

## Meet Adam Perez, Meadowview Farms

Many people think neighborhood groups are strictly about crime prevention, which is understandable since most of these small groups have long identified by the “Crimewatch” moniker.

But Mesquite’s efforts have taken a turn toward rebranding the program citywide – emphasizing the importance of building neighborhood bonds that go far beyond crime prevention.

A shining example of the philosophy is the Meadowview Farms group, which has long taken a color-outside-the-box approach when it comes to being good neighbors, even before there was a neighborhood group.



“This neighborhood already has a history from Christmas [decorations] of years past and people still talk about that today,” said the group’s current president Adam Perez. “I want us to follow that and be a neighborhood that everyone knows about and talks about how active we are.”

Perez – who joined the Meadowview Farms group in spring of 2015 and took the lead as president in October that year – said he wants him and his neighbors to serve as a model for what neighborhood groups throughout Mesquite can be.

“I want us to be a ‘city on a hill,’” Perez said. “I want our group to be the footprint to what a neighborhood group should look like. I want our group to be the most active in Mesquite.”

The Meadowview Farms group boasts consistent high participation and regularly works with City departments such as police, fire, traffic engineering, animal control and Keep Mesquite Beautiful. Perez said he’s watched as City and elected officials have substantially increased their support.

“They have stepped up tremendously,” he said. “Council members actually hit the streets knocking on doors and talking to residents – finding out what issues they are dealing with. They have helped neighborhood groups get started where they were nonexistent and even led trash cleanup.”

Perez is especially appreciative of Mesquite Police Chief Charles Cato.

“He is a huge blessing to the city,” Perez said. “He did his first neighborhood meeting two days after being sworn in and we were lucky to be that group. Right from the start, you could tell he

is very committed to what he does. He is very active in the community. If there is an event going on, he will probably be there.”

The Meadowview Farms group takes part in National Night Out festivities in October, but there’s another special event where Perez and his neighbors really come together – the annual Fourth of July parade.

“The Fire Department, Police Department, Citizens’ Police Academy Alumni Association, City councilmembers as well as our neighbors play a big part in it,” he said. “We walk the route. People drive classic cars and ride lawnmowers, motorcycles, wagons and bikes dressed in red, white and blue. After the parade, we have hot dogs and chips, desserts and drinks and just hang out for a while. It is always a great time and it is always the perfect opportunity to get to know some neighbors.”

But make no mistake about it, Perez said crime prevention is still a big part of what neighborhood groups are about. Even if that crime prevention is just a drive through the neighborhood.

“When you come home from work or from running errands, drive around a few blocks before going home to make sure things look ok,” he said. “The more people who are active, the harder it is for a crime to be committed. People just being outside is crime prevention.”



Perez said making time to become actively involved in a neighborhood group is well worth the effort put forth by residents.

“It’s the best investment you can make for yourself and for your neighborhood,” he said. “It is a great way to meet extended neighbors, not just the ones next door to you. You are making your neighborhood safer.”

Perez offers some simple advice to other groups, their group leaders and those interested in forming a new group in their neighborhood.

“Don’t quit,” he said. “Stay the course. Get out and meet people. When you go to the store, drive down a couple of streets and stop to talk to neighbors you see outside. Introduce yourself. Tell them why you stopped. Who knows? Maybe they don’t go to meetings because they don’t know anyone, or maybe they just needed a personal invitation. You just changed that.”

Perez has some even simpler advice to families or individuals who might be considering making Mesquite their new home.

“Come on,” he said. “We would love to have you.”

For more information on the City’s neighborhood group program, call Yolanda Wilson, manager of Neighborhood Vitality, at [972-216-6473](tel:972-216-6473), or call Mesquite Police Department’s crime prevention office at [972-216-6600](tel:972-216-6600).