

Royal Victoria Marathon
Box 675, 185 - 911 Yates Street
Victoria BC V8V 4Y9
Phone: 250.658.4520
Fax: 250.658.4580



Email: info@royalvictoriamarathon.com
Web: www.royalvictoriamarathon.com

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MEDIA RELEASE

Marathoners to run their 28th Royal Victoria Marathon

(Victoria, BC – September 25, 2007) Three marathon runners will be spending Thanksgiving weekend as they have done for the past 27 years – running the Royal Victoria Marathon. Victoria runners Ken Bonner and Terry Slater, and Burnaby resident Rose Marie Preston, have run every Royal Victoria Marathon since the first race in 1980.

“It’s such a tradition now that I can’t think of doing anything else for Thanksgiving,” says Preston. A runner for over 35 years, her best time of 3:46 may not be repeated but she comes back every year to enjoy the scenic route and to challenge herself. “My goal these days are to start and finish.” She hopes to complete the 42.2-kilometre course in five and a half hours.

Ken Bonner, a recognizable figure on the local Victoria running scene, remembers the first Royal Victoria Marathon. “It started at 5:00 pm on a Friday night outside City Hall and we ran down the centre of Douglas Street, out of town and all the way to Sooke. We had a water station at Langford but that was it,” he recalls. Bonner was a prolific runner with over 160 marathons to his record, averaging 10 marathons a year. Now he usually does three – Vancouver, Seattle and his favourite – Victoria. He likes the marathon for the course, the people and the weather. “Victoria isn’t a big city marathon and if we have a sunny day there is such a nice fall atmosphere with all the colours.”

For Terry Slater, running the marathon is just the natural thing to do. “It’s part of my life and even though I don’t run or train as hard as I used to, I still enjoy it,” he says. In 1983 he ran his best ever time in 2:35. “It’s more challenging now but if I can complete it in around 3:30 I will be happy. It really depends on how I feel on the day and how mentally prepared I am.”

The 28th Annual Royal Victoria Marathon takes place Sunday October 7, and in addition to the Marathon there is a Half Marathon, an 8K Road Race and the THRIFTY FOODS Kids Run.

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For more information contact:
Sandi Heal, Administrative Manager, Royal Victoria Marathon
info@royalvictoriamarathon.com
Tel: 250-658-4520