

Hospice run marks ten years of fund raising

By Sue Dickens

News - Warkworth - Celebrating the tenth anniversary of The Bridge Hospice W8 fund-raising runs, approximately 100 participants gathered near the arena for the big day.

"I stood on this line ten years ago with five other guys and we waited for someone to say go and the general consensus was this was a great course and we should try to turn it into something more formal and that we have done," said Bryce Miller, founder and official organizer of the race.

As race director he would always blow a horn to signal the start to get runners moving onto the five and 13-kilometre routes.

Prior to the main events, youngsters were given the opportunity to participate in a one-kilometre run with first-, second- and third-place ribbons awarded.

Nolan King, age nine, was one of those runners. He won first place in the nine- and ten-year-old division with a time of 4:45.

This was his first time at the W8 event. He had just completed the Northumberland Forest Turkey Trot, an event in Co-bourg held on Thanksgiving Monday.

"I just like to run," he said as he geared up.

He was joined by Preston Switzer, age eight, who was "very excited," about being one of the runners. His mom Stephanie Switzer was there with her friend Lonnie Dawe.

"I just lost my mom to cancer a year ago. We were able to keep her home and I think the Hospice is a great thing. I love Warkworth and I think it's great to have it here," she said.

"I think it's important for those that can't stay at home to have a home-like setting so that's why I am here today."

Brad Hilker, president and CEO of the Campbellford Memorial Hospital, was with his son Tristan who said, "I've never run in this before. I have run in cross-country races and came in third in the Peterborough Zoo run earlier this year."

His dad has participated in many runs and is raising funds not only for The Bridge Hospice but for the hospital.

"I've got a goal this year to run 500 kilometres to raise money for the hospital and so this is my last race. Hopefully I've raised my goal of \$2,000," he said.

Dr. Bob Henderson, chair of The Bridge Hospice board, was there to welcome everyone and cheer on the runners.

"It's absolutely wonderful. The effort put in by this group is quite extraordinary and the support that that brings to The Bridge Hospice is very much appreciated," he said.

"We really see them as partners in what we are doing at the Hospice and count on their good efforts every year and just really much appreciate what they are doing. All these people are out here to have fun and raise money for the Hospice."

For Miller the day was bittersweet as he plans on retiring from his role as race director to give someone else the chance to take over.

"It's my last year ... in theory," he said with a grin.



Race director Bryce Miller, from left, and Dr. Bob Henderson, chair of The Bridge Hospice board, welcomed the participants to the tenth annual W8 Bridge Hospice Running events held last Saturday. Miller, who started the race a decade ago, said he is retiring from his role to let someone else take over. Photo: Sue Dickens



The W8 run also had a one-kilometre race for youngsters: from left, race director Bryce Miller, runners Veronika Dinkel, Preston Switzer, Nolan King, Ava Real, Jillian Clarke, Zachary Garrod, and Duncan Watson. Nolan won first place for the boys with a race time of 4:45. Photo: Sue Dickens

"It's been an amazing run ... no pun there," he added smiling.

"It's been a pleasure really to work with the Bridge Hospice people and be able to bring much needed cash into the coffers."

He estimates the event has raised \$25,000 during the past decade.

There were no race results at press time but a tally has been provided and \$3,000 was raised.



Nolan King, age nine, front from left, and his friend Preston Switzer, age eight, were joined by Lonnie Dawe, back left, and Stephanie Switzer as they got ready for the W8 run. Nolan won first place for the boys with a race time of 4:45. Photo: Sue Dickens



Zachary Garrod was among the younger runners in the one-kilometre event at the W8 Bridge Hospice fund raiser held in Warkworth last Saturday. He captured the hearts of onlookers as he took the course like a real champion. Photo: Sue Dickens