



Alton Miles for Meso 5K Set to Attract Top, National Running Talent

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Fourth Annual Alton Race Offers \$6,700 in cash prizes to elite, amateur runners and family-friendly atmosphere

ALTON, Ill., Aug. 16, 2012 – The 4th Annual Alton Miles for Meso 5K Race & 2K Fun Run/Walk, hosted by the Simmons Law Firm and organized by the Metro Tri Club, is set to attract both professional and amateur runners alike to its 5K course in downtown, historic Alton, Illinois. Over the past three years, the race has become known throughout the St. Louis area and beyond for its difficulty, as well as its generous purse of more than \$6,700. The race takes place Saturday, Sept. 22 at the Simmons Firm Building, 1 Court St., across from Marquette High School and just 30 minutes from St. Louis.

“Because it is one of the largest Fall 5K purses in the Midwest, our course appeals to runners of skill levels. The city’s hills and brick streets provide scenic views for walkers and a reasonably challenging 5K road course that any runner would be proud to complete,” said Race Director and President of Metro Tri Club Mike Wever. “We certainly expect the Alton Miles for Meso race to attract several Olympic-caliber runners again for the elite race. To attest to the caliber of runners this race attracts, the 2011 race had three elite men finish in under 14:00 minutes.”

This year the event will be split into two separate events. Professional athletes from across the country will compete in the Elite race that begins at 9:30 a.m. The Age Group 5K event, geared toward amateur and recreational runners, and the 2K Fun Run/Walk both precede the elite race at 8:30 a.m.

Wever said race officials decided to split the event to help with traffic flow, and improve safety for all participants but mostly to provide an opportunity for the age group runners to watch the professional runners compete. In addition, he encouraged area residents to also line the streets and cheer the runners.

Chairman John Simmons said the race offers something for everyone. Race day activities and entertainment include a live band and complimentary refreshments. Children's attractions include an inflatable bounce house, a snow cone stand, face painting and more.

"Our ultimate goal is to fundraise for mesothelioma, a rare cancer caused by exposure to asbestos, and we do that by hosting an engaging race that professional runners, walkers and families will enjoy," said John Simmons, Chairman of the Simmons Firm that is hosting the event.

Miles for Meso/Add One

Elite runners from across the country will compete for approximately \$6,200 in cash prizes. To be eligible for the cash prizes, runners must register as an elite runner by Sept. 18. No elite registration is available on race day. The top five elite runners in both the men's and women's categories will receive \$1,500 for a first place finish, \$750 for second, \$500 for third, \$250 for fourth and \$100 for fifth.

Last year, only elite runners were eligible to receive cash prizes. This year the top three Illinois & Missouri finishers in the regular 5K race will receive cash prizes. Awards are: \$250 for first place, \$150 for second place, and \$100 for third.

"Providing cash prizes to the top finishers in both the Age Group and Elite categories allows local runners, many of whom run to beat personal goals, to receive recognition for their own training without being eclipsed by the elite runners, many of whom compete on the Olympic level," Wever said.

Additional prizes will be awarded according to age brackets. Top Age Group runners from Illinois will also compete for the Road Runners Club of America Illinois State 5K Championship Title. Only a one race per state receives the designation of a 5K RRCA Championship event.

"Being named a championship race is an honor and truly exciting for the local running community," Wever said. "It lets runners know that not only is the Alton Miles for Meso a professionally organized event, but that participants will be running against some of the best competition in the state."

It costs \$20 to register before Aug. 31. Afterward, it increases to \$25 and is \$30 on race day. Elite registration costs \$25 before Aug. 31 and \$30 through Sept. 18. Race day registration begins at 7:15 a.m. and runs until 8:15 a.m. No elite registration is available on race day. All participants will receive a goodie bag long-sleeved Miles for Meso T-shirt.

The Alton race is one of three official Miles for Meso races taking place in September around the nation in celebration of National Mesothelioma Awareness Day. Additional races are taking place in Ontario, Ohio and in Fairfax Station, Virginia, a suburb of Washington, D.C.

All proceeds from the Miles for Meso races will help medical researchers find a cure for mesothelioma and other asbestos-related illnesses. Last year, the Alton Miles for Meso race raised \$25,000 for the Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation. Cumulatively, Miles for Meso has raised nearly \$250,000 for cancer research since the first race in Alton in 2009.

Miles for Meso is a national fundraising race that is an advocacy project of the Simmons Mesothelioma Foundation, which has donated over \$2 million dollars to cancer research and treatment since 2010.

For more information about Miles for Meso races, or to register visit www.milesformeso.org/register

About the Simmons Firm:

The Simmons Firm, headquartered in Alton, Ill., is one of the country's leading asbestos and mesothelioma litigation firms. With offices in Illinois, Missouri and California, the firm has represented thousands of patients and families affected by mesothelioma in every state. The Simmons Firm has pledged nearly \$20 million to cancer research and proudly supports mesothelioma medical researchers throughout the country in order to find a cure. For more information about the Simmons Firm, visit <http://www.simmonsfirm.com>.