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Preparations Heat up for Perris Health Fair

More than 175 volunteers—both adult and children—have pledged their time and talents to ensure the Fourth Annual City of Perris Health Fair continues providing the insights and information needed for residents to eat healthy and exercise.

The April 23 health fair at Perris City Hall, 101 North D Street, features exercise demonstrations, health screenings performed by college nursing students, bicycle raffles, tickets to local recreational events, a kids' obstacle course and rock wall, carnival games, a jumper, educational materials and healthy food vendors. More than 80 vendors and exhibitors will participate in the fair.

The health fair also provides the perfect setting to unveil the City's demonstration garden, which features a variety of growing techniques that use little water, leave a small footprint, produce high yields and continue Perris commitment to sustainability and its ongoing Live Well healthy eating active living initiative.

The City is once again partnering with the American Cancer Society and the Perris Elementary School District to make the day extra special. The school district's annual 5-K "Fun Run" kick off the day's events at 8:30 a.m. as hundreds of runners hit the pavement and make their way through City streets to complete the course.

Then the annual 24-hour "Relay for Life" begins at 9 a.m. and includes the always-emotional opening ceremonies and the traditional first lap featuring cancer survivors walking around Foss Field Park.

Mayor Daryl Busch and other elected officials are expected to provide opening remarks at all three events.

"We're proud of our partnerships with the schools and great non-profit organizations like the American Cancer Society," Busch said. "Our health fair is one of our major City events and it always draws a large and enthusiastic crowd. We're looking forward to a great day."



A youngster climbs the rock wall during the 2015 City of Perris Health Fair. This year's health fair takes place April 23 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and once again will feature a rock climbing wall, physical fitness and cooking demonstrations and music and dance performances.

The health fair officially opens at 10 a.m. Highlights of health fair 2016 include the efforts of 60 students from West Coast University, which specializes in graduating students with degrees in the medical profession. Students will be providing screenings for high cholesterol, high-blood pressure, diabetes and skin cancer.

Jolene Balatero, a spokesman for the university, said West Coast officials are looking forward to partnering with the City to ensure the success of the health fair.

"Thank you to the City of Perris for hosting this important community event and for inviting West Coast University to participate!" she said. "We are so excited to be working with the City of Perris on this health fair. Health fairs are important to the community because they help reach residents and participants who may not otherwise have access to care. In simple screenings that are done in health fairs, care providers often catch abnormal results that need medical attention."

The kid's corner features a cornucopia of sights and activities sure to attract the elementary and middle-school set. Besides the climbing wall, jumper and obstacle course, the children's area also a skateboarding demonstration, a chance to paint a mural to support the City's "Green City Farm Program" or demo garden and the opportunity to assemble ingredients into healthy snacks.



Participants take off at the start of the 2015 Fun Run, a 5-K event through the streets of Downtown Perris. This year's Fun Run begins April 23 at 8:30 a.m.

The City's health fair also features an assortment of food vendors with healthy eating options.

"Kids who are exposed to healthy food options when they're young are more likely to stick with those choices when they become adults," said LaShay McClinton, a Perris staff worker who his helping organize the Kids' Corner

McClinton said 120 students from Innovative Horizons Charter School in Perris have volunteered to help make the Kids' Corner and the entire health fair a rousing success. The Innovative Horizons middle-schoolers will staff booths, escort visitors to and from the health fair and various other duties

Recreation Coordinator Rachel Pinedo, who also is working on the Kids' Corner for the health fair, said she emphasizes the importance of eating healthy to her two young daughters, who have taken the message to heart. Both are fond of apples, broccoli, asparagus and boiled chicken.

"We need to educate our children about the importance of exercising and eating healthy early on so they can avoid diabetes and heart disease and maintain a healthy lifestyle for life," Pinedo said.

Sponsors for the upcoming health fair include Mission Pediatrics, Lamar Advertising Company, Perris Auto Speedway, Aleshire & Wynder, LLP, Tri-Lake Consultants, Inc., Citizen's Business Bank, Global Plastics, Mount San Jacinto College, Olivia Johnson Interpreting & Languages, Inc., North County Health Services and Riverside University Health System.

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