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Many Perris Hands Make Light Work of City Cleanup



Perris City Councilman David Starr Rabb loads piles of weeds into a bag, held by Youth Advisory Committee volunteer Brittany Burch, during cleanup efforts May 14 on Fourth Street near Interstate 215.

Dedicated volunteers fanned out across Perris May 14 to help beautify the City, removing paint from park playgrounds, sanding picnic benches and pulling, bagging and disposing of sacks of weeds and trash along entry points to Downtown.

The contingent included members of the Perris Youth Advisory Committee, school students looking for community-service hours and City Councilmembers David Starr Rabb and Mark Yarbrough.

By 8 a.m., Rabb had worked up a good sweat removing weeds and rubbish from a Fourth Street lot right off Interstate 215. With him were cadets from the California Military Institute, a volunteer from the YAC and Perris Valley resident Michelle Lewis, who organized a cleanup at the Perris Post Office.

"It's great to help keep the City clean and this is an entry point to our City," Rabb said. "I am so pleased to see students from CMI and our Youth Advisory Committee working here today. They are tremendous assets to the City. They are always there to lend a hand."



Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough scrapes paint from the walls of a handball court during the May 14 community cleanup.

CMI cadet Brittany Burch, 16, took part in the Fourth Street corridor clean-up. Burch has been a member of the Youth Advisory Committee since its inception in 2013.

"This is where we live and we all want to live in nice place, not one that's full of trash," she said. "It's fun to be able to come together to help the community."

Another group of students worked outside the Perris Senior/Teen Center on D Street, sanding off picnic tables before applying new coats of paint. Chantal Loreda, 16, a junior at Rancho Verde High School, was among those applying a little elbow grease to remove the old paint. For her, the day's efforts could be summed up in two words: civic pride.

"This is the City I live in," she said. "If you want to see a difference, you've got to make a difference. As a member of the Youth Advisory Committee. It's nice to be able to keep up the image of our City and show that we're willing to work to make it beautiful."

At Paragon Park, Councilman Yarbrough scraped paint off the cement walls of a handball court, joining teen-agers and City staffers at the job site. Dianne Ochoa, 15, a freshman at Citrus Hill High School, said community-pride, much like charity, begins at home.

"This is our community and no one is going to clean it besides those of us who live here," Ochoa said. "This is going to benefit everybody. That's why I like it."



Perris recreation department employee Jessica Munoz sands a picnic table near the Senior Center as part of the community cleanup May 14.

Jasmin Garcia, 14, who attends Lakeside Middle School, said scraping paint was no easy chore but in the end, the toil would prove worthwhile.

"We're helping make this park look nicer," she said.

Yarbrough thanked all the volunteers who came out to lend a hand.

"It is important to help keep up City facilities," he said. "This effort says a lot about the people who come out to help. It's important for them to get out and personally lend a hand."

The volunteer projects coincided with a large community-cleanup day sponsored by the City's waste hauler, CR&R. Hundreds of Perris residents took part in the cleanup, an opportunity to dispose of furniture, wood and metal scraps, paper products, household appliances and other refuse. Dozens of vehicles lined up outside the old police station on Fourth and G streets to off load their cargos, which was placed into large bins for disposal.



High school students remove an old coat of paint from a picnic table as part of the May 14 community cleanup.

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