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## Friday's Flashy, Splashy End of Summer

Summer went out with a bang in the City of Perris.

More than 700 residents gathered Sept. 18 to welcome in autumn during a night of fun and festivities at Mercado Park in Downtown Perris. The extravaganza featured a food-truck festival of gourmet food, jazz music, raffles, jumpers and bounce houses for the kids, an obstacle course created by teenager from the City's Youth Advisory Committee and the showing of the family-friendly film, Annie.



Perris youngsters take advantage of the water features to frolic at the end-of-summer splash on Sept. 18 at Mercado Park.

But for many Perris kids, the best part came when the park's signature symbols, its water features came to life at the start of the "End of Summer Splash Show." Drought conditions prevent the popular features from operating this summer, but for this show the City decided to let the water flow, bringing shrieks of delight from lots of kids and smiles to their parents.



Perris City Councilman David Starr Rabb, Mayor Daryl Busch, Mayor Pro-Tem Tonya Burke, Deputy City Manager Darren Madkin and City Councilwoman Rita Rogers enjoy the summer splash festival in Mercado Park on Sept. 18.

City elected officials were pleased as well.

"We have a very big turnout for our end-of-summer celebration," said Perris mayor Daryl Busch. "We're very appreciative that we can turn on the water and let the kids enjoy playing in it. We've been disappointed we could not because of the drought. The crowd is appreciative and we're glad they are."

Mayor Pro-Tem Tonya Burke also commended the large and diverse gathering, which included parents with their children, families and senior citizens.

"These events are like a treasure," Burke said. "We have families and children coming out for entertainment and exercise, we are promoting local businesses with our food truck festival. So many people from so many walks of life are coming together for a good safe time. Events like this makes serving on the City Council special."



Long lines of hungry residents took advantage of the gourmet offerings, part of the food truck festival at the Sept. 18 end-of-summer splash in Perris.

City Councilman David Starr Rabb fasted for several days so he could sample all the food truck fare.

"It's Friday and a lot of people have been looking forward to it and a lot of people are enjoying it," Rabb said.

City Councilwoman Rita Rogers called the Mercado Park extravaganza "a wonderful end to summer."

"The kids are having fun in the water and I'm almost tempted to put my feet in myself!" Rogers said. "There's nothing better than to watch young kids playing in this beautiful park, having a great time and having the chance to sample the great cuisine from our food truck festival!"



The soothing sounds of jazz music filled in the air, adding to the ambiance and fun at the end-of-summer splash in Perris.

Sandra Cedillo attended the splash with her four children, ages 9 to 18.

"The kids have missed playing in the water," Cedillo said. "I live right across from Mercado Park. The park is my neighbor. I'm blessed to be here. I'm having fun watching everybody here have fun."

Raul Rodriguez said his son, Sebastian, 18 months, was looking forward to playing and splashing in the water. Rodriguez also brought his two nephews to the show.

"I think it's great the City organized this event," he said. "It shows they care about the community and the people who live in it."



Perris residents Mikari Bradford, mom Shayna Bradford, grandma Denise Bradford and brother Noah Bradford enjoy themselves prior to the showing of the movie "Annie" at the end-of-summer splash at Mercado Park in Perris.

Three generations of the Bradford family took part in the end-of-summer splash. Shayna Bradford came with her mother, Denise Bradford, and sons Mikari, 4, Noah, 1, and daughter, Sonaja, 7. She took advantage of the food festival to purchase some Chinese food—orange chicken, rice and broccoli.

"The food is excellent," Shayna Bradford said. "The music is great. The family is together and that's great. I've been to all the parks in Perris, and they're all great for families and kids. They are all first-rate."

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