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Many Hands Make Light Work of Trash

More than 150 volunteers fanned out across Perris to wage their own personal war on blight, removing tons of blight from several locations while showing their pride in the City and a commitment to make it the best possible community.

The volunteers included 10 high-school students from the Perris Youth Advisory Committee, who hauled away tires, wood scraps, household trash, broken glass and a myriad of other refuse as part of the spring cleanup. Most of the other helpers came from several wards and stakes of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Several City staffers supervised the April 18 cleanup.

The labor was sweaty, dirty and physical. But the Youth Advisory Committee members said it also was rewarding and provided a great way to lead by example.



Perris Youth Advisory Committee members Llara Tovar and Brittany Burch load trash collected at a vacant lot near Perris Boulevard.

Guillermo, 17, a Perris High School student who hopes to be a physician one day. "Who wouldn't want to contribute a few hours to make our City more attractive?"

Fellow YAC member Brittany Burch voiced similar sentiments.

"No one wants to live in a dirty community," said Brittany, 14, who attends the California Military Institute and hopes to become a veterinarian. "I want to help my community look better."

Volunteers concentrated their efforts at a vacant lot near Walmart, in a residential neighborhood in Enchanted Heights and at an open space west of A Street. About 75 volunteers tackled the latter location, quickly filling up several truckloads of trash.

Resident Joe Camarillo lives nearby and he was delighted with the enthusiasm of the volunteers and the results.

"I really appreciate it very much," he said. "We really needed it."



Youth Advisory Committee member Gabby Bulacan scoops up bits of trash at a lot near A Street, part of the April 18 community cleanup.

Perris Recreation Coordinator Josh Estrada said the City appreciates the efforts of its teen committee and the other volunteers. The YAC was created last year to provide a conduit between teenagers and City policy-makers about issues facing the younger said.

"It's nice to see so many young people taking an active role in making Perris a better place," Estrada said. "They are a credit to the community."

YAC president Ronnae Lockette, 18, a Perris High School senior who plans on becoming an obstetrician, said before joining the committee, she thought it was impossible for one person to make a difference in the City. That perspective has turned around completely since she joined the advisory group.

"If you can join a group, you get the ability to go out and help," she said. "'I hope others get the message and go out and help."

Another YAC member, Shaeera Ahmed, 16, who attends Rancho Verde High School, said joining the YAC has made her improve skills like public speaking. She helped organize the spring cleanup, part of an Earth Day activity. She cleaned up the lot near A Street.



Perris municipal employee Sara Cortes de Pavon drives a load of trash collected during the community cleanup, which featured the efforts of more than 150 volunteers.

"We all live in the environment and we all need to think about how we can keep it clean," she said. "It's nice being with other members of the community and working on a good cause."

Other Youth Advisory Committee members who took part in the clean-up included Gabby Bulacan, Martin Medrano, Victoria Mac, India Rockett, Llara Tovar, and Princess De la Cruz.



Perris Youth Advisory Committee members Shaeera Ahmed and Jeremy Guillermo on the job during the April 18 cleanup.

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