

Southlake wants YOU: Hospital, Town gear up for Sunday's run



By Jake Courtepatte

The Southlake Regional Health Centre Foundation is hoping the public will reach deep into their pockets to support an event that raises six-figures annually for important hospital missions.

The Run or Walk for Southlake, presented by Nature's Emporium this Sunday, May 1, at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex (SARC), is a fun-filled, family event with something for everyone.

There's 2.5K and 5K Run/Walk routes, a 10K route and a Kids' Mini Mile. The KidZone rounds it all out with face painting, bouncy castles and more.

Over \$200,000 was raised last year in support of the Newmarket-based care centre, one of the largest fundraisers organized by the hospital.

As the run grows in volunteers and participants every year, so does the need for more space.

The 2015 run marked the first time the event was held at the SARC on Wellington Street East, moving away from the Aurora Community Centre.

Robin Taylor Smith, co-chair of the Run, said this year's Run will provide an even grander experience, bringing in a larger athlete's village, more sponsor booths, more pledge incentives, and more on-stage entertainment.

?'It's an entire day of fun activities, not just the Run,?' said Smith. ?'There's a lot going on, not just for the runners and walkers, but for their families and supporters. The more people we can get out, the better chance we have of reaching our goal.?'

As of press time, the run has raised just under \$70,000, with an ultimate goal of \$200,000. The executive committee usually expects a large influx of funds to come in the day-of or after the run, when community members see the enormous support for the cause.

Aurora Mayor Geoff Dawe has expressed immense support of the event, entering as the reigning champion among York's mayoral ?Municipal Challenge,? with Team Aurora bringing in the most money last year.

The Run is held Sunday, May 1, with registration beginning at 7.30 a.m.

Opening ceremonies are at 8.30 a.m., followed by the 10K run setting off at 9 a.m.

A new initiative for 2016, no registration fees are needed while pledging minimums help ensure 100-percent of the money you raise or donate goes directly to Southlake. To learn more, or to donate, visit www.runforsouthlake.ca.