Rockin' Life event rolls into Rio West Mall

Written by By Duane Haven Sun Correspondent
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A community gathering that aims to create awareness to fight depression, suicide, and addiction – to support prevention and recovery and encourage expression through music, art and talent – took place at the Rio West Mall Sept. 14.

The 2nd Annual Rockin' Life event, spearheaded by community liaison Watts Billie, showed the

initiative by bringing the community together to showcase their hidden talents.

It was a song he heard on the radio that brought his ideas to life.

Not only music, but the available resources and programs that are out there to support individuals who are struggling with life.

“I thought about how music was my light in my darkest of days and how positive expression could be the light to everyone else,” Billie said.

Without hesitation, Billie introduced his thoughts to his supervisor, the local media, and the general manager of the mall. They all gave him the green light to arrange the first annual “Rockin' Life” event in 2016. With positive feedback from his partnership, Billie reached out to the local wellness programs and several departments to aid and assist the community via information booths.

“I thought putting together an event that collaborated all of this; an expression of life through music, art, and talent. What better way to express life, by rocking it,” Billie said.

Anita Artalejo, General Manager of the Rio West Mall was very pleased with this year's turnout. The seats in center court of the mall were not empty.

There was plenty of talent for the audience to enjoy. Those talents included a pound demo with the Zuni Wellness Center, local guitarists and singers, and a kite festival demonstration.

“I was very excited and proud for Watts,” Artalejo said. “He did a wonderful job to bring Rockin' Life back to the mall. We hope it will continue to grow and reach out the communities.”

United Healthcare and Rio West Mall co-sponsored the event.

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