

# Alpine Avalanche

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## Local race fueled by community

BY MARCY STUEVE

Staff Reporter

In October, the town of Marathon doubles in size with runners coming from all over to race in the Marathon to Marathon. This year will be no different when on Saturday, Oct. 21, people flood into West Texas to tie on running shoes and race down the road into Marathon.

The event kicks off with a pasta dinner at the Gage Hotel Friday evening, and the next morning, runners will line up to race, followed by a lunch hosted by the Marathon Volunteer Department.

This event is a fundraiser for local non-profits like the VFD, the Marathon public school, the Marathon Public Library, and more. Last year, the event raised \$8,300 for the fire department.

One quarter of the town comes out to volunteer and man the registration table and water stations, drive buses full of runners to the start lines, prepare and

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serve the pre-race pasta dinner and the post-race lunch, and provide security for the whole event. There are massage therapists on site for runners to help with tired, sore, or injured muscles.

"It's not a one person show. Everyone gets involved one way or another," said Marci Roberts, the event organizer.

Roberts manages the hundreds of volunteers and runners, and has overseen the race since 2011.

"Each year we get better and better organized, better and better streamlined," she said.

The race is in its 15th year, and each year is different from the one before. In 2016, there were over 500 racers. This year, Roberts expects around 450 participants.

The race has several options - the 26.2-mile marathon, a half marathon, a 10k, and a 5k. A broad range of age categories offers something for everyone. Some locals enjoy racing as well, such as Pat Martin and Julia Pineda, who are in 80 to 90-year-old category. Roberts said she sees the women around town walking and preparing for the 5k.

With all the volunteers and the year-long planning, the race runs like a well-oiled machine.

"Sometimes something happens and you



The Marathon to Marathon race starts at 6:30 a.m., and runner have until 1:30 p.m. to cross the finish line pictured here.

Courtesy photo

just have to deal with it, like weather. I've learned to be flexible and to have a handful of volunteers to just be available," said Roberts on how she prepares for the unforeseeable issues that arise.

In October, the outdoor race could be on either a warm day or on a cold, rainy day.

Marathon can't handle all the visitors, so the surrounding towns also benefit. Many runners are already booking their hotels for the 2018

race. "I can get overwhelmed with the emotion because it's such a loving and supportive event, whether you're trying to qualify for the Boston Marathon or you're in the 80 and 90-year-old category," said Roberts. "What's special to me is that it is a race of love for a community. Racers feel they are racing for community."

For more information visit [marathon2marathon.net](http://marathon2marathon.net).