



The B.M.C. Durfee High School Marching Band finishes the parade in front of the Academy Building on S. Main St.

Children's Holiday Parade draws hundreds to S. Main St.

The 32nd Annual Holiday Children's Parade stepped off from Kennedy Park shortly after 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 3rd with 125 groups from local schools and organizations lined up to walk a heart-healthy half-mile parade route on South Main Street from the Park to Government Center.

Participants included local politicians, beauty pageant queens, the Fall River Colonial Navy, the Hills Mills Clown Band, Clydesdale horses from Lakeville, numerous school marching bands and floats, the giant Kermit the Frog inflatable float, and, of course, Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus.

"I'm always amazed at the turnout every year" said Greater Fall River Re-Creation's Executive Director Grace Gerling who, along with Annemarie Holly, organized the event, the largest Holiday Parade in New England.

Students learn how to confront discrimination



Project sponsor and Executive Director of United Neighbors of Fall River, Wendy Garf-Lipp, left, talks about some of the situations of discrimination that people commonly confront at the event held at the Fall River Boys and Girls Club.

Seven students from Durfee High School and Diman Regional High School attended the first of five sessions that will be



Viveiros Elementary School Vice Principal Frederick McClelland leads a "walking school bus" on the first day.

Viveiros students can now join a "Walking School Bus"

Students who attend the Viveiros Elementary School began their first "Walking School Bus" of the school year by leaving from the Sunset Hill Housing Development.

The group every day of the week throughout the thanks to School Vice Principal Frederick McClelland who began the daily walks.

Walking to school has been a primary objective of Partners School Wellness Coordinator Marcia Picard who organizes walk to school events twice a year at all of the Fall River Public Schools.

"With all of the attention on academic achievement, children's physical health is too often ignored as an essential part of learning," stated Picard.

Similar walking groups now head to the Doran Community School, the Letourneau Elementary School and the Fonseca Elementary School.

provided to various groups of youth around the city to learn how to confront discrimination and prejudice in their own lives and the lives of their fellow students held in November at the Fall River Boys and Girls Club.

The training is a project of United Neighbors of Fall River and Partners and was led by Diman Regional Technical High School Adjustment Counselor Michaela Hetzler who took the group through a series of exercises that illustrated examples of microaggression and implicit bias that they encounter and then asked them to think of a variety of strategies to effectively confront those situations.

"These students really get it and demonstrate a remarkable ability to think on their feet," commented Hetzler.

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Partners is supported by DPH Factor 9 funding from Saint Anne's Hospital and numerous other grants.



2014-2019 Priority Strategy Areas

Factor I: Diet & Exercise

Factor II: Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drug Use Prevention

Factor III: Sexual Activity and Infectious Diseases

Factor IV: Access to Quality Dental, Health, Mental Health and Substance Abuse Care

Factor V: Education, Employment, Income and Disability

Factor VI: Community Safety and Violence Prevention

Factor VII: Family, Cultural and Social Support, and Housing

Factor VIII: Environment and Infrastructure



Greater Fall River Partners for a Healthier Community, Inc. P.O. Box 1228 Fall River, MA 02722

Participating Organizations

Arbour Counseling
BMC Health Net Plan
Bristol County District Attorney
Bristol Elder Services
Catholic Social Services
Citizens for Citizens, Inc.
City of Fall River
Board of Park Commissioners
Community Development Agency
Community Maintenance Council on Aging
Health & Human Services
Mass In Motion
Street Tree Planting Program
Tobacco Control Program
Youth Services
Dog Tag Navigators
Fall River Housing Authority
Fall River Police Department
Fall River Public Schools
Fall River WIC Program
Family Recovery Project
Family Service Association
First Baptist Church
Gr. F.R. Chamber of Commerce
Greater Fall River Re-Creation
Green Futures
Habit OPCO
HealthFirst Family Care Center
Katie Brown Educational Program
Mass. Department of Public Health
NHP Ship's Cove Apartments
People, Incorporated
Diabetes Association, Inc.
Early Intervention Program
Seven Hills Behavioral Health
SCI AmeriCorps
Southcoast Health
Saint Anne's/Steward Hospital
Stanley Street Treatment & Resources
The Trustees of Reservations
Thomas Chew Mem. Boys & Girls Club
Town of Somerset
Town of Swansea
Town of Westport
United Neighbors of Fall River
United Interfaith Action
Y.M.C.A. of Greater Fall River

Partners Web Sites:

www.GFRPartners.com
www.HealthyCityFallRiver.org
www.FallRiverFitnessChallenge.com
www.SouthCoastWorksiteHealth.com
www.MyFallRiver.org

The Greater Fall River Health CONNECTION

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Connecting the people of Greater Fall River to improve our quality of life and health

The Greater Fall River Fitness Challenge begins its tenth year. The longest in the country!



The Greater Fall River Fitness Challenge begins its tenth year in January 2017, making it the longest running non-commercial fitness challenge in the nation! Well over 25,000 pounds have been shed by hundreds of participants over that time, but more importantly, everyone who has participated has made a commitment to increase their fitness level and thereby their overall health.

Many research studies have confirmed that 150 minutes of active movement every week:

- Helps keep muscles, bones, and joints healthy,
- Increases ability to do daily activities without getting tired,
- Improves balance and flexibility,
- Maintains muscle tone, improves posture, and reduces risk of falling and fracturing bones,
- Lessens feelings of anxiety or depression, and, improves one's sense of well-being and self-esteem.

Research also supports the benefits physical activity and regular exercise in lowering your risk of developing heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, back pain, arthritis, osteoporosis and some cancers.

Challenge events will be held on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. and most Saturday mornings from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. in the Kuss Middle School gymnasium, along

with a weekly bonus challenge. The Challenge is open to anyone in the Greater Fall River Area, including folks who live, work or attend school in Somerset, Swansea and Westport. People from outside that area are also welcome to participate but are not eligible for prizes.

As was provided last year, a weekly walking challenge will be offered for those who aren't quite up to the more intensive one-hour workouts that are led by local fitness providers on a rotating basis. "We have been emphasizing walking all year through the new www.WalkFallRiver.org web site and Facebook page," noted Eric Andrade who manages the sites. There will be no charge for the walking group but enrolling in the Challenge will require a one-time ten dollar charge. People can join either the Challenge or the walking group anytime while the series is running.

"We also have a youth component," noted Partners School Wellness Coordinator Marcia Picard. "Most of the school physical education staff will also get students involved in some type of fitness challenge"

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Winning teams "Sunday Funday", "BCC Bombers", and "Mission Slimpossible" pose on stage while second place winner Linda Ferreira, third place winner John Malloy, second place winner Gerald Lemay, first place winner Danika Guadalup and third place winner Liz Mota pose below.

Profiling Annemarie Holly



No one embodies the Fall River Fitness Challenge better than Annemarie Holly. Though she didn't start working on the Challenge until its fourth year, her presence at nearly every event in the six years since then has cemented her identity as a staple of the Challenge.

Not native to the Fall River Area, Annemarie now lives with her husband in nearby Barrington, RI, but often spends six or seven days a week in Fall River.

Ms. Holly now serves as the Program Director for Greater Fall River Re-Creation and has responsibility for all aspects of that large agency's services, but she finds the time to do the organizing and publicity for the event that draws hundreds each year.

"While it's a lot of work and a big time commitment," she states, "it's something that I really enjoy doing, especially when I see the benefit that so many get from participating."

In fact, thousands have responded to the Challenge, and many lives have been changed. Not only have many been able to lose unwanted pounds, many have made personal fitness a lifelong habit.

"I've personally witnessed people whose whole life has been turned around by joining and staying with the Challenge year after year," she notes. "That's what keeps me coming back every year!"

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at the same time that the adult program is running," she added. Children under sixteen are not permitted to join the adult Challenge, though parents may bring their kids to Challenge events and participate with the permission of the instructors

While exercise can be part of a weight loss approach, it is clear that successful weight loss only works with dietary changes. While some follow a low-fat, calorie-restricted approach, the Challenge has endorsed a lower carbohydrate, higher fat approach as the current research shows greater effectiveness for most people.

Dr. David Weed, Executive Director of Partners for a Healthier Community, will again be running a nutrition group with Southcoast Health Registered Dietitian Amanda Raposo from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. in the Kuss Middle School Community Room each Saturday morning right after the Challenge events until April 8th. These sessions emphasize reducing dietary carbohydrates (e.g. sugars and starches) and adding healthy fats to reduce hunger, a strategy based on the best science that results in improved cholesterol, blood sugar and blood pressure.

Nutrition science has been evolving, and it is now clear that consuming fats, even saturated fats, does not pose a risk of heart disease. In fact, dietary fat actually enables the body to absorb essential vitamins and minerals also results in a sensation of fullness long after eating while carbohydrates lead to increased hunger after just a few hours. People who follow low-carb, high fat diets not only lose weight more easily and

also see improvements in blood sugar, blood cholesterol and blood pressure.

"Everyone I know who's given this approach a try for as little as two weeks sees positive results," says Weed who began this lifestyle seven years ago. "The hard part is getting people to try it," he continues. "Forty years of bad dietary advice has resulted in a fear of increasing dietary fat, even though any cardiologist will tell you that eating refined grains and sugars is what will drive up your risk of heart disease."

There are signs that the fear of fat is subsiding as well-known physicians like Dr. Mark Hyman of the Cleveland Clinic and Dr. David Ludwig of Harvard Medical School fully support eating more fat and fewer carbohydrates.

Anyone interested in learning more is invited to attend any of the free weekly one-hour sessions offered on Saturday mornings at 10:00 a.m. at Kuss Middle School from January 21st through April 8th. Videos of last year's sessions are also available at www.gfrpartners.com/LowCarbs.html.



Terry Wilbur, pictured above with Tajae Mendes, leads a candlelight vigil at Steppinstone, Inc. in support of the new First Step Inn that will open in the spring on Durfee Street.

3rd annual health fair draws a crowd at HealthFirst



HealthFirst Family Care Center Outreach Coordinator Linda Hennessey greets State Representative Carole Fiola at their 3rd annual Health Fair in November.

The HealthFirst Family Care Center held its Third Annual Health Fair at its Quarry Street headquarters in November 2016.

The event included a very popular raffle

for a variety of prizes, one in which, in order to win, participants had to visit each table and get a stamp. The tables featured, among others, a blood pressure and blood sugar screening, a table featuring the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program, a table for the HealthFirst Dental Clinic, and table for the diabetes prevention program at the Fall River YMCA.

HealthFirst is one of two federally-qualified community health centers that provide a resource for people struggling through difficult times, whether unemployed, a single parent or a recent immigrant. The Center offers a full range of medical and dental services and also houses the Standard Pharmacy drug store and Southcoast Radiology Services.



Senator Michael Rodrigues listens as Superintendent Matt Malone speaks to School Committee Member Dr. Ed Costar and State Representative Carole Fiola at the PACE Center opening.

PACE Center opens at Durfee

Local politicians, school officials, School Committee members, and agency representatives were invited in November to the official opening of the new Parent and Community Engagement Center (PACE) located at B.M.C. Durfee High School.

The occasion highlighted several years of work to bring a number of school resources into one location that was readily accessible to parents and other members of the public.

The location just off the small parking lot, with dedicated parking spaces near the school entrance, allows parents and others to enter without going through the building to access six different services housed at the Center

"We wanted to create a welcome and engaging space so that parents, when they come in to register, the first point of contact, we're all about customer service," stated Superintendent Dr. Matt Malone. "Our School Committee has made that a priority this year and for the years moving forward, he added.

Parent Academy classes focus on early childhood



Dr. Jeanne Paccia of the Fernandes Center for Children and Families at Saint Anne's Hospital talks about raising resilient children in the "Bouncing Back" class.

Parents, caregivers and their children gathered for the third session of the fall Parent Academy program, this time held at the Greater Fall River Children's Museum.



Fall River Mass In Motion coordinator Julianne Kelly goes over the findings of the HIA Report completed in 2012 on the Alfred J. Lima Quequechan River Trail.

Rail trail health impact presented

Fall River Mass In Motion coordinator Julianne Kelly was invited to participate in a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Training offered at the Brockton Public Library in November.

The invitation was based on the HIA that was done in 2012 on the Quequechan River Rail Trail that was subsequently opened for public use in June of 2016.

Plans were first presented in April, 2011 and reviewed in 2012 along with other efforts to make Fall River more bicycle-friendly. The HIA Report completed in 2012 suggested a number of potential health benefits from the use of the Trail by residents of one of the poorest neighborhoods in the City of Fall River where the Trail is located.

Ms. Kelly described how those benefits have accrued since the Trail opened in June of 2016. The Trail is an integral part of the Fall River Mass In Motion 1422 Project to reduce diabetes and hypertension.

The program focused on early childhood and featured four classes: 1) "Brain Building in Progress", 2) "Bouncing Back", 3) "You're Not My Friend," and 4) "Not Talking Yet? Not to Worry, Talk Together."

The evening began with free pizza, and then, while parents went to the four classes, the children got to play in several of the Museum's playrooms.

"I think the parents really appreciated the chance to focus on the particular needs of their children," stated project coordinator Barbara Allard, "The small classes gave each parent the chance to address their unique concerns," she added.

Upcoming Events

Jan. 12th, - 5:30 -7:30 p.m.
Parent Academy Health and Fitness Night at the Fall River YMCA. Free classes on Taekwondo, weight loss, healthy eating, Zumba and more. Call 508-235-2619 or go to www.fallriverparentacademy.org to register or get more info.

Jan. 14th, - 10:0 a.m. - noon
Greater Fall River Fitness Challenge Kick-off Health Fair, Kuss Middle School, 52 Globe Mills Avenue. Go to www.FallRiverFitnessChallenge.com for more information or call Annemarie Holly at 508-679-0922.

January 16th, All Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Jan. 18th, 19th, 23rd & 25th at 10:45 a.m. Dr. Weed talks about a Low-carbohydrate approach to weight loss and diabetes at the Niagara, North End, Flint and South Main Senior Centers. Call Laurel Jonas at 508-324-2402.

Feb. 16th, - 5:30 -7:30 p.m.
Parent Academy Career Success Night at the Fall River YMCA. Free classes on Google Apps, career success, college support, and becoming an entrepreneur. Call 508-235-2619 or go to www.fallriverparentacademy.org to register or get more info.

February 20th, All Day
Presidents' Day

March 17th, All Day
Absolutely Incredible Kid Day. Contact Youth Services Coordinator Christian McCloskey at 508-982-4297 for more information.