



## Perris News

Contact: Joe Vargo, Perris Public Information Officer  
Phone: 951-956-2120  
[jvargo@cityofperris.org](mailto:jvargo@cityofperris.org)

### 8th Annual Relay for Life: Celebrate. Remember. Fight Back.

The City's 8th Annual Relay for Life to raise funds for cancer research and treatment took on a personal tone for Perris Mayor Daryl Busch when he announced that he has undergone treatment for the disease.

Busch, in his first public announcement, addressed about 500 people Saturday who gathered for the 24-hour Relay for Life at Foss Park. He told the crowd that he was diagnosed with prostate cancer several months ago and has completed 42 radiation treatments.

The Mayor said he is feeling well and that he is looking forward to serving the City for many more years.

"Cancer is a disease that plays terrible tricks on your body and mind," Busch told the hushed crowd. "You wonder if you're going to die. But you can beat it. That's why I am urging everyone to get early screening. It makes a difference."

Event organizers praised the Mayor's remarks, saying they are sure to cast light on the importance of early detection and treatment.

Around Foss Park, teams gathered early Saturday morning for the 24-hour relay. The theme of this year's event was "Celebrate, Remember, Fight Back." Cancer survivors led participants in the first lap around Foss Park. A team from the California Military Institute A Perris High School drum kept up the enthusiasm.

Debbie Villegas, a member of the committed that organized Relay for Life 2010, urged the crowd to "keep strong, keep looking forward so we don't look back." Villegas's son, Paul Villegas, lost his battle with brain cancer in 2002. He was 30 years old.

"Cancer never sleeps," Debbie Villegas said. "Neither do we."

Villegas singled out Perris Auto Speedway promoter Don Kazarian for special commendation. Kazarian has supported the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life for several years, and has raised more than \$50,000. This year, he is committed to raising at least \$14,000.

Kazarian said he encourages race car drivers to walk through the stands during every program with their helmets in hand to collect donations from the audience. He announced that the upcoming July 3 fireworks show and racing program will be free for Perris residents.

"We are glad to support the City of Perris in this important cause," he said. "We will be here for you guys forever." Teams from various agencies and companies raised money for the effort. No one's team was larger than Bob McGinty, a three-time cancer survivor. He organized a team of 100 marchers.

McGinty, 48, said his mother, mother-in-law and father-in-law all died of cancer. When he was diagnosed with prostate cancer six years ago, he felt he too would die. He told his family and friends, and they encouraged him to fight the disease as hard as possible.

"I was never alone," McGinty said.

Robotic surgery removed the cancer, McGinty said. Talking with survivors kept up his spirits. He maintains his optimism despite two later diagnoses of cancer. Surgeons removed a cancerous tumor from his neck a couple of years ago and later removed a cancerous growth from his arm.

"Cancer can take my body one piece at a time," McGinty said. "But it can never take my spirit. I have been cured three times. I am going to live. I cannot thank the City enough for their support of this event."

Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough brought his race car to the event and invited people to autograph it. Signatories included survivors and people who remembered in tributes friends and family who succumbed from cancer.

Kay Smith wrote a tribute to her friend, Liz Tilley, who was known as "the lunch lady" at the California Military Institute. Tilley died of cancer last year.

"I'm here today so everyone can have more birthdays," Smith said.

Yarbrough said he was glad to show his support for cancer research and treatment.

"This dreaded disease can strike anyone at any time," he said. "We must do everything in our power to combat it."

You need to have the  
Adobe Flash Player to view  
this content.  
[Please click here to continue.](#)



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch reads a proclamation in support of Relay for Life. He is flanked by City Councilwoman Joanne Evans and City Councilman Mark Yarbrough.



Perris Auto Speedway promoter Don Kazarian presents a check to Relay for Life.



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch reads a proclamation in support of Relay for Life. He is flanked by City Councilwoman Joanne Evans and City Councilman Mark Yarbrough.



Debbie Villegas talks about her son, firefighter Paul Villegas, who died from brain cancer in 2004.