

25th Silver Anniversary
1982-2007
The History of the Eerie Erie

..as remembered by Bill Pedrick, September 30, 2006

Starting in 1982 an idea was hatched to sponsor a fall running race. The ad hoc Erie Community Advisory Council was eager to fill a void in the calendar. The Erie Fair was held in mid to late September. Although Erie Community Schools hosted an annual Halloween Party at Erie Elementary, something was missing.

The Advisory Council, which included among others, Pam Bartholf , Audrey Minnis , Marilyn Brand, Phil O'Shea, Susan Ritter, Charlie Garcia and Susan Pedrick, determined to launch a 5K and 10K race at the time of Halloween . Charlie Garcia, I suspect came up with our infamous "handle" the Eerie-Erie.

As it would be a family affair, the suggestion was made to include a Goblin Run - one lap of the Erie High/Middle School track for the 4 to 8 year olds. The decision was made to establish the race Saturday prior to or on October 31st.

Quickly, sponsors were secured. 1st Bank, Mountain High Natural Yogurt, All West Trophies, Boulder Running Company were pioneering supporters. And of course, there were legions of volunteers who answered the call. Who will ever forget Eva Klemmen's legendary pumpkin pies, which were raffled off to lucky winners?

Full credit for the early Eerie-Erie might approach Hollywood proportions. Erie High School Teacher Susan Sparks designed the T-shirts. Former Mayor Wade Carlson and Paul Bartholf shared announcing honors. Track and Cross Country Coach David Brinkley offered behind the scenes technical advice on the finish line. Hans (Rags) Bowker's Event Construction Specialists provided fencing that funneled runners into their places. The Erie Volunteer Fire Department were on hand to provide first aid and the Erie Police Department helped direct traffic.

The following army of recruits is by no means complete, but some of the early race-day volunteers include Audrey Minnis, Cammie Arneson, Marilyn Brand, Pam and Paul Bartholf , Bev and Butch Vernon , Cynda Arsenault, Sue Mitrovic, D'Ann Bury, Phil and Marilyn O'Shea, John Grumm, Susan Ritter, Bob Bledsoe, Susan Kelly, Chris Pedrick, and Megan Starke .

Over the years, Erie students have benefited directly from the Eerie-Erie proceeds. Specifically, Erie Close-Up Participants, Erie Booster Club, and more recently the Optimist Club of Erie which now produces this event. The Eerie-Erie has parlayed earnest Halloween sweat into sweet returns for the youth of Erie. Although the faces may have changed over the years, the spirit of the Eerie-Erie remains firmly entrenched.