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## Fundraising Bazaar Puts Focus on Historical Museum

History and horsepower came together to link the past and present during the annual fundraising bazaar May 10th at the Perris Valley Historical and Museum Association.

Perris Valley history from the time Indians came to the Perris Valley was on display at the museum housed in the Depot Building, a former train station built in 1892 that now houses information about the region's mining, agriculture and railroading roots and celebrates pioneering families.

A variety of nicknacks, photos, house and kitchen wares and baked goods were on sale. There were demonstrations about gold-panning techniques and murals created by local artist Rob Padilla were there for painting. A live band performed classic rock numbers.



Children practice gold-panning techniques during the fundraising bazaar at the Depot Building, held May 10 to aid the Perris Valley Historical and Museum Association.

The horsepower came from seven race cars provided for the fundraiser by the Perris Auto Speedway. Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough, a former driver and current car owner and track sponsor, said it made perfect sense to mix racing with history.

"One of the things that makes Perris great is its ability to partner," Yarbrough said. "The partnership with the Perris Auto Speedway will give the track some exposure and bring people to the history museum."

Yarbrough said the City, working with the historical museum, has done a "super job of preserving and archiving our history." He noted the City's financial contributions to helping restore the 1892 Depot building, the Bank of Perris building with now serves as a City records depository, the 1930 art deco Perris Theatre, the façade-restoration of numerous other D Street buildings and the partnerships forged to complete Mercado Park, the Mercado Park and Perris Station apartments.

"Lots of what we have—buildings, records, archives and other documents—cannot be replaced. The City and historical museum have done an outstanding job of recognizing, identifying and preserving that history."



Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough addresses the crowd at the Depot Building while Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley looks on.

Perris

"It's important for people to have some sense of history about their community, whether they were raised here or moved here," Busch said. "It gives them some sense of their community."

Ashley, who lives in Perris, commended the museum for the dedication from its volunteers.

"They are doing a fantastic job in keeping the history and traditions of the Perris Valley alive," he said. "Riverside County and the City of Perris are committed to chronicling our history and keeping it alive."



Sarajeen Stewart, 11, paints a mural on display during a fundraising bazaar May 10 at the historic Depot Building in Perris.

Museum member Cindy Chambers said the historical society is working with other Perris venues to raise the profile of all vacation, recreation and educational sites in the Perris Valley. Those include the Orange Empire Railway Museum, the Big League Dreams sports complex, the soon-to-be-opened Drop Zone aquatics center, the Perris Valley Airport and Skydiving Center, the Perris Auto Speedway and the Southern California Fair.

"We want to call attention to all the great things we have in Perris," Chambers said.

She said the museum also has "taken itself on the road" by inviting residents young and old to complete unfinished murals depicting Perris' history and activities. One such mural depicts Live Well Perris activities. Others made the rounds during the City's 2011 centennial. The murals are creating by artist Rob Padilla who draws the outlines for buildings and landscapes and encourages visitors to fill them in. Chambers said the museum is working on a "Depot after Dark" plan that would see musicians perform in very intimate settings at the former train station.



Perris artist Rob Padilla, who has created several murals in support of the City of Perris, chats with Mayor Daryl Busch during the May 10th fundraising bazaar at the Depot Building.

The fundraising bazaar attracted visitors from neighboring communities. Bill Zimmerman, of the Menifee Valley Historical Association, praised Perris for preserving and presenting its history with honor and pride. He would love to have a museum or record archive to display Menifee artifacts but none currently exists.

"Perris is miles ahead of what we have in Menifee," Zimmerman said. "We would love to have a museum to showcase all of our documents and archives but we don't have one location where we can showcase it to the public."

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