

Runners and Walkers Flock to the Second Annual Wild Goose Chase Run and Walk

October 3, 2009

Imagine running through a tranquil forest with the smell of leaves and earth surrounding you. Now add about one-half inch of rain to this picture and “slippery when wet” gains a whole new meaning. Wet, rainy weather and cool conditions could not keep a bunch of avid runners and walkers away from Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) on Saturday, October 3, 2009, for a very unique event. The second annual **Wild Goose Chase 5 K Run and Walk** had 64 registered runners and walkers.



*Ready, set, go! Runners and walkers start their timers as they leave the start line at the second annual Wild Goose Chase 5 K Run/Walk at Shiawassee NWR.
Joy Clark/Refuge Volunteer; October 3, 2009*

Runners and walkers followed a route along gravel roads and hiking trails, some of it in normally closed areas. The geese and ducks didn't seem to mind the weather as they provided the soggy participants with aerial acrobatics and cheerful honks and quacks along the way.

Most participants said they were intrigued by the notion of having a running and walking race in the “wilderness.” Some participated in last year’s race and enjoyed it so much, they came back again. Visitor Services Manager and **Wild Goose Chase** Race Director Becky Goche said, “Even though everyone was soggy by the end of the race, spirits were high. We had a great group of sponsors, volunteers and refuge staff who made this a memorable event for the runners and walkers. Many are looking forward to next year’s race!”



Though a bit soggy, Brenda Warner (center) and her daughters Emilee, age 16 (left) and Courtney, age 14 (right) were all smiles after completing the 5K race. Emilee was the first female runner to cross the finish line with a time of 20:26.02.

Joy Clark/Refuge Volunteer; October 3, 2009.

The run planning committee made up of Becky Goche, Steve Kahl, Ed DeVries, and Tom Horb from the refuge and Susan Scott from the Friends began planning this year’s event shortly after the success of the **2008 Wild Goose Chase**. Seven partners, including the Friends group, helped the refuge sponsor the **Wild Goose Chase**. On the day of the race, 14 volunteers donated 70 hours working the registration table, taking pictures, helping at the finish line, and providing water and other refreshments to the runners and walkers. Six refuge staff also worked the event.