



NEWS RELEASE

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WAYNE, PA--On Saturday December 2, 2023, Richard Brennan will run his 10th Elves for the Shelves 5K & Fun Run. The same number of years that the Radnor Memorial Library, in Wayne, PA, has been hosting the family-friendly race.

This is no coincidence. Brennan, a runner who had participated in another local 5K for several years had wanted to find a race he could run every single year. He was living in Radnor at the time and when the inaugural Elves for the Shelves 5K & Fun Run was announced in 2013, he knew this would be the race for him.

“I was looking for a streak, and the stars aligned”

Elves for the Shelves 5K & Fun Run is a family-friendly race and RML’s largest annual fundraising event. As part of the traditional Christmas in Wayne activities, the Elves race is a fantastic way to gather family, friends, and colleagues for a fun, festive morning. Funds raised through this event support the Library’s mission to provide programs, collections, space, and other resources that enhance the quality of life for the entire community.

That first year wasn’t exactly a smooth course. First time race marshalls made a mistake and runners took a wrong turn and ended up doing an extra 2 miles. Kathy Sonier, who in 2013 was an RML Trustee and was one of the creators of the event, remembers that moment well.

“There was a moment where I was very nervous, but runners were so kind-hearted about it”

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Sonier had been an RML Trustee since 2012. The Library had had several fundraising events, most of them on the formal side. She and another trustee had been involved in another local race, and there were also several runners on the board who had participated in many races.

"I thought we could parlay that experience into a successful event," she remembers.

Sonier came up with the name and a theme that would tie up nicely with the Wayne Business Association's Christmas in Wayne festivities, which start the day before the race with the Tree Lighting.

Their idea proved successful and the race continued to be organized year after year. During the pandemic years, RML hosted a modified race, creating a move-a-thon that participants could complete on their own. Some runners completed the course as it had been in previous years.

For Ron Pedersen, who will run his 10th Elves for the Shelves on December 2, the event has been a fun way to support the Library.

"I always feel the strong support of the library by the community before and after the run as we all gather at this special community resource."

Pedersen says that he and his wife have utilized the Library throughout their lives in Radnor.

"My wife took our kids as preschoolers to the library to be read to, which they enjoyed very much," he said.

"Both my wife and I have continued to enjoy the library now that we are empty nesters. She is a fan of paper backs and brings home a stack every week or two. I love the convenience of e-books and the library always has a great selection."

Funds raised through Elves for the Shelves via sponsorships, donations and registrations directly impact the collections, programs and services that RML offers the local community.

"Elves is one of my favorite days of the year. It raises needed funds for the Library, and it is full of community spirit. I love to see families turn out to run together and all of the creative costumes. We know that the library holds a special place in people's hearts year-round, but we see it in a special way on race day."

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For Sonier 2023 will mark a homecoming. Although she has supported the race and the Library through the years, it has been a few years since she has run. This year she'll be running to celebrate the 10th anniversary.

"I can't believe it's been 10 years. I couldn't not be there."

For Brennan, who now lives in Wallingford, getting to Wayne will take a little longer but he won't miss the race, and has already registered.

"This is my race. If I am anywhere in the world, I will make sure that I will be back on the first Saturday in December to run it."

Elves for the Shelves, is held annually on the first Saturday in December, and is organized on the same weekend as the Wayne Business Association's Christmas in Wayne.

To learn more and register visit <https://runsignup.com/Race/PA/Wayne/ElvesfortheShelves5k>

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Radnor Memorial Library is located in Wayne, PA and is part of the Delaware County Library System. We are the community's destination for discovery and engagement, a home for cultural and intellectual enrichment and learning. Learn more at radnorlibrary.org

For more information about Elves for the Shelves 5K & Fun Run, including sponsorship opportunities, please contact Joyce Platfoot at 610-687-1124.

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