

candgnews.com The Online Home of C & G Newspapers
 13650 11 Mile Road | Warren, MI 48089 | Main: (586) 498-8000

[Home Page](#) | [Macomb/Wayne](#) | [Oakland](#) | [Sports](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Auto](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Dining](#) | [Real Estate](#) | [Apartments](#) | [Retail](#)



Photo by Tracy Dreslinski
 The first four finishers of the inaugural Brooksie Way included Rochester Hills residents Brian Sell, from left, Kyle O'Brian, Mike Kilburg and Patrick Rizzo. Rizzo was later declared the overall winner.

First annual Brooksie Way called a success

Communication should improve, says cities

By Linda Shepard and Jennifer S. McDonald
 C & G Staff Writers

ROCHESTER HILLS — Perfect weather and an enthusiastic crowd made the inaugural Brooksie Way half-marathon race a grand success Oct. 5.

Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson first announced the idea for the race in February 2007, in memory of his son, Brooks “Brooksie” Stuart Patterson, who died at the age of 28 in a snowmobile accident that same month.

According to Patterson, the race was more than he could have anticipated, with almost 4,000 participants showing up when they expected only between 750 and 1,000.

“From my perspective it was an amazing morning,” Patterson said. “To finally see it come to fruition was rewarding and exciting. I think (my son) would have been pleased. Having this program in his honor will keep his memory alive.”

City officials were pleased as well, including those in the cities of Rochester and Rochester Hills.

Rochester City Manager Jaymes Vettrano said the race was a great opportunity to showcase the area.

“The participation was very large, and it was obviously well-received,” Vettrano said.

Rochester Hills Mayor Bryan Barnett agreed.

“It was a big event in the city,” Barnett said. “We had a tremendous crowd, beautiful weather, and the race went off without a hitch.”

[Rochester Hills Dentist](#)
 Your search for a Dentist is Over. Check out our website and Call.
www.handkdental.com

[Commercial Broker](#)
 Contact Qualified Brokers In Rochester Hills. 100s of Brokers.
www.Cityfeet.com/RochesterHills

[Cellulite Treatment](#)
 Remove Cellulite With VelaShape Reduction Therapy. Learn More Now!
www.AmericanLaser.com

[Rochester Hills Mi](#)
 Shop and Compare at Yahoo! Travel Rochester Hills Mi
www.Travel.Yahoo.com

[Michigan Health Insurance](#)
 Insurance Coverage for Disability, Medical, Health and More. Call Us.
www.albourdeau.com

But city officials are looking for ways to make the event more convenient for residents. Both cities received complaints of traffic jams and residents that were “blocked in” during race times.

“What we found out is that we need to do a better job communicating,” Barnett said. “There are lots of things we learned, and we apologize for any inconveniences.”

Vettrano said he received similar calls as well.

“The city did address several inquiries that day and the day following the race about the impact to traffic in certain major intersections,” Vettrano said. “Our Police Department and chief of police did address those concerns. (What we got was) just a general frustration from residents who thought they were going to be able to find an alternate route and it wasn’t as easy to identify one. It caused some delays in travel.”

Barnett said he fielded inquiries from residents asking why Rochester Hills would want an event like the Brooksie Way, modeled after Flint’s Crim Festival of Races, which drew more than 15,000 participants in 2007.

The Crim Fitness Foundation, a nonprofit organization that provides year-round health and fitness programs for children and adults, partnered with Oakland County to establish the event.

“In an economy like ours, local government looks for creative ways to find things they can do to infuse [the economy] with something that is a very low cost for the city,” Barnett said. “We’ve received a lot of positive calls from restaurant owners and businesses.”

Barnett added that the annual Crim Festival of Races infuses from \$8.5 million to \$10 million into the local Flint economy.

The Brooksie Way race’s 13.1-mile course, which was chosen for its beauty and terrain, began on Walton Boulevard on the campus of Oakland University, traveling along the Clinton River Trail and the Paint Creek Trail through downtown Rochester and along Avon, Tienken and Adams roads in Rochester Hills. Meadow Brook Hall hosted the finish.

Patterson said that while there will be very little change to the course itself, organizers plan to look into items of concern, including things like additional parking and the placement of portable toilets.

“We had support from fire and police department and city staff,” Rochester Hills Council member Vern Pixley said. “The Crim Foundation is a great organization. I think Brooks Patterson was particularly excited about the honor it brought his son. I think we can all be proud about how our city looked.”

For more information, visit www.thebrooksieway.com.

You can reach Staff Writer Linda Shepard at lshepard@candgnews.com or at (586) 498-1065. You can reach Staff Writer Jennifer S. McDonald at jmcdonald@candgnews.com or at (586) 279-1112.

Copyright © 2008 C & G Publishing

Advertiser Times • Birmingham-Bloomfield Eagle • Eastsider • Farmington Press • Fraser-Clinton Chronicle • Grosse Pointe Times • Journal • Macomb Chronicle • Madison-Park News • Rochester Post • Royal Oak Review • St. Clair Shores Sentinel • Shelby-Utica News • Southfield Sun • Sterling Heights Sentry • Troy Times • Warren Weekly • West Bloomfield Beacon • Woodward Talk