

Leaders: ‘Rendezvous indicator of San Bernardino’s progress’

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10/11/2017

October 11, 2017



IECN Photo/Anthony Victoria: Fred Conteaoi of Yucaipa shows off his 1955 Chevrolet Nomad during the Rendezvous Back to Route 66 event in downtown San Bernardino on October 7, 2017. Over 1,150 cars signed up to participate in this year’s Rendezvous.

Cruising through E Street remains a tradition for the thousands of Inland residents who attended last Saturday’s Rendezvous Back to Route 66 event in downtown San Bernardino.

“I’ve come every year since 2000,” said Fred Conteaoi of Yucaipa. “I used to live right down the street on Court. This was my backyard.”

Seeing over 1,150 cars cruise downtown and show off their robust engines and vehicles to the public is an indicator that things are turning around, members of the Conteaoi family believe.

“Nobody comes to downtown anymore,” remarked Damian Conteaoi. “This gives San Bernardino the opportunity to shine a little bit. Something like this makes it happen.”

San Bernardino Area Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Judi Penman admits it’s taking lots of money, support from local businesses, and commitment from community car clubs and organizations for the city to gain back some of its “car culture” aura.

“It wasn’t easy,” Penman said about planning the Rendezvous. “People didn’t like having it at the baseball stadium, so it shrank. People wanted to cruise E Street.”

The commitment from the city and community, Penman noted, makes the long hours of planning for the Rendezvous worth it.

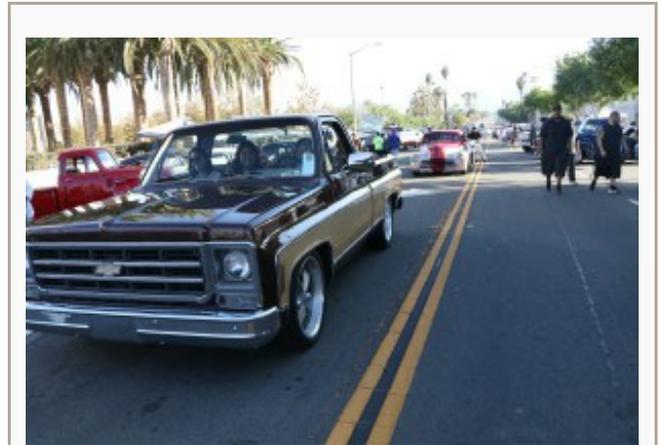
“It’s a labor of love,” she said.

The city’s Parks and Recreation Department, which helped clean up downtown in preparation for the event, were among the entities Penman acknowledged for their efforts. The Suavecitos Car Club, Center for Individual Development, and the Public Works Department were others.

“This event is indicative of what’s happening in San Bernardino, and how we’re bouncing back from the hardships of the past,” said Parks and Recreation Director Jim Tickemyer. “Downtown is changing...we’re on a good path moving forward.”

Highland resident Pete Ramos, the owner of a yellow 1955 Chevrolet Pickup truck, is convinced the turnout at the Rendezvous demonstrates people still have pride for San Bernardino.

“Everyone is still here for San Bernardino,” Ramos said. “If they throw an event, us car [enthusiasts] will be there to back them up.”



IECN Photo/Anthony Victoria: Classic vehicles and lowriders cruising up Arrowhead Avenue during the Rendezvous Back to Route 66 event on October 7, 2017.

A banner for Arts Connection. On the left is the logo for Arts Connection, featuring a colorful swirl and the text "ARTS CONNECTION THE ARTS COUNCIL OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY". In the center, the text reads "Connecting arts organizations, artists and communitites." On the right, it says "Get connected, join online at: ArtsConnection Network.org".

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