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Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run Presents 2021 Les Kinion Outstanding Service Award to Marsha Way in Recognition of Her Many Years of Service to the Race

*Award honors the memory of longtime race volunteer
Les Kinion.*

September 12, 2021, Washington, DC: Credit Union Cherry Blossom organizers announced last night that Marsha Way has been named the 2021 recipient of the Les Kinion Outstanding Service Award. Established in 2015, the award is presented at the pre-race dinner for the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run. Last year's event got sidelined due to Covid-19, making the energy and enthusiasm particularly inspiring on Saturday evening as Deputy Race Director Becky Lambros announced Marsha's name as this year's award recipient.

"I met Marsha Way 48 years ago when she came to my room at Youngstown State University and recruited me to play field hockey for the school. What followed was a lifetime of creating stories! Some of the stories are hilarious, some sad, but through it all Marsha and I are inseparable! I am so proud of her, her talent as a coach, her sense of humor, her attention to detail and most of all how she takes care of me! She is the person in my life who would be there seconds after I called her for help – no questions asked. Her dedication to the Credit Union Cherry Blossom race is unfailing – I'm not sure the race could go on without Marsha issuing orders from the Volunteer tent – and everyone listens! That is an indication of the respect everyone has for her. When we are in a bind we all say –



Long-time Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile volunteer Marsha Way (l) receives the 2021 Les Kinion Outstanding Service Award from Deputy Race Director Becky Lambros (r).

'Ask Marsha.' The Les Kinion award was created to honor outstanding volunteers – Marsha is truly one of those."

Race Director Phil Stewart added: "Marsha's enthusiasm and energy for the race seems to ramp up to a crescendo as race weekend approaches. She has recruited and motivated our volunteer corps for over 20 years. She approaches our volunteers the same way she approached her high school field hockey teams which she coached to numerous Virginia State titles — with caring, but with a no-nonsense style that brings out the best in everyone. In the end, volunteers just *want to do* whatever Marsha asks them to do. She is a most worthy recipient of the 2021 Les Kinion Outstanding Volunteer Service award."

It was this enthusiasm and energy for the race that permeated the room as Marsha received the award. Like [previous Kinion Award recipients](#), she stood out as a worthy award recipient through the impact that she has had in bringing this event together, but with her unique coach-like corralling and championing of her fellow volunteers at the forefront.

The Les Kinion Award was established in honor of Les Kinion, a Baltimore firefighter with Engine Company 43. By passion, he was first a runner and then a running club officer and race director. In 1970, Les co-founded the Baltimore Road Runners Club, one of the earliest chapters of the Road Runners Club of America. In 1973 he helped launch the first Maryland Marathon. After retiring in 1986, Les moved to Bishopville, MD, and worked on hundreds of races on the Maryland-Delaware Coast. He became involved with the Cherry Blossom Run in the early 1990s and was active until he passed away in July 2014 at the age of 78.

With virtual editions held in April 2020 and 2021, the in-person Fall Edition of the 2021 Credit Union Cherry Blossom Runs marks the 20th year of title sponsorship by Credit Union Miracle Day. Since 2002, \$10 million has been raised for the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, including \$439,000 in 2020. Of that \$439,000, \$66,000 came from runners donating their entry fees instead of asking for a refund when race weekend in our Nation's Capital was wiped out by Covid-19. Participants in the 2021 in-person race have raised an additional \$180,059.

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 the Road Runners Club of America's "Roads Scholar" program, designed to support up-and-coming U.S. distance running talent.

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, Garmin, MedStar Health; supporting sponsors are E*Trade, Gatorade, Potomac River Running and Suburban Solutions.

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 #CUCB2021.

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 are financial cooperatives that 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 a credit union.

— End —



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