



## For Immediate Release

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### **Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run Awards Les Kinion Outstanding Service Award to George Tarrico in Recognition of His Tireless Dedication to the Runner's Rite of Spring**

#### *Award Honors the Memory of Longtime Race Volunteer Les Kinion*

**April 2, 2016, Washington, DC:** Eager anticipation was in the air at the annual pre-race dinner of the 44th Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run, the third stop on the 2015-16 PRRO Circuit. The invited athletes were ready to run, race committee members had myriad last-minute details running through their minds, and credit union dignitaries were excited to share the news of their fundraising success. On top of all that, a new annual award was added to the agenda last year: the Les Kinion Outstanding Service Award - an award established to ensure the memory of Kinion's outstanding service to the running world in general, and the Cherry Blossom Run specifically.

"Les Kinion was very much at the heart and soul of the Cherry Blossom race committee for over 20 years," said Race Director Phil Stewart. "He coordinated the screen printing of the t-shirts, packaged and delivered over 150 separate packets for committee members and others, and worked all race weekend long - always with a smile and effusive spirit that rejuvenated even the most tired among us. There wasn't a single thing that Les wouldn't do to help out the race."

Stewart went on to add: "This year's Kinion Award recipient, George Tarrico, brings that same indefatigable spirit to his role as our logistics coordinator, a role he has filled since 2008. George coordinates all of the planning and logistics for the massive Washington Monument Grounds staging area for the event. A former helicopter pilot during the Vietnam War, he came to us keenly qualified about how to make order out of chaos. That is what he does over six 24-hour days overseeing construction on the site and dealing with half a dozen vendors, each of whom feels that his job is the

most important work that needs to be accomplished. To accomplish this task he has to be a tough taskmaster when people under-perform or fall behind schedule, and a diplomat when his 'best friends' from the National Park Service's Permit Enforcement team show up on site."

By trade, Les Kinion was a Baltimore fire fighter with Engine Company 43. By passion, he was first a runner and then a running club officer and race director. In 1970, Les co-founded the Baltimore Road Runners Club, one of the earliest chapters of the Road Runners Club of America. In 1973 he helped launch the first Maryland Marathon. After retiring in 1986, Les moved to Bishopville, MD and worked on hundreds of races on the Maryland-Delaware Coast. He became involved with the Cherry Blossom Run over 20 years ago, and was active until he passed away in July 2014 at the age of 78. His three daughters, Cheryl, Kathy and Dina, assisted with the presentation.

Since 2002, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile and 5K Run-Walk have raised over \$7.5 million for the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. The 2016 event marks the 15th year of title sponsorship by Credit Union Miracle Day.

#### **About the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile:**

The Credit Union Cherry Blossom is known as "The Runner's Rite of Spring" in the Nation's Capital. The staging area for the event is on the Washington Monument Grounds, and the course passes in sight of all of the major Washington, DC Memorials. The event serves as a fundraiser for the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals, a consortium of 170 premier children's hospitals across the United States. About one-third of the funds raised support Washington, DC's own Children's National Medical Center ("Children's Hospital"). The event also funds two \$5,000 Road Runners Club of America "Roads Scholar" grants designed to support up-and-coming U.S. distance running talent.

Credit Union Miracle Day, Inc., a consortium of credit unions and credit union suppliers, is the title sponsor of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile Run and 5K Run-Walk. PSCU is the lead financial partner of Credit Union Miracle Day, Inc. Supporting sponsors include Cabot Creamery Cooperative, E-Trade, Gatorade, Gold's Gym, MarathonFoto, MedStar Sports Medicine, Navy Federal Credit Union, New Balance, Potomac River Running and Suburban Solutions Moving Company.

The event is a proud member of the PRRO Circuit ([www.PRRO.org](http://www.PRRO.org)), a five-race non-marathon prize money circuit with events in Utica, NY; San Juan, PR; Washington, DC; Spokane, WA; and Pittsburgh, PA. The circuit is committed to a drug-free sport and funds USADA to conduct drug testing at all circuit

events. The winning male and female at Cherry Blossom are eligible for the \$10,000 PRRO Super Bonus if they win the PRRO Championship presented by the Boilermaker Road Race on July 10, 2016; if they place in the top 10 at the PRRO Championship, they will earn the PRRO Event Champion's bonus of \$1,500.

In addition to being sanctioned by USA Track & Field and the Road Runners Club of America, the Credit Union Cherry Blossom Run recently earned Gold certification from the Council for Responsible Sport for its many environmentally and socially responsible initiatives.

**About America's Credit Unions:**

Credit unions provide consumers choices for financial services such as checking accounts, investments and loans of all kinds including mortgages. Funds are federally insured, but unlike banks, there are no stockholders at credit unions. Earnings are returned to member-owners in the form of lower loan rates, higher savings rates, low or no-fee products and services. The credit union philosophy of placing members' needs first is why more than 104 million Americans do their banking at one of America's 6,300 credit unions. Credit unions are for everyone - no matter where you live, there is a credit union to meet your needs.

To find a credit union near you visit: [www.asmarterchoice.org](http://www.asmarterchoice.org) or [www.culookup.com](http://www.culookup.com).

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