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RUNNING SPREE RACES TOWARD SECOND YEAR

For a second year *running*, Summit Metro Parks is again partnering with the Akron Marathon Race Series to offer a three-month running event.

Beginning June 1, the second annual Metro Parks Running Spree will include a number of natural-surface and paved trails for beginning, intermediate and advanced runners that can be completed for credit while training for the June 25, August 13 and September 24 races. Participation in the spree is FREE.

Each spree participant who finishes at least six runs on Summit Metro Parks trails by August 31 will earn a wooden race medal on a commemorative ribbon. Race series registration is not a prerequisite for receiving spree rewards.

New this year: Spree runners don't have to complete six *different* trails. They may run, jog or run-walk the same trail or any combination of trails.

Forms will be available starting Memorial Day weekend at runningspree.summitmetroparks.org, at several Metro Parks locations and all Acme Fresh Market stores in Summit County. Rewards for the spree are FREE to Summit County residents. Out-of-county residents will pay \$10 for their rewards.

"We're thrilled about the second year of the Running Spree," said Anne Bitong, president/executive director of the Akron Marathon. "The spree helps us support our runners throughout the training season."

To aid in that preparation and help runners complete the spree, race series staff will host six group runs this summer:

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Wednesday, June 1, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

RUNNING SPREE: GROUP RUN

Firestone Metro Park / Tuscarawas Meadows Area

2620 Harrington Rd., Akron

Celebrate National Running Day and earn Running Spree credit. Answer questions that are placed along the route, and then submit them for a chance to win a free race entry! Overflow parking is at the Warner Road lot.

Tuesday, June 14, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

RUNNING SPREE: GROUP RUN

Goodyear Heights Metro Park / Main Entrance

2077 Newton St., Akron

Runners have 30 minutes to run the loop, and with each pass they'll earn a rubber band. After 30 minutes, runners will fill out a raffle ticket for each rubber band they've earned and then will be entered into a prize drawing.

Tuesday, July 5, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

RUNNING SPREE: GROUP RUN

Towpath Trail / Memorial Parkway Trailhead

499 Memorial Pkwy., Akron

Runners will have 20 minutes to run "out," and then have 20 minutes to get back. Runners who finish before the 40-minute mark will be entered into a prize drawing.

Tuesday, July 19, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

RUNNING SPREE: GROUP RUN

Firestone Metro Park / Tuscarawas Meadows Area

2620 Harrington Rd., Akron

This time we'll enjoy yoga before our trail run. Overflow parking is at the Warner Road lot.

Tuesday, August 2, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

RUNNING SPREE: GROUP RUN

Goodyear Heights Metro Park / Main Entrance

2077 Newton St., Akron

Runners will have 15 minutes to complete as many hill repeats as they can. Each time up they'll earn a rubber band for entry into a prize drawing. After the hill, run Parcours Trail for another rubber band.

Tuesday, August 16, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

RUNNING SPREE: GROUP RUN

Towpath Trail / Big Bend Trailhead

1337 Merriman Rd., Akron

Runners will form teams of five and run in single-file lines. The last runner on each team will sprint to the front, and the cycle will continue for the duration of the run.

For more information about Summit Metro Parks, call 330-865-8065.

ABOUT SUMMIT METRO PARKS

Summit Metro Parks manages 14,100 acres, including 16 parks, several conservation areas and more than 125 miles of trails, with 22.4 miles of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail. Annual attendance averages 5 million visits.

ABOUT THE AKRON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL AKRON MARATHON RACE SERIES

The Akron Children's Hospital Akron Marathon Race Series is organized by the Akron Marathon Charitable Corporation, a non-profit group founded in 2002 to provide a world-class marathon and other events that promote health and fitness, stimulate the local economy, galvanize the community and benefit charitable organizations. 2016 will mark the 14th running of September's marquee event (FirstEnergy Akron Marathon, Half Marathon, Team Relay & Kids Fun Run), which has grown by more than 300 percent since its inception in 2003. The series features race dates in June (National Interstate 8k & 1 Mile) and August (Goodyear Half Marathon & 10k), providing greater opportunity for participation on all levels in the sport of running. Additional information is available at AkronMarathon.org or by calling (330) 434-2RUN (2786).

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