

## **Gathering Place**

By Matthew Cabe

Thursday, October 15, 2015 Daily Press

VICTORVILLE – When new ownership came to the Holiday Inn Hotel and Convention Center on Palmdale Road over a year ago, the 44 year old hotel had a paltry 11 employees on staff. But after a 10 month renovation process that cost \$5 million, the staff has been bumped up to 67 and a plan to increase that number to 130 is in motion.

Now the High Desert landmark is looking to become an asset to the surrounding community and a hot spot for Victor Valley events, according to Pier Point Management of San Diego President Ried Floco.

“(This venue) is specifically for the High Desert,” Floco told the Daily Press before a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the community Table Restaurant and Bar inside the Holiday Inn. “We’re really focused on bringing people together.”

Lifelong Victorville resident and Mayor Gloria Garcia, who cut the ribbon in honor of the restaurant’s grand opening, said the hotel holds a special place in her heart during an address to a large group huddled together in the Holiday Inn’s lobby.

“(The Community Table) promises to be a great gathering place for those working in the area, as well as those looking for a resting place from their travels,” Garcia said.

As the name suggests, the Community Table was envisioned as a meeting place for High Desert residents, community groups and hotel patrons, according to Floco.

The bar, which touts 16 craft beers on tap that are poured at less than 35 degrees, includes an elevated outdoor patio that overlooks the Holiday Inn’s Olympic-sized swimming pool and is separated from the restaurant’s dining room – a conscious decision, according to Director of Sales for the hotel Zarlyn Hidalgo.

The bar is separate from the restaurant to provide a quieter dining experience for families,” Hidalgo said.

The hotel’s staff currently services upwards of 5,000 guests per month and expects approximately 2,500 patrons to pass through the restaurant and banquet facilities each month as word continues to spread through the Victor Valley, according to Floco.

“Our focus is less about being profitable and more about being an asset to the community,” Floco said. “We have a lot of different community events we’re sponsoring and you’ll continue to see that grow.”

The sponsorships are provided to area high school athletic teams and the hotel staff welcomes various events into its 10,500 square feet of meeting space; during the grand opening, Options for Youth students were taking tests in a closed-off meeting room near the restaurant.

“The hotel has an) incredible history we want to contribute to,” Floco said. “Based on the product we’re offering to the community, we know it will be successful.”

*-Matthew Cabe can be reached at [Mcabe@vvdailynews.com](mailto:Mcabe@vvdailynews.com) or at 760-951-6254.  
Follow him on Twitter @DP\_MatthewCabe.*