

Memories from Bill Hatch, Monte Rio, CA

I am long-time vacation resident of Monte Rio and have been involved with the MRVS volunteering behind the scenes since 2001. My wife Pat evolved into the financial phase of the Show which turned out to be a year-round task with me as her sidekick. Everything comes to a crescendo the week preceding the show to the point of us spending the entire day at the amphitheater. Dozens of volunteers happily join us throughout the week. The day of the show was an event in itself. I will describe the 100th Annual Show.

Up in the morning at 5:00 am and off to the venue to greet a crowd of hundreds, perhaps thousands of people with chairs in hand and the line reaching from inside the venue through town, across the Monte Rio bridge, and beyond.

Our job was to set up our work table where we would sell tickets and take care of business in the middle of the grove. When our makeshift business office was ready, we were confronted with literally a stampede of humanity, including people with wheelbarrows loaded with chairs, headed straight for us like a runaway train locomotive! We actually had to drop everything and run for cover.

Another memorable part of that morning is that Monte Rio was featured on the Bay Area KCBS Radio traffic reporting the Monte Rio Bridge was clogged with traffic due to the event.

And this was just the beginning at 7:00 AM. With the help of Fire Chief Steve Baxman and his team traffic problem was quickly controlled and our staff worked to solve the chaotic seating situation. The rest of the day proceeded as usual for show day.

Throughout the 100 plus years the Show has been the highlight of the year for the town of Monte Rio. My wife, Pat and I are very happy and grateful that we are a part of the Great History.

Another interesting story to tell regarding the MRVS involved me, but it could have been anyone attending the Show. It goes like this: After finishing my day of volunteering from 5:00 AM I was granted the opportunity of viewing the show from the first row (due to an assignment in that area during the Show). It was great being able to take close up photos of the entertainers doing their acts. As the time rolled on nature intervened and my urge to use a port-o-let increased by the minute.

I came to the realization that I couldn't make it to the end of the Show, so I realized that I had to fight thousands of people getting from the first row to my destination. It seemed like 2 miles up the narrow isle in the dark which I accomplished only to wait before hand about a hundred people for my turn. When that was done – now the grueling trip back down to my seat.

I collapsed exhausted into my seat at the exact time the last note of music was blown – The Show was OVER!

Memories from Patricia Hatch, Monte Rio, CA

Port – O – Let's

This is the story of one of my volunteer assignments at the Monte Rio Variety Show (MRVS) event going back some years. I assigned myself to title of Chief Human Waste Management Controller which included the port-o lets for the event. Each year I would diligently determine the area for them to be located and measure the location for there arrival. Even though I repeated this exercise numerous times in the past years, one can never be to sure – can one?

Since these port-o-lets always were pre-ordered and the arrival time predetermined, I was anxiously waiting for the delivery truck. I was excited when the truck came into view with 15 gleaming towers of sanitation aboard. I welcomed the driver and directed him to the placement areas. He placed them all in the location perfectly and left the venue. Since they were delivered a day before the Show there was a lock and key assigned to each unit. So, in my wisdom I decided to keep a detailed record and write the number of the key corresponding to the number of the unit, a time consuming task only to find out that every key would open every lock. All that was required was only one key for all the units.

I put portable battery run lights in each port-o-let since the show was a night event. The next day I went to collect the lights 90% of them were missing. I guess it was due to the fact that there were a lot of folks that needed the lights for their toilets at their homes.