

Hundreds turn out for 32nd annual Darien Road Race

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And off they go! The 2011 Darien Road Race "Loop" runners shot out of the starting line at Pear Tree Point on Sunday, September 18. Photo: Jeanna Petersen Shepard / CT

The 32nd annual Darien Road Race took place on Sunday, Sept. 18, at Pear Tree Beach. The race route, which stretches along scenic waterfront roads, included two events, a 10-kilometer race (6.2 miles) and a 1.5 mile fun run known as the Loop.

First Selectman David Campbell welcomed the hundreds of runners, spectators and nearly 100 volunteers who turned out.

The Atria Awards were awarded by JoAnn Panella to the oldest and youngest runners with the best finish times in either the 10-K or the fun run events. The youngest runner to complete the Loop this year was 4-year-old Skyler Kaalinagy, of Darien. The oldest runner was Neil Knox, 90, also from Darien, who also won the award in 2010 by completing the 1.5 mile event.

The Jim Fixx Award, named after the late Greenwich runner and author whose "Complete Book of Running" fueled the running boom of the 1980s, is awarded to the top fundraiser who also runs in and completes one of the two races. This year's award went to Fixx's son, John, who placed second in the men's 50-year-old category and raised more than \$2,500. His contribution also earned him the overall Top Fundraiser Award, a BMW Cruise bicycle donated by BMW of Darien.

According to Mary Green, founder and co-chairman of the race, the event raised more than \$30,000 for the beneficiaries: The Bennett Cancer Center at Stamford Hospital; the Whittingham Cancer Center at Norwalk Hospital; and The Community Fund of Darien.

Following the race, an award was presented to the overall 10K men's winner Jeff Watson, 30, of Stamford, with a time of 35:38. The second-place finisher was Wantuil Souza, 44, of Bridgeport, with a time of 36:16 and the third-place finisher was Ken Fandell, 40, of Chicago, with a time of 37:33.

The 10K women's winner was Mary Zengo, 46, of Wilton, with a time of 40:34. The second-place finisher was Danielle Simms, 22, of Darien, with a time of 41:26, and the third-place finisher was Amanda Parrish, 29, of Norwalk, with a time of 42:06.

The Loop men's winner was Charlie Keady, 17, of Darien, with a time of 13:55. The second-place finisher was Kevin Kedra, 28, of Stamford, with a time of 14:02 and the third-place finisher was Will Foster, 12, of Darien, with a time of 14:36.

The Loop women's winner was Lauren Rutledge, 13, of Darien, with a time of 15:16. The second-place finisher was Caroline O'Brien, 13, of Darien, with a time of 15:17 and the third-place finisher was Juliet Homes, 10, of Darien, with a time of 15:50.