

MORE FIRE PREVENTION WEEK FUN Get ready to trot for charity

5th annual Turkey Trot of the Chathams set for Nov. 28

CHATHAM TWP. – Don those running shoes for what is fast becoming an annual tradition in the township – the Fifth Annual Thanksgiving Day Chatham Turkey Trot.

The one-mile Family Fun Run and 5K Race greets underway at 8 a.m. Thanksgiving Day Thursday, Nov. 28 in the Highlands section of Chatham Township at the corner of Seminole Way and Van Houton Avenue.

The event benefits the Chatham Township Volunteer Fire Department and Diabetes Research Institute and last year, 435 runners helped raise \$14,300 that went to the organizations.

Trot runder Curt Ritter is looking forward to this year's event.

"It's hard to believe what started as a small neighborhood race has grown into one of the premier holiday traditions," he said. "Not only does the Turkey Trot bring families, friends and neighbors together, but we're raising funds for two great organizations that do so much to protect and improve the lives of others in our community.

"Thanksgiving is a day to give thanks and a day to count one's blessings for all that you have" he added.

"We are fortunate to live in one of the greatest towns in America, and this race is just another example of what makes Chatham such a great place to live and raise a family."

Trot organizers opted to donate proceeds to the all-volunteer fire department and the Diabetes Research Institute the second year the race was

held. Their selection, he said, was "for a number of reasons.

Department members, he said, "Do so much for the residents of Chatham Township and each and every day, and this is one small way we can give something back to them and serves as a small token of our appreciation."

Personal

Selecting the Institute, however, was for a more personal reason.

Ritter's daughter Mollie, now nine and a third grader at Southern Boulevard School, was diagnosed with diabetes five years ago.

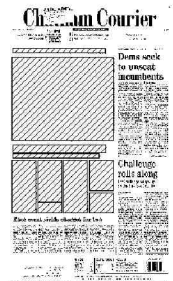
He said when the selections were announced, "we received many letters of support from residents who also live with diabetes or have a friend or family member living with it."

Ritter expects this year's attendance – and dollars raised – will surpass last year's, although, "ultimately the race is about the community – being together with family and friends and building upon this tradition in the years to come."

On Race Day, registration will be at 8 a.m. The One-Mile Family Fun Run starts at 8:30 a.m., the 5K at 9 a.m. An award ceremony will be held at about 9:50 a.m.

This year, gold sponsors include the following businesses: Allstate – A John Hawk Agency; Klas Electrical Contractors; Silver Sponsors: Dreyer's Lumber; Kitchen Intuitions; Simonfay Landscape Services; Gifts-in-Kind Sponsors: Starting Line Sports and You Here Productions.

Those interested in registering for the Turkey Trot will receive a free T-shirt if they register before Tuesday, Nov. 19. Cost is \$15 per person for the One Mile Family Fun Run, and \$20 for the 5K race. Those interested in sponsoring the event are asked to please email TheChathamTurkeyTrot@gmail.com or visit www.TheChathamTurkeyTrot.org





Photos by Judi Whiting

Left: Luca Denichilo of Chatham Township gets some help from Chatham Township Fire Chief Jim Pignatello during Saturday's National Fire Prevention Week open house at the Southern Boulevard firehouse. **Right:** Colton Walter of Chatham shows off his fire hat.