

Firefighters Run for Charity as Recruitment Tool

Firefighters Saving the Date: Sunday, April 28, 2019

February 4, 2019. “Hey, we are willing to run into a burning building, so a 3-mile jog or walk in bunker pants to recruit new members and support Sean’s Run is really pretty easy – and it’s fun.” That’s how firefighter Jeff Hughes of the Mellenville Volunteer Fire Company summed up his participation in the Firefighter 5K Challenge at Sean’s Run in Chatham, NY last year.

Bank of Greene County is sponsor of the “race within a race” on Sunday, April 28th in Chatham, NY. The event attracts firefighters proud to use this unique opportunity on “RecruitNY” weekend to show their dedication to the fire service and talk up the value of volunteering. The Bank has been the sponsorship behind this event for several years as part of their mission to support the volunteer fire service.

“Running and walking in the Sean’s Run 5K shows the public we are serious about being prepared to do whatever is needed in an emergency, plus it provides a great chance to talk to people at the event about firefighting,” said Chief Mike Layman, Mellenville Volunteer Fire Company.

Firefighters are easy to identify in the huge crowd – they distinguish themselves in a field of over 1,200 other runners and walkers as they traverse the picturesque 3.1 mile course through the streets of historic Chatham village. Some go the extra mile and wear turnout coats and helmets, and some firefighters run while donning air pack and masks.

Firefighter Hughes, like many of his brother and sister firefighters, places a high value on physical fitness. When not at the firehouse or responding to calls, Jeff Hughes manages his own gym and fitness center in Chatham.

“We have to have at least 5 on the team to score as a team but we usually have 10 or more members who want to be part of the event,” Hughes explained

James Brady, past Secretary of the Columbia County Volunteer Firefighters Association plans to again set up a “RecruitNY” exhibit at the event and answer questions of prospective recruits. “The participants at Sean’s Run come from throughout the region, we just hope when they go home they will go to their local firehouse to find out more about volunteer opportunities in their hometown.”

Sean’s Run Weekend, voted for four years as the Best Community Event-Spring in Columbia County, gives special attention to the brave men and women who protect our communities.

To enter the Challenge, fire companies and departments register members as individual participants in the Sean’s Run 5K. On the day of the event, after

checking in at the Sean's Run Packet Pick-up inside the Chatham High School gymnasium, fire companies report to the Firefighter 5K Challenge officials under the Bank of Greene County tent near the starting line to identify the names and bib numbers of their members.

Event officials will total the times of the first five firefighters from each company or department to cross the finish line. The team with the lowest combined time for their first five wins the title: *Champions of the Bank of Greene County Firefighter 5K Challenge*. Bragging rights, plaques and medals are awarded to the fastest fire companies and departments.

All Firefighters in the Challenge will receive a Sean's Run souvenir t-shirt and enjoy all the amenities of Sean's Run including a great spread of nutritional refreshments at the finish line festivities.

To sign up your fire company, go to www.SeansRun.com and for more information call Jeff French 518-672-4757.

Sean's Run Weekend includes the 5K with its Firefighter 5K Challenge, Meghan's Mile youth race, Bike Rides, a Zumbathon, a run for people with special needs, and a Prevention Education Expo.

Money raised is used to fund scholarships and programs in schools that combat the pervasive problems of underage drinking, impaired driving and lax use of seat belts by teenagers.

The event was established in response to the tragic death of Sean Patrick French, the son of a volunteer firefighter and the 17-year old Chatham High School junior, honor roll student, community volunteer and record-setting athlete who was killed on January 1, 2002, as a passenger in an underage drunk-driving car crash. He was not wearing a seatbelt when he perished.