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Fast Times and Healthy Snacks at Fun Run

Participants in the annual "Fun Run" in Perris used to munch hot dogs, chips and sodas after completing the three-mile course.

Not this year.

In 2014, as part of the ongoing Live Well Perris healthy-eating active-living campaign, the 800-plus runners who finished the race snacked on apples, oranges, granola bars and water.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch said events like the fun run—which was sponsored by the Perris Elementary School District with support from the City—are designed to encourage youngsters and teen-agers that it's never too early to develop healthy lifestyles.

"This is a great activity that gets young people involved in healthy living," Busch said in comments before the start of the race at Railway Elementary School on A Street. "We want all our residents to be healthy and happy—that's the object of Live Well Perris. If you live well, you will live longer and that makes for a better life."



Hundreds of runners take off from the starting line at the beginning of the annual Fun Run in Perris on May 10.

Busch stood at the finish line, congratulating participants who crossed the line and who received participation medallions for their efforts.

Perris City Councilman Julio Rodriguez said he was delighted at the support shown by parents who encouraged their youngsters along the route.

"One of our goals as part of Live Well Perris is to prioritize exercise," he said. "It's great to see so many people out here supporting this great event."

Plenty of race participants were hard-core athletes determined to set personal bests in the run, which took participants on a flat course through south Perris. Others pushed strollers, walked and ran with their pets and made it a fun-family outing as much as a serious athletic competition.



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch provides words of encouragement for the runners prior to the start of the annual Fun Run.

Josue Arguelles came down from San Francisco to take part in the Fun Run along with his niece, Brianna Arguelles, and nephew, Ramon Arguelles, both 9. Josue Arguelles graduated from Perris High School and said he is glad the City is pushing healthy living and physical activities.

"To see the City of Perris engaging its community to become healthier is inspiring," he said. "It's motivating."

Ramon Arguelles said he came prepared to do well.

"I got my new shoes on to make me run faster," he said.

Cousin Brianna Arguelles was looking to enjoy the day.

"I think it's fun," she said.



Perris City Councilman Julio Rodriguez chats with Charlene Busch, who organized a "Tot Trot" mini-run for tykes and small children.

Gabriel Sanchez, 15, a sophomore at Perris High School, completed the three-mile run first, navigating the course in 15-minutes flat. Gabriel competes in the one and two-mile competitions at the high school and said the course, well-marked and flat, posed few challenges.

"I did it just for fun, for the love of running," he said.

Nick Cohenour, 17, came home second, 30 seconds after Sanchez. He said Sanchez has beaten him to the finish line more than once and he promised to come back next year to turn the tables. Cohenour, who attends Canyon Springs High School in Moreno Valley, said he appreciates Perris' commitment to engaging its residents through exercise.

"I don't see any other community doing that," he said.



Perris High School sophomore Gabriel Sanchez, 15, was the first competitor to cross the finish line.

Allison Mallory, the principal at Good Hope Elementary School in Perris, was the first woman to finish the race. She crossed the finish line with her dog, Toby, running alongside her. She takes part in the Fun Run every year. It's a case of leading by example.

"If our students see that we're here to support a healthy lifestyle, they'll realize it's important for them to pursue it as well," Mallory said. "It was great seeing all the kids and community members cheering for each other. Live Well Perris has taken this event to a whole new level."

Vince Ponce, superintendent of the Perris Elementary School District, praised the City for creating a program that is educational, entertaining and encourages exercise. The bottom line, Ponce said: Live Well Perris fun!

"People want to be healthy but they have to find a time to get involved to become healthy," Ponce said. "By making it fun, people remain interested. Creating that culture was masterful."

The top five winners among male runners were Gabriel Sanchez, Nick Cohenour, Omar Mendoza, Ryan Vargo and Hunter French. The top five runners among the women participants included Allison Mallory, Margarita Sanchez, Linda McKibben, Juana Aguilar and Emma Castillo.

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