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Huge Turnout for Halloween Run Benefits Boys & Girls Club

More than 200 adults, teen-agers and children spent part of their Halloween taking part in a 5-kilometer "spooky" run, jog and walk to raised money for the Boys & Girls Club of Perris.

The large and enthusiastic turnout brought a smile to the faces of City officials who sponsored the event and Jose Ramos, Boys & Girls Club chairman.

"We exceeded expectations," he said. "I am grateful to all the runners, the volunteers and especially to the City for making this possible. We are going to be able to do a lot in the next year because of the funds we raised here today."

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Runners take off at the start of the 5-kilometer "spooky" Halloween jaunt Oct. 31 at Frank Eaton Park to raise funds for the Boys & Girls Club of Perris.

The Boys & Girls Club supports a variety of activities for children from 5 to 17 years of age. Those include arts and crafts programs, field trips, homework support, hot and cold snacks and games like air hockey and ping-pong.

The Perris chapter is housed in a building on the north end of the City Hall Campus on D Street. Ramos said membership in the club has more than doubled in the past year, increasing from 150 to 400.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch and City Councilman David Starr Rabb came out to support the "5-K Spooky Walk/Run" Oct. 31 at Frank Eaton Park. The morning dawned cool and bright but the nippy temperatures could not keep dozens of people from donning Halloween costumes to take part in the fun. There were ghouls and pirates, superheroes like Batman, Superman and Wonder Woman and characters like Raggedy Ann. The Teen-age Mutant Ninja Turtles put in an appearance too.



Members of the "Perris Dream Team" pose for a photo before hitting the course Oct. 31 to support the Boys & Girls Club of Perris.

Mayor Busch served as event starter. The initial group or hard-core runners took off first on the course that stretched through the North Perris neighborhood before returning to Eaton Park. Those were followed by occasional runners. The last group consisted of walkers and those who took part while pushing strollers or walking with pets.

"Have a great time!" Busch told the crowd. "Thank you all for coming out and supporting our Boys and Girls Club because they do a great job. Have fun."

The City of Perris was well-represented by its administration and staff, including City Manager Richard Belmudez, Assistant City Manager Ron Carr, Deputy City Manager Darren Madkin and about 20 other employees.



Perris City Councilman David Starr Rabb and Mayor Daryl Busch pose with members of the "Perris Dream Team" who supported the fund-raising effort for the Boys & Girls Club of Perris.

Councilman Rabb, who stays in shape by running, completed the 3.1-mile course in under 30 minutes. He declared the course challenging but not overly difficult and said the spooky walk/run was "a very good success for a very good program."

Rabb noted that the walk/run continues the City's ongoing Live Well Perris healthy-eating active-living campaign, a program he supports whole heartedly.

"I'm glad to see what we are doing for our City and I appreciate it," Rabb said. "I want to continue that."



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch befriends a ghoul prior to the start of the Oct. 31 "spooky run/walk" to raise funds for the Boys & Girls Club of Perris.

A group of runners from the Perris Panthers High School cross country team led the pack. Perris High School senior Gabriel Sanchez, 17, crossed the finish line first in under 18 minutes.

"It was a fun race," Gabriel said. "The weather was cool at the start. It was a nice community event and a nice race."

Ayleen Orduno, 14, of Rancho Verde High School, was the first woman to finish. Like Gabriel and other top finishers, she said enjoyed the running and the community spirit the Halloween-event brought to Perris.

"I had a nice time," Ayleen said.



Perris City Councilman David Starr Rabb chats with resident Raj Vaidyanathan at Frank Eaton Park.

Perris resident Raj Vaidyanathan took part in the run as a gesture of support to his two children, Jaicek, 10, and Eshaan, 7, who are members of the Boys & Girls Club.

"There is a lot of good stuff about this event," Vaidyanathan said. "It helps the community, it promotes health awareness and it raises a good Halloween spirit—no pun intended! We need this kind of activity in Perris. I hope we do more."



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