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'Youthful' North Las Vegas hosts 'State of the City' event

Newer parks, more business diversity on 2008 agenda

BY VALERIE MILLER

North Las Vegas may be youthful in terms of its residents' ages, but business leaders in the city say they aren't spending their marketing dollars specifically on the young.

The average age of North Las Vegas inhabitants is 28 years old, making it the youngest city demographically in Southern Nevada. Michael Montandon, the city's mayor, touted that fact during his annual "State of the City" address recently.

The packed event drew hundreds to a luncheon at Texas Station on Jan. 10. Mitch Fox, host of KLVX-TV, Channel 10's "Nevada Week in Review" program, served as master of ceremonies.

The mayor spoke of all the young families in North Las Vegas and the facilities that were being built for them during his speech. Among those planned facilities are more skate parks, a 36,000-square-foot multigenerational center called Sky View to be built on 36 acres on Centennial Parkway, and two regular parks. One of those is the soon-to-be-converted Craig Ranch Golf Course, which will be renamed the Craig Ranch Regional Park.

The other park is a \$14.5 million, 20-acre park proposed for the southeast corner of Tropical Parkway and Bruce Street.

Although those projects are family friendly, area businesses are spanning the generations in attempts to generate sales.



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North Las Vegas Mayor Michael Montandon delivers the State of the City address at Texas Station.

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"I don't think it really plays into the type of business coming into the city," said Sharon Powers, the president of the North Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce. "In the last 10 years, you have had an influx of businesses coming and bringing money in."

Bill Rosado, the owner of ManagedPay, deduced one factor bringing down the average age in North Las Vegas: Nellis Air Force Base.

"The officers will likely live off base in the community," he said. "There will be a community within the city."

The high number of young adults and young families helps to draw businesses to North Las Vegas, he said following the State of the City address.

"Anything that continues to focus on children, growth and education, people want to put their business in that community," he said.

Powers saw no special emphasis on the under-30 set, though. "No. I think the businesses coming in cater to the community as a whole," she said. "What is moving in here isn't catering to one demographic over another."

The chamber president noted the increasing number of restaurants opening in the city. The dearth of upscale eateries has long been something for which Montandon has taken criticism.

The family focus is evident in the type of restaurants in the city, however. Although the number of restaurants is increasing, Powers would like to see more than chains move in.

"There are a lot of Applebee's, Chili's and Denny's. You have a lot of family restaurants. I would love to be able to get a Roy's, a P.F. Chang's in North Las Vegas," she said.

The nonrestaurant-related service industries target customers across the demographic group, she noted. Beauty salons, nail care and insurance agencies, along with banks and advertising agencies, have widespread appeal.

John McCandless, a longtime North Las Vegas businessman, has seen the city grow tremendously over the last dozen years. But he echoed Powers' contention that age really doesn't matter in doing business there.

"Most of my employees are older because people don't leave here a lot," he said about his staff of 138. "I have nothing against hiring young people. They were young when I hired them."

What affects McCandless International Trucks more is the growth around



JEFERSON APPLGATE | BUSINESS PRESS
ManagedPay owner Bill Rosado discusses the North Las Vegas State of the City address with employee Linda Perry after the event.

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his Losee Road location.

"Losee Road has become a jammed-up highway, more now since they have been working on the freeway ramp," the owner said.

McCandless, which has sold and leased heavy- and medium-duty trucks since 1994, has also seen the good side of growth. Revenues rose from \$15 million a year to \$55 million a year.

John McCandless will put up with the roadwork under those circumstances.

"We'll grow with the city," he said.

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