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Rods and Rails Pays Tribute to Travel This Saturday

The 15th Annual Rods and Rails Extravaganza celebrates everything that makes Perris special.

The event, hosted by the City of Perris at the Orange Empire Railway Museum, pays tribute to the community's tradition of trains and train travel. The classic car and motorcycle show, part of Rods and Rails, make perfect sense in a City with the world-class Perris Auto Speedway and where iconic Route 66 travels through Downtown.

The venue lies just a short distance from the Perris Valley Airport, one of the most highly-acclaimed skydiving facilities on Earth.



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch chats with a visitor during the 2013 Rods and Rails Extravaganza at the Orange Empire Railway Museum.

And in a City with its own history museum and a dozen authentic Victorian-era homes, businesses and a train depot building, Rods and Rails always pays tribute to a pioneer family who forged a lasting link in the chain of the Perris Valley. This year the honorees are Williams and Sons, a family who helped put the region's potato industry on the map by trucking the spuds to market.

Add in music, more than 100 vendors, craft demonstrations, a dunk tank, musical performances and military and gunfighter re-enactors, it's little wonder that Rods and Rails attracts close to 7,000 visitors. This year's musical artists include Rose Royce, a soul and rhythm and blues act that scored hits in the 1970s with song like "Car Wash," "I Wanna Get Next to You," "I'm Going Down," "Wishing on a Star" and "Love Don't Live Here Anymore. Also on the music list is Savor, a Santana Tribute Band.



Classic hot rods are a staple at the Rods and Rails Extravaganza, sponsored by the City of Perris.

"Rods and Rails truly offers something for everyone," said Perris Mayor Daryl Busch. "It's got the whole ball of wax."

Busch said the popularity of the event soared after organizers moved it from D Street to the railway museum, which boasts one of the largest collections of rolling stock and trolleys in the U.S.

"The new venue provides plenty of space and plenty of shade and it has allowed people to see what a great treasure the train museum is," Busch said. "It's helped turn Rods and Rails into what we had hoped for. The City is very pleased to be involved in the types of activities that benefit our community. It's a pleasure."



Cartoon characters like Sponge Bob made an appearance at last year's event, which drew 7,000 visitors.

Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough likes Rods and Rails because it gives him the chance to display some of the classic Volvos he works on as part of his job. The cars and trains and history on display "bring together everything that is unique about this City," he said.

"Perris grew up right next to the railroad tracks," Yarbrough said. "We have the Lake Perris State Recreation Area, the skydiving center, Perris Auto Speedway and Route 66. The Rods and Rails festival allows us to play to our strengths, showcase the venues that make Perris unique. It's quickly becoming an important regional event—not just a City of Perris event, but a regional event."

The 2014 Rods and Rails Extravaganza takes place Saturday, June 14, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Orange Empire Railway Museum, 2201 South A Street. Admission to the event and parking at the museum is free.

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