

Freeze for Food 2016

Submitted by Kate Schachter

Ahhh...the wonders of winter!

The 35th annual Freeze for Food was held on Saturday, January 23, 2016 at the usual Vilas Park Skating Shelter. It was an amazing event, though perhaps a bit chaotic as we reached a record high of 282 runners, plus volunteers, plus general public who were there for skating!

There were several good reasons for the success. First, let's look at the stats...for the geeks among us.

- Runners: 282
- Expenses: \$3,012
- Total profit donated to the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado, Colombia: **\$5,600**
- Total amount set aside for next years' expenses: \$2500
\$1,500 (\$5 of each registration is reserved to cover current year credit card charges and registration site expenses, and save for next year) + \$1,000 (from Calendar Committee)

The number of runners and donations slams it out of the park from previous years. The only thing that wasn't a record was the weather...the best Freeze weather was 50°F in 2002. You can see the history of our Freeze event at <http://rpcvmadison.org/activities/freeze-for-food>.

So, the Success Factors?

- A new, local race management team (Race Day Events) and registration site (RunSignUp), with a wide reach to the runner community.
- The weather was gentle on the runners and volunteers. With temps of 31°F, winds from the SW at 10-11mph, and no snow or rain, the pavement was generally clear.
- A new pedestrian walkway banner was a big expense for this year and an experiment, but it will last for years with simple date corrections. It was placed at the South Park Street bridge for two weeks and at the Campus Drive bridge for two weeks.
- Because costs have been



increasing, primarily for insurance, but also by using a chip timing company, last year we set aside \$5 of each registration to cover expenses for the next race. This allowed us to purchase the walkway banner and invest in new race shirts.

- New race coordinators, Steph Shelton and Tom Felhofer, who have participated as runners and/or volunteers in the past, stepped forward this year as co-chairs of the planning team. It was a big undertaking, and they did a fantastic job. They allowed me the freedom to step away and leave for my Peace Corps Response assignment in Georgia without hesitation.
- They were backed up by the Colombia Support Network team, who have been taking an active part in race planning since 2009. Jack Laun, Conrad Weiffenbach (both RPCVs), Hope Hague, and CSN interns Noel Gonzalez and Haley Olig were critical to keeping continuity from year to year.
- And last but hardly least, the amazing number of volunteers who stepped forward to keep the event running smoothly! RPCVs of Madison, Colombia Support Network, East High school students...this is a big event, and everyone's participation is critical.

As has been for the last many years, proceeds go to the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartado in Colombia. The money is used for food security projects, from gardening supplies, to lunch programs for the children and elderly, or agricultural training for youth. You can learn more about their activities from the Colombia Support Network at <http://colombiasupport.net/>.

Stay tuned for next year by joining the special Freeze for Food Facebook Group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/FreezeForFood/>), allowing interactive discussion among the runners. Steph and Tom will be looking for volunteer help next year...keep it in mind as a great Third Goal activity!

The first organizational meeting is planned for June 22, 2016 at the Mason Lounge, 416 S. Park St., Madison. Contact Steph <stephanie.v.shelton@gmail.com> if you are ready to be part of the planning team.



10K RUNNERS