

Rockin' Rio Nido

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New beginnings

With the new year underway and longer, sunnier days approaching, we feel the stirrings of spring fever and new beginnings. Our Task Force has renamed itself Friends of Rio Nido, and meets on Feb. 5, 11:00 a.m. at the Roadhouse. For those who don't celebrate Valentine's Day, February also marks the beginning of Girl Scout Cookie Season! Our local Girl Scout Troop #10480 is taking orders. To get your cookies, contact Elisabeth or visit their booth at Safeway on weekend afternoons at the end of February through the end of March.

Balalaika Guest Homes, the ultimate 'Stay-cation'

You've probably noticed these eye-catching vacation homes on Canyon Seven Road across the street from our **Pee Wee Mini Golf**. If you need roomy and affordable accommodations for friends and family from out of town, these townhouses fit the bill. With three bedrooms, two bathrooms, well-equipped kitchen, living room, and charming deck overlooking our bucolic enclave, Balalaika Guest Homes are also ideal for entertaining.

Our friends recently rented one of these town homes, and found it to be chock full of modern amenities, including: WiFi, granite counters in the kitchen, dishwasher, designer furnishings, a large flat screen TV, and two luxurious bathrooms. One of the tubs even has two shower heads – ideal for couples on Valentine's weekend!

Our favorite feature, however, was the giant redwood growing straight through a specially-designed hole in the deck! It's never too early to start planning for summer – or even President's Day weekend! Prices start at \$99 per night. For more information, call 707-318-3175 or visit the Web site at www.balalaikaguesthomes.com. Or read the rave reviews from happy travelers on www.TripAdvisor.com.

O'Connell Properties

After staying at Balaika, your guests may never want to leave Rio Nido ... in which case, you can send them to realtors Mary O'Connell, David Shalar, David Clary, and Tony and Misty Humphreys at O'Connell Properties (707-887-2884 or www.russianriverrealestate.com).

With all the planned improvements for Rio Nido and real estate prices lower than ever, this is a great time to

buy here. Have you checked out their darling little real estate office at the entrance to Rio Nido off of River Road? It looks like little elves live there. Rumor has it, the charming cottage was built around 1920. San Francisco expatriate Mike Shalar originally purchased the building as a billboard, recognizing the value of the location alone. He meets people from all over the Bay Area who recognize this unique landmark.

O'Connell Properties specializes in properties all over the Bay Area. Back in the day, this property belonged to a man named Fred Froelich, and functioned as a weighing station for passing truck drivers. The house was also an easy walk to the railroad which ran along River Road and transported summer tourists back in Rio Nido's glory days.

Laura Mueller, Rio Nido's radio personality

Speaking of local history, fellow Rio Nidan Laura Mueller has been hosting a weekly radio talk show for the past three years. Titled, *"Anecdotal Evidence,"* Laura's show features interviews, personal stories from as early as the 1930's, and fascinating tidbits about the Russian River's colorful and entertaining history. Tune in Saturdays at 11:00 am. To **95.1 KGGV FM**, our local radio station. If you can't get a signal, www.KGGVFM.org provides live audio-streaming.

RRROC-ing Rio Nido

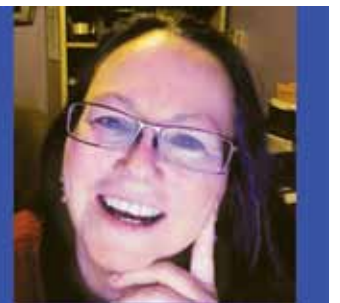
Rio Nido resident and community organizer Kim Holliday officially began her term as a member of the **Russian River Redevelopment Oversight Committee (RRROC)** at the Jan. 20 meeting held at the Guerneville Veterans Hall. Following a meeting with Redevelopment Manager John Haig and members of the **Rio Nido Redevelopment Task Group**, Kim shared that priorities for Rio Nido are: Safe crossing to the bus stop on River Road; securing public beach access; and basic infrastructure and beautification improvements. Support Kim and participate in the process! RRROC meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. and alternate between the Veterans Hall and the Monte Rio Community Center.

Got news? Email Elisabeth Parker at RussianRiverRattina@gmail.com and Elena Chronis at elenachronis@yahoo.com.

Monte Rio Musings

By Dawn Bell

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Quiet is the river in winter.

Much as we all enjoy the quiet and beauty (not so much the cold spells) in these winter months, we thrive on the business of tourism. Though all may look calm and serene, there is much going on behind the scenes in preparation of the coming season.

Monte Rio Recreation and Park District is in full gear with plans for the spring and summer. Many weekends are already booked for special events including a two day event newly titled *"The Monte Rio Festival"* which will highlight the **Jerry Garcia Band** for two days at the Monte Rio Amphitheater on Labor Day Weekend. A website is being created especially for this event and I'll share that with you when it is operational. Please don't call me for tickets yet!

The 100th **Monte Rio Variety Show** will also take place this year at the Amphitheater. Already an enormous draw, this year is bound to reach new heights of attendance and entertainment to mark the centennial celebration. This year the Variety Show will take place on Thursday, July 28th.

A new committee will form this month to guide the planning of the **Russian River Car Show**, scheduled for August 20th. I, for one, am very excited by that prospect and will encourage the committee to take on the work one person has been trying to manage the last two years. It will, no doubt, be an exceptional event this year with all the additional organization help.

Monte Rio Fire dept.

MRRPD elected its officers last month. **Fire Chief Steve Baxman** will serve as Chair this year with **Suzi Schaffert** focusing on the budget and LAFCO committees. Suzi has been in the Chair for eight of her nine years of service. Thank you so much for all your hard work, Suzi – you ain't done yet!

Monte Rio Chamber

The **Monte Rio Chamber of Commerce** is likewise busy with planning. Their first **Casino Night** event was held last October and was a resounding success.

Their planning committee will begin meeting very soon to ensure an event greater success the second



time around. For those interested in marking their calendars for this exceptionally fun event, it will be held on Saturday, October 22nd at the Monte Rio Community Center.

The Chamber is also seeking to increase their membership this year. Fees are \$50 for businesses and \$25 for residents. This is a great way to support your community and a wonderful place to spend some volunteer. Especially during **Independence weekend**, when Chamber volunteers work hard to produce a most memorable weekend as they have done for nearly 90 years. Please contact **Philip Hampton**, Chamber President at the **Village Inn & Restaurant** for more information – 865-2304.

Rest in Peace Neighbors —

John Castagnola

Pete "The Barber" Curreri

Thank you for sharing your lives with so many in our beautiful part of the world.

Community Meetings:

Mon. Feb. 7, 6PM - Monte Rio Recreation & Park Board meeting

Wed. Feb. 16, 1-4PM – MRRPD - Monte Rio Mountain Park Workshop

Thur. Feb 17, 6-9PM – RRROC

Mon. Feb 28, 6:30-9:30PM – Monte Rio Waste Water Task Group

Mon. Feb 28, 5:30-7PM – Monte Rio Chamber Mixer, Blue Heron, Duncans Mills

(All meetings take place at the Monte Rio Community Center unless otherwise noted)

As always, let me know if you have an event or activity you want to publicize in Monte Rio — dawnebell@comcast.net