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NEWS

Troy Turkey Trot counts down to 77th running on Thanksgiving

By **Kenneth C. Crowe II**, Staff Writer
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Troy Mayor Carmella Mantello speaks during a press conference at The Arts Center of the Capital Region to launch the countdown to the 77th Troy Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving morning on Wednesday, Nov. 20, 2024 in Troy, N.Y. Lori Van Buren/Times Union

TROY — Organizers of the 77th Troy Turkey Trot believe they'll hit the 8,000-participants mark when the races start on Thanksgiving morning and runners head up River Street.

The Capital Region's premiere holiday road race has 5,600 runners signed up and is aiming to raise \$25,000 for the Regional Foodbank of Northeastern New York and Joseph's House & Shelter in Troy, George Regan, the event director, said Wednesday.

Organizers, government officials and nonprofit leaders kicked off the final week countdown before the races on Thursday, Nov. 28. The races follow courses north from Fourth and Fulton streets up River Street from downtown through North Central to Lansingburgh, before turning around to head south back downtown, with the finish line at Monument Square and River Street.

"This is a significant event for the city," Mayor Carmella Mantello said about the influx of holiday visitors both to run in the races and to watch the participants. The influx is expected to boost local businesses.

Regan was confident a new record would be set for race registrants, surpassing the 2017 mark of 7,197. In 2023, there were 6,641 participants.

"We're going to have a record field," Regan asserted.

Moving the 5K course back to River Street will be a plus for runners, Regan said. "It's going to be a safer course."

The 5K course will go to River and 101st streets before turning around. The 10K race will follow a course up River Street to Second Avenue, then along Third Avenue to 111th Street, then go south along Second Avenue back to River Street. A Grade School Mile and a Turkey Walk also will be held.

The Troy Turkey Trot began in 1916 and was held 18 times between 1916 and 1963. The race has been held every Thanksgiving holiday since 1964. The event is the 12th oldest road race in the U.S. and the 64th oldest road race in the world.

"This is not just the best Thanksgiving event in Troy, it is the best community tradition in the Capital Region," Tom Nardacci, CEO of the Regional Food Bank, said.

The Regional Food Bank expects to serve 30,000 meals for Thanksgiving, the largest mass feeding in the Capital Region's history, Nardacci said. The Regional Food Bank, which leads the efforts to feed the hungry and supplement families' food supplies, has stepped in this year to become the provider of the traditional holiday meal around the region.

Amy LaFountain, executive director of Joseph's House & Shelter, said the support provided by donations from the Troy Turkey Trot helps her organization to serve the needs of the homeless, especially as the weather grows colder.

Jesse Tomczak, chief banking officer for Pioneer, which was founded in Troy 135 years ago, said the banking institution and its employees are proud to help sponsor the Troy Turkey Trot.

Information about registering for the race is available online at troyturkeytrot.com.

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Kenneth C. Crowe II covers Rensselaer County for the Times Union. He writes about Troy, US Census, northeastern Albany County and whatever else comes up. Screenwriting is a fascination. You can reach him at kcrowe@timesunion.com.

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