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Heat Doesn't Daunt Determined Terri Peak Hikers

More than 75 people braved scorching temperatures June 20 to tackle a challenging four-mile course to the summit of Terri Peak at the Lake Perris State Recreation Area, a fitting end to a series of hikes and bicycle rides that continue the Live Well Perris campaign.

City Councilman Mark Yarbrough and City Manager Richard Belmudez led the contingent of Perris elected officials and employees taking part in the rigorous hike, which took place on a sun drenched trail that ascended 850 feet from the starting point to the summit of Terri Peak.

Hikers carried extra water along the trail as temperatures soared to near 100 degrees in the Perris Valley. Physical fitness instructor Laura Sosa led the hikers through a series of stretches and other exercises to keep them from muscle cramps on the trail.

"This was a challenging, invigorating hike," Yarbrough said after completing the Terri Peak route. "Definitely, a good intermediate hike. We had a great turnout, much larger than we anticipated. If you make things fun, people will come out and participate."



Perris fitness instructor Laura Sosa flashes the thumbs-up sign as she leads a group of hikers up an incline at the start of the Terri Peak trail on June 20. More than 75 people took part in the challenging hike.

Jose Salazar, 60, beat the field to the top and back of Terri Peak. Jorge Alcalá, 17, and Issac Tafolla, 14, were the second and third participants to complete the hike.

Salazar said he walks in municipal parks but the Terri Peak hike was his first. He called it "pretty challenging" and said moments after completing the trail that "the weather was a little hot but not enough to scare me."

"It was a really nice hike and the view from the top was wonderful," Salazar said.

Tafolla runs cross-county at Rancho Verde High School and said Terri Peak is one of the trails the team attacks at practice.

"It's challenging," he said. "It's one of the harder runs we do. The summit view is beautiful. You can see the lake, the water looks beautiful and you can see all of Perris and Moreno Valley."

Alcalá, another Rancho Verde student, said he has hiked in the past but added his body felt the effects of challenging Terri Peak.

"It was cool, no, it was really hot!" he said. "The trail got steeper as you reached the top. I think my legs are still shaking!"



Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough makes his way up the trail during the June 20 hike to Terri Peak at the Lake Perris State Recreation Area.

David Gibson came from Oceanside to tackle Terri Peak. He brought friends from Rancho Cucamonga to take part as well and praised the City of Perris for organizing the event to promote health and fitness.

"It's a great idea that not only shows the City's commitment to fitness but lets people know what's going on in their community," he said.

Gibson and friends routinely hike around San Diego and San Bernardino counties. After completing the Terri Peak ascent, he said the trip to Lake Perris was definitely worth the effort.

"This was definitely not for novices," he said. "I rate it a 6, no a 7, on a scale of 1 to 10"

Following the hike, the City of Perris raffled off prizes to participants who took part in at least one of the four recent hikes and bicycle rides. Those prizes included bicycles, backpacks, fitbit activity trackers and gift cards.



The first three finishers in the Terri Peak hike: Issac Tafolla, 14; Jorge Alcalá, 17; and the contestant to summit and back, Jose Salazar, 60.

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