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Runners and Walkers Group Celebrates 10th Anniversary

By John English
Contributing Writer

The Lake Grapevine Runners and Walkers group will celebrate its 10th anniversary on the Fourth of July in a "fitting" fashion.

Beginning with a 10K Fun Run at 7 a.m., the event will also feature Fun Aid stations, door prizes, refreshments and a few other "surprises" for registered participants.

"I think this is our first big, big milestone," said Kelly Richards, LGRW president. "The club was always a success right from the very beginning. It was one person's idea, and more people than expected came out for the first initial meeting. To be successful and continue on for 10 years is quite significant."

Richards said there were about a dozen people at the group's initial meeting 10 years ago, and membership currently stands at over 500 members from the communities of Grapevine, Colleyville, Southlake and beyond.

The mission of the club is to promote running and walking as part of a healthy lifestyle and anyone is welcome to join the group.

"This is an exciting time," Richards said. "Even though the club has grown so much over the years, it is more like a family atmosphere. We've watched our members grow and move on and it has just been a great time."

Richards said she believes the secret to the club's success has been the social aspect of the group, where people talk and visit at the organization's club house before and after races, combined with the fact that no pressure is put on the runners and walkers to live up to any kind of fitness standards.

The Lake Grapevine Runners and Walkers' clubhouse is located at Oak Grove Park in Grapevine.

LGRW member Tony Flesch said the club has had a tremendous impact on his life.

"When I first found RAW three years ago, I was just starting a fitness program to loose some weight and was just looking for a group to walk with," Flesch said. "What I found was not only that, but the greatest group of friends and supportive people anyone could imagine."

Founding member Richard Craft said he is impressed with the way the membership has grown over the years, but not surprised.

"I used to belong to the New York road runners club, which is a pretty big organization too, and that was kind of my template," Craft said. "It is a great satisfaction to know that we are celebrating 10 years."

Entry fees for the Fun Run are \$5 for LGRW members and \$10 for nonmembers.

See www.runnersandwalkers.com for details.

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