



Perris Press Release

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Day of Recreation Celebrates Centennial at Lake Perris

Perris' past, present and future took center stage during a day of recreational and educational activities April 28 at the Lake Perris State Recreation Area.

More than 350 Perris school children were invited to attend the event, part of the City of Perris' ongoing Centennial celebration.

The past included a visit to a local Indian museum, where Perris school kids learned about the traditions and culture of Native Americans who lived here hundreds of years ago. The day's events also included water-safety presentations from park rangers, a nature hike and a picnic lunch.

The present included a reminder from City staff that the day at the lake served as an Arbor Day celebration and that Perris is determined to "go green" to save precious resources and reduce its carbon footprint.

The future came from remarks from students who said they planned to return to the state park with their parents for day trips and campovers and pledged to keep track of Perris' Centennial events, which are taking place throughout 2011. The City officially celebrates its 100th birthday on May 26, when a time capsule will be buried near the City Council Chambers.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch, City Manager Richard Belmudez and Housing Manager Sabrina Chavez were among City representatives who spoke to the students during the picnic lunch. The City provided t-shirts and backpacks for all students.

"This is a special day for us," Belmudez said. "This is a special year for us. Please enjoy the activities we have planned throughout the year."

City officials said 200 camp spaces were made available at no cost to Perris residents over the April 29 to May 1 weekend. All were given out.

"It's great that we get the local community out here," Busch said. "We have a lot of kids who live in Perris who have never been here. This lake is such an asset to our City and we want people to enjoy it. I hope everyone has as good time." Several Sky View Elementary School students said they learned a lot about nature, native culture and the recreational opportunities awaiting them at Lake Perris.

"We got to go on a nature walks and saw a lot of interesting flowers and plants," said Sierra Davies, 8. "It was a lot of fun."

Amariah Cali, 8, said she enjoys nature and looking at plants and animals. During her visit to Lake Perris, she said she learned about mountain lions

"I liked when we went exploring around the lake," she said.

Makayla Thompson, 8, said that until she visited the lake as part of the Centennial event, she had never been to the state recreational area.

"I will definitely come back," she said.

Chavez, who helped coordinate the day's activities, said everything well and the students enjoyed themselves while having a good time.

The colorful Native American dancers proved a big hit with the students and dignitaries. They represented Hopi, Choctaw, Cupeno, Luiseno, Cheyenne, Sioux and Arapaho Indians. The dancers showed off several types of dances, including a salute to military veterans.

Dancer Sonya Flores said Native Americans sought to protect the environment and "be good to Mother Nature" as part of their daily living.

"It's very important for my kids and other kids to respect and honor people and Mother Earth," she said. "If we instill that attitude, it will grow into a lifestyle. If we don't, we'll have nothing left for tomorrow."



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch and City Manager Richard Belmudez chat under a shade tree during the April 28 City Centennial Event at Lake Perris.



City staff members Cynthia Quintero, Richard Belmudez, Sabrina Chavez and Melinda Ward share a laugh during the day's festivities at Lake Perris.



Tribal dancers and drummers chant in a Native American ceremony.



Colorfully dressed Native American dancers and drummers represented tribes from across the western U.S.



Perris school children received t-shirts courtesy of the City.