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The Desert Sun

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SERVING THE COACHELLA VALLEY SINCE 1927

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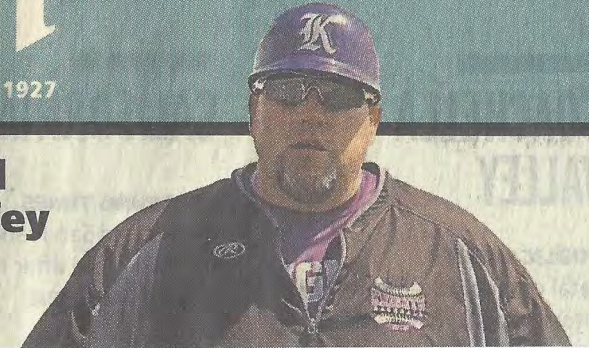
COACHELLA VALLEY, 8A

Fitness buffs leave the gym for national monuments

HEALTH, 1D

SHHS baseball coach Teg Diffey steps down

SPORTS, 1C



Report: Thousands in valley with diabetes go undiagnosed

BARRETT NEWKIRK
THE DESERT SUN

One in ten adults in the Coachella Valley has been diagnosed with diabetes and many more are going undiagnosed or are at risk of developing the disease, according to a new report.

The latest HARC survey report found that 10.3 percent of valley adults — more

than 36,000 people — have been diagnosed with diabetes, a condition where the body does not properly process blood sugar. The figures, based on a 2013 survey, show a rise in the local prevalence of diabetes since 2010, when a survey found 9.1 percent of valley adults had been diagnosed.

The latest report also found that more than 6,800 local people have been told

they have pre-diabetes. HARC estimated that 13,000 more people have diabetes but have not been diagnosed.

The local prevalence of diabetes is slightly higher than the national rate and that for California as a whole, but nearly twice the overall rate for Riverside County, according to HARC, or Health Assessment and Research for Communities, a Palm Desert nonprofit that spe-

cializes in health-related surveying and data.

The HARC survey found that Coachella Valley adults with diabetes are more likely to be men and over the age of 55. Most valley adults with diabetes are retired and almost a quarter are military veterans. The report recommends that

Please see **DIABETES, 8A**

Diabetes

Continued from 1A

more be done to reach people who have not had their diabetes diagnosed and that more opportunities need to be created for disease management education for those already in treatment.

"The problem with diabetes is you can feel pretty good and have it for a time," said Yuri Krochmaluk, a registered nurse and diabetes educator at the Eisenhower Medical Center Diabetes Program, which offers regular free classes to teach people about diabetes and how to manage it.

Untreated diabetes can slowly damage a person's eyes, kidneys and heart, Krochmaluk said.

While nationally, diabetes is more common among blacks and Latinos than it is with whites, the differences among those ethnic groups was less extreme in the Coachella Valley, the report found.

There are different types of diabetes and their causes vary, but factors like obesity, high blood pressure and high cholesterol can lead to the most common form, Type 2 diabetes. Diabetes is managed through diet, exercise and insulin injections or other medications.

Across the U.S., 1.4 million people receive a diabetes diagnoses every year, according to the American Diabetes Association. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention rank diabetes as the seventh leading cause of death in the country, ahead of the flu and pneumonia.

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DESERT SUN FILE PHOTO

Melinda Read checks her glucose level with a digital blood glucose monitor.