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Health Fair Hits the Spot Again



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch, Mayor Pro-Tem Rita Rogers and City Councilmembers David Starr Rabb and Tonya Burke welcome the crowd during opening ceremonies of the Fourth Annual Health Fair at City Hall on April 23. Standing in front of Rogers is her grandson, Jordan.

The City of Perris held its fourth annual health fair April 23, an event that turned the City Hall Campus into an expo center where residents screened themselves for diabetes and other life-threatening conditions, learned low-cal cooking techniques, took part in exercise classes and toured the recently planted community garden.

The health fair continues the City's Live Well Perris healthy eating active living campaign which has garnered national, state and regional acclaim.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch led a contingent of elected officials who spent the day at the health fair, talking with residents, visiting with the nearly 100 vendors who supported the event and taking turns raffling off 75 donated bicycles.

As in previous years, the health fair took place along with the annual Relay for Life to raise money to fight cancer and the 5-kilometer "fun run" sponsored by the Perris Elementary School District. Turnout for the day topped 3,500.

"Live Well Perris has proven a big hit for our community," Busch said. "Excitement is in the air. All the events go together—it's all about living well. These are all wonderful activities that make our City stronger. It's a wonderful day to be in Perris."

Mayor Pro-Tem Rita Rogers attended the health fair with her grandson, Jordan, 4, in tow. Jordan led the Pledge of Allegiance during the opening ceremonies.

"It's great to be able to share this great day with our partners from Relay for Life and the school district," Rogers said. "This is an exciting day."

Rogers said she was recently appointed chairwoman of the health subcommittee of the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG). Her fellow committee members are impressed with Perris' commitment to spreading the word about exercise, healthy eating and medical screenings.

"They wish they could be us," Rogers said.



Perris City Councilwoman Tonya Burke (center) leads a Zumba lesson during the April 23 health fair.

City Councilwoman Tonya Burke led a Zumba lesson.

"The health fair keeps getting bigger and better," Burke said. "I am pleased we continue to develop our partnerships with school children and the American Cancer Society. We are all pushing toward the same objective—healthier living. Our collaboration makes for a tighter community."

City Councilman David Starr Rabb called the annual health fair "a great event with a great turnout, one I look forward to every year."

"You cannot have a healthy community without healthy residents," he said. "We are making a difference in the lives of our residents. I am excited about the future."

Councilman Mark Yarbrough could not attend the event but said he was there in spirit.

"It's a great event for all the right reasons—your health," he said. "Anything we can do to promote, support and educate people about their health is a great thing. The health of our residents is super-important to our elected officials. That's why we support the health fair whole-heartedly. We lead by example."



Health screenings for high blood pressure and diabetes were among the activities taking place in Perris during the City's Fourth Annual Health Fair on April 23.

A variety of events

Residents attending the health fair found no shortage of places to visit and enjoy. Parents with kids took time to watch their youngsters ascend a rock wall or jump up and down in a bounce house. Other children got face painted. Wannabe martial artists broke pieces of wood in half with their feet. Chef Lee Bowman demonstrated how to make healthy snacks. City fitness instructor Laura Sosa led several exercise classes.

Maria Carrillo watched her kids tackle the rock wall. She said the health fair provided quality time with her family.

"It's great that this event takes place in the City," she said. "There's lots of activities for the kids and things kids want to see. I give the City two thumbs up! Great job."

The City gym became a health-screening center during the health fair, as residents lined up to learn their weight, blood pressure, body-mass index, cholesterol levels and were tested for diabetes. Volunteers from West Coast University, Claremont Graduate University and Keck Graduate Institute moved participants from station to station, recording the results and then explaining what they meant.

Lucie Leung Liu, who coordinated the screenings, said the results will become part of a research project to reduce diabetes in Riverside County. She commended the City for organizing the health fair and encouraging medical screenings.

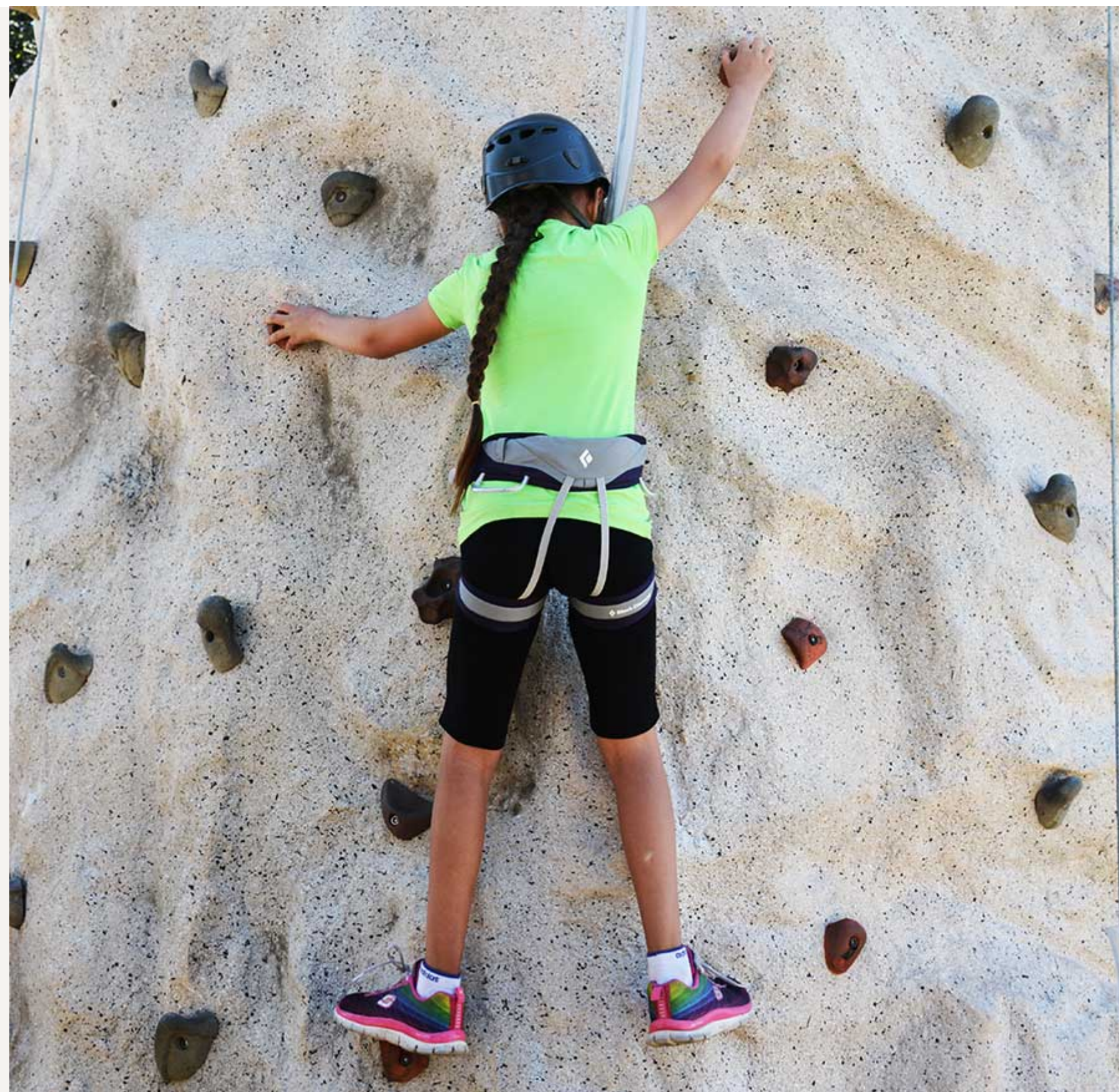
"We've received great cooperation from the City, and we are most appreciative," Liu said.

Alice Mangram took part in many of the day's activities. She got screened for high blood pressure and diabetes. She took part in the exercise routines. She visited many vendor booths, which included those with information about healthy cooking and health care.

Mangram takes part in line-dance and exercise classes for seniors. They help keep fit.

"It keeps me from being stiff and out of shape," she said. "The best thing you can do is keep those muscles moving."

The health fair ended with the raffling off of bicycles donated by event sponsors. Mayor Busch, Mayor Pro-Tem Rogers and councilmembers Burke and Rabb took turns calling out the lucky numbers and posing for photos with bicycle winners.



A youngster tackles the rock wall, one of the activities at the City of Perris' Fourth Annual Health Fair on April 23.

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