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Rotarians stage successful run up mountain

Mike Beck

Reader Submitted

More than 60 people took on Granite Peak on a crisp Saturday morning as the Wausau Noon Rotary held its first WRUT'N Run.

Dozens of Rotarians and their family members helped organize the run, which consisted of a 5K run on a course midway up Rib Mountain and a loop near the top of the hill. Proceeds from the event will be used to help Rotary's commitment to youth projects and services.

Major sponsors included Aspirus, Marshfield Clinic and Ministry Health Care. Rotarians also received additional support from Eastbay and Studio 519 Graphic Design Services.

A variety of runners met the ski trail challenge. Participants included kids, an 80-year-old runner, a Marine ironman, a team of walkers, marathon racers and weekend road runners.

Some of teams participating in Saturday's WRUT 'N Run (Wausau Rotary Ultra Trek & Fun Run) included WRUT 'n Nuts, The Hillbillies, In It for the Shirts and the Lead Feet.

Jeremy Jonas, 31, of Wausau, learned of the Rotary's inaugural event by chatting with one of its organizers during one of his recent, routine training runs. Jonas said before his 5-K "fun run" Saturday that he felt confident he could tackle the four laps up and down the lower portion of the ski hill because he regularly incorporates a lot of hills into the 20-30 miles he runs each week.

Audrey and Jake Allorie, of Minneapolis, returned to their Wausau hometown to join Audrey's sister and her husband, Gretchen and Mark Thuot, in a four-person team in the most challenging event of the day ñ a relay won by the team that completed the most 2.2-mile loops on a course with a 700-foot vertical rise.

"We've done relays in the past with Mark and Gretchen, so I guess it's becoming a tradition," said Jake Allorie. "We agreed as soon as Mark said they were getting this together. We've been in it since day one."

Neither Audrey, 28, nor Jake, 27, had trained heavily before this race but said they hoped previous training for Audrey's late summer relay and Jake's spring marathon would carry them through the four-hour relay Saturday.

"It's not about conquering the hill. It's about doing it and having fun ñ just to say you did it," said Gretchen Thuot before the race Saturday. But after checking with Jake after his first lap and before her own, she said, "It's brutal!"

The event was the brainchild of Patrick Bradley, Kristin Barry and Mark Thuot. The crew worked with Rib

Mountain expert Les Schwartz, Bradley said, to chart and prepare a course for the runners. Barry worked with Rotary volunteers to successfully organize the day's events.

And volunteers pitched in a host of ways Saturday, from setup, registration, timing, medical support and other logistics.

Club President Brad Peck served as announcer for the vent.

The registration team included Rebecca Pilgrim, Todd Toppen, Diane Bartell and Jeanette Knauf. Goodie bags were handled by Mary Radke, Rosemary Barnes, Michael Barnes, Deb Traeder, Tom Kraemer and Sandy Smith.

The food tent crew included Jim Schaefer, Bitsy Hoffmann, Cheryl Davis, Mark Hadley and Kirk Howard.

Jean Tehan, Karen Graff, Laurie Prochnow and Gaylene Rhoden organized T-shirts and awards.

The ever-important set-up team included Jim Campbell, Terry Kittson and Ken Nerison, and Drs. Gary Zimbrick and Jimmy Lombardo were available to meet medical needs.

Many other Rotarians and their families pitched in to help make the first WRUT'N Run a success.
