

MARATHON WOMEN

Goddesses of Holmdel are among area participants in Sunday's More Marathon

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When the 5,000 participants take their place at the starting line for Sunday's More Marathon, there will be a few goddesses among them. The Goddesses of Holmdel Park, a group of runners, will lead a pack of area women participating in the event held in Central Park, especially for women age 40 and older.

"This is a race for women only. It's about celebrating women together and they want older women to participate. I just think that's great," says Kathleen Brogowski, 59, of Holmdel. Brogowski, a member of the Goddesses, started running in 2003 through a special running class for women sponsored by the Jersey Shore Running Club. The class is taught by John MacGillivray and Elaine Hartung's Running 101 class. Brogowski has participated in several races including the New York City Marathon.

"I've never done the More Marathon before, but I'm really excited. I've heard so much about it from other women who have done it. I'm looking forward to it," Brogowski says. "It's not so much about the race but to be a part of the event. It's special."

Women like Brogowski are exactly why More Magazine hosts the 4-year-old event, says Stephanie Young, More Magazine's health and fitness editor.

"We started this marathon to prove that women over 40 still have a lot of kick in them," Young says. "One thing women over 40 really love is reaching a goal. It's the whole mastery thing. It's a goal, but we find that for a lot of women the celebration is for mastering the challenge — to just get there."

Women can participate in the More Marathon in two ways. Women age 40 and older can elect to run the entire marathon themselves or they can be part of a team with a younger woman, where each team member runs half of the marathon course.

Given the format, many mother-daughter teams are expected at Sunday's marathon.

Paulette Stallone, 42, of Manalapan, will be running the marathon with her 18-year-old daughter Nicole. The More event is the latest opportunity for the two to team up since Nicole joined her mom in the Women's Running 101 classes.

"I got my daughter into running and now we do events together. It's nice to be able to say your daughter is your running partner," Stallone says.



The Goddesses of Holmdel.

WOMENS RUNNING 101

classes with John MacGillivray and Elaine Hartung meet once a week in Holmdel Park, Thompson Park and other parks in Monmouth County. New classes will begin in the spring. For information go online at www.Geocities.com/JMacRunning or e-mail JMacRunning@yahoo.com

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Willie Soscia is another Goddess running with her daughter.

"It's one more thing that we can share," says Soscia, 58, of Hazlet, who will run the More Marathon with her daughter Jennifer Van Dright of Atlantic Highlands.

"The first race we ever ran together, I cried when I finished with her," Soscia says. "This one will be special, too."

Adds Van Dright, 34: "To be in an event like this next to your mother is pretty fantastic. I got her into running for the health but it's turned into something more for us."

Young says the atmosphere of the More Marathon is a bit different from other marathons.

"With most races it's, 'I'm finished, I'm done, give me my medal and I'm out of here.' We will have some elite runners at the More Marathon, but there are a lot of women who will finish the race, double back and walk the last couple of miles to cheer on other women., or who will stay around to applaud the other women finishing," Young says. "These women have a blast out there. They talk, they chat and they joke. I did the race last year and I can tell you these women were chatting about all sorts of things — what they had for dinner, where so and so got those cute tights or shorts, which group is from where.

"And there's just a lot of love and support and mutual admiration from everybody. It takes the sting out of running 26 miles."

For Shirley Lew, 39, of Manalapan, who will be running her fourth More Marathon on Sunday, "it's such a special event."

"Everyone there is celebrating what a woman can do," she says.

Coach MacGillivray, who gave his 2003 runners' class the moniker Goddesses of Holmdel Park, says he sees a similar spirit of camaraderie among the groups in his weekly classes.

"We don't just warm up, talk about running and then run for 30 minutes," he says. "The women cheer each other on. They chat about their families and their children."

Mentoring, MacGillivray says, is another special part of the Women's Running 101 classes. Women from past classes returning to help those just starting out.

"The competitive part of it is very low key. Quite a few of them have become very good runners and have won awards," he says. "But for the majority of these ladies, they're running for their own health and a sense of accomplishment."