

2020 Compass Fun Run taking place throughout October

Written By PAULA BROWN

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Where the starting line is, is your choice.

Compass Community Church is hosting their seventh annual Compass Run for Food as a virtual run set to take place throughout the month of October.

"People can sign up for the whole month of October, they can do their run anytime during the month, they can do it anywhere they want, and they don't even have to live in town," said Mike Braun, race director for the event.

Compass Run for Food, which started on Oct. 3, is an annual 5km or 10.5km run that takes place in Orangeville. The race since its 2014 launch has aimed to raise funds for local food security initiatives in the community, such as food banks and school breakfast programs.

"Seven years ago a few of us got together, a few of us were runners, we saw the possibility of putting on a run to raise money and we saw a big need for raising money for our food bank and school breakfast programs," said Braun.

Postponing the events one day race back in April, during the peaks of COVID-19 and after raising \$25,000, Braun said that they never considered cancelling the event.

"One of the things we love about the event is engaging other people in raising money and awareness of the need for food for people," said Braun. "We thought if we could still figure out some way to do a run and get people engaged, participants engaged, and sponsors that we really wanted to do that."

Sponsors of the event provide money each year that goes towards the costs of the race and helps the Compass Run for Food raise funds.

Angela Tupper is one of the sponsors of the run and has also volunteered for the event working with sponsorship and social media. Tupper said that they expected to see some of the sponsors that had committed prior to COVID-19 pull back due to the pandemic, but didn't lose a single sponsor.

"It was hard for a lot of people for a little while and what was really great was all the sponsors really stayed committed to the cause," said Tupper. "Even though things were a little bit harder for their businesses, they all felt it was still something they wanted to support, which was really great."

So far the event has a registered 462 participants for the run, with 100 of them children in elementary schools. In 2019, the event had the biggest turn out of participants with 770 runners and was able to raise \$60,000 for local food initiatives.

Braun said that the goal this year is to raise \$65,000 for the local programs and that they are hoping to reach \$250,000 as a total for their fund raising over the last seven years.

An app that tracks runner's times and automatically uploads them will be used to keep track of the final results of the race. Markers have also been set up at the Island Lake trails for the run.

Those looking to participate in Compass Run for Food, can sign up throughout the month of October at www.compassrun.com.