



Aerie's February Freeze Run in Grafton successful once again

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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Ultra runners and trail run participants are ones who can push themselves beyond bounds that most athletes could never endure.

This past Friday and Saturday at the Aeries February Freeze Run in Grafton some runners once again pushed themselves in both a 12-hour Ultra Trail Run that had individual and team categories. The Ultra Trail Run started Friday night and ran into Saturday. On Saturday morning, there was a 5-mile trail run only. The person who completed the ultra race completed 12 laps or 60 miles in the dark. Individuals were able to run the ultra race or as a team. The winner last year completed 10 laps. Each lap is 5 miles on the trail course.

A total of 75 registered for the two different events, which seem to be gaining popularity each year.

Edwardsville's Robin Rongey is the race director for both events. She said if she weren't the race director she would definitely do one of the events. The winner of Ultra Individual Run was Peter Wright. Wright completed 12 laps in 11 hours, 52 minutes and 51 seconds. The team winner was Go Go Zilla and team members were Doug Bristow, Matt Dunn and Donna Polinske. Go Go Zilla did 10 laps in 11 hours, 22 minutes and 48 seconds.

"It's a different kind of person that does this," Robin Rongey said. "It's somebody who wants a challenge, because it is very challenging. It's the same course as our annual Trail Run. They run the course over and over again. It's a five-mile course. This gives you sort of bragging rights. We tried to make the course a little easier to navigate this year. It is a challenging course and slick as snot."

The 5-mile winner was Joshua Wiley of St. Robert, Mo., in 43 minutes and 34 seconds. The female first place winner was Tayler Sheahan, of St. Louis, with a time of 53 minutes and 56 seconds.

Sue Rongey, Robin's sister-in-law, said the race was something Aeries Winery enjoys sponsoring and it shows some of the rich property of the business to others. Aeries owns more than 200 acres in Grafton.

"The weather was good compared to last year when it we had a freeze and sleet," Sue Rongey said. "It was pretty treacherous last year. I think a lot of people who ran it this year were relieved."

Robin Rongey thanked the volunteers for the event, saying, "It takes a lot of volunteers to put this on."

She added, "Trail runners are a little crazier than most in general. I direct four races and this is my favorite. The harder it is, the more awesome it is and it makes for a good story."

