



Perris Press Release

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"Live Well Perris" Campaign Promotes a Healthy Lifestyle

Perris City Council members this week gave their stamp of approval to the City's new healthy living initiative, a comprehensive program of healthy eating and physical fitness challenges described as educational, interactive, fun and potentially life-changing.

A community health fair scheduled at City Hall and adjacent Foss Field Park marks the kick off of the "Live Well Perris" campaign.

The event will include health screenings, information about diabetes, high-blood pressure, heart disease and other medical conditions, health food vendors, a walk-a-thon (with the chance to win a big-screen television), dance classes and a domino tournament.

The health fair will take place June 15 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. The City is teaming up with the group Friend of Diabetics and All Communities THRIVE for the health fair.

The health fair also marks the initial weigh-in for residents participating in the City's version of the "Biggest Loser." That three month initiative ends with a final weigh-in on Sept. 14. The winners will be the residents who lose the greatest percentage of their initial body weight.

Other events planned for the "Live Well Perris" campaign include the 2013 version of the Perris Farmers Market—one that puts a greater emphasis on locally grown fruits and vegetables-- a D Street history walk and a 3-on-3 basketball tournament.

City elected officials are pitching in as well by taking part in the "Step Out to Work Out" initiative, which features a walk with Mayor Daryl Busch, bicycle riding with Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Yarbrough and work outs with other members of the City Council.

Perris residents can use an interactive app to track their progress toward achieving the "Presidential Active Lifestyle Award" by completing at least 30-minutes of exercise five days a week over a six-week time span. The Presidential Award also includes healthy eating goals, including consuming more fruits and vegetables, fish, whole grains and low-fat milk, cheese and yogurt.

Perris Assistant City Manager Ron Carr led a team of about 25 staff members, elected officials and contractors that launched the "Live Well" campaign, which is expected to continue throughout the remainder of 2013.

The City has launched a webpage (www.cityofperris.org/livewell), a facebook page that can be accessed by searching "Live Well Perris" as well as twitter and instagram accounts (@livewellperris) that allow Perris residents to track their progress as they move toward a healthier lifestyle as well as post pictures and comments related to their participation in the Live Well Perris program.

Perris officials announced that residents who "friend" the City on the live well facebook page before June 15, 2013 will become eligible for two grand prizes—a 12-month membership to the City gym or a \$100 gift card to Big 5 Sporting Goods. Winners will be announced at the health fair.

Carr said the "Live Well" program was created to address an epidemic of childhood and adult obesity caused in large part by sedentary lifestyles and consumption of high-calorie, low-nutrition foods.

In Riverside County, 61 percent of adults and nearly 15 percent of children and teen-agers are considered overweight or obese. "The statistics related to children are particularly troubling," Carr said. Children who are obese have a much greater likelihood of becoming obese adults."

Dr. Cameron Kaiser, Riverside County's Public Health Officer, said obesity, lack of exercise and smoking contribute to about 70 percent of the preventable deaths each year in the county. By implementing the "Live Well Perris" initiative, Kaiser said the City "will become a leader" in promoting healthier and longer lives.

Perris City Council members unanimously approved the "Live Well" program and encouraged residents to get behind its goals.

City Councilwoman Rita Rogers said she has "already dusted off the treadmill, went to zumba dance classes and traded soda and chips for fruits and veggies" in her quest to lose weight and increase exercising. She will be taking part in the City's version of the Biggest Loser and D Street History walk in addition to working out with Perris residents as part of the "Step Out to Work Out" program.

"A program like this is long overdue and I am looking forward to it," Rogers said.

City Councilman Julio Rodriguez said he too has struggled to keep excess weight off for much of his life. He too will be taking part in the Bigger Loser program. The initial weigh-in for contestants takes place during the Sept. 15 health fair and the final weigh-in takes place Sept. 14. The winners will be the residents who lose the greatest percentage of their initial body weight.

"This is a struggle but one that is worth going through," Rodriguez said. "I'm going to need a lot of encouragement and support. I'm really excited about the biggest loser program. I watch the show on television."

Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Mark Yarbrough will be bicycling through Perris and its environs with interested constituents. He wondered if calls for medical aids would decrease over time as more and more Perris residents improve their fitness and would be less prone to heart attacks, strokes and other medical emergencies.

"This is a great program," Yarbrough said. "I look forward to participating in it."

Perris City Councilman Al Landers said the Live Well initiative is aimed at raising the quality-of-life for all residents.

"I am proud to be part of a City Council that is bringing forward a program that will improve the health of our citizens," he said.

Mayor Daryl Busch said that "healthy communities mean happy communities." He said to ensure children and high-schoolers join "Live Well Perris," the City must commit itself to an extensive outreach program to local school boards and classrooms. Perris officials plan to address some local school boards and keep Perris students informed about the latest

"Live Well" programs through the City's website and social media portals.



Perris Assistant City Manager Ron Carr outlines the City's "Live Well Perris" Healthy Eating Active Living Initiative to the City Council.



Perris Assistant City Manager Ron Carr discusses the "Live Well Perris" campaign with two high-school students who attended the April 30 City Council meeting.