

DISCOVER DOWNTOWN 5K STROLL & 10K RUN

After a very harsh winter in Eastern Oregon in 2010/11, community members in La Grande saw a need to reengage the community with downtown, draw attention to the improvements being made, as well as highlight the great businesses in the district. The Grande Ronde Roadrunners introduced the idea of a 5K Stroll and 10 K Run to the La Grande Main Street Promotion Committee and the idea took off from there.

As indicated in a 2009 residence survey, the top reasons for shopping in downtown La Grande are the friendly store owners and the historic buildings. This event aimed to highlight these aspects. Both the walking and running routes were created to include the entire downtown district. All 5K participants were given a walking map that included not only the route, but also shared information about historically significant buildings and the improvements made to date in the district.

Planning for the event took place during February and March of 2011. During that time, a sub-committee solicited business participation to provide a Service, Stamp, or Sponsorship. Concurrently, the Grande Ronde Roadrunners established course routes, arranged course marshals, worked with local media for donated advertising, and designed event t-shirts. The budget for the inaugural event (t-shirts, printing, are registration) was \$280 which was more than covered by the \$1300 collected in registration fees.



To get people off the street and into stores, premier door prizes were available for participants who entered a high number of stores and received a stamp. This campaign paid off as many participants returned at the end of the event raving about the new local businesses they had discovered.

To date, this has been one of the most successful events held by La Grande Main Street. Not only did it market downtown, it also marketed La Grande Main Street and acted as a fundraising event. Due to the great response from merchants and participants, this will become an annual event for La Grande Main Street. This highly successful event was made possible because of the tremendous amount of work done by the Grande Ronde Roadrunners.

