

Published March 30th, 2022

Rheem Theatre hopes a COVID-free summer will boost attendance

By Vera Kochan



Moraga Council Member Teresa Onoda buys a movie ticket. Photo Vera Kochan

So many venues where large crowds are expected to sit within inches of each other have suffered through nearly two years of closures or limited seating in order to provide a safe, COVID-free environment to patrons. The Rheem Theatre (built in 1957) is one such local example.

The Rheem's Assistant Manager Tiffanie Cone proudly touted the fact that once the recently remodeled theatre was able to open its doors to audiences again, first-run blockbuster movies were and continue to be offered. "We were really busy during Christmas break, but then it dropped off," she said, noting that weekends are starting to see an improvement in attendance.

"I love going to the movies with my friends," said recent patron, Moraga Council Member Teresa Onoda. "It's wonderful to have a first class theatre just minutes away."

With spring break and summer on the horizon, the theatre will extend its schedule to seven days a week. During the off-season the Rheem is only open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

"We always do a lot of business when a Marvel movie is playing, usually with a two-thirds capacity," stated Cone. "With 'Spiderman' we stayed busy the entire time we had it. During those kinds of movies the audience is mostly teenagers."

The Rheem also offers a Cinema West Rewards Club Card where patrons can earn points toward free concession stand items or a free movie ticket.

Cone expects that the coming summer months will help to bring patrons back to the movies, both as a place to get away for a few hours and to beat the heat. She hopes that people will remember how much fun it is to go to the movies.

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