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2020 Credit Union Cherry Blossom Events Cancelled; Free Virtual Race Planned

March 18, 2020, Washington, DC: Race organizers of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run - The Runners' Rite of Spring® for the past 47 years - announced on Saturday the cancellation of all of the activities over race weekend, April 3-5, including the Health and Fitness Expo, the Kids' Run, 10 Mile Run and 5K Run-Walk. They announced today preliminary plans for a free virtual race, details of which are still to be determined.

Event director Phil Stewart said, "We've faced heat, cold and high winds at the event since 1973, but never a broad health threat like the COVID-19 virus. The organizing committee held out hope that the virus might peak and start to decline in the three weeks that remained before race day. However, when the warnings by Federal and local officials along with Public Health Agencies showed that we were still on the upslope of the virus, we knew we needed to take action - however painful - to minimize our participants' exposure at our event."

The event will offer full refunds to all participants but is encouraging entrants to donate their entry fee to the official race charity, Children's Miracle Network Hospitals.

Event Director Phil Stewart noted: "Since 2002, over \$9.5 million has been raised on behalf of 170 Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, including \$385,000 from last year's event. We would like to carry on the legacy of enabling Credit Union Miracle Day to make a sizeable contribution to Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, even though the annual tradition of the race itself will be interrupted this year."

Stewart went on to add: "If a significant number of runners were to choose to donate their entry fees, we just might be able to break through the \$10 million dollar mark."

The email sent to all registered runners on Saturday outlined three options for participants to choose from: 1) donating their entry fee to Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, 2) getting a full refund of their entry fee, or 3) offering a guaranteed entry (lottery exemption) into the 2021 event and no refund of the 2020 entry fee.

The entry process for next year's event, scheduled for April 11, 2021 (a week later than usual due to Easter falling on the first Sunday in April), will be conducted by lottery scheduled for December 1-12. Runners choosing one of the first two options outlined above will have to apply to the lottery and pay the 2021 registration fee. Runners choosing the option of guaranteed entry will also have to pay the 2021 registration fee but will not need to enter the lottery. Runners will have until April 15th at 11:59 p.m. to make their choice using an online form that will be made available to runners over the next few days. With more guaranteed entry codes being made available through this process, Stewart anticipates that fewer slots will be available through the lottery itself, something he suggests

runners should think about as they make their choices.

In recognition of the countless miles logged by 16,000 runners entered in the 10 mile and 2,000 in the 5K Run-Walk, the organizers will conduct a free virtual run as a way for runners to celebrate all of the preparation they have done in anticipation of the race. Stewart said: "Over 12,000 had signed up for free training programs hosted by Coach Kirt West and Runcoach, and we wanted to provide an opportunity for them to celebrate and cap off their training." Details about the Virtual Run will be posted at www.cherryblossom.org.

About the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile

The Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile, organized by Cherry Blossom, Inc., a 501c(3) chapter of the Road Runners Club of America, is known as "The Runner's Rite of Spring®" in the Nation's Capital. The staging area for the event is on the Washington Monument Grounds and the course passes in sight of all of the major Washington, DC Memorials. The event serves as a fundraiser for the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, a consortium of 170 premier children's hospitals across North America. About one-third of the funds raised support Washington, DC's own Children's National ("Children's Hospital"). The event also funds two \$5,000 Road Runners Club of America "Roads Scholar" grants designed to support up-and- coming U.S. distance running talent.

The Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run is also part of the [National Cherry Blossom Festival](#), "America's Greatest Springtime Celebration."

Credit Union Miracle Day, Inc., a consortium of credit unions and credit union suppliers in partnership with CUNA Mutual Group, PCSU and CO-OP Financial Services, is the title sponsor of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile Run, 5K Run-Walk and Kids' Run. Presenting sponsors include ASICS, the official shoe and apparel sponsor; Garmin, the presenting technology sponsor; Gold's Gym, presenting sponsor of the race pace groups; and Med Star Health, presenting sponsor of the Fall Kickoff Reception. Supporting sponsors include E-Trade, Gatorade, Honey Stinger, Mamma Lucia, Potomac River Running, Suburban Solutions and UPS.

The event is a proud member of the PRRO Circuit (PRRO.org), a series of major non-marathon prize money road races in Tampa, FL; Washington, DC; Spokane, WA; and Utica, NY. The circuit is committed to a drug-free sport and funds drug testing at all circuit events in compliance with the standards of international and U.S. drug testing authorities.

In addition to being sanctioned by USA Track & Field and the Road Runners Club of America, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run has earned Gold Level Inspire Certification from the Council for Responsible Sport in recognition of its legacy of commitment to sustainability and thoughtful resource management. To learn more, visit www.CherryBlossom.org and follow the event on social media @CUCB and #CUCB2020.

About Credit Union Miracle Day

Credit Union Miracle Day is a partnership of over 100 credit unions, CUSOs and partner organizations united to sponsor the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile Run promoting awareness of the credit union difference and benefitting Children's Miracle Network Hospitals nationwide.

About America's Credit Unions

Credit unions provide consumers choices for financial services such as checking accounts, investments and

loans of all kinds including mortgages. Funds are federally insured, but unlike banks, there are no stockholders at credit unions. Earnings are returned to member-owners in the form of lower loan rates, higher savings rates, low or no-fee products and services. The credit union philosophy of placing members' needs first is why more than 115 million Americans do their banking at one of America's 5,500 credit unions. Credit unions are for everyone - no matter where you live, there is a credit union to meet your needs.

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