vista's Industrial Park properties along St. Francis Way around Poppy House Rd to Airport Road. Mayor Kott reported that Rio Vista needs to address the problem of potential flooding before the waterfront can be fully developed. The report, due by 10/13/2018, will include options, costs, and impacts. He shared that economic development is a high priority for the City. At California League of Cities workshops, Mayor Kott learned how other cities are creating a revenue stream, with proper controls and security, with the cannabis industry. A city ordinance was passed to allow Rio Vista to bring in vertically integrated cannabis businesses, such as indoor growing and cultivation, extractors/product manufacturing, testing, and medical and recreational dispensaries. Their development agreements would include an annuity to the city and investment in cannabis educational programs. Park lots are now being sold. In the Q&A which followed, a discussion ensued about the perceived growth in homeless population in Rio Vista and a successful program in Fairfield. Mayor Kott spoke with a citizen interested in creating a committee to pursue the topic further.

May you enjoy your gatherings with loved ones this week. Please review "What's Happening in Rio Vista" so you won't miss opportunities to gather with others in our community to learn, serve, or just have fun.