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City Crime-Fighting Displays Entertain the Crowds

The hundreds of people attending National Night Out event in Perris had plenty of ways to pass their time.

They could watch police dogs tackle and detain suspects in a demonstration of canine speed and strength.

They could watch firefighters cut apart a car to show how they free people trapped inside smashed vehicles.

They could pose for a photo with the Riverside County Sheriff's Mounted Posse.

They could shake hands with McGruff the Crime Dog, watch cops get soaked in a dunk tank, check out the latest off-road vehicles and armored trucks used to track and apprehend suspects in rural areas or support SWAT officers as they serve high-risk warrants and take down armed fugitives.

And they could pick up information about how to form a Neighborhood Watch group on their street.

The National Night Out in Perris, held Aug. 8 at Skydive Baseball Park, provides the opportunity for residents to meet with police, firefighters and emergency responders, glean insights into their jobs and chat with elevated officials in a relaxed, informal setting.



Perris Police Chief Mike Judge presented a plaque to Perris officials Aug. 8 during the National Night Out event in the City. Accepting the award were City Councilwoman Rita Rogers, Mayor Daryl Busch and City Manager Richard Belmudez.

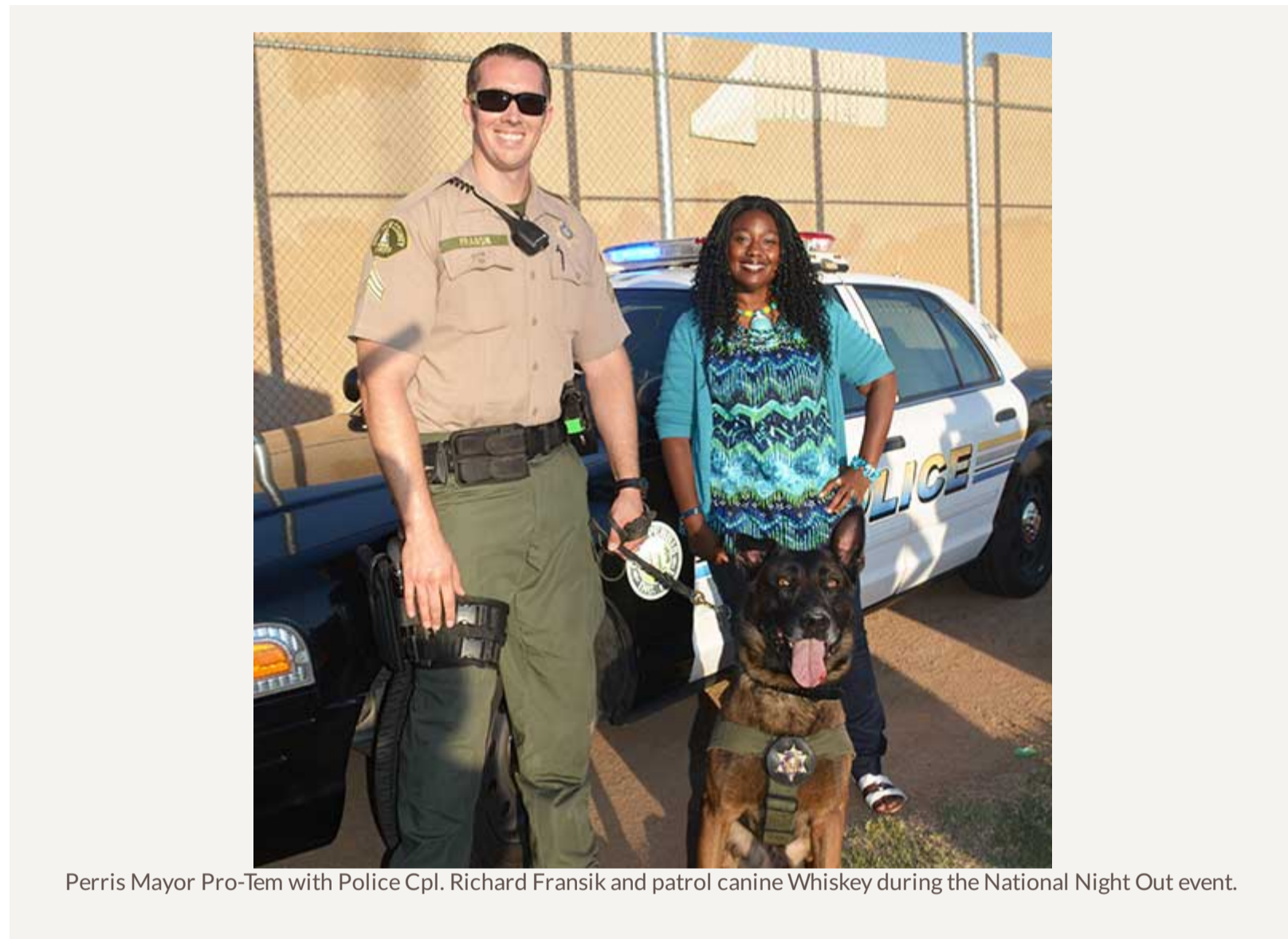
The City of Perris was presented with a plaque from Police Chief Mike Judge for its "outstanding, unwavering and top-notch support for public safety."

Perris was one of the few communities to maintain its public-safety budget during the recession. In 2014, violent crime fell 25 percent and overall crime declined more than eight percent in the City.

"The City of Perris has always been supportive of law enforcement and public safety as a whole," Judge said. "Our officers like working in the City and embrace it as a whole. Many of them live in Perris. The people who call us not only seek calls for service but calls for help. The expectations of this City for its police officers are always high, and that's the way we like it."

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch and City Councilwoman Rita Rogers accepted the plaque from Judge. Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Tonya Burke and City Councilman David Starr Rabb also attended National Night Out to watch the demonstrations and talk to residents.

"This is a great way for the public to get better acquainted with their local fire and police agencies," Busch said. "This event provides an opportunity to what they do and what kind of equipment they work with. The City of Perris remains committed to providing the best police and public safety protection possible and that has shown in the reduction in crime."



Perris Mayor Pro-Tem with Police Cpl. Richard Fransik and patrol canine Whiskey during the National Night Out event.

Rogers called National Night Out an opportunity for residents "to see our tax dollars at work"

"Our number one concern is public safety," she said. "It is vital for the City Council to continue its support for law enforcement to make sure our residents remain safe."

Rabb said excellent police, fire and emergency-response services create a solid foundation on which to build a great community, one that already features historic buildings and museums and world-class recreation.

"Without adequate law enforcement, residents won't feel safe, businesses won't locate here and tourists won't visit," Rabb said. "We cannot reduce our commitment!"

Burke watched a demonstration put on by police Cpl. Richard Fransik and his canine partner, Whiskey, a 7-year-old Belgian malamute. Cops and canines work together on reports of missing children, lost hikers, suspects hiding in buildings or fleeing police, drug raids. Dogs also are great in pursuing suspects threatening law officers



Perris City Councilman David Starr Rabb chats with resident Mary Godoy during the National Night Out event in the City.

Fransik and Whiskey work in Perris. During the demonstration, Community Services Officer Charles Oden, who wore a protective suit, played the role of a suspect threatening officers and attempting to flee from the law. Within seconds, Whiskey ran down, champed on to Oden's arm and detained him.

Whiskey also doubles as drug-detecting dog. Fransik recalled the time that he stopped a vehicle. Whiskey immediately alerted on a suspicious odor inside, even though no drugs were visible. After searching the vehicle, authorities found a hidden compartment with more than 30 pounds of cocaine wrapped in several layers of plastic covering soaked in oil to camouflage the scent. With a nose one million times as sensitive as a human's, no amount of masking will keep drugs safe from a trained canine.

The Riverside County Sheriff's Department, which provides police service to the City of Perris, employs 28 dogs who perform patrol, narcotics and jail duties and serve as bloodhounds in missing persons and fleeing suspect cases.



Perris police canine Whiskey chomps on a fleeing suspect during a demonstration at the National Night Out event.

"This is a wonderful event," Burke said. "We've had a great turnout and a great opportunity for the community to learn what law enforcement and public-safety officers do all the time. It's wonderful for the children to come out and see all the activities here."

Burke said her daughter is interested in pursuing a career in forensic science.

"Our leadership has done a really great job in adequately funding public safety," she said. "It's important to have sufficient law-enforcement to make the City safe."

Perris resident Mary Godoy dropped by National Night Out and said the time was well spent.

"It was definitely a great event," she said. "It's great for the public, it's great for the community. Everyone should see what kind of public-safety services their community has to offer."

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