



# Perris Press Release

Contact: Joe Vargo, Perris Public Information Officer  
Phone: 951-956-2120  
[jvargo@cityofperris.org](mailto:jvargo@cityofperris.org)

## Wind Proves No Obstacle to March for Babies

More than 1,500 people braved blustery winds to "March for Babies" and raise money to combat premature births and their related maladies.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch and City Councilwoman Rita Rogers were among the dignitaries who addressed the crowd of marchers that gathered April 30 at Riverside Community College. Rogers is a division chair for the March of Dimes, which conducts the annual walk through Riverside, while Busch is a longtime supporter of the event.

Rogers noted that one in eight babies are born prematurely and suffer a range of related challenges, including underdeveloped lungs and vision problems. Research from March of Dimes has led to therapies responsible for saving thousands of babies and allowing them to live normal lives.

"When you talk to people who have lost their babies or who have children that had to go through multiple surgeries, you realize how important the work that we are doing really is," Rogers said. "I am pleased to say that the number of premature births has gone down slightly. We are on the right path."

Rogers thanked the national sponsors who contributed to the event: Kmart, Farmers Insurance Group and FedEx. All sent large contingents to walk in Riverside.

Mayor Busch said he supports the March for Babies because every child deserves every chance to grow up strong and healthy.

He called the March for Babies a "very worthwhile cause" and one that he is eager to lend his support.

"It's a great day to March, we have a large turnout for a great event and a great purpose," Busch said.

Perris residents Emilio and Maysom Lupercyo represented their daughter, London May, who was born 13 weeks premature on May 1, 2009. The tiny girl weighed only 2-pounds 12-ounces at birth and spent 88 days in an incubator before she could go home. Without breathing therapies developed by the March of Dimes, the little girl might not have survived. Their fight to save their daughter put the couple in touch with Rogers, who they said has been extremely supportive.

"Not all babies are born healthy," Maysom Lupercyo said. "Rita Rogers has been so helpful. We love her as a councilwoman too!"

Emilio Lupercyo called his daughter "our little fighter" who has taught the family "what life is all about."  
"She's amazing," he said.

Nearly 20 members of the family marched as part of Team London May. The toddler was on hand as an ambassador of the event.

Patrick and Rebekuh Vasquez, of Lake Elsinore, offered another story of survival. Their son, Landon, was born Feb. 16, 2010, more than three months premature. He weighed only 1-pound 11-ounces at birth. He spent 115 days in the hospital. Today, he is on the road to a healthy childhood.

"Premature birth can happen to anyone," Rebekuh Vasquez said. "Events like this touch our hearts."

For Nic Corwin of Farmers Insurance, the day was personal and professional. He said he was born five weeks premature and owes his health to the March of Dimes. He said he wanted to give to others what he had received himself.

"This is a big day for me," he said. "It's a huge event for our company. The March of Dimes is where everything comes together. It's pivotal to giving premature babies the care they need."

He too went on to praise the efforts of Councilwoman Rogers.

"Anything is possible with passionate people," he said. "Without her support, without her passion, none of this would be possible."

Riverside County Sheriff Stan Sniff, the chairman for the Inland Empire March for Babies, said the organization first was created to attack polio. When that scourge was defeat, the mission changed to prevent premature births.

"The research and the support of the March of Dimes is what we're all about," Sniff said. "I think it is great that all these people came out to demonstrate their support of this worthwhile effort."



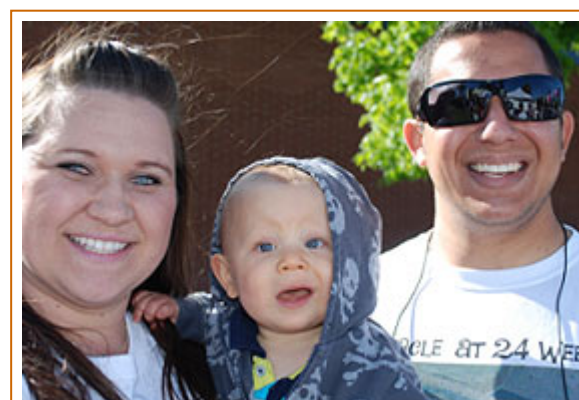
Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers and Riverside County Sheriff Stan Sniff at the March for Babies.



Emilio and Maysom Lupercyo, of Perris, with their daughter, London May. She survived with the help of March of Dimes research.



Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers says premature births are declining: "We are on the right path."



Rebekuh and Patrick Vasquez with their son, Landon, who was born premature.



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch addresses the crowd of 1,500 marchers: "Great turnout for a great event and a great purpose."