



Perris Press Release

Contact: Joe Vargo, Perris Public Information Officer
Phone: 951-956-2120
jvargo@cityofperris.org

Perris' March for Babies is the Most Successful in California

Hundreds of Perris residents, high-school students, members of church congregations and business owners and public servants turned out Saturday to walk and raise money for the March of Dimes in its quest to reduce premature births and their related defects.

Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers, who also is a division chair for March of Dimes, said she "pleased but not surprised" at the enthusiastic crowd that marched for babies at Foss Field Park. "This is truly a community event," she said. "People in Perris always come out to support a great cause. Our City is known for its generosity. It's a great feeling."

The final amount raised for the March of Dimes won't be known for several weeks as contributions continue to pour in. Rogers said a preliminary estimate is about \$25,000. That figure would make the Perris March for Babies Relay the most successful in California for the third consecutive year. In 2010, Perris raised \$21,000 in its March for Babies Relay.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch once again served as chairman of the event.

He said research from the March of Dimes has provided many children and adults to live full and happy lives.

"Halloween is coming and a lot of children will be eating a lot of candy," Busch said. "They will get to experience life because of what the March of Dimes has done for them. I am pleased to be chairman of this most worthwhile cause."

Mayor Busch and Councilwoman Rogers led the crowd on the opening lap around the field. Festive music filled the air as people walked while waving to friends, dancing or even hula-hooping.

More than 200 students from Perris High School took part in the March for Babies. They included students from the dance teams, cheerleading squad and other student clubs.

Senior Bryan Salazar, 17, said he came out to march for babies because it's important for teen-agers to help their community when possible.

"This shows we care about what's going on in Perris, Salazar said.

Senior Lizbeth Ramirez, 17, said she took part in the march to support several of her cousins, who were born prematurely. Like other Perris High School students, she solicited money for March of Dimes from her fellow students and teachers.

"This is important and I want to be part of it," Ramirez said.

The day's hot weather did not discourage the marchers, who walked around Foss Field Park beginning at 11 a.m. The City of Perris organized a team of marchers. Several team members wore Hawaiian clothes as part of the theme for the City's contingent.

London-May Lupercyo, 2, was one of the guests of honor. London-May was born about 12 weeks premature and weighed just 2-pounds, 2-ounces at birth. She spent the first 88 days of her life in a neo-natal intensive care unit. Without the research funded by March of Dimes, her mother, Maysom, said London-May would not have survived. Today she is a healthy and growing toddler who is learning the alphabet and how to count.

"We are so blessed she survived and is doing great," said Maysom Lupercyo. "Thank you City of Perris for supporting the March of Dimes."

The Lupercyo family lives in Perris. Maysom works at Whirlpool. Her husband, Emilio, works for Lowe's.

Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley and the City's new police Chief, John Hill, joined Perris City Clerk Judy Haughney, Mayor Busch and Councilwoman Rogers on stage to wish everyone a great time. Ashley, a Perris resident, donated \$2,500 to the March of Dimes.

"The City of Perris is a generous, caring community," Ashley said. "This march for the March of Dimes clearly demonstrates that City of Perris residents will support charities that support our City."

Hill said he too was impressed by the turnout and spirit present in the March for Babies Relay.

"It's very great to see the heart here," he said.



Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley and Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers helped kick off the March for Babies Relay at Foss Field Park.



Police Chief John Hill, Perris Mayor Daryl Busch and Riverside County Supervisor Marion Ashley led a ceremonial first lap at the Perris March for Babies Relay.



Cadets from the California Military Institute marched during the event.



Perris High School seniors Lizbeth Ramirez and Bryan Salazar raised money for the March of Dimes event.



The Perris High School dance team livened up the day with spirited routines.