



GULF COAST HERITAGE TRAILS PARTNERSHIP

Building a safe Coast-wide network of diverse trails that connect neighborhoods to businesses, schools, green & blue spaces where everyone can enjoy scenic, historic, educational & natural areas.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

MS Gulf Coast — The five Boys & Girls Clubs of the Gulf Coast just completed a 6 week summer program where they walked over 87 million steps. Their challenge was to walk 10,000 steps a day with the center walking the most steps winning a pizza party from Domino's Pizza. Why did we want to put this program in place? 1. We wanted to get them excited about walking. 2. We wanted to shed some exposure on MS being #1 in obesity and hopefully gain some headway in reversing this statistic. 3. Tying in with the Gulf Coast Heritage Trails Partnership, promoter of the extensive trails network here on the Gulf Coast, offers the opportunity to showcase the wild and wonderful trails that link communities and tourists to Mississippi's authentic natural world. Kids are encouraged to walk their steps during the day at the centers, but also step outside to explore the spectacular and diverse trails that the Gulf Coast has to offer.

Interesting to note is that the winning center was the Qatar Center of Pass Christian, who walked the majority of the steps at 64,627,219. Why did they win? They won because of their location and the City of Pass Christian has done a great job of creating a walkable community. The kids were able to walk to the library, to eat lunch, to the beach, and many other locations. Some of the other things they did at their center was P90X, zumba and jogging in place. Bri Smith, one of the students, shared with us that the kids exercised as much as they could to the point where, "the bleachers used to be full of kids but now there are only 2-3 kids in the stands as they are all up playing to get their steps in". She also wanted to say thanks to domino's Pizza for the pizza party, where the best pizza is made. Another attendee, Demarcus Boyd, said he even walked 14,000 steps in one day and stated, "keep working hard and try your best at what you do and you will achieve your goal"☺

This program was sponsored by the Gulf Coast Heritage Trails Partnership, the Junior Trails Partnership, Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area, and Domino's Pizza. Of note, the GCHTP also sponsored a bike safety rodeo at the Forest Heights Center and gave away 24 helmets to the kids that were donated by the Public Relations Association of Mississippi. Just another way the Partnership is trying to promote trails and activities along the Gulf Coast.

In 2010, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Gulf Coast had approximately 2800 registered members and served 1500 youth through Boys & Girls Clubs of the Gulf Coast New Hope Program, which is a school based therapeutic behavioral facilitation program. Our mission is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. For more information please contact Michelle Wilson, 228-896-3770. www.bgcgulfcoast.org.

The Gulf Coast Heritage Trails Partnership is a collaborative effort on the MS Gulf Coast whose vision is to build a safe, coast-wide network of diverse trails that connect neighborhoods to businesses, schools, and green and blue spaces where everyone can enjoy scenic, historic, educational, and natural areas. www.GulfCoastTrails.org.

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