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New Additions Make Breakfast With Santa Even Better

The City of Perris continues expanding its popular Breakfast With Santa program and the residents who come for the food and the fun say they love the additions because they make a great event even better.

This year, the City added an arts and crafts center to its program, opening up part of the Senior Center to youngsters and parents wanting to make homemade Christmas ornaments and other decorations.

In 2013, the City added a fruit-and-yogurt bar to the menu, encouraging people to eat healthier, part of the ongoing Live Well Perris quality of life initiative. The blackberries, raspberries and yogurt again were part of the annual breakfast, along with staples like eggs, sausage and pancakes.



Perris City Councilwoman Tonya Burke assists a youngster in making crafts during the Dec. 20 Breakfast With Santa at the Perris Senior Center.

Perris City Councilmembers Rita Rogers, Tonya Burke and Julio Rodriguez stopped by to take part in the Dec. 20 festivities. Mayor Pro-Tem Rogers brought her 3-year-old grandson, Jordan.

"It's wonderful that we continue this tradition in the City of Perris," Rogers said. "It's good for families to come out during the bust Christmas season to spend time with their loved ones."

Rogers said the City hosts a series of events to make the holiday and winter seasons enjoyable. Festivities kick off with the Tree Lighting Ceremony, followed by the Christmas Parade and Breakfast With Santa. In January, the City will restart its Snow Day, which provide Perris youngsters with the chance to ride sleighs and make snowballs.

"We've got the winter covered," Rogers said.

Councilwoman Burke spent time working with children making holiday crafts. She said the City's annual Breakfast With Santa provides a much-more intimate venue to talk to St. Nick and get pictures and great food.



Perris City Councilman Julio Rodriguez chats with resident Betzabe Espinoza, who learned about construction engineering while working as an intern for the City.

That's a sentiment voiced by many visitors who make the breakfast every year. The Perris event means their children can sit and chat with Santa for much longer than the production-line attitude at many malls.

"It's great to be able to offer this kind of event," Burke said. "It shows that we care about our community's traditions."

Councilman Rodriguez was accompanied by several members of his family who make the annual breakfast part of their Christmas season.

"We just keep improving on our great programs," he said. "People in Perris love this City and are supportive of our programs. The City is always innovative. My thanks to the Perris public for making our events so great."

Allison Grayson has made the trip to the Senior Center with her three children—Wyatt, 13, Riley, 11 and Ella Kay, 9—for a decade.

"This day truly starts our Christmas season," Grayson said. "This is the kickoff. Now it's official."



Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Rita Rogers attended the Breakfast With Santa with her grandson, Jordan, 3.

In-demand Christmas gifts this year include xBox1 and xBox360, video cameras, tablets, other electronic devices along with old favorites like Legos, Barbie dolls and Teen-age Mutant Ninja Turtles.

Katie Acosta returned in 2014 with her daughter, Isabella, 5. Her comments: "It get bigger and better every year!"

"The kids look forward to it every year," Acosta said. "Isabella could hardly sleep. I enjoy the excitement of watching the kids get their picture with Santa. I use those pictures in my electronic Christmas cards which I send out every year."

Brenda Chavarria came to the yearly breakfast with her daughter, Alessandra, 6, and son, Bruce Wayne, 4.

"This event creates a memory I will always cherish," Chavarria said. "I love being part of the City of Perris. It's got a small-town focus that really concentrates on making things fun for the children. You really do feel a part of this community."

Perris City staff were assisted by community volunteers and members of the Youth Advisory Committee who dressed up as Santa's elves. They included Rancho Verde High School students India Rockett, Shaera Ahmed, Victoria Mac, Gabby Bulacan, Jose Ortega and Oscar Guzman.

Media Contact

Joe Vargo
Public Information Officer
951-956-2120
jvargo@cityofperris.org



Perris City Hall
101 N. D Street
Perris, CA 92570

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