

New Pond Farm

Inaugural road race is on the horizon

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New Pond Farm will be the scenic backdrop for 500 runners participating in "A Run for the Cows," an inaugural Redding road race scheduled for Sunday, May 6. Registered participants have a choice of four runs, including a half marathon, a 10K, a kids fun run, and the Mad Cow Challenge, which is a three-and-a-half mile race before the half marathon.

John McCleary, a New Pond Farm member, came up with the idea while walking the grounds with his family, he said.

"I thought it would be great to have a race," said Mr. McCleary.

Registration opened in late December and closed early February with about 500 runners, he said. "We have a huge waiting list."

Due to the quick sign-up for the race Mr. McCleary hopes

this will become an annual event for the farm.

"This is the first race I've organized, but I've run 34 marathons and hundreds of races. I have a great race committee and race director," he said.

The course, which may be seen at Reddingroadrace.com, includes "some bumpy, rolling hills." It starts at New Pond Farm, then goes up Umpawaug Road to Station Road, Side Cut Road, Long Ridge Road, Deer Spring Road, Lamppost Drive and Old Lantern Road, and then circles back to Long Ridge Road, Simpaug Turnpike, Marchant Road and ends at the farm.

"Runners' safety is our first, second and third concern," Mr. McCleary said. "We'll have four Redding police officers, and since part of the race goes into Danbury, we'll have a Danbury police officer."

Car traffic is a minimal concern on a Sunday morning,

said Mr. McCleary.

"One of the coolest things besides selling out in a month," he said, "is the correspondence has been phenomenal. People who have battled cancer or other ailments are running; a lot of families are running together— mothers and daughters, husbands and wives."

All levels of runners have registered.

"People who run a five-minute 30-second mile and people who run a 13-minute mile will participate," he said. "We'll be there all day so they can take their time."

The day before the race there will be a "cool expo" where runners can pick up their race bag and meet the vendors," he said.

"We're trying to make it an event, rather than just a race. I-95 radio station will be there. Most races are low frills, but ours is high frills," said Mr. McCleary.

There will be six water stations along the route, including a sponge/candy station at mile 9, he said.

"Runners can cool themselves with a sponge and snack on some candy to keep their energy up," he said.

All the proceeds from the race will be going to the farm.

"New Pond Farm will use the money to further its education program. Over 5,000 area students a year visit the farm," said Mr. McCleary. "They're a jewel of Redding. It was a no-brainer they'd benefit from this race," he said, adding the farm will utilize the money well.