

Changes and Additions – 2015 MI-Evart July 4th 5k

2014 was a year of major changes for the MI-Evart July 4th 5k. The changes included changing the name of the event, the 5k course changed, the beneficiary of funds generated by the 5k changed from the Chamber of Commerce to the Evart Public Schools, a new age group (8 and Under) was added, and this year the starting time changed as both runners and walkers started together at 8:30 AM. Changes and additions for the 2015 MI-Evart July 4th 5k will be relatively minor, but, in our estimation, will help make the event even better.

1. We are obtaining the services of a different company to provide online registration for the 5k. Over half of the 394 people who registered for the 2014 5k did so online. So, it is important that the online entry is as inexpensive and efficient as possible. In 2015 you will be able to enter online using your phone which was an issue this year for some people. Also, the new company will provide the service at a lower cost and this saving will be passed completely on to those who register online. Online registration will open January 1, 2015 as before.
2. Our feedback on the 2014 event included many, many positive comments on our volunteers. Because we recognize that the 5k could not happen without our volunteers we are planning to host a cookout of some sort to thank our volunteers. The cookout will happen about a week before the 5k, after volunteers have been confirmed, and will also serve as a pre-event meeting to make sure everyone knows exactly what his/her job is.
2. There will be a statement included on our entry form requesting participants who are planning to do a combination of walking and running to please register as a runner. While the walk is non-competitive, some walkers like to test themselves against others who only walk. The 2014 5k had nearly 100 walkers.
3. All pre-registered participants will receive a personalized, card stock certificate of participation at packet pick-up in addition to the usual t-shirt and bag of goodies. A generic certificate will be issued to late entrants.
4. An award (plaque) will be given to the runner or walker wearing the best patriotic costume. Determination of the winner will be made by a panel of judges. Everyone entering this category must present themselves to the judges in the registration tent at 7:45 AM when an announcement is made. Entering the costume contest does not prohibit the participant from winning other awards.
5. The packet pick-up time on July 3 will be expanded by one hour. The time will be 2:00 PM until 6:30 PM. at the Depot Community Room.

6. Because we had a large number of runners in the 8 and Under age group, and only three are recognized with medals, we have decided to include a ribbon similar to the walkers' ribbon for all participants in the 8 and Under age category.

7. Showers will be available in the school locker rooms after the 5k. Bring your own towel and supplies.

8. The local VFW color guard will present the American flag immediately before the playing of the National Anthem. The color guard will fire their guns to start the race. This year some participants on the starting line could not see the flag and the starter's pistol misfired.

8. Finally, we are going to order many more t-shirts. This year 400 shirts were ordered. At the time of ordering, there were fewer than 200 entries. The t-shirts were totally gone by 8:00 on race day morning and some sizes were gone long before that. Shirts that might remain will be sold for \$7 after the 5k.

We continue to work to make the MI-Evart July 4th 5k bigger and better each year. If you have an idea for improving the event that is not described above, please send us an email or post it on our Facebook page. We look forward to seeing you at the 2015 MI-Evart July 4th 5k. Bring your relatives and friends and help us reach the 500 mark next year.

Ken Willems
Race Director