



28th Annual Soap Box “Race Of Fun” Coming Up From East Alton Parks & Rec

by Dalton Brown, News Reporter
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EAST ALTON - The East Alton Parks & Recreation Department is hosting their 28th Annual Soap Box “Race of Fun” on Saturday, Sept. 9, immediately after the first-ever 5k Run For Infertility. Superintendent Tyler Lafferty and Adult/Seniors Event Coordinator Robin Carlton with the department discussed the events and many other exciting things going on with East Alton Parks and Rec on [a recent episode of Our Daily Show on Riverbender.com](#).

The first-ever 5k Run For Infertility will begin on Saturday, Sept. 9 at 627 Berkshire Blvd. in East Alton. Check-in begins at 8 a.m. and the 5k itself begins at 8:30 a.m. The One Mile For Fun Run/Walk begins at 9 a.m. and the cost is \$20, which includes a free t-shirt. Registration can be completed online [at this link](#).

This year’s Soap Box “Race Of Fun” will also be held on Saturday, Sept. 9 from 10 a.m to 3 p.m. The cost of admission is \$2 for East Alton residents or \$4 for non-residents. Soapbox cars are provided for the participants, who must be at least 7 years old by the race date, meeting certain physical requirements - those requirements and more information about this year’s soap box race are available on the [Village of East Alton website](#).

Carlton explained the Soap Box “Race Of Fun” started 28 years ago in 1995. The race was held on Berkshire Boulevard (or “Berkshire Hill”) in East Alton, where it will also be held this year. She emphasized that the race is not for trophies or prize money, but as the name implies, it’s just a “Race Of Fun.”

“It’s really cool to see the evolution of how the event has changed over the years, too. I’m only 28 myself and I did it when I was a kid, my little brother did it ... now it’s been around for so long you have people that I graduated with where now their kids are doing it,” Lafferty said of the soap box race. “It’s a continuous thing and it’s one of our most recognized events for East Alton that we do.”

He added the event also has a photobooth station and new sponsors this year, but they’re still looking for more sponsors. More information about becoming a sponsor, crafter, and/or vendor at this year’s event is [available here](#).

In addition to the 5k and soap box race, the department also has several other projects and programs coming up. With baseball season wrapping up, Lafferty said East Alton will be getting some new baseball fields as “soon as it stops raining.”

He also announced they’ll be hosting a four-week outdoor “Soccer 4 Tots” program starting on Sept. 16., led by former Lewis & Clark soccer player and current soccer teacher Jenna Robinson. More information and registration for Soccer 4 Tots is available [at this link](#). Other upcoming programs include [Tri-City Soccer](#) for ages 5-13 and [Tri-City Volleyball](#) for grades 3-6.

Carlton said their 5th annual [Back to School event](#) was also successful and thanked more than 80 volunteers who were involved.

“We just had our Back To School event, and that’s the top of the line,” she said. “I love that we have so many volunteers, because we can’t do it without them.”

During the Back to School event, Carlton said they register kids who are in the East Alton School District and/or residents of East Alton. Last year, they managed to get 214 kids registered and received enough donations to buy every kid a new outfit.

Several local organizations provided backpacks, food, hygiene products, haircuts, and more. Carlton additionally thanked members of the East Alton School District, Mayor Darren Carlton, and the village trustees for their support.

For more information about the East Alton Parks & Recreation Department and their upcoming programs, visit their [website](#) or [Facebook page](#). The full interview with Lafferty and Carlton can be watched at the top of this story or on [Riverbender.com/video](#).