



## **Mayor's Fitness Council** City of San Antonio

### **Highlights from the Community Committee Any Baby Can, August 10, 2017, 3-4:45pm**

**Organizations Represented:** San Antonio River Authority, San Antonio Botanical Garden, San Antonio Food Bank, San Antonio Parks & Recreation, Texas A&M Agri-Life, MetroHealth, Kinetic Kids, Green Spaces Alliance, American Heart Association, Trinity University, Fully Alive, YMCA, Golds Gym (Culebra), CHEF, Rackspace, In Balance, 1<sup>st</sup> 30 Seconds, Salud America, University Health, UTSA, REI, Well-Med Charitable Foundation, Pediatric Pulmonology, The Athlete Company, and San Antonio Walks. 35 folks attended in person or by phone.

#### ***Agenda Topics:***

**San Antonio River Authority (SARA):** Recreation Superintendent **Matthew Driffill** stated that he is willing to offer support and partnership for many wellness organizations. Today, he shared details about SARA's upcoming activities:

- Along with passing out bandanas and tote bags, Matthew distributed new San Antonio Riverwalk maps which clearly highlight adjoining trails and offer unique history of segments of our river. The maps are free and can be gotten from SARA along with being downloadable. Matthew stated that the beginning mile is at the Rivercenter area and that a northern route goes for 4.5 miles while the southern route goes out more than 10 miles. Matthew also passed along highlights of various happenings on the river such as kayaking, yoga, and other activities.
- Adding to the input from last month's trail updates from Parks' Brandon Ross, Matthew informed the group about plans for the Medina Greenway extension, and how funds will be coming from the city's bond package. Property acquisition and contracting are occurring and the construction process shouldn't be far off.
- Matthew also gave highlights from the recent Bat Loco Bash when over 4800 folks came out to the Museum Reach location (Camden and IH-35 – near the fish grotto) to observe 50,000 Mexican bats flying out for their daily "evening meal." While the bats didn't fly out until mid-evening, the public interacted with vendors and many came out in superhero costume, highlighted by an appearance of the 1966 official Batmobile.
- Saturday, September 9 will be the World Heritage Festival at the Missions during which SARA has partnered with the American Volkssport Association (AVA) in offering trail walking and bike activities on the Museum Reach. Visit [www.ava.org](http://www.ava.org) for details.
- Saturday, November 11 will be the city's River Relay which combines a 5K run and a 4K kayak paddling starting at Mission County Park #2. Visit [www.sariverfoundation.org](http://www.sariverfoundation.org).
- Every Wednesday night at 5pm, SARA hosts a free 5 to 10 mile trail bike ride from their 100 E. Guenter St address. 99 percent of the ride is on the trail. Visit [www.sara-tx.org](http://www.sara-tx.org).

- Currently, kayakers can ferry down the river from Roosevelt Park to Mission Espada, offering a wide berth of the river, lots of scenery, and different levels of the river. However, Matthew advised novices to only go out for short distances and duration as the wind and water current can be challenging. He also stated that due to heavy rain when the river's levels are much higher that the river current may also be affected.
- To learn more about SARA, their Foundation, and River activities, please contact Matthew at (210) 227-1373. Sign up for their quarterly River Connection magazine.

**Diabetes Prevention:** Food Bank's **Isabel Ramos-Lebron** passed along details on recent studies on diabetes and also informed the group of very positive feedback concerning their education programs. Starting in 2007, there has been a strong emphasis on diabetes prevention through educating folks on how to eat better, focusing on smaller portion sizes, visiting farmer's markets, and how to grow healthy vegetables and plants. Training partners have included MetroHealth, CHEF, CentroMed, Southside Clinic, Central Health Care Services, University Health System, SLEW, Nix Hospital, and other agencies.

- Isabel gave a breakdown of the free bilingual training classes conducted by specialized educators and qualified chefs. The actual preparation and cooking are done by students. This training process is more engaging as students become more comfortable in cooking at home and curriculum educators are constantly updating recipe concepts.
- The Food Bank's cooking demos and curriculum are evidenced-based and follow national CDC and Texas Diabetes Council guidelines. Being seasonally-focused, the classes also benefit from the Food Bank's 40 acres of farmlands which helps folks understand that gardens can be locally developed in the city and definitely affordable.
- There are eight cooking classes to include a ninth one for gardening. Classes are an hour and a half long. Based on demand and need, the class curriculum can cover nutrition, healthy, cooking, physical activity, or gardening. Sometimes it's a combination of these topics. "Purchasing produce and eating healthy does not have to be expensive, so we teach how to select items, read labels, visit food markets, etc.," stated Isabel.
- Through unique and eye-catching graphs, Isabel shared great feedback from the Parks' Fit Pass cooking classes. She mentioned that participant responses before and then after the six (6) Fit Pass classes clearly showed participants already making healthy food choices or making a strong effort to adopt a healthy food lifestyle. Alexander Hutchinson suggested that the Food Bank follow up with these participants over time to see if their lifestyles have in fact changed. All agreed this was a good idea!
- Additionally, Isabel stated that all their classes use cooking and safety incentives, and that they are currently developing a new class for Eating on the Holidays which will look at larger family portions, culturally-sensitive recipes, and cost-conscious purchasing.
- The Food Bank can conduct the classes at other locations but there needs to be a host facility that will meet the program's requirements and offer the classes to the public. If any organization would like to be involved or participate in the Food Bank's training classes, please let Isabel know. They will be posting their September schedule shortly.

**Culinary Health Education for Families (CHEF):** Katy Bowen passed out tote bags and handouts about the CHEF program. With support from the Goldsbury Foundation, CHEF funds teaching kitchens around SA such as at the YMCA, Botanical Garden, and the Children's Hospital of San Antonio – which is actually their primary location as physicians can refer pediatric patients for free classes. Other highlights:

- Cooking classes are fun, family-oriented, “hands-on” opportunities where folks can learn. The new YMCA on Potranco Rd has channeled many folks through the CHEF-supported kitchen which is now collecting great data on how the kitchen and cooking processes are working. A new Boys & Girls Club just opened about a month and a half ago, and they have already serviced 220 students. Katy mentioned that Isabel and the Food Bank have been great partners in making the community team effort a great success. Each kitchen is usually run by a dietician or a chef but by partnering with the Food Bank's team, those cooking concepts become extremely fluid and supportive of each other.
- Katy stated, “We develop new recipes, recipe videos, post much on our website. Our current goal is to bring people to a teaching kitchen. We get lots of requests for health fairs, and we do the Saturday Pearl Farmer's Market, but we are limited in staff.
- The obesity rate with children in San Antonio is shocking so in January 2018, CHEF will be moving into pilot schools. Initially, they will be partnering with Brackenridge High School's culinary program and then work with PE and health teachers in many elementary schools. They hope to roll out in further school districts by Fall 2018.
- CHEF was recently highlighted in the NY Times along with a few other teaching kitchen concepts across the country. The article highlights the teaching kitchen at the Children's Hospital and mentions community sites such as the YMCA.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/09/well/family/when-the-prescription-is-a-recipe.html>

- Visit [www.chefsa.org](http://www.chefsa.org) to see details and visit CHEF's calendar page which highlights what is going on at each kitchen. If anyone wishes to partner, needs materials, or support, please contact CHEF!

**San Antonio Botanical Garden:** Health & Wellness Director **Dave Terrazas** offered details on the Botanical Garden's kitchen partnerships with CHEF and other organizations. While there has been construction going on around the Garden recently, there are plans to move much of the CHEF curriculum into their kitchen and focus on experienced cooking classes. Coming from very experienced culinary training and community opportunities, Dave plans to use 33 acres and 8 additional acres for the Garden. He focuses on a “produce-forward” menu and plans to have lots of crosstalk and interaction with dieticians. Botany, horticulture, and culinary arts are integrated into the program. There is also a physical component with kinesiology, Tai Chi, Yoga, and plans to bring in Camp Gladiator. Other highlights:

- The garden is starting to offer fitness classes and they are working with various fitness instructors to offer supplemental nutrition classes based on teamwork with Task Fit Gym's Alexander Hutchinson. According to Alexander, there have already been two classes that were very well received, with participants learning quick recipes on the fly.

- Dave stated that the Garden is trying to get a seniors walking group going, and is working a veteran's horticulture therapy project with IWC and UTSA Therapy departments. Going a step further, they plan to host a private class with Edgewood ISD in getting students to learn how to incorporate more produce, develop recipes, and novel ways to make food preparation/cooking entertaining for kids. Southside ISD has also expressed interest. Essentially, the SA Botanical Garden is becoming a great resource to leverage many of the city's broad wellness programs to the public.
- The Botanical Garden will start Grand Opening festivities on October 21 for three successive weekends. For more Botanical Garden happenings and to see their class schedule up through December 31, visit [www.sabot.org](http://www.sabot.org).

**Fit Pass Update:** Parks' **Travis Davey** gave another update on the 6-week free, incentive fitness program. Program went from June 10 to July 29 with over 1600 events, thousands of participants, and over 3600 downloads of their activities APP. Thanks to all for volunteering fitness activities for free or low cost. On August 19, Parks will hold its Fit Pass 5K Finale so participants can redeem prizes based on points accumulated. Over 1300 registered so far for the free 5K. Lots of activities, vendors, health screenings, etc, all at LBJ Park. *(Late item: Fit Pass 5K finale was a grand success – over 2000 registered, great turnout, super teamwork!)*

**Senior Fitness Ambassador Concept:** Chair **Bert Pickell** shared an update. On August 21, at the Commander's House at 3pm, there will be a brainstorming session to see how to recognize and identify deserving seniors, and establish a workable process in moving forward. While senior organizational representatives are invited, we also encourage our passionate MFC Community Committee members to attend. *(Late item: Brainstorming session was a huge success with key concepts developed that will be shared with the MFC Executive Committee).*

**Upcoming Events:** **Rebeca Baquero** reminded the group of the free August 11-12 Pathways to Hope Mental Health Conference coordinated by the Health Collaborative at the Tobin Center. For details check out [www.pathwaystohope.net](http://www.pathwaystohope.net). **Andrea Tan** reminded everyone of the Healthier Texas Summit (previously known as the It's Time Texas Summit) which will be in Austin, November 6-7. 15 percent of our registration fees paid will go to the MFC Youth Ambassador program. For details check out <https://healthiertexasummit.com>

**Fit Family Challenge:** While San Antonio Sports wasn't able to make the meeting, Bert Pickell reminded everyone of the Fit Family Challenge Finale event – District 3's Jump Into Fitness 5K at Southside Lions Center on Saturday, August 12. Similar to the Parks' Fit Pass, the Challenge offers free activities and opportunities to accumulate points for prizes. *(Late item: Finale was a huge success with over 2000 folks registered and many prizes given out)*

**MFC Endorsement:** We encourage ALL of our partners to look at getting their events/programs endorsed by the Mayor's Fitness Council. The endorsement will elevate events and promote to more organizations and communities. If anyone wishes to submit an event or program for an MFC Endorsement, please visit [www.FitCitySA.com](http://www.FitCitySA.com) for the process and form.

### ***Additional Comments from our Partners and Guests:***

**Green Spaces Alliance of South Texas:** **Chris Babis** and **Tia Moen** introduced themselves and gave a basic pitch of Green Spaces Alliance which focuses on conservation, stewardship,

community gardens, and photography. They plan to have their SA Flow Fest and Run 3K/5K on November 4 at Hemisphere. Besides competitive running and walking, they will be having vendors offer other activities. They wish to partner and get involved in more community teaming. For details on the SA Flow Fest and Run 3K/5K, visit [www.saflowfest.com](http://www.saflowfest.com).

**Kinetic Kids: Catherine Easley** offered basic info about Kinetic Kids which has been around for 15yrs and offers sports and recreation activities for kids with special needs. They work with over 2700 kids a year (ages 18 months to 18 years) who experience physical or cognitive disabilities. According to Catherine, "We will offer anything we can find a coach for." They have swimming, cheerleading, gymnastics, wheelchair sports, and extreme sports (para-Olympic track for higher level performance). They recently completed their Bike Camp where they teach kids how to ride 2-wheel bicycles. Essentially, they provide physical therapy to kids while the kids are moving and don't realize they are exercising! Catherine stated that they are trying to prevent sedentary lifestyles with movement. They do NOT patronize the kids but their specialize therapists challenge kids to move. Classes are usually 6-8 weeks, 4X a year. IWC, St Marys, Mays YMCA, and other facilities are donated for the trainings. They plan to hold a 10K in January and they have great partnerships (e.g., CRIT). Classes are \$70 but actually cost \$250. However, they do offer partial and full scholarships if families are challenged. They are looking for instructors to offer one day events or classes. Catherine passed out flyers, business cards, and schedules. If folks need more info, check out [www.kinetickidstx.org](http://www.kinetickidstx.org).

**Building Healthy Temples: Summer Wilmoth and Elena Martinez** shared an update on the program. While the initial bible study and fitness seminars were effective at some locations via their toolkit and with volunteer presenters, they now are funded for Diabetes prevention. They plan to have a total of 18 Diabetes Resource Seminars at various locations in the city. While the first location isn't identified, it probably will be Thursday, November 16 from 9:30am to 12pm. They will be asking for vendors and folks to help out in nutrition, physical activity, resources, and research. Contact Summer at [summer.wilmoth@utsa.edu](mailto:summer.wilmoth@utsa.edu) if you wish to help.

**Body, Mind, Spirit:** Body Alive Author and wellness advocate **Daryl Duer** expressed his willingness to help out in the Building Healthy Temples, MFC Toolkit, and other outreach projects to congregations. A dedicated fitness advocate, Daryl was pre-diabetic but focused his life on body, mind, and spirit; essentially turning his life around. Loosing over 100lbs in the process, Daryl now is a committed health coach who has developed a 9-week course which he will be starting in September. He stated that he can visit any church or congregation, go anywhere, and passionately convey effective wellness traits that can reverse negative trends.

**Parks: Travis Davey** stated that Parks plans on having a Troops For Fitness event on Veterans Day. Parks is also crafting a unique Cardio-Concert program which will incorporate exercise and music with many organizations in a large health fair type area. More info to follow!

**Recreation Equipment Incorporated (REI): Jeanette Honermann** gave big shout-outs to many of the attending partners who are building a great community wellness team for San Antonio. She passed along details about REI's upcoming September program. "Do everything outside! It's all about trail running and a unique relationship with Parks & Recreation in using Eisenhower Park." Jeanette also mentioned a new relationship with Solomon shoes and great opportunities with Work Out Help Out in SARA activities. For more info on REI activities, visit [www.REI.com](http://www.REI.com)

**American Heart Association (AHA): Sarah Nohmedal** (sp?) stated that AHA will have its Heart Walk Kick-Off on August 26 with a SA Missions game versus Corpus Christi. She also

informed the group of San Antonio's free Heart Walk being on November 4 at Wolff Stadium. As in past years, there will be a timed 5K for runners.

**Doris Griffin One-Stop Senior Center:** Well-Med Charitable Foundation representative and Griffin Wellness Instructor **Kristi Docwra** passed along details of the large senior center's activities. There are more than 1000 members but they actually serve between 300 to 350 seniors daily in many fitness and wellness activities. They have state of the art equipment and focus on the social environment of seniors, building relationships daily.

**YMCA:** **Kamille Donnelly** stated that the newest YMCA will open on September 15 near the Mission Library, and a new Boerne YMCA will open on August 25. She stated that all new YMCAs will have teaching kitchens. Kamille also reminded the group of the large Siclovia on October 22.

**Choose Healthier APP:** **Andrea Tan** reminded the group the ease of getting events updated on cell phones via the Choose Healthier APP. She suggested that attendees sign up as a partners and once approved, they will be able to immediately upload events which will be reflected on FitCitySA as well.

**FitCitySA Videos:** Andrea also reminded the attendance of our MFC videos. Seven (7) have already been produced and they are located on FitCitySA and accessible via YouTube and other platforms. All partners could share their programs and activities via these promotional videos. If interested, please inform the MFC Community Committee folks for assistance.

**Texas A&M Agri-Life:** **Eliza Cavazos** informed the group of the various branches of Texas A&M Agri-Life. She stated that each may be funded differently and work different projects but they usually collaborate on many activities. Eliza stated that there are youth and adult programs and classes which also focus on cooking and activities. They conduct eight (8) English and Spanish sessions looking at portion control, the safe ways to cook, etc. They also utilize incentives and offer twice weekly sessions. They do pre- and post surveys to assess their programs. Eliza stated that the constant collaboration from various organizations truly help reinforcing great wellness lifestyles.

**Trinity University:** **Katherine Hewitt** gave an update on their tobacco and smoking cessation efforts which are moving towards a totally free tobacco and smoking campus.

**The Athlete Company:** **Alexander Hutchinson** stated that he thrives on developing events and would love to help others put event on. Call him at (210) 829-5194 if you need help!

**Shout Out:** Alexander gave a big shout out to **Dave Terrazas** and **Katy Bowen** on how they work together in adding a nutritional component to a body composition challenge that Alexander developed. "They are great teachers!"

**Shout Out** Rebeca Baquero thanked departing MFC intern **Stephanie Beard** for her super performance and all-around support!

**San Antonio Walks:** Director **Bert Pickell** reminded the group that San Antonio Walks is YOUR city's free walking program. With numerous active partnerships, SA Walks conducts presentations to organizations and participates in weekly health fairs. Looking throughout San Antonio and beyond, SA Walks, helps organizations and communities to develop walking groups, training programs, and event opportunities. There are more than 530 walking groups in

almost every demographic. Recently, SA Walks assisted the Greater Chamber in their walking challenges, and they are also revisiting many city district offices due to the recent city elections. If anyone would like a presentation or needs materials, please call Bert at (210) 273-7983.

**Synopsis:** This was our largest meeting to date. We continue to reach out and find many organizations providing great programs, events, and opportunities for our citizens. We hope that many others will assist us in “connecting dots” of diverse fitness partners with city neighborhoods and organizations. Within our Community Committee meeting, there continues to be explosive teamwork and productive networking during and after the meeting, and not just between one and two attendees. We are seeing groups coming together and mini-brainstorming opportunities into immediate results! It’s a sight to see!

**Next Meeting:** Our next Mayor’s Fitness Council Community Committee meeting is tentatively set for Thursday, September 14 at 3pm at Any Baby Can (217 Howard, 78212).

As stated before, while our meetings follow an agenda and will be attended by partners, the meeting is ALWAYS OPEN to anyone wishing to share and team to enhance the wellness lifestyle of San Antonio residents.

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