Great River Road Run brings over 800 runners to Downtown Alton

by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer
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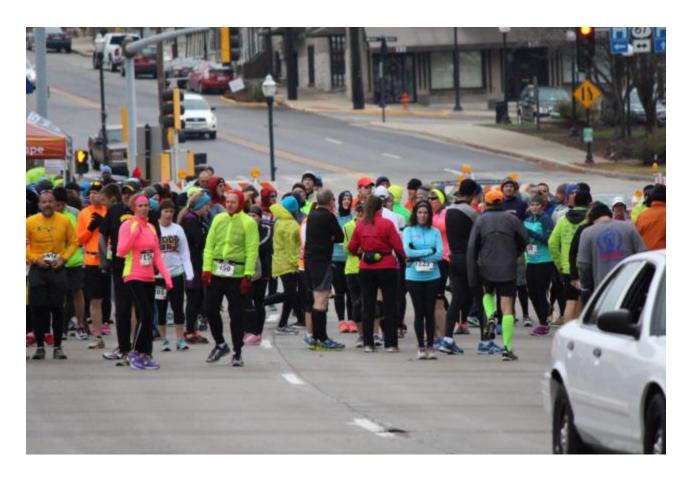

ALTON - For 56 years, runners from around the region and beyond have gathered in **Downtown Alton** to participate in the **Great River Road Run**.

This **Saturday, Nov. 28,** race directors **Russ and Kathy Colona** welcomed more than 800 runners for 10-mile and two-mile races, sponsored by the **Alton Road Runners Club**.

"It's a great tradition that residents around the area have the opportunity to participate in," Kathy Colona said as she was taking in registration forms at the race's command center at **Mac's Time Out.**

After a small delay due to a lack of traffic cones on the River Road to block traffic from the runner's path, the race began as Russ Colona kicked off the race with a sharp blow of an air horn.

Racers began the 10-mile trek down the **Great River Road or Route 100.** Runners crossed right into **Jersey County** and then turned around to head back toward Downtown Alton.

"I love seeing all of the people," Colona said. "Since it's a big event, people come back year after year to run. We have some great volunteers that help us and brave this crazy weather every year."

Edwardsville native Luke Padesky, 23, crossed over the finish line with a time of 54: 28.31. A little over 10 seconds later, at a time of 54:39.03, Josh Kaplan, 29, of Seattle, Wash. came in second place. **Alton native Dave Janet, 24, came in almost five seconds behind his predecessor at a time of 54:44.35.**

"We've been race directors for the last 11 years," Colona said. "It's a great opportunity for people from around the country to come to Alton. The money we raise helps do great things for the kids, the community and of course, running."

The Alton Road Runners Club which was established in **1979**, holds a summer running series for kids around the area. Since the Great River Road Run raises funds for the organization's operations, the series' registration fees are as low as $10 for three races.

The organization will also be hosting the **Cross Country "Runner of the Year" Banquet** for area runners who have gone above and beyond in their sport. This year's event is this upcoming **Saturday, December 5.**

Endurance Race Timing of St. Louis, MO helped the Alton Road Runners keep the most accurate timing with special chip sensors. The results of the race are also posted on their website, which can be found [here](#).