

Running with Paul: Annual AAUW Wildflower Run has become tradition for MH families

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With spring here and California poppies, lupine and other colorful native flowers popping up throughout the South Valley, I thought I'd highlight a fun run that has grown into a favorite Morgan Hill tradition for families as well as serious running athletes.

The American Association of University Women has been providing leadership programs, grants and scholarships to local girls in the Morgan Hill chapter since it first became a charter in 1981.

The AAUW's annual Wildflower 2K, 5K and 10K Run, now in its 32nd year, has been a driving force in helping raise funds for its various projects. In addition to the scholarships offered, the program also provides leadership conferences and math and science camps. The Wildflower Run first began in 1984 when it had more than 200 women-only participants. Last year brought in shy of 1,000 runners, both male and female, making it one of the biggest races in South Valley.

With numerous volunteers ranging from high school clubs, Boy Scout troops and the Morgan Hill Chamber of Commerce, along with local business sponsors, the Wildflower Run gets considerable support from the community. The 2015 goal for the AAUW is to bring in more than 1,000 participants yet still maintain the small town, friendly feel smaller races have to offer and the reason so many Morgan Hill residents choose to run it.

Considered a Morgan Hill tradition, the race offers a family-friendly environment for all ages. Offering family rates and the flexibility for members to sign up for different events is what also makes the event so attractive. Mom or dad can push their little ones in the 5K stroller division while others can race a flat and fast USATF Certified 10K, all with the opportunity to win a medal in each event.

The 5K baby jogger race is only one of a few in the entire Bay Area. It is a newer addition to the schedule, now in its third year and has become wildly popular among its athletes. Another unique event is the 2K Fun Run on the Live Oak track for children 10 and younger. Each participant in this event is given a finishing medal, T-shirt and kid-oriented goodie bag.

The top three finishers are awarded medals along with a WERC (Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center) visit to their school classroom for the overall boy and girl winners.

Runners can register by visiting www.WildflowerRun.org with early bird discounts through March 19. They may also register race day morning, March 29. Participants and particularly families can also pick up their packets March 28 at The Running Shop, 16999 Monterey Road, Suite D, to avoid arriving early race day.

A handful of local clubs will be represented, such as the South Valley Running Club, Moms Run This Town and the WolfPak. Jamba Juice will be handing out free smoothies to every participant during and after the race in the Finish Fest area.

I encourage you to spend a beautiful Sunday morning with friends and family at the AAUW Wildflower Run and help support an amazing organization that gives back so much to Morgan Hill. Hope to see you there!

DETAILS

What: AAUW Wildflower Run

When: Check in at 7:30 a.m., 2K run at 8:30 a.m., 5K and stroller/baby jogger event at 9:15 am., 10K at 9 a.m.

Where: Live Oak High School, 1505 E. Main Ave.

Cost: \$20 to \$40 and available at www.WildflowerRun.org, call (408) 778-3924 or email contact@wildflowerrun.org.