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MARATHONING'S BEST HOST CITY EXPANDS ITS 2010 PHILADELPHIA MARATHON RACE WEEKEND EVENTS

An enhanced weekend experience of activities features four races, more than 20 Cheer Zones, free Health & Fitness Expo, volunteer opportunities and family fun.

PHILADELPHIA (August 12, 2010) – In November, the City of Philadelphia will welcome more than 20,000 runners and over 50,000 spectators at the **2010 Philadelphia Marathon Race Weekend**. Beginning Friday, November 19, and running through Sunday, November, 21, Race Weekend is the most action-packed series of events in the Marathon's 17-year history, with extended health & expo hours, a new day for the Rothman Institute 8K, and an enhanced runners' pasta party.

Races through the city streets, activities, and fun for the whole family will allow runners and spectators to get a taste of Philadelphia's beauty, culture, history and hospitality. From a high-five with Mayor Michael A. Nutter at the starting line to a Philly Finish near the Philadelphia Museum of Art on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway -- and all the scenic miles in between-- the Philadelphia Marathon guarantees runners and guests a great Race Weekend experience.

"We are excited to show our runners and visitors that we are striving to be marathoning's best host city through an expanded schedule of activities," said Mayor Nutter. "We think Philadelphia is definitely a premier destination city, with a scenic, runner-friendly course, enthusiastic spectators, more than 2,000 friendly volunteers, community involvement, special deals and discounts around the city and weekend-long activities for the entire family."

Friday, November 19

The 2010 Philadelphia Marathon Race Weekend officially kicks off at noon with a free, two-day Health & Fitness Expo in the heart of Center City at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. All runners are required to pick up their race packets at the expo, which is open to the public to browse the more than 70 vendors' booths showcasing the latest in running apparel. The expo also features health and fitness tips and provides helpful information on Philadelphia-area attractions. Expo hours have been extended this year to better accommodate visiting runners. The expo is open from noon to 9 p.m. on Friday, and from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. on Saturday, November 20.

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PHILADELPHIA MARATHON EXPANDED WEEKEND EXPERIENCE /ADD 1

Saturday, November 20

New in 2010 is the move of the Rothman Institute 8K, from Sunday to Saturday, with runners competing along the fast and scenic Martin Luther King Drive. The change allows runners who are competing in the marathon or half marathon on Sunday to consider competing in the 8K on Saturday. The move also opens spots for more runners and wheelchair contestants to compete in the Sunday races, while allowing families with runners participating in multiple races to cheer on each other.

The festivities continue with the Kids Fun Run that will start in a new location at 22nd Street and the Benjamin Franklin Parkway near the Philadelphia Museum of Art at 10:30 a.m. The Kids Fun Run is a short distance, non-competitive event for future Marathon hopefuls, ages 4-12.

The Runner's Pasta Party on Saturday evening, from 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., features an all-you-can-eat carbo-loading meal including an array of pasta, sauces, salads and other goodies. Guests will be entertained by a strolling magician, a balloon artist and more. Held this year at a new location -- the Spaghetti Warehouse, 1026 Spring Garden St. -- shuttles will provide continuous service to and from the Health & Fitness Expo.

Sunday, November 21

On Sunday, a record number of athletes are expected to compete in the Philadelphia Marathon, Half Marathon (both at 7 a.m.), Wheelchair and, new this year, Handcycle (6:55 a.m.) races. The Philadelphia Museum of Art serves as a stunning backdrop for both the start and finish, while all races are run on scenic, athlete-friendly courses entirely within city limits.

During the race, runners will navigate their way through the "City of Neighborhoods," which are both hip and historic. From the trendy neighborhoods of Old City and University City to American historical points at Independence Hall and the Betsy Ross House, runners will get a spectacular close-up view of this great American city. Landmark signs, strategically placed on the course, will signify landmarks such as Independence Hall, Boathouse Row, the Philadelphia Zoo and Please Touch Museum in Memorial Hall.

Both spectators and runners will enjoy the more than 20 Cheer Zones that are designated throughout the course. The Cheer Zones are unobstructed, transportation-accessible, fan-friendly locations, where fans cheer on runners and take in the excitement of the race. Some zones will include hot chocolate and pretzels, and are near cafes offering discounts and specials. Runners finish with the Philadelphia Museum of Art as their backdrop, and are rewarded with some much-deserved food including the famous Philadelphia soft pretzel at the finish-line hospitality tent.

Marathoning's best host city welcomes more than 20,000 runners to Philadelphia for a family-friendly series of events over Philadelphia Marathon Race Weekend, November 19-21, 2010. Produced and hosted by the City of Philadelphia, Marathon Race Weekend features four races in a city "born to run" -- the 17th annual Philadelphia Marathon, Philadelphia Half Marathon, Rothman Institute 8K, and a Kids Fun Run. Other activities to welcome runners, families, friends, spectators, businesses and residents include a free two-day Health & Fitness Expo; a free course map complete with city discounts and promotions; more than 20 spectator cheer zones; and an enhanced pre-race pasta party. Runners pass many of Philadelphia's famous attractions on the swift and scenic USATF-certified course, which is a Boston qualifier. Take the first step to experiencing 26.2 miles of fun, beauty, history and excitement by visiting www.philadelphiamarathon.com.

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