

Positively a domino effect for economy

A SUCCESSFUL MOTOR COACH RALLY TWO YEARS AGO HELPS BRING ANOTHER MAJOR EVENT TO THE BAY AREA

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NORTH BEND — Things are getting busy over at The Mill this week, which is just the way they like it, of course.

It is estimated that over 500 visitors, and their RVs, will be taking part in the Monaco International RV Club's 30th anniversary motor coach rally this week in North Bend. The national organization, part of the Family Motor Coach Association, is in town, in part, because of the success of a larger rally in 2012.

That FMCA rally brought over 1,200 participants to the South Coast.

"Visitors at the 2012 event were thrilled with how they were received by our communities, which helped inspire Monaco International to bring their rally to the South Coast," said Terri Porcaro, general manager of The Mill Casino Hotel & RV Park. "Hosting an event like this is a great privilege for The Mill and an even greater opportunity for our communities to show what we have to offer travelers to our region."

Rally Master Jack Brewster said, for those who have not attended one of these events, it is best described as part convention and part family reunion.

"We get together three to four times a year as a club, at various places, we've been all over the country doing rallies," he said. "We are a real big family. We really go to see each other, for the camaraderie, and to have a real good time. That is what it is all about."

To help with the fun, The Mill planned a variety of activities for the rally-goers, including a poker run to shops and local venues in North Bend and Coos Bay. Tours of local attractions also give visitors a taste of what the region has to offer, while members of the Coquille Indian Tribe demonstrate native cooking techniques and discuss tribal culture at a traditional salmon bake.

Those are extra benefits that the participants appreciate, Brewster added.

"Normally, when we do a rally, we have a very full schedule. We have meals, they are trying to sell them coaches, we have seminars, we have vendors, and it's rather hectic. But, we enjoy it."

The club's treasurer, Jerry Jenkins, added that it also helps the participants inject some of their out-of-town funds into the community. He said a conservative estimate is that members will spend about \$250,000 eating at restaurants, shopping at local stores, and resupplying their RVs, all in just over a week, and that does not include fuel.

"We like to go out to local businesses," Brewster said Monday. "(And) we like to go out to local restaurants, not the chains. We can go to chains anywhere."

Another unique thing about this week's rally is that, although the event is open to FMCA members only, a vendor show and display of RV coaches will be open to the public.

"Because this is a public environment," Brewster added, "and we figured as long as the public was going to be here, we might as well just open it up for the opportunity."

They will offer that opportunity from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday, Aug. 6-9, at The Mill.

Club membership is open to anyone who owns any brand of motor home manufactured by Monaco Coach Corporation or Monaco RV. For more information, visit www.monacointernationalrvclub.com.

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