



home > city hall > press releases

## Santa Breakfasts with Kids and Families



Perris Mayor Michael Vargas and his wife, Julie, at the Dec. 17 Breakfast with Santa: "It's all about the children," the mayor said.

The City of Perris municipal gym was transformed into a festive holiday hall to celebrate the annual Breakfast with Santa, an event that drew more than 200 holiday revelers and elected City representatives.

Visions of iPads, smartphones, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Trolls, musical instruments and other Christmas goodies danced in the heads of the youngsters and their parents who gathered Dec. 17 for breakfast and photos with Santa.

Mayor Michael Vargas and his wife, Julie, led the contingent of elected officials who took part in the fun. As grandparents to six boys, they are well aware of the wish lists awaiting many parents in 2016.

"Tablets, Minecraft, Legos," Vargas said, reciting some of the items on his grandsons' wish lists. "This is my favorite time of the year. It's all about kids, it's all about families. Breakfast with Santa is a great event because it brings the community together. Best wishes to all our residents for happy holidays and for a great 2017."



Perris Mayor Pro Tem Rita Rogers with her grandson, Jordan, 5, at Breakfast with Santa.

Mayor Pro Tem Rita Rogers attended with her grandson, Jordan, 5. It's an annual event for the pair. Rogers said her shopping list included Xbox and dinosaurs.

"I love the magical season of Christmas," Rogers said. "I think it is so important to celebrate for our children. This event allows our children to have a visit with Santa. Seeing Christmas through Jordan's eyes is very special to me."

City Councilwoman Tonya Burke said her children are book lovers so they want gift cards to purchase the titles they enjoy. Burke noted that Breakfast with Santa drew not only Perris residents, but those from neighboring cities—another example of the City's impact throughout the region.

"Perris can host this event and residents from outside our City come here to enjoy the festivities as well," she said. "It shows where we are as a City."

City Councilman Malcolm Corona attended with his wife, Mila, and son, Malcolm, 18 months. He encouraged residents to purchase gifts like musical instruments to stimulate their children's minds and imagination.

"It's important to host this event because it brings families together," Corona said. "Families are the cornerstone of the community. This is a great time because it shows our City cares about its youth and families."



Perris City Councilman Malcolm Corona, his wife, Mila, and son, Malcolm, enjoy their visit with Jolly Old St. Nick during the Dec. 17 Breakfast with Santa.

City Councilman David Starr Rabb said 2016 marked his first visit to Breakfast with Santa.

He thanked City staff and members of the City's Youth Advisory Committee for turning the gymnasium into a festive holiday venue. The breakfast—sausages, eggs, potatoes, pancakes and yogurt with fruit—was top-notch too.

"It's good to get into the Christmas spirit," Rabb said. "It's also nice to be able to get a picture with Santa Claus without having to go to a shopping mall."

Deborah Murphy came to Breakfast with Santa with granddaughter, Amelia Fernandez, 3. This year marked the second time the pair took part in the celebration. Last year, Amelia was afraid to sit on Santa's lap. This year, she loves Old St. Nick.

"This is a great time for us," Murphy said. "It's good for the community. It's great for families. The decorations are great, the food is wonderful and the staff is excellent. I look forward to this event. Keep up the good work."

Gamalie Garcia, his wife, Yesenia Gutierrez and their children, Bethany, 3, and Breezza, 19, attended Breakfast with Santa for the first time. They heard about the event while attending the City's annual Christmas Parade the previous week. They liked what they saw when the set foot into the Bob Glass Gym.

"It's fun to see them having fun," Gutierrez said. Dad was happy too.

"It's really nice to be here," Garcia said. "We like to see them happy. It's great family time. We like what the City of Perris is doing for the community."



Perris City Councilman David Starr Rabb and City Councilwoman Tonya Burke chat during the Dec. 17 Breakfast with Santa program, which drew more than 200 visitors to the Perris City Gym.

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