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A GOLDEN GIFT: GRANDMA'S MARATHON CELEBRATES 50 YEARS WITH NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR KIDS

All Children Ages 18 & Under Can Run Free in 5 Local Races

(DULUTH, MINN.) --- As thousands of runners prepare to chase their finish line at Grandma's Marathon in June, the organization announced today a new initiative aimed at helping the next generation of runners to do the same.

In celebration of its 50th annual race weekend and to honor the community's continued commitment to the event, Grandma's Marathon is offering free youth entries to five local races throughout the year that support the organization's charity, the Young Athletes Foundation (YAF).

"Healthy communities start with healthy kids," Marketing & Public Relations Director Zach Schneider said. "Offering free youth entries to these races throughout the year is our way of saying thank you to the community that has built Grandma's Marathon and also investing in the next generation that will carry forward the traditions of our event."

All children ages 18 & under can enter any of the following races free of charge in 2026:

- Saint Fennessy 4K – March 14
- Fitger's 5K – April 18
- Park Point 5-Miler & 2-Mile Walk – July 16
- Minnesota Mile – September 11
- Superior Nightmare 5K – October 24

There were 841 youth participants during the 2025 Young Athletes Foundation race schedule – plus more than 3,000 participants in the already free kids' events such as Wednesday Night/Saturday Morning at the Races – and organizers are hopeful this new initiative will make those events even more accessible to the community's families with kids.



“The Foundation has always believed that every child deserves the chance to feel the joy of movement,” Schneider said. “Removing the element of cost for these races opens the door for more kids to run, play, and discover what they’re capable of. That’s how healthy lifestyles start – by giving kids access.”

Registration for the first three of the 2026 events – Saint Fennessy 4K, Fitger’s 5K, and Park Point 5-Miler & 2-Mile Walk – will open on January 1.

For any questions or interview requests, please contact Marketing & Public Relations Director Zach Schneider via phone at (218) 343-9874 or via email at zach@grandmasmarathon.com.

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ABOUT GRANDMA’S MARATHON

Grandma’s Marathon began in 1977 when a group of local runners planned a scenic road race from Two Harbors to Duluth, Minnesota. After seeing just 150 registered participants that year, the marathon has now grown into the 10th largest in the United States.

The race got its name from the Duluth-based group of famous Grandma’s Restaurants, the first major sponsor of the marathon. Having now added the Garry Bjorklund Half Marathon and William A. Irvin 5K, the race weekend now welcomes more than 20,000 participants to Duluth and the surrounding region each year.

As the popularity of Grandma’s Marathon weekend has grown, our mission has stayed the same – to organize, promote, and deliver annual events and programs that cultivate running, educational, social, and charitable opportunities to our communities.

Grandma’s Marathon-Duluth, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization with a 10-person, full-time staff and a 17-member Board of Directors.



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