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## Saturday's Fun Run in the City of Perris

The possibility of rain and a new route for the sixth annual "Fun Run" in the City of Perris presented new challenges to the hundreds of participants who took off April 25th from City Hall but in the end, nothing could dampen the day's excitement and enthusiasm.

As in previous versions of the 5-kilometer fun run, the fastest times were posted by high-school students who are seasoned runners and train regularly.

The winning time of 17-minutes 5-seconds was turned in by Perris High School junior Jordie Casillas, 17.

"It was pretty intense," he said of the run. "I didn't think I could win. I just kept trying."

The 2015 route took runner from City Hall down G Street to Goetz and Case Roads before turning for the home stretch on D Street and back to the City Hall Campus. Runner-up Xavier Carranza said the last leg looked daunting as he headed north on D to the finish line.

"It seemed to go on forever!" said Xavier, who like his Perris Panther High School track team-mates runs 5 to 10 miles a day as part of his training regimen.

The other top finishers among the men included Mitchell Perez, Juan Vega and Michael Yen. Top women runners included Lynette Ngo, Sarah Light, Airia Tapia, Cindy Tapia and Mia Echiverri.



Throng of runners take off from the starting line of the 6th Annual Perris Elementary School District Fun Run on April 25.

This year also marked the first time the Perris Elementary School District partnered with the City of Perris to support its ongoing Live Well Perris healthy-eating active-living campaign. The partnership resulted in many Fun Run participants remaining at City Hall at the end of the run, which coincided with the opening of the third annual City of Perris Health Fair.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch expressed his sentiments about bringing the Fun Run to campus: the more the merrier. The American Cancer Society became the third partner to host an event that day at City Hall by holding its annual 24-hour Relay for Life at Foss Field Park.

"We're glad to have everybody here," he said. "Our City has always been interested in community events."

Mayor Pro-Tem Tonya Burke was equally pleased.

"Events like these contribute to the overall health of the community," she said.



First-place finisher Jordie Casillas races to complete the 5-kilometer Fun Run with runner-up Xavier Carranza in hot pursuit.

The hard-core runners paced the field and left the rest of the pack in their wake. But there also were plenty of casual joggers and more than a few participants who brought their children in strollers and their pets on leashes. They all shared one thing in common: It's fun to run, get some exercise and take steps to improve one's health.

"We're here to support our daughters," said

Krystin Grimard, who came to the Fun Run with her husband, Roger, father-in-law, Roger Sr. and children Jaden, 3, and Deborah, 8, who attends Good Hope Elementary School.

"It's good to hold community activities that encourage physical fitness. We recently moved to Perris and we try to take part in as many community events as possible. This community is important."

Jose Martinez brought his daughters, Giselle, 7, and Roselyn, 9, to the Fun Run. They attend mead Valley Elementary School.

"We are here to exercise, keep healthy and inspire other people," Jose Martinez said. "We are here to have a good time. This encourages people to have a positive mind and good future."

Perris Elementary School Superintendent Vince Ponce said the district's commitment to Live Well Perris is providing benefits for students, their parents, teachers and administrators. The district takes part in the Chef-in-the-Classroom program, part of Live Well Perris, which teaches students how to prepare healthy snacks and the benefits of fruits and vegetables over sugary drinks and chips.

"It's been phenomenal," Ponce said. "This is a rich community. We're proud to be part of it. Blending all the events here today provides the awareness we want about what is happening in Perris."

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