



Thursday, Aug 9, 2007

Posted on Tue, Jul. 10, 2007

## Biz Buzz: Paso 'cowboy' retreat - with hotel, golf course and vineyard - planned near airport

A 280-room resort with an 18-hole golf course, 15,000 square feet of conference room space, a vineyard and wine tasting facility is in development for a nearly 400-acre lot near the Paso Robles Municipal Airport. The resort — to be named Vaquero de los Robles — is the latest vacation property in the works by local developer John King.

"This will really be a destination center," explained Dave Watson, chief operating officer of King Ventures. The company—which already owns The Apple Farm, SeaVenture Resort, Inn at Morro Bay, Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort, The Cliffs Resort and Avila Hot Springs, plus five properties outside San Luis Obispo County — expects to bring updated plans to the city of Paso Robles later this summer.

Plans for an all-inclusive resort — previously named Black Ranch — were approved by the city in 2004 by its original owner, real estate developer Matt Masia. He sold the property, which is near the north side of Highway 46 East between Airport and Jardine roads, to King Ventures in late 2006.

The approved project included plans for a 27-hole golf course, which Watson said will be modified to an 18-hole course with three additional holes used for a golf academy. He said that about 50 acres will be devoted to a vineyard with a tasting room. In addition, the conference facility will be able to handle large and small gatherings, as well as weddings. There will also be a spa.

Construction on the first phase of development is anticipated to begin later this year. It will include 150 to 200 rooms, the golf course and golf academy, wine center and one restaurant. The first phase should open in 2009, Watson said. The second phase — which will likely begin in 2008 for a 2010 debut — will include the rest of the rooms and a second restaurant.

"The North County really needs a retreat," Watson said, "where people can come and stay for several days either for business or pleasure to enjoy both the facilities on site and the surrounding region."

—Ermina Karim

### French Hospital has new board members

French Hospital Medical Center recently announced newly elected officers to its community and foundation boards.

The community board supports the hospital's mission to deliver compassionate, high-quality, affordable health services. The board of the hospital's separate foundation directs charity donations.

Elected officers to the voluntary community board are chairman **John Ronca**, vice chairman **John Dunn** and secretary **Jim Copeland**. New board members include **Dee Torres**, director of the Prado Day Center for the homeless; **Sylvia Ortiz**, a psychologist and director of the Latino Outreach Program; and **Sister Marianne Rasmussen**.

Incumbent members include Dr. **Luke Faber**, Dr. **Richard Macias**, Dr. **Mark Soll**, Dr. **Dale Rowland**, Dr. **Ann Grant**, registered nurse **Grace Mitchell**, **Greg Morris**, **Isabel Ruiz**, **Cornel Morton**, **Sister Jeanne Rollins**, **Sister Pius Fahlstrom** and French Hospital President and CEO **Alan Iftiniuk**.

Elected officers to the voluntary foundation board are chairman **Greg Bland**, vice chairman **Jim Sargen** and treasurer/secretary **Wayne Longcrier**. New board members include **Sandy Dunn**, **Jim Lokey**, **June McIvor**, **Laurie Rossi** and **John Shoals**.

Other officers include Iftiniuk, hospital CFO **Sue Andersen** and foundation Executive Director **Debby Nicklas**. Current foundation members are Dr. **Michael Famularo**, **Patrick O'Hara**, **Bill Thoma**, **Angela Soll**, **John Ronca**, **Pierre Rademaker**, **Sister Meg Keeler**, **Barbara George**, **Beth Peterson** and honorary members Dr. **Lou Tedone** and **John French**.

—Sarah Arnquist

### Landscape designers to hold grand opening

Landscape design firm Garden Escapes will celebrate its grand opening with a ribbon cutting and open house at 4 p.m. Wednesday at its new location, 202 Tank Farm Road, Suite E2, in San Luis Obispo. Guests will receive free tickets to the evening's 6 p.m. San Luis Blues baseball game against the Santa Barbara Cowboys at Sinsheimer Stadium.

Garden Escapes' previous location was not able to accommodate the expanding needs of the company because of a lack of space, said **Shay Stewart**, director of sales and marketing. The new location has meeting rooms equipped with computers and large-screen monitors where clients and designers can meet and work on plans together, Stewart added.

Look in Biz Buzz every Tuesday through Saturday for the news and notes involving local businesses. To suggest a news story, call 781-7932. Press releases can be sent by fax to 781-7905, by e-mail to [bizbuzz@thetribunenews.com](mailto:bizbuzz@thetribunenews.com) or mailed to Biz Buzz, The Tribune, P.O. Box 112, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406-0112.

© 2007 San Luis Obispo Tribune and wire service sources. All Rights Reserved.  
<http://www.sanluisobispo.com>