



home > city hall > press releases

## Terri Peak Challenge Rounds up Hiking Series

The City of Perris's "Take a Hike" series concluded on a fantastic note April 29 as more than 200 people challenged themselves on a strenuous four-mile trek to the top of Terri Peak at the Lake Perris State Recreation Area.

Perris Mayor Michael Vargas, City Councilman Malcolm Corona and City Manager Richard Belmudez were among those taking part in the Terri Peak hike, which wrapped up a series of three increasingly challenging jaunts that together drew more than 600 people.

"Amazing!" Vargas said at the Terri Peak turnout. "This event and the others in the Take a Hike series are all about community engagement. This is awesome."

Vargas said the large and enthusiastic turnouts show that Perris residents are interested in the City's ongoing "Live Well" program emphasizing healthy eating and exercise. The mayor shook the hands of dozens of hikers at the beginning and end of the trail.

He was also pleased the Terri Peak hike drew residents from Riverside, Corona and Santa Ana.

"Those residents who are coming to Perris from other cities shows us that we are doing something right," Vargas said.



Perris Mayor Michael Vargas shakes the hand of a climber at the start of the hike to the summit of Terri Peak April 29, an event that drew 200 participants at the Lake Perris State Recreation Area.

The hikers included families with children, singles with dogs, friends, hiking buddies and about 12 Perris Police Explorers led by Chief Brandon Ford, who completed the climb wearing a full uniform. Councilman Corona said the highlight for him was "the fantastic view from the top of Terri Peak" including Lake Perris, the City and neighboring communities.

"It was a challenging hike," Corona said. "It was nice to talk to people along the way. A lot of people were happy the City is able to host events like these and would like more. These events keep growing and more and more people are taking advantage of them."



Climbers begin their ascent to the top of Terri Peak during a four-mile trek to the summit of the mountain sponsored by the City of Perris as part of its "Live Well" healthy eating, active living initiative.

### Twists and turns

The Terri Peak trail included slight inclines, steep ascents and took the hikers through narrow paths as it approached the summit.

The hiking sticks used by some participants came in handy on the most challenged stretches of the ascent. But in the end, the views and the knowledge they had taken on Terri Peak and succeeded made the sweat and sore muscles worth the effort.

Many hikers who tackled Terri Peak also took part in two earlier hikes, which included an easy jaunt along the shore of Lake Perris and more challenging hike at Kabian Park in South Perris. Andrea Peris and Anabel Gonzalez made the trio of hikes.

"The hikes have been progressively difficult," Gonzalez said. "But since we went to the last two we're ready for this one."

Peris thanked the City of Perris for sponsoring the "take a hike" series.

"The events keep us motivated," Peris said. "We have fun, we enjoy the scenery, and if it wasn't for the City we wouldn't be doing the hikes."



Council Member Malcom Corona completed the four-mile round-trip to the summit of Terri Peak April 29.

Sarita Orozco and her husband, Osvaldo Pacheco, were the first to conquer Terri Peak. The couple are big supporters of the Live Well program and have taken part in exercise classes throughout the program's existence.

"A great hike, a great view, a great workout, a great experience," Orozco said.

Pacheco used the same word to sum up his Terri Peak trek: "great."

"I'm happy more and more people are taking part in these hikes," he said. "That's a good thing."

Crystal Smith was all smiles after she summited Terri Peak. Like other participants, Smith said she takes advantage of other City programs, including ones offered by Perris fitness instructor Laura Sosa. Those include body sculpting, cardio-training and weights to tone up and strengthen her arms and legs. Smith also is pleased that the City offered a soccer scholarship to help her daughter, Tamia, learn the sport.

During the hike, Smith said she became discouraged at times as the summit seemed never to draw near. She talked to a friend along the trail and that helped pass the time until she reached the peak.

Afterwards, Smith said the success made the strain worthwhile.

"I love everything about the City of Perris," Smith said. "It provides activities that keep us active. What more could you ask for?"

Following the hike, Mayor Vargas and City Councilman Corona called the winning numbers for a raffle of prizes that included bicycles, a GoPro camera, Fitbits, backpacks and hiking poles.



Hikers who reached the summit of Terri Peak saw this spectacular view of the Lake Perris State Recreation Area and surrounding hills.

### Media Contact

Joe Vargo  
Public Information Officer  
951-943-6100  
jvargo@cityofperris.org



Perris City Hall  
101 N. D Street  
Perris, CA 92570

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8 am - 6pm

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