

OUTER BANKS MARATHON

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Tuesday, November 20th

Contact: Robyn Keenan, 252-261-6296

Copy by Kelly Byrd
Nags Head, NC

Almost two weeks have passed since our quaint coastal towns were taken over by runners competing in the Outer Banks Marathon, Half Marathon, 8K and Fun Run. With more than 7700 registrants, 2009 marked a record year for registration. The Half Marathon was the first to sell out with 4036 registered. While the full marathon still had slots available, it made an impressive showing with 2315 runners signing up for the 26.2 mile trek. The inaugural 8K secured its place on the roster with 602 runners getting in on the fast paced action of a shorter distance, or as part of two new challenge runs combining the 8K on Saturday with either the half or whole marathon on Sunday. A favorite amongst young runners, the Fun Run unleashed the energy of 750 children along with 10 elite runners, who were asked to participate as celebrity motivators. Some of the Fun Run participants added an additional challenge by completing the Buccaneer 5k which earned them an "I Did It!" pin to attach to their Finisher medal. Event Coordinator Robyn Keenan acknowledged, "The children were very proud of themselves for taking on the additional mileage and earning their pin." Chair and Elite Coordinator, Jim Snyder recalls, "The kids really enjoyed running with the elites. They were smiling from ear to ear when they crossed the finish." Runners received medals upon completion in their respective events.

Spectators lined the streets from Kitty Hawk to Manteo to show their support. They offered everything from encouragement to refreshments as runners passed through their neighborhoods. "The 2009 Outer Banks Marathon was the first half marathon I've run. I was amazed at how much fun the marathon was and how quickly the miles went by. I had a great time and would do it again tomorrow. The volunteers and community members who came out to cheer on the runners were amazing," stated Shannon Clift, a local teacher and first time half marathon participant. While many watching the race enjoyed the warm weather, runners struggled with 88% humidity and temperatures in the high 60's. "It's not often you see elite Kenyan runners walking. At least 3 of them needed medical attention," said Snyder. "On the other hand, a lot of locals did extremely well because they trained in these conditions." One such local, Hunter Nelson turned in a PR, beating his best time by 21 minutes. Another hometown runner, Brian Woods, made it a point to take in the beautiful scenery as he made his way to Manteo. The first half of the course was the highlight of his day.

After the last runner crossed the finish, marathon organizers reflected on the success of the event from an economic perspective." Hotels were booked, vacations rentals were utilized, and local businesses experienced a surge in revenue during a normally slow time of year, "confirmed Race Committee member, Amy Montgomery. In addition to the money generated by out of town guests, organizers made a point of using local vendors for various needs. "We purchased race t-shirts locally, used a local photographer, rental companies, suppliers, etc," said Montgomery.

Perhaps the most important contribution is that of the volunteers. They handled everything from passing out water to cleaning up the streets. "The marathon is a tremendous volunteer effort. We had over 900 volunteers," acknowledged Mike Kelly, Logistics Committee Chair. "The sense of community this event has instilled on an area that's predominated by second homes is unsurpassed." Putting on such an event inadvertently brings awareness to public health. "The Outer Banks Marathon has awakened a whole new group of running and walking enthusiasts. Many of our local residents are competing in races for the first time. With the help of the local schools, we have placed an emphasis on lifelong fitness," declared Jill Bennett, Marketing Committee Chair.

Should race organizers need assurance of a job well done, they need look no further than the hundreds of emails sent in by elated runners across the country. "I've run every Outer Banks Marathon since the inaugural in 2006 and have no intentions of taking it off my marathon calendar. After running 72 total marathons, it's one of my most favorite and beautiful courses. See you next year," wrote Joe Malinowski of Woodbridge, VA. As the excitement of the 2009 Outer Banks Marathon comes to a close, let's not forget to thank the marathon committee for an outstanding job!

The Outer Banks Marathon, presented by the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau, the Gateway Bank Half Marathon, the Outer Banks 8K and the Kelly Hospitality Group Fun Run are the annual signature fundraising events for the Dare Education Foundation and the Outer Banks Relief Foundation. For more information about the Outer Banks Marathon, visit www.obxmarathon.org.

This project sponsored by the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau. For more information on where to stay, play, dine and shop, visit www.outerbanks.org or call 877-629-4386.