

This half marathon in Weatherford on Oct. 3 should be a scenic, and a good training run

By Carol Montgomery

As a jogger I have enjoyed fun runs throughout my jogging career. As a part of our Fall Festival last year in Weatherford, I wanted to incorporate a 5K Fun Run. We hosted our first Fall Festival and run last year in October. Having not lived in Mineral Wells for several years, I began to ask around about other "runners" and lucky me I found an avid runner, Raymond Wiggs. Raymond runs and bikes in lots of area races and is quite competitive. He generally runs in at least one marathon a year and enjoys long runs (unlike me who thinks five miles counts as a long run!!). He willingly helped Clark Gardens put on our first 5K and we had approximately 50 runners and walkers. As someone who enjoys long runs, he noted that there were few half marathons early in the fall leading up to some of the Metroplex well-known marathons, White Rock and Cowtown. He thought that runners could incorporate a half marathon into their training schedule.

This year, we found several other area runners who volunteered to serve on the committee. Janiel Werner, an avid runner from the Metroplex who works as a dietician for the local hospital, and Leeanne Wells, a retired cardiac critical care nurse, join with local runners Shannon Cavness, Brian Parsons and Chastity Wilcox and Raymond to form the committee helping with the race. Area businesses have committed sponsorship dollars and will have a chip-timed race by It's About Time. Additionally, pictures will be taken of runners by Movin' Pictures. Area rock band Elixir will perform at the finish line and awards ceremony.

The Clark Garden Half Marathon and 5K are unique in that the course starts and finishes in the garden with the last mile and a half going through the trails of the gardens. The rest of the race is run on the Rails to Trails and on quiet country roads, with even a bit of the half marathon running through the National Vietnam War Museum. The National Vietnam War Museum (see website) will provide volunteers, many of whom are Vietnam veterans, manning an aid station. This part of the race is about mile 10 and should really encourage the runners as they run by a replica of the wall in Washington D.C. and a Huey helicopter dangling 16 feet in the air.

We are quite excited about this race. The race offers a unique experience--beautiful, exquisite garden trails, the opportunity to experience the Rails to Trails with its great footing for runners, quiet countryside and lastly the opportunity to experience the National Vietnam War Museum. It doesn't get much better than that!!