FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Credit Union Cherry Blossom Features an Outstanding Lineup of Speakers at Health and Fitness Expo Presented By Wegmans

Former winners, past race directors, and best-selling authors gather to discuss the state of the sport — 50 years ago, and today.

March 14, 2023, Washington, DC: Organizers of the 50th Anniversary of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile, 5K and Kids Run (CUCB) announced today a full schedule of talks to be held on Friday, March 31, and Saturday, April 1, at the Health and Fitness Expo Presented by Wegmans. The venue will be the auditorium of the National Building Museum — a National Historic Landmark, located at 401 F Street, NW in the District.

The CUCB speakers program will be open to the public, not just registered runners, and will kick off with 1973 Cherry Blossom women’s race winner Kathrine Switzer talking about the Women’s Running Movement at 4:00 p.m. on March 31. Kathrine is perhaps best known for the iconic photos of Boston Marathon director Jock Semple attempting to evict her from the 1967 race, which did not allow women to run officially. She went on to win the 1974 New York City Marathon and to champion women in the sport globally.

Switzer’s talk will be followed at 5:00 pm by a panel featuring best-selling author Alison Mariella Désir, whose book Running While Black will provide context for a lively discussion among a number of notable Black runners from the DC area, including: Alisa Harvey, a world class 1500-meter runner in the late 1980s and throughout the 90s, and winner of the Fifth Avenue Mile in 1991 and 1999; Bill Sollers, who ran CUCB 35 times between 1973 and 2018, when he won 75-79 age group honors at the age of 78; Marilyn Bevans, who ran CUCB 11 times between 1976-2005, winning 25-29 age group honors in 1976 at the age of 26, and who became the first Black woman to break three hours for the
marathon in Boston in 1977, placing second overall in 2:51:12; and Delabian Thurston, who ran CUCB eight times between 1974-1986.

The final speaker at 6:30 pm on Friday will be Lisa Bentley, a familiar face to past CUCB expo attendees, who will reprise her talk from 2019 about Running Your Best Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile or 5K – how to use your mind and body to achieve a personal best.

The program on April 1 will begin at 11:00 a.m. with repeats of Friday’s session with Kathrine Switzer, followed by a noon session with Alison Mariella Désir and her fellow Black runners.

At 1:30 p.m., 1973 women’s winner Kathrine Switzer will be joined by four-time Cherry Blossom 10 Mile champion Bill Rodgers (1978-1981); three-time winner Lisa Rainsberger, who won the race in 1985, ‘89 and ‘90 as Lisa Weidenbach; 1983 victor and still American Record holder (46:13) Greg Meyer; 1998 winner Colleen De Reuck; former CUCB race directors Ed Murray and Jeff Darman; and noted running historian and outstanding age group performer Roger Robinson, whose most recent running bio entry is 2023 World Cross Country Champion for men 80+. They’ll all be sharing 50 Years of Cherry Blossom Memories.

Lisa Bentley will close the speakers program at 4:00 p.m. with a repeat of her Friday session of Running Your Best Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile or 5K – how to use your mind and body to achieve a personal best.

Cherry Blossom, Inc. Historian George Banker will moderate all of the sessions on both days.

Kathrine Switzer, Bill Rodgers and Roger Robinson will be signing books at a booth in the expo hall from 5:00-6:00 p.m. on March 31 and from 3:00-4:00 p.m. on April 1; Kathrine and Roger will also be signing books from noon-1:00 p.m. on Saturday. Alison Mariella Désir will be signing her book from 6:30-7:30 p.m. on Friday evening and again from 1:30-2:45 p.m. on Saturday. The books of those doing book signings will be available for sale at the expo.

Event Director Phil Stewart, who makes it clear that he has not directed the race for the last 50 years (he did place 5th in 1977 in 51:01), said: "Our 50th anniversary speakers truly celebrate our traditions of the last 50 years through athletes and former race directors, and our goal of making the event more inclusive in the years ahead with Alison Mariella Désir."

The inaugural Cherry Blossom Ten Mile in 1973 was won by Sam Bair in a time of 51:22; the women’s winner was Kathrine Switzer in a time of 1:11:19; 127 men and 12 women ran that first race. Bill Rodgers holds the honor of most victories, with four consecutive wins between 1978 and 1981. Three women have each won
the race three times: **Julie Shea** (1975-77), **Lisa Weidenbach** (now Lisa Rainsberger) (1985, ’89 and ’90) and **Lineth Chepkurui** (2008-10). **Ben Beach** leads all Cherry Blossom finishers with an active streak of 49 years. A comprehensive media guide detailing a wide variety of statistics from the first 49 CUCB races is available [here](#).

Thanks to Credit Union Miracle Day’s title sponsorship since 2002, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run has raised over $10.2 million for the Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals, including $323,000 in 2022.

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**About the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile:**

The Credit Union Cherry Blossom races, organized by Cherry Blossom, Inc., a 501c(3) chapter of the Road Runners Club of America, are known as “The Runner’s Rite of Spring®” in the Nation’s Capital. The staging area for Sunday’s 10 Mile is on the Washington Monument Grounds, and the course passes in sight of all of the major Washington, DC Memorials. In 2023, the re-imagined Saturday 5K will stage on Freedom Plaza and traverse the route of Presidential Inaugurations down Pennsylvania Avenue before crossing the National Mall in the shadow of the Capitol Building and returning by the same route. The Kids Run is staged at 9:30 a.m. Saturday on the grounds of the National Building Museum. All events serve 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, is the title sponsor of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile, 5K, Kids Run and Virtual Run. Current presenting sponsors include ASICS, REI Co-op and Wegmans; supporting sponsors include CACI, Co-op Solutions, CUNA Mutual Group, FinisherPix, Gatorade Endurance, Guayaki, MedStar Health, PSCU, Potomac River Running, Suburban Solutions, The MO Apartments and UPS.

The 10 Mile is a proud member of the PRRO Circuit ([PRRO.org](#)), a series of this country’s classic non-marathon prize money road races with circuit stops in Washington, DC; Spokane, WA; and Utica, NY. The 2023 10 Mile will serve as the 2022-2023 PRRO Championship.

In addition to being sanctioned by USA Track & Field and the Road Runners Club of America, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom races have 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](http://www.cherryblossom.org) and follow the event on social media @CUCB and #CUCB2023.
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 races, 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, and low or no-fee products and services. The credit union philosophy of placing members' needs first is why more than 131 million Americans do their banking at a credit union.

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