

Erin Dunn
Community Comment
July 17, 2018

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

Rodeo week has started in Fortuna. It's week filled with kids' games, community events, special entertainment and the rodeo.

The volunteers who make up the Rodeo Association always make it look easy, but it's a year-round endeavor.

The collaboration effort alone has many tentacles. The City has to have buy-in to make it happen. The streets are closed throughout the week—it started with the 5K run on Sunday, the Chili Cookoff yesterday, and street games later this week. There is the parade on Saturday through town, and the rodeo participants camping in the City Park next to the arena for the week.

One collaboration we sometimes lose sight of is with the local businesses. When the streets are closed for events during the day – like the Chili Cookoff and the parade, people can't park in front of their stores, foot traffic in the stores can diminish, and there is the constant need for bathrooms from the attendees.

Fortuna's businesses have met this challenge for years. And I want to give a big shout out to them. Because it's not always easy. It's actually quite inconvenient when you think about it. But it's Fortuna, and that's what Fortuna does, and therefore, it's what our Fortuna businesses do to support their community.

The Rodeo Association also has to round-up countless volunteers to help, especially for the Friday night, Saturday and Sunday events. Volunteers sell and take tickets, and sell beer all weekend long.

It's one thing to have Rodeo week come to town, but in Fortuna it's followed by AutoXpo—one of the longest running and busiest car shows in Northern California. Once again the City helps close the streets and customers can't park in front of businesses.

The AutoXpo committee is all volunteer, and they enlist extra volunteers to help with the Cruise traffic on Friday night. And once again, Fortuna provides them.

It takes all three of the legs to make events successful in Fortuna—the City, buy-in of the businesses and volunteers. It might sound easy, but it takes finesse, and an understanding that ultimately many benefit from the events in some way.

Both the Rodeo and AutoXpo give back to the community. Funds raised from the Rodeo go to update the rodeo grounds and surrounding area. And AutoXpo gives scholarships each year to area youth.

There is a pride that goes with being a part of Fortuna—whether it's when the flags line Main Street on a holiday, or when the big American flag is carried down Main Street in the Rodeo parade by Native Sons of the Golden West. Fortuna in the summer is a little slice of Americana, a harkening back to simpler times, when a community sets aside differences and comes together to be little kinder to each other and a little more mindful of how lucky we are to live where we live.

Come down to Fortuna and experience it for yourself. You are always welcome in the Friendly City.

This has been Erin Dunn with a Community Comment.