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Perris Seniors Celebrate at Seasonal Luncheon



Perris senior Mattie Ramirez, 68, gives the thumbs-up to express her appreciation of the annual Senior Luncheon.

The City's annual holiday luncheon provides Perris senior citizens the chance to listen to seasonal tunes, dance, enjoy a hot meal and make sure old acquaintances are not forgotten as they prepare to enter the new year.

Members of the City's recreation department made Thursday, Dec. 15, something special by serving plates of stuffed chicken, honey-glazed carrots and mashed potatoes to 100 Perris seniors, several who said they always make sure to mark the date on their calendars.

City staff distributed all 100 tickets in little more than a day.

"This is our way of telling Perris senior citizens that we love them and appreciate all they've done for our community," said Recreation Coordinator Cynthia Mendez, who coordinated the lunch. "It's the holiday season. It's the season of giving and we look forward to it very much."

Mendez said the celebration ensures that local senior citizens, many who live on very-low incomes, enjoy at least one hot meal lunch during the holidays. After finishing their lunch, the seniors danced, listened to Christmas music and took part in a raffle contest.



Perris Recreation Coordinator Cynthia Mendez with residents Ophelia Gonzalez, 65, and Josefina Duran, 89, at the annual Senior Luncheon De. 15 at the Bob Glass Gym.

Mattie Ramirez, 68, attended in a mechanized wheelchair. She relished the chance to get out of the house and mingle with peers.

"When you get to our age and the kids are grown up and out of the house it's good to meet people your own age and make new friends," Ramirez said. "The City of Perris has done a great job in making us feel part of this community, and we appreciate that so much."

Ophelia Gonzalez, 65, attended with her best friend, Josefina Duran, 89. Gonzalez said eating, meeting and greeting other seniors "helps us get into the Christmas spirit."

"It lifts our spirits to come here," Gonzalez said. "We like the environment. We like to share our stories and make friends. We're happy the City takes such good care of its seniors."

Les and Darlene Steele, both 64, have called Perris home for 42 years. The couple take part in many activities geared for seniors, including Wednesday morning walks, exercise classes and workouts in Perris parks.

The Steeles are on a first name basis with many recreation department workers and exchanged greetings at the annual luncheon.

"We come to have a wonderful time and to support our City because we love it," Les Steele said. "What better City is there than Perris? I don't know of any."

Darlene Steele summed up the couple's perspective on Perris: "We shop in Perris, we party in Perris, we live in Perris and we are happy in Perris."



Perris residents Darlene and Les Steele say they consider Perris one of the best communities in the country.

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