

SHOWDOWN

Race Against Racism features a spirit of friendly competition

Firefighters and police vie for bragging rights, race trophy

BY JENNIFER TODD
Staff Writer

Lancaster's finest will add a new twist to the 12th YWCA Race Against Racism later this month.

City police will put their swiftness to the test as they team up to compete against city firefighters in a bid to take home a trophy created this year for the first-ever showdown between Lancaster's emergency responders.

Representatives from both groups said this week they're feeling strong going into the final stretch before the April 24 event.

"I think we've got a great shot at it," police Officer Justin Waynick said of winning the competition. "I wish we would have had more time to train but..."

"In our job though we try to somewhat resemble being in good physical shape so I think we'll be OK," he joked.

City fireman Todd Hutchinson had some good-natured ribbing for his team's competitors.

"Cops are used to chasing people and that's what they'll be doing this time too — chasing us," he chuckled.

"Really though, it's a great fundraiser for a great cause and we're excited to be a part of it in this capacity," Hutchinson said.

Pitting the two public-servant teams against one another was the idea of race course coordinator Peter Barber.

Barber, a runner who participates in marathons and triathlons, said he has seen similar contests in large races such as the New York City Marathon.

Race Against Racism
Saturday, April 24
9 a.m.
3.1-mile race starting at Musser Park
Registration is \$22 for adults,
\$7 for kids (age 12 and under) before April 12;
\$25 and \$10, respectively, after April 12

www.ywcalancaster.org

"It seemed like a great rallying point for each organization and I thought it would be neat to translate that to Lancaster," Barber said.

Barber said he spoke with police Chief Keith Sadler and fire Chief Tim Gregg about three months ago; both embraced the idea.

"Both groups have always supported the race by providing services like security and traffic control, but this gets them involved in a different kind of way," Barber said. "A more community-oriented way."

The police team consists of six members while the fire department will have five representatives. The teams will be ranked according to their net times, using the times of the first five runners to cross the finish line, Barber said.

The trophy will be awarded to the winning team which will keep it until next year's race when it will be up for grabs once again.

"So it will become somewhat of a tradition," Barber said.

"We're hoping that eventually other police and fire departments will want to participate as well," he said. "I think it's a great way to build excitement for the race and get more community involvement."

The 3.1-mile race begins and ends at Musser Park, at East Chestnut and

North Lime streets. The race starts at 9 a.m. and is preceded by a Kids Fun Run at 8:30.

Registration is \$22 for adults and \$7 for kids age 12 and under before April 12; \$25 and \$10, respectively, after April 12.

Participants can register on the day of the race until 8:30 a.m.

In conjunction with the race, the YWCA also will host Humanity Fest, a multi-cultural food and craft fair that will be held in Musser Park from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Proceeds from the Race Against Racism support the Y's racial justice initiatives such as educational workshops and study groups which foster positive race relations in the community.

Lancaster's event, which typically consists of about 3,000 participants, is the longest running YWCA Race Against Racism in the world.

To register for the race or for additional information call 393-1735 or check online at www.ywcalancaster.org.

jtodd@lnpnews.com



Teams of runners from Lancaster city's police and fire departments will vie for the Public Safety Challenge trophy during the YWCA's Race Against Racism April 24. Pictured above are race participants police Sgt. Damon Greathouse, back left, and firefighter Todd Hutchinson along with race coordinator Peter Barber, front.