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## Former Mayor Daryl Busch Dies at 76



Mayor Daryl Busch 1941-2017

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Daryl Richard Busch, the longest serving mayor in Perris history, died early Sunday with his wife, Kay, and son, Barry, at his side.

Mr. Busch, a six-time elected mayor who served from 1999 to 2016, was 76.

A viewing will take place Thursday, Dec. 7, from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the First Congregational Church of Perris, 100 North A Street. Services will be held at the church at 11 a.m. Friday. Private interment will follow at the Perris Valley Cemetery.

Mr. Busch's legacy benefitted Perris residents from one end of the City to the other.

During his tenure, the City's population grew from 34,000 to 76,000 and evolved from a fiscally-strapped community to one with a firm financial footing able to attract new commercial, industrial and residential development and complete major infrastructure improvements.

The list of Mr. Busch's accomplishments is long and impactful.

They include developments on the south side of Perris like the Drop Zone aquatics center, the Big League Dreams sports complex, Mercado Park and Mercado Apartments, the Monument Ranch neighborhood and Ethnac corridor upgrades.

Downtown Perris saw the arrival of Rio Ranch Market, a new Walmart Supercenter, creation of the Patriot Park sports complex, renovations of numerous businesses along historic D Street, the restoration and rededication of the Victorian-era Depot Building and the Bank of Perris, development of the Perris Station senior apartments, a new sewage system for residents in the disadvantaged Enchanted Heights neighborhood and a new interchange at I-215 and Fourth Street.

Downtown also benefitted from the arrival in 2015 of Metrolink train service at the City's new multi-modal transportation hub.

In the north end, the construction of several logistics centers provided thousands of jobs for Perris residents. During Mr. Busch's tenure, a new interchange at I-215 and Ramona Expressway helped traffic flow on the north side as did roadway improvements to Ramona Expressway east of the freeway.

The City's ongoing Live Well Perris healthy-eating active-living program began during Mr. Busch's term, which encourages residents to exercise and make smart food choices to avoid diabetes, high-blood pressure and other maladies. Live Well Perris and the Enchanted Heights sewer program garnered the City a pair of National League of Cities awards.

### Respected and remembered

"He was an icon for the City of Perris and his heart was always here for the people," said Mayor Michael Vargas, who succeeded Mr. Busch in 2016. "He loved this City. He will be sorely missed."

Vargas said that when Mr. Busch first took office, the City was struggling financially and nearly bankrupt and elected officials made the painful decision to dissolve the 85-year-old Perris Police Department and contract with the Sheriff's Department. Thanks to the leadership of Mr. Busch and other elected officials, the City "survived and is now on a very solid financial footing," Vargas said.

"He did a lot of great things for this City," Vargas said.

Mayor Pro-Tem David Starr Rabb called Mr. Busch "a true asset to the City of Perris."

"I was fortunate to have served with him on the city council for two years, Rabb posted on facebook. "While there were times we didn't agree on certain policies, I never questioned his dedication to the City and its residents. Please keep his family in your thoughts and prayers."

City Councilwoman Tonya Burke remembered Mr. Busch as a "true gem" who instilled "pride in this community and made people proud to call Perris home."

"He stood in a class all by himself," said Burke, who served with Mr. Busch from 2014-16.

"He was reasonable, he was mindful and he led through collaboration, not domination. His legacy is like none other in this City and throughout this region. He was a great man."

City Councilman Malcolm Corona grew up in the Perris. Mr. Busch was mayor for most of his life.

"He always had the best interests of the City of Perris in mind," Corona said. "My thoughts and prayers are with him and his family,"

City Councilwoman Rita Rogers, who served since 1999 with Mr. Busch, said of his passing: "My heart is breaking."

"I had the honor to serve with Daryl for 17 years on an incredible journey of accomplishments that the Perris City Council achieved under his incredible leadership. Daryl Busch was a true Leader who knew how to build a team. He was a Gentle Giant, a Man's Man, a lover of people. He was a great conversationalist and knew something about everyone and everything!"

### Navy veteran, business owner

Mr. Busch was born on Jan. 31, 1941 in St. Louis, one of seven siblings. The family later moved to small town of Greenville, Illinois. While still a teen-ager, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy where he served three years as a shipboard radar operator on the USS Picking and USS Bryce Canyon.

While on a weekend pass from the service, Mr. Busch met his future wife, Kay, and married a short time later. The couple's marriage lasted 57 years. After leaving the service, Mr. Busch and his family lived for a time in the Ontario-Chino area, where he worked as a banker. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in Business from California State University, San Bernardino.

A promotion to bank manager brought Mr. Busch and his family to Perris in 1975. Following his career in finance, Mr. Busch owned and operated Amigos Tres Restaurant on D Street before beginning his service in public office.

Mr. Busch was active in many organizations, including the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, the Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce, Perris Valley Historical and Museum Association, the Perris Valley Rotary Club and the Perris Cesar E. Chavez Friends of the Library.

Survivors include his wife, Linda Kay Busch; son Barry; daughter in law Charlene Busch; grand-daughter Holly Kay Busch; brothers Earnest and Erwin Busch; sisters Darlene Watson, Nona Nance and Wendy Zobrist; sisters-in-law Joyce Kerns, Josie Wallace and Bertha Wallace and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Ida Earnest and Lloyd Busch and sister Narlene Micheimer.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Perris Valley Historical Museum P.O. Box 343, Perris, CA, 92572, or the Perris Cesar E. Chavez Friends of the Library, 163 E. San Jacinto Ave., Perris, CA, 92570. Donations to the historical museum will go to fund an Eagle Scout project to build a garden at the site.

### Services for former Mayor Daryl Busch:

**Viewing:** 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 7, at the First Congregational Church of Perris, 100 North A Street

**Services:** 11 a.m. Friday, Dec. 8 at the First Congregational Church of Perris

**Interment:** Private at Perris Valley Cemetery.



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