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SHELBY TOWNSHIP

Glow Run/Walk to benefit Special Olympics

By **SEAN DELANEY**

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Cherry Creek Golf Course in Shelby Township is hosting a Night Glow 5K Run/Walk event on April 16 with proceeds to benefit the Macomb County Special Olympics.

The result of a partnership between Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel and race directors Michael Ward and Jean Lambert, officials say the county's first "Glow Run" will raise awareness and funds for Macomb County Special Olympics and give local runners an opportunity for a "night on the township."

"Michael Ward always does a tremendous job organizing fundraisers for our community, and I am very excited to see what he does with this one," Township Supervisor Richard Stathakis said. "And, hopefully, as people come out to

enjoy the run they stay in our community for a night on the township."

The race was announced Feb. 22 at a press conference featuring Hackel, Stathakis, Ward and Lambert at Cherry Creek, and the officials outlined particulars of the event, which begins at 7 p.m. with registration for adults, a "Kids Run" at 7:45 p.m. and the 5K at 8 p.m.

"Nobody's done anything like this before in the dark on a golf course," Ward said.

During the event, participants will use flashlights, glow tubes and other items to navigate the golf course at night.

"Jean and I are really excited because it's another big fundraiser for the kids," Ward said.

The Macomb County Special Olympics is part of the Special Olympics Michigan, a privately funded nonprofit organization that provides year-round sports training and athletic competi-



Officials announce a first-of-its kind event for Macomb County. A Night Glow 5K Run/Walk will be held at Cherry Creek Golf Course on April 16. A children's run will start at 7:45 p.m. followed by the 5K run at 8 p.m. Proceeds will benefit the Michigan Special Olympics. Horsing around after the press conference with a foam stick baton are Richard Stathakis, Shelby Township supervisor (front); Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel; Jean Lambert, co-director of Run the Creek and Special Olympics regional manager; and Mike Ward, co-director of the Run the Creek race.

RAY SKOWRONEK - DIGITAL FIRST MEDIA

tion in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

The goal of the program is to engage and encourage special needs individuals to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and develop

skills, confidence, self-esteem and friendships.

In addition to the Glow Run, Ward and Lambert work together on the annual Gopher the Gold Run and Jingle Bell Run in Shelby Township to raise funds for Macomb County Special Olympics.

"There is nothing more powerful in the world than the heart of a volunteer, and Michael Ward truly embodies that," Stathakis said. "He devotes so much time to these causes and asks for nothing in return. Truly, Shelby Township is a better place because of peo-

ple like Michael Ward."

The event costs \$25 through April 12 and \$30 after April 12. The cost of the "Kids Run" is \$5 or \$10 with a shirt. Online registration is available at eastsideracingcompany.com.

For more information, contact Ward at 586-484-5523 or email jean.lambert@cmich.edu.