A Successful Failure

Three hundred and thirty-five runners jogged to the starting line for the 35th running of the Montcalm Mile. That classic race follows a downhill course around the famous monument, through downtown Ticonderoga and ends just before Bicentennial Park.

Start mats were placed, the steamy road was chalked and the posed runners waited!

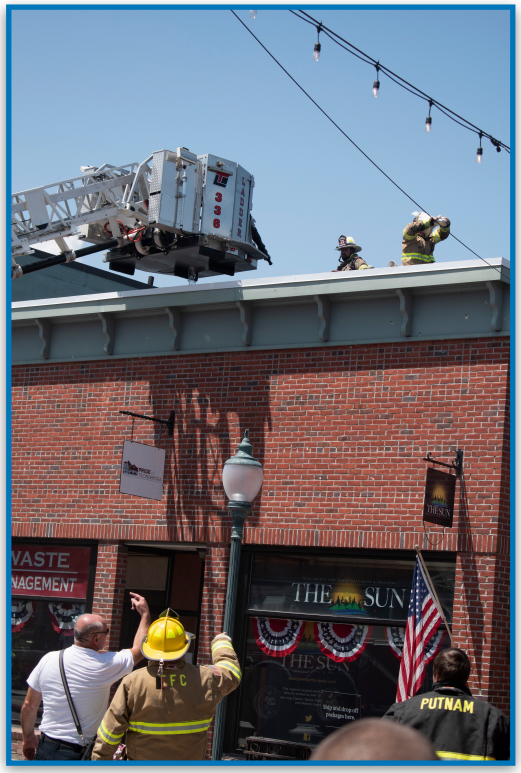
And they waited!

Then came a phone call. There was a problem–one of the buildings in the center of Montcalm Road was on fire.













Green light! There was one, a traffic light, but there were plenty of red lights from fire trucks.

There were not just local fire trucks from Ticonderoga, but trucks from near-by communities, 11 different fire departments arrived at the scene, one from Washington County, four from Warren County, and the remainder from Essex County. The area was made secure and safe!

People present for the race and parade waited. Some wondered. What was happening at the starting line?





At the starting lines, there was first puzzlement, and eventually smiles. As they waited, bands moved in. These bands were present to march in the parade. The bands had been waiting, but they were formulating a plan!

If they could not play for the hundreds lining the road, they could play for a different group, the runners. So they grouped and marched and approached the standing and idle runners.





One band was the Fife and Drum corps from Fort Ticonderoga. They picked up their drums and drum sticks and the fifers picked up their instrument, and with a signal, they started playing.

Runners turned; they listened, and they smiled. The music was wonderful! The corps then smiled as well. Both groups were happy. Then, another group marched up!





This group was the Capital District Youth Pipe Band.

One of the runners read the insignia on a uniform and exclaimed, “Wow, did you guys come here all the way from Washington, DC?

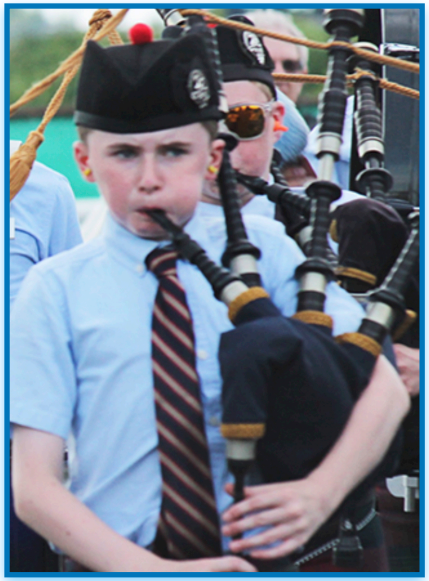
One of the players stopped and looked and said, “No, we are from Scotia, NY!”

“Oh!”

They played. The runners enjoyed.

Another group had formed at the edge of the field. They too held bagpipes. They approached the band playing and joined in. They fit in perfectly! The music was magical!

It was an extremely warm day, but the runners no longer notice.



The day’s events were unexpected, but everyone enjoyed the new day’s events as they unfolded.



The music slowed! A group of runners then moved. They moved toward the downhill and the monument. They then started running. Runners looked, then they followed! Soon the field was running toward the finish line, smiling and laughing!

They ran past the waiting parade group. The parade group took notice and joined in! They too smiled! As they descended they unleashed their cargo. Candy! Runners bent and scooped, soon pockets were filled. Bystanders ducked and the barrage of candy reigned down. They too smiled and filled pockets and bags.

An unexpected event did not dampen the enthusiasm of the runners. They did run, and they did make it to the finish line, although by a round-about route.





At the finish line they were greeted and given medals and treats. 🏅

It was the 35th running of the Montcalm Mile, and it was indeed a successful failure! 😀



