

Challengers show strength, agility on “The Beast” course

BY MARILYN THOMAS
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“This’ll make you break a sweat,” said Walter Myers as he tossed a tire on “The Beast,” an obstacle course and dash presented by the H-F Racquet & Fitness Club.

The tire toss was Obstacle 4. Myers had six more obstacles and another mile of running to go to complete “The Beast,” a course designed by Kelly Anhalt, group fitness coordinator and personal trainer, and Ashley Bianchi, a personal fitness trainer at the club.

The first-time event drew 33 participants, ages 6 to 77, who took advantage of a beautiful summer’s day on Saturday, June 11, to run the course on a grassy knoll behind the racquet club, 2920 W. 183rd St. in Homewood. Kids were up first starting at 8 a.m. Adults started on the course at 9:30 a.m.

“The Beast” had a cheering section of supporters who gave encouragement as runners ran their laps. The program was designed so kids ran one mile and five obstacles and adults ran two miles and then met the challenge of 10 obstacles – tire toss, balance beam, hay bale climb, etc.

Mike Barker of Flossmoor was the first to complete the adult leg of the course in 30 minutes. He said he is a regular runner,



Marilyn Thomas/H-F Chronicle
Walter Myers flips a tire at Obstacle 4 of “The Beast” obstacle course and dash sponsored by the H-F Racquet & Fitness Club.

so he was able to keep a good pace. He learned about “The Beast” from Bianchi and thought “it sounded really awesome” so he came out for the challenge.

Linda Dasey of Homewood is a regular at the racquet club spending more than



Marilyn Thomas/H-F Chronicle
Connor Quirke, who ran in the kids race, and his mom, Emily, who took part in the adult obstacle course race.

two hours a day on the treadmill and other equipment. She signed up for “The Beast” to try something different. It proved to be a lot of effort, but she kept at it with short pauses after running the loop. Kids in the cheering section brought her water before

she headed off to meet the challenge of another obstacle.

Emily Quirke of Flossmoor wore her sentiment on her shirt: Everything hurts and I’m dying. Her husband, Joe, and children Connor, 10, and Katherine, 7, cheered her on with each lap.

Emily said although she doesn’t have a regular exercise routine, she accepted the challenge of “The Beast.” “I’m hoping it inspires me to exercise but it’s not working, but I’m still doing it!”

“I’m proud of my mom and my brother,” Katherine said. Connor completed the kids version of “The Beast” which he described as his first run. He’d do it again.

Quirke found a buddy runner in Celestine McGee, 60, from Chicago’s Bronzeville neighborhood.

Flossmoor Mayor Michelle Nelson, an avid runner, came to the event with her son Logan.

“I hadn’t planned on this, but I decided to join him,” she said.

After his run, Barker said if the park district sponsors the event again, he’ll recruit people to come out. He’d like to see it become a tradition. Shelley Strasser, a supervisor at the racquet club, was encouraged by his sentiment and said she’d like to see the event return next year.

Park crew, contractor repair leak hours before pool opens

BY CHRONICLE STAFF

A park district crew and local contractor are credited with saving opening day for the Homewood-Flossmoor Park District’s Lions Club Pool on June 4.

Days before the first swimmers were to arrive, the park district staff filled the pool and balanced the chemicals. The following day, staff noticed the pool had lost two to three inches of water on consecutive nights, Doug Boehm, superintendent of parks and planning, report-

ed to the H-F park board at its June 21 meeting.

“We noticed on the east side of the pool that the gutters on Morgan Street were wet,” Boehm said in his report.

The hunt was on for the leak with just days to spare. Boehm said park district staff members Zig Gucius, maintenance supervisor at the H-F Racquet & Fitness Club; Eric Scheutzow, parks shop foreman and mechanic; Andrew Presnak from the H-F Ice Arena; and Kenny Nye, parks worker, worked as a team over two days

trying to determine where the leaking was coming from.

Boehm credited their efforts with “saving us thousands of dollars and helping us get the pool open on time.”

But the parks team couldn’t repair the leak, so they called out Aleck Plumbing of Homewood. The company brought out plumbing cameras and located the damaged pipe.

“Aleck saw-cut and excavated down three feet to expose the pipe and installed a coupling” on a six-inch pipe, Boehm ex-

plained. “They started at 5 a.m. on Friday, June 3, finished the repair and back filled at 9:30 p.m. A concrete truck arrived at 8 a.m. on Saturday, June 4, applied concrete to the exposed area, and we were ready to open at noon on opening day as scheduled.”

Boehm gave “a huge thank you” to his crew, adding his appreciation to Aleck Plumbing “who made the repair a priority in their schedule.”

The park board approved a payment of \$19,850 to Aleck Plumbing for the emergency repair.

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