Monaca firefighters organize Stop, Drop and Run 5K race

By Kirstin Kennedy kkennedy@timesonline.com | Posted: Wednesday, October 8, 2014 4:00 am

MONACA -- Stop, drop and run 3.1 miles -- that's what borough firefighters want the community to do Saturday at their second annual 5K race.

The Monaca Volunteer Fire Department's Stop, Drop and Run 5K kicks off at 9 a.m. at the department's Taylor Avenue station. Christopher Shotter, the department president, helped to organize what he calls a family-friendly, community event.

The race is offered to serious and casual runners alike. Shotter also said

Stop, Drop and Run 5K

The Stop, Drop and Run 5K, which benefits the Monaca Volunteer Fire Department, begins at 9 a.m. Saturday.

walkers and kids are encouraged to join the race. All participants 12 years old and younger will receive a medal for participation.

Shotter said since the borough hasn't hosted a fall festival recently, he hopes the race can become a community event.

The entire event is organized by Monaca volunteer firefighters, from advertising for the race to actually getting runners on the road. The department purchased its own software to build timers in the start and finish line. According to Shotter, it would cost the department between $300 and $600 to bring in a timing company every year. With its own software, the cost to the department is only about $20 annually.

In 2013, the first time the department organized the race, about 120 participated and $4,000 was raised. This year, Shotter expects between 150 and 200 runners and walkers at the start line, and he estimates they will raise between $5,000 and $6,000. All of the money raised goes into the department's equipment fund.

The race is laid out in Monaca Heights, in what Shotter calls "Beaver County's rolling hills." There will be two water stations along the course. Fire trucks from Monaca and

neighboring communities will line the course, he said.

There are several firefighters who plan to run the race in full gear -- which adds about 60 pounds -- Shotter said.

"It's really a feat of stamina and determination," he said. Not only does the gear add extra weight, but it also increases heat and limits the runner's movement. Shotter hopes this will help the community to see and understand some of the physical difficulty involved in fire response.

Registration will be open until Friday night, and the cost is $25 per runner or walker. The cost includes a Stop, Drop and Run T-shirt. Firefighters from any department receive a 20 percent discount. Race-day registration is available.

The first-place male and female runners each will receive $100, and the top three runners in each division will get a medal. The age divisions include 12 and under, 13-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59 and 60 and up. A trophy will also be presented to the firefighter in gear who finishes first.

Anyone who is interested in volunteering may contact the department on the race website.

To register for the race, visit www.monacafire.com/5K. Parking will be available at the start and finish of the race. The course map is also available on the website.