

## Health, wellness promoted at annual fair in Southington



Jordan Hallett, 12, of Southington, runs the obstacle course in the Hartford HealthCare rehab area Sunday during the Healthy Family Fun Fest at the Aqua Turf Club in Plantsville.



February 25, 2018 06:05PM  
By Lauren Takores, Record-Journal staff



**SOUTHINGTON** — Thousands flocked Sunday to the annual Healthy Family Fun Fest, featuring hundreds of booths offering health information, medical screenings and other activities.



In its ninth year, the health fair at the Aqua Turf Club was presented by Hartford HealthCare and the Southington-Cheshire YMCA and sponsored by the Bradley H. Barnes and Lelia U. Barnes Memorial Trust at Main Street Community Foundation.



John Myers, the Southington-Cheshire YMCA executive director, estimated 3,000 to 4,000 attended throughout the day.

"The whole community comes together to ask, 'do you care about the health and well-being of our residents?'" he said.

Vendors were encouraged to have something interactive at their booths. Some had giveaways, activity wheels or prize drawings, but many had activities like basketball, games and puzzles.



Stacy Milkowski, of Bristol, and her husband brought their three children, ages 8, 3, and 2, after reading about the event on Facebook. Her kids hopped, jumped and ran through the obstacle course, part of Hartford HealthCare's family fitness challenge area.



"There's so much information," Milkowski said, "lots to learn."



Emil Johnson, Hartford HealthCare fitness program manager, said the obstacle course — featuring activities like jump rope, hoops and planks — promotes athleticism.



"Things that they would do in gym class, things they would have some fun with," Johnson said.

Outside, emergency services and touch-a-truck vehicles included Southington police and fire and Hunter's Ambulance. Inside, an activity room for children had a Star Wars theme.

Lewis Educational Agricultural Farm served Tuscan vegetable soup, made by chef Dan Varano.

"We are healthy, we grow vegetables," said Mark Ramsey, the farm's executive director. Lewis Educational Agricultural Farm, located in Southington, has been attending the event for three years, promoting healthy, local and sustainable eating.

Ramsey, a seventh-generation farmer, said LEAF's community sponsored agriculture program brings fresh, local food to the community from its 10 acres and seven greenhouses. The farm also runs an agricultural camp through Camp Sloper for grades 6-9 and works with several other community groups.

Health screenings included tests for blood pressure, cholesterol, glucose, glaucoma, and mammograms. Hartford HealthCare offered flu shots.

Lillian Swan, Hartford HealthCare transition care nurse, performed cholesterol screenings that people could bring to their physician for possible follow-up.

Cholesterol screenings included information on exercise and heart-healthy diets.



Were you **SPOTTED**? At the Healthy Family Funfest?

popular when we do it," she said.