



Perris Press Release

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Perris Multicultural Festival is a Community Fiesta

The 3,000 people who came out to the City's annual Multi-Cultural Parade and Festival had three great reasons to celebrate.

The festival honors Hispanic Heritage Month and included tributes to many states in Mexico as well as countries throughout Latin America.

The date of Sunday's celebration—Sept. 25—is the annual Day of the Charro, Mexican cowboys known worldwide for their outstanding equestrian skills.

And the festival provided another opportunity for Perris residents and visitors to celebrate the City's 100th birthday.

"The idea of this festival is to involve people and participate in cultural exchanges," said Perris Mayor Daryl Busch. "This year the City is celebrating its Centennial and the parade and festival is bigger and better than ever. It is important to the citizens and City Council to show off the heritage of our City. It is a wonderful day to hold this parade and festival and a great opportunity for people to enjoy this event."

Crowds of enthusiastic spectators lined D Street to get prime viewing spots for the parade, which featured 50 equestrian, dancing and marching units, classic cars and dignitaries from Perris, Cotija, Perris' sister city in Mexico and from Michoacan state. In some locations, spectators lined up five and six deep to view the festivities and many people in the audience carried video recorders to capture the action and pageantry. Bands played festive songs, folklorico dancers twirled in the streets and horses danced and pranced to the commands of their riders.

The fourth annual Multi-Cultural Festival was sponsored by the City and the TODEC Center (Training Occupational Development Educating Communities), which works to provide services for immigrants while educating them and encouraging permanent residents to become citizens.

TODEC began through the efforts of Perris resident Luz Maria Ayala, who also helped developed the Sister City program with Cotija and Michoacan.

Dignitaries from Mexico included Jose Mendoza Morfin, the Mayor of Cotija, other municipal workers from Cotija and Michoacan and representatives of the Mexican Consul in San Bernardino.

Ayala praised the City of Perris for its support of the Hispanic community. Her daughter, Luz Gallegos, addressed the throng from a stage at City Hall and told Perris administrators and elected officials that "we love you guys."

She then led the crowd in English and Spanish versions of "Happy Birthday." In addition to Mayor Busch, the Perris delegation included Mayor Pro-Tem Joanne Evans, City Councilwoman Rita Rogers, City Manager Richard Belmudez, Redevelopment and Economic Development Manager Michael McDermott and Redevelopment Project Coordinator Veronica Arana, who helped coordinate the festival.

Throughout the course of the day, City Hall reverberated with the sounds of music from the stage as several bands performed. Vendors sold a wide variety of novelties and ethnic foods. Part of the proceeds will be sent to Cotija to help pay for public safety, hospitals, schools and churches.

Event Grand Marshal Marion Ashley, a Perris resident and Riverside County Supervisor, said Perris has been a diverse and welcoming community since its incorporation in 1911.

"Some of our pioneer families were Hispanic and their descendants still live in Perris today," Ashley said. "The Perris City Council cares about all its residents, and as a result, we have this wonderful event."

Evans called the multi-cultural festival "an event that brings our entire community together."

"Lots of people, lots of fun, lots to be proud of," Evans said.

Rogers said she was pleased that City residents came out in large numbers for "good fellowship and to enjoy the rich culture and diversity of the City of Perris."

Dignitaries from Mexico and the City shared a lunch following the opening ceremonies. Officials from Cotija, known around the world for its outstanding cheese, presented a block to the City.

Morfin, in remarks made during the luncheon, noted that Mexico celebrated its bi-centennial in 2010 and that he was proud to be included in one of the signature events of Perris' centennial.

"We are very happy to be here," Morfin said. "We have a great relationship with the Perris City Council. This is a great celebration."

Consul Carolina Zaragosa Flores, from the Mexico consulate in San Bernardino, thanked City of Perris officials for "your great Centennial." She also thanked them for their support of the Latin American and Hispanic culture.



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch prepares to cut the birthday cake presented to the City during Sunday's Multi-Cultural Parade and Festival. With him on stage are Carolina Zaragosa Flores from the Mexican Consul in San Bernardino, Perris City Council woman Rita Rogers and Mayor Pro-Tem Joanne Evans.



Colorful dancers like these made D Street the place to be during the parade.



A charro puts his horse through the paces.



Perris resident Luz Maria Ayala is presented with a pottery bowl from the Mexican state of Michoacan during the festival.



Members of a band serenade the City of Perris with a rendition of "Happy Birthday."