

## Autism Speaks 5K Run Will Be Held July 4

Event raises awareness and money.

BY SUSAN BELFORD  
THE ALMANAC

When Susan Pereles learned that her 2-year-old nephew had been diagnosed with autism, she literally raced into action. She initiated a 5K charity race and a 1 mile walk to increase autism awareness and raise money for global biomedical research on causes, prevention, treatment and cures for autism. In this first effort, they raised \$100,000 for their cause.

This year, as they celebrate the 10th anniversary of the race, they expect to raise more than \$250,000. The 2010 Autism Speaks 5K Run is in memory of the race's first announcer, Chip Shooshan,

On Sunday, July 4, more than two thousand racers and 600 walkers will gather at the Potomac Library to run and walk through Potomac.

"This is a wonderful family and



Susan Pereles initiated the race; Steve Kirstein, one of the owners of BOWA, the presenting sponsor, suggested the "Run Anywhere" concept.

community event," said Pereles. "Entire families, including children, grandparents, aunts and uncles meet before 8 a.m. to start their July 4 family events. Almost every family in the U.S. is touched in some way by autism. Participating in the race or volunteering to help with the event and raising both awareness and funds is a wonderful way to make a difference and bring an end to autism."

A NEW CONCEPT, entitled "Run

Anywhere" was introduced this year by Steve Kirstein. He had the idea because many race invitees told him they would be out of town on vacation. Kirstein suggested that people could still sign up for the race, receive the attractive blue race tee shirt and "Run Anywhere."

Kirstein is one of the owners of BOWA, the presenting sponsor of the race. BOWA has been supporting the race since its inception. Kirstein and his family are person-



T-shirt worn by runners and walkers in the AutismSpeaks 5K.

### Details

Autism Speaks 10th Annual 5K Run-1 Mile Walk

When: Sunday July 4, event day registration available

Where: Potomac Library at the intersection of River and Falls Roads in Potomac.

♦ 7:30 a.m. Pre-race warm-up (with professional trainer Fred Foster)

♦ 8 a.m. 5K road race

♦ 8:05 a.m. 1 mile walk

Registration Information: (online registration will close at midnight June 30)

Entry fee for 5K run or 1 mile walk: \$30

Packet Pick-Up and Late Registration:

♦ July 2, at Potomac River Running Store, Rockville Town Center, 115 Gibbs St., 4-8 p.m. \$35

♦ July 3, Potomac United Methodist Church, Corner of Falls Rd and South Glen Rd., 3-6 p.m., \$35

♦ July 4 (at Potomac Library) \$40  
Fee for children ages 14 and under: \$15 at all times

AutismSpeaks5K@autismspeaks.org

ily income, education and lifestyle do not seem to affect the risk of autism. Improved diagnosis and environmental influences are two reasons often considered to explain the increasing prevalence of autism, but the real cause is unknown.

**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED** to help the day of the race as well as

SEE REGISTER, PAGE 8

**Potomac ALMANAC**

Susan Pereles and Steve Kirstein display the Autism Speaks Race t-shirt. The annual fund-raiser will be held July 4 starting at the Potomac Library.

Smoochie: One Expensive Rescue Dog  
PET CONNECTION, PAGE 4

Grand Slam Champion Teaches  
NEWS, PAGE 3

**Raising Awareness And Research Funds**

## Register for Autism Speaks 5K

FROM PAGE 3

the day before. Volunteers will work with a partner to help with registration, course monitoring, water and food distribution, race set-up and break-down, and directing runners and walkers. "Volunteering to help is fun and an excellent way to give back to the Potomac community," said Pereles. "We need lots of volunteers. It is a very short commitment of time — and will have a real impact on our world."

To volunteer, visit the website [Autismspeaks5K@autismspeaks.org](http://Autismspeaks5K@autismspeaks.org)

"Pre-register on-line as soon as possible," said Kirstein. "Entry fees are \$30 if participants register before June 30. After June 30, the fees are \$40. If you are going out of town and pre-register, your race shirt will be mailed, so you can wear it as you 'Run Anywhere!'"

Racers can register on the morning of July 4 at the Potomac Methodist Church, but should plan to arrive by 7

a.m. They may also register in person after June 30 at the Potomac River Running Store from 4-8 in the Rockville Town Center.

After the race, food and drinks will be provided by Potomac Pizza, Giant, Safeway, Whole Foods, Chicken Out and other local merchants. Many businesses are sponsoring runners or teams — or just serving as sponsors. These can be viewed at the website.

"Donations are also welcome as are patrons," said Kirstein. "Several community swim clubs, including Country Glen, Eldwick and Potomac Swim and Tennis are backing teams to run in the event. It has become a real competition."

To register for the Autism Speaks 5K Race and One Mile Walk or to serve as a volunteer, visit the website at [Autismspeaks5K@autismspeaks.org](http://Autismspeaks5K@autismspeaks.org). The only way to solve the mystery of why so many children are autistic is to raise money for research into this debilitating disease.