



## CINCO DE MAYO IN SAN JOSE



**Children's Activities at Cinco de Mayo Festival**



**Mike Torres Band Rocks Festival Crowd**

By all accounts, Cinco de Mayo in downtown San Jose was a great Celebration. The San Jose Chapter pulled all the stops in sponsoring and coordinating the huge event on a sun filled Sunday May 2, 2010. Beginning with a parade numbering over 100 entries that included; floats, decorated low rider cars, musicians, cultural dancers, charros mounted on their beautiful horses, novelty units and of course an array of local VIP's riding on open custom cars. The Celebration of Cinco de Mayo pays tribute to the rag tag Mexican Army that defeated the French at the Battle of Puebla in 1862.

Hermelinda Sapien, CEO of The Center for Employment Training headed the Parade as the "Cinco de Mayo" 2010 Grand Marshal. Though the colorful parade was focused on the Celebration of Mexican Heritage, the crowd's thoughts were also on the issue of the times, immigration reform. Attendees including Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren expressed views and concerns over Arizona's SB1070 and its effect on citizens everywhere.

The festivities followed the parade at Discovery Meadows Park where music, food, arts and crafts and much other entertainment was found in abundance. Scores of people entered the gates and peacefully spent the afternoon enjoying the warm sun, food and entertainment. Beginning at 10 am and continuing until 7 pm men, women and children flowed into the park where performers, vendors and volunteers served up a fun filled Fiesta Mexicana.

Two main stages carried entertainment featuring a variety of music and singers. At the South end of the park was a third stage featuring folkloric dancers and an array of children's activities including arts and crafts, face painting and other activities to the delight of the youngsters.

The San Jose (non-profit) Chapter is a veteran service organization of the National American GI forum. The service organization promotes cultural pride among other civic endeavors and advocates for the returning veteran in their quest for earned benefits and assistance in reestablishing themselves after serving their country.

A very special thank-you to Parade Grand Marshal Hermelinda Sapien, the Festival Committee, SJGIF Board of Directors, Volunteers, Coordinators, Vendors, Sponsors and Staff members. **Augie Lerma, Editor California Forumeer**