



Perris Press Release

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

History Comes Alive at Perris' Veteran's Day Parade

Military uniforms and equipment from the Revolutionary War to the present were on display Saturday at the annual Perris Veterans Day Parade.

The parade featured a fife and drum corps dressed in Revolutionary War uniforms, Civil War re-enactors who carried period muskets, restored World War II Jeeps and light-armored assault vehicles used by Marines in Afghanistan and Iraq.

A group of Old West gunfighters also made an appearance and staged a mock robbery of a 1850s replica stage coach, only to learn that crime doesn't pay.

Hundreds of people lined the parade route to salute the soldiers taking part in the event, which took on extra special meaning this year because it is Perris' Centennial. Marching bands, precision rifle teams, equestrians, dancers, classic cars and military color guards also joined the celebration. About 200 cadets from the California Military Institute took part in the parade.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch, a Navy veteran, served as grand marshal.

"This is a real honor for me," said Busch, who served as a shipboard operator aboard the destroyer USS Picking. "It's a great day to honor all of our veterans for all they've done to protect our country and to protect freedom around the world."

As he has for many years, Perris City Councilman Al Landers announced the parade. He said it's a privilege to take part in the parade because it shows "that the City of Perris appreciates what the men and women in uniform have done to protect us."

"It makes everyone more aware of the contributions of our military," Landers said.

Landers also thanked the volunteers from the Perris Citizens Patrol and the City staff workers who toiled behind the scenes to ensure another successful Centennial event.

Mayor Pro-Tem Joanne Evans, a former Marine, came to the parade wearing military camouflage. She summed up in a few words the reasons why Perris hosts a Veterans Day parade: "Americanism, freedom, democracy."

"We honor the ones who served," Evans said.

Evans worked with Camp Pendleton representatives to bring a contingent of Marines to the parade. They came with two armored reconnaissance vehicles and a troop/cargo transporter used in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Perris City Councilwoman Rita Rogers said she enjoys the Veterans Day Parade because it unites the entire community—schools, churches, civic groups, military organizations and the City.

"We always get a great contingent of people who turn out to support and honor our military," Rogers said.

Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough said he believes the Centennial parade drew the largest audience ever. He called the Veterans Day Parade another example of "the quality of life events that make Perris a great place to live, work and play."

"They're important," Yarbrough said. "Our community has always enjoyed strong ties to the military and this parade is a perfect example of that connection."

Perris City Manager Richard Belmudez and Police Chief John Hill rode atop a vintage 1850s stagecoach. The stagecoach represented the best in travel in the mid 19th Century. A stage pulled by four strong horses could make 100 miles on a good day by stopping periodically to change animals. Just as important as carrying passengers, stage coaches hauled mail, including government contracts with businessmen and ranchers throughout the western U.S.

As the stage rounded San Jacinto Avenue by City Hall, members from the Old Town Temecula Gunfighters tried a stick-up only to meet their match in the form of several gun-toting women who played the role of sheriff deputies. The Old Town Temecula Gunfighters stage robberies, gunfights and gun-safety shows and as part of their enjoyment of the Old West and a desire to keep the past alive.

As the last of the bandits fell, Councilman Landers chimed in by saying: "It just goes to show you that if you do anything wrong in Perris, we're gonna get you."

Tom Ashley, principal of the California Military Institute, said events like the Veterans Day Parade help instill a sense of community spirit in young people. CMI students volunteer at almost every City function, part of the 60-hours of mandatory community service they must complete every year.

"Our students really love it," Ashley said. "The City of Perris Veterans Day parade has legs. The whole community comes out. Events like this help integrate our students into the community at an early age. They feel comfortable being involved."



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch accepts a plaque from Mayor Pro-Tem Joanne Evans while City Councilwoman Rita Rogers and City Manager Richard Belmudez look on.



Perris City Councilman Al Landers announced the Veterans Day Parade: "The City of Perris appreciates what the men and women in uniform have done to protect us."



Perris City Manager Richard Belmudez and Police Chief John Hill rode atop a replica Old West stagecoach.



Members of the Old Town Temecula Gunfighters stage a mock shoot-out with women deputies as part of the festivities.



Marines from Camp Pendleton took part in the Veterans Day Parade driving light-armored reconnaissance vehicles.



Cadets from the California Military Institute carried flags during the parade.