Swamp Rabbit 5K doubles TR's population

More than 4,000 to participate in run-walk on trail in Travelers Rest

By Mike Foley
STAFF WRITER
mfoley@greenvilleonline.com

The city of Travelers Rest will experience a population explosion Friday night.

That's when the third annual Greenville Hospital System Swamp Rabbit 5K comes to town and brings thousands of runners and walkers with it.

"It more than doubles the population of Travelers Rest for a few hours," said Rebecca Crown, the event director and mayor pro tem.

While the race causes the only traffic jam the city experiences all year, it's well worth it, Crown said.

"The businesses are excited about it," she said. "We have churches asking to have water stops, and they're having their praise bands out there to entertain runners."

As of Tuesday afternoon, more than 4,000 people had registered to participate.

"That makes this the largest race in the Upstate," she said.

Only the mammoth Cooper River Bridge Run 10K which featured 34,790 finishers April 2 and the Turkey Day 5K in Charleston which had 5,308 finishers in November 2010 are larger.

But getting that many people doesn't come without sacrifices, Crown said.

"We lose money on this," she said. "But it's worth it to us. We see it as a way to create awareness for the Swamp Rabbit Trail and healthy lifestyles."

With an early entry fee of $6 and still at $10 today, the race costs less than many others.

"The best thing about the low cost is entire families can do it. We hear that so much, that families can all do this together. We even have businesses paying to have all their employees do it. T&S Brass here in Travelers Rest paid to have 75 of their employees and dependents do this."

Packet pickup and late registration will be from 11 a.m.-6 p.m. today at Greenville's Caine Halter YMCA and 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Thursday at the GHS Family YMCA, 550 Brookwood Point Place, in Mauldin. Packet pickup and late registration continues from 4-6 p.m. Friday at Gateway Park, 115 Henderson Drive, Travelers Rest (behind Sunrift Adventures).

YOU CAN GO

What: GHS Swamp Rabbit 5K
When: 6:30 p.m. Friday
Where: Gateway Park, Travelers Rest
Parking: Travelers Rest High
Block Party: from 7-9 p.m.
More: Visit www.ghs.org/swamprabbit5k