



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MORE THAN 500 RUNNERS, WALKERS AND VOLUNTEERS TURN OUT FOR SECOND ANNUAL RAY TANNER FOUNDATION "HOME RUN"

COLUMBIA, SC (October 9, 2007) – The Ray Tanner Foundation held its Second Annual "Home Run" on September 22, 2007, a 12K, 5K, Miracle Mile Walk and Kids Fun Run to benefit economically and medically disadvantaged children and their families. In total, more than 500 runners, walkers and volunteers gathered at 8:00 AM at the University of South Carolina's Sarge Frye Baseball Field in support of the worthy cause. WIS-TV's Joe Pinner generously donated his time as Master of Ceremonies for the day's festivities, which provided an exciting and rewarding experience for residents, families and athletes of all ages and abilities.

Local business and community involvement increased significantly this year, with financial sponsorships amounting to nearly double that of the inaugural race. Primary donors included PASCO Inc., State Credit Union and the Optimist Club of St. Andrews. Essential goods and services also were donated by such businesses and organizations as T&T Sports, Strictly Running, Peek Pavement Marking, Gatorade, Embassy Suites Hotels, Miller Valentine Group and Kelly's Gymnastics, among many others. In total more than 30 organizations joined on as event sponsors.

Proceeds from the Home Run benefited the Ray Tanner Foundation, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, nonprofit organization founded in 2005 by University of South Carolina Head Baseball Coach Ray Tanner and his wife Karen. The Foundation provides support for adoptive families, those who care for seriously ill children, the homeless and other charitable causes.

"The Foundation and the children and families it benefits owe a great deal of gratitude to the more than 400 runners and walkers who came out for this year's event," said Coach Tanner. "Karen and I also greatly appreciate the personal time commitments made by our amazing volunteer team. The enthusiasm and support for the Foundation shown by everyone involved was both humbling and inspiring."

The 2007 race solidified the "Home Run" as the largest 12K in the state of South Carolina and also this year became a registered Palmetto Grand Prix event. 12K runners were rewarded with a high performance technical event race shirt, the first non-profit charitable race in the region to do so. More elite runners were able to be recruited for this year's through an elite runner sponsorship from Time Warner Cable Business Class.

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Second Annual RTF Home Run – Page 2 of 2

The first 12K runner to cross the exciting home plate finish line this year at Sarge Frye was none other than Jim Sonefeld, drummer for the band Hootie and the Blowfish! The overall female 12K winner was 23 year-old Kenzie Lang of Columbia, SC, an elite runner. Other notable finishers included WIS-TV news anchor Dawndy Mercer, who took second place in the women's 40-44 age group, behind first place finisher Lisa Anderson, of Summerville, SC.

The Foundation was privileged to have Loretta Claiborne running in the 5K, an international athlete and motivational speaker who placed in the top 100 women in the Boston Marathon and carried the torch in the International Special Olympics. Loretta took first place in the women's 50-54 age group, and 11th overall among females. The women's overall 5K winner was 45 year-old Polly Shoemaker of Columbia. Sixteen year-old Willie Cox of Lexington, SC, placed first overall among the men, completing the 3.1 mile course in at an impressive time of 19:46.

New for this year was "The Miracle Mile," a one-mile walk sponsored by Arc of South Carolina, to help fund construction of a "Miracle Field" in the Midlands. "We are especially proud that a portion of the proceeds from this event will aid in the construction of an amazing Miracle Field, designed solely for children and adults with physical and mental disabilities. The specialized synthetic surface creates easy mobility of wheelchairs and walking devices, allowing handicapped children and adults an opportunity to experience the enjoyment of playing the game of baseball.

Rounding out the Home Run activities was the "Kid's Fun Run," sponsored by The Optimist Club of St. Andrews and Kelly's Gymnastics. The event led children in a run around the outfield of Sarge Frye, making it a true family affair by enabling people of all ages to "get in the game."

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About the Ray Tanner Foundation

Founded by Ray and Karen Tanner in 2005, the Ray Tanner Foundation is a 501(c) (3) tax-exempt, non-profit organization dedicated to the betterment of economically and medically disadvantaged children and their families. For more information please visit www.RayTannerFoundation.org.

About The Ray Tanner Foundation Home Run

The Ray Tanner Foundation Home Run included a 12K Run, 5K Run, Miracle Mile Walk and Kids Fun Run beginning at 8 AM on September 22, 2007 at the University of South Carolina's Sarge Frye Baseball Field. The mission of the volunteer event committee is to provide "a premier annual running and walking event bringing together people of all levels to help improve the lives of disadvantaged children and their families through the Ray Tanner Foundation, while promoting the benefits of healthy active lifestyles."

The October 11, 2008 Home Run Team

Ray Tanner – Ray Tanner Foundation
Karen Tanner – Ray Tanner Foundation
Heather Alexander – Finish Line Director
Selwyn Blake – Technical Director
Kristi Davis – Director of Finance
Leona Lavallee – Wheat Street Water Stop

Tricia Lavin – Kids Fun Run Director
Chris Lammons – Safety & Traffic Control
Ken Lowden – Race Director
Pam Richardson – Starting Line Director
Sandy Smith – Director of Volunteers
Dale Stigamier – Director of Volunteers