

Kids take to the streets

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BY: Hew Hallock

Students and parents walk to school for better health

By HEW HALLOCK

ALAMOSA — Early morning and frost were no deterrent for about 300 kids from Alamosa elementary schools, along with some parents and community volunteers, as they met in Cole Park yesterday for Walk to School Day.

“This annual event serves as an excellent way to remind students as well as the general public, of the importance of remaining active to improve overall health,” said Liza Marron, project coordinator for LiveWell Alamosa, the sponsor of the event.



Courtesy photo Students and parents begin their walk from Cole Park to Alamosa's three elementary schools early yesterday morning for Walk to School Day. It was a way to promote physical activity among kids as a way to better health.

Walk to School Day was observed by an estimated 5,000 schools across the country and in 40 foreign countries.

Walkers gathered at Cole Park at 7 a.m. where they treated to apples, bananas, oranges and granola bars. Before taking off in three directions to Polston Primary School, Body Elementary and Evans Elementary, students and adults heard from community leaders about the importance of physical activity and fighting obesity.

Alamosa Mayor Farris Bervig talked about walking to school in South Dakota during snow as a kid. He encouraged the youngsters to exercise more, and he challenged them to turn off their televisions when they got home from school and to go outside and play.

As a former teacher, Charlotte Bobicki, regional representative for U.S. Sen. Ken Salazar, stressed the importance of exercise to learning.

ASC track coach Damon Martin told the group that health and exercise are all about attitude and to "get in there and do it."

Other speakers included Erin Minks representing U.S. Rep. John Salazar and Heinz Bergann, director of Alamosa Parks and Recreation.

Music from the animated film "Madagascar" added to the lively atmosphere as the kids and adults prepared for their walk to school, escorted by Alamosa Police.

Three students - Michael Illenberger, Graci Hard, Dakota Burciago - were winners of bicycles through a drawing of students who took part in the walk and a coloring contest.

"It went really well," Marron said of the walk. "We had good participation from young kids and adults."

By the way, it's 5,528 steps from the south end of Cole Park to Boyd School, and back, according to Marron. That's about half of the 10,000 steps-a-day recommended for good health by America on the Move, a national organization that promotes good health through physical activity and healthful eating.

For more information on LiveWell programs, contact Liza Marron at 587-1034