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Credit Union Cherry Blossom Long-time Event Director Phil Stewart to Retire After 2026 Event Concludes

March 23, 2026, Washington, DC: Phil Stewart, who has led the Credit Union Cherry Blossom for 35 years, has informed the Cherry Blossom Board of Directors that he will be stepping down from the position of Event Director at the end of the organization's current Fiscal Year. He will direct the event for his final time over the weekend of April 11-12. His daughter, Anna Stewart, will sing the National Anthem at the start of the 10 Mile in honor of his retirement. Assistant Event Director **Rob Wolfe** has been named as Stewart's successor.

After two top 10 finishes (5th in 52:55 in 1975 and 6th in 51:01 in 1977), Stewart joined the CUCB organizing committee as the volunteer race announcer and teamed with Jeff Darman as the volunteer co-race director in 1989. In 1991, Stewart officially became the solo Event Director. In that year, the race had 3,327 finishers (2,441 men and 886 women). Under his leadership, the event has grown to welcome over 20,000 participants for the 10 Mile and an additional 8,000 for the 5K presented by ASICS. The 10 Mile has also hosted the USATF National 10 Mile Championships six times and been the site of 7 World Records and 11 American Records.

"I have always seen myself as the steward of something much larger than myself, namely the Cherry Blossom 10 Mile," said Stewart. "I have endeavored over the last 35 years to grow and enhance the event. Fortunately, I have always been supported by the best organizing committee on earth. Together, I believe we have been

successful in making the “Runner’s Rite of Spring” a fixture for the Washington, DC running community and as a bucket list race for runners around the country. It doesn’t get much better than that. I am deeply honored to have been given the opportunity to serve as the Event Director.”

Under Stewart’s tutelage, the event has had two long-term title sponsors, during which time the event has provided increased prize money and raised millions in charity donations -- Northern Telecom (Nortel) from 1991-2001 and Credit Union Miracle Day (2002-present). Over the last 24 years the partnership between the CUCB and Credit Union Miracle Day has raised over \$12 million for the Children’s Miracle Network.

Stewart plans to continue serving as President of Road Race Management, Inc., publishers of the **RRM E-News** and the RRM website (www.rrm.com), as well as the organizer of the annual [Road Race Management Race Directors’ Meeting and Trade Exhibit](#). He also will continue serving as the Treasurer of the [PRRO Circuit](#).

Stewart began his career in the running industry in 1977 as one of the founders of **Running Times Magazine**, one of two nationally circulated running magazines at the time. He launched **Road Race Management Newsletter** in 1982. Stewart’s publication titles include **Organizing Running Events: The Complete Guide to Staging a Successful Road Race, the Guide to Prize Money Races and Elite Athletes** and the **Running Industry Resource Directory**. Stewart received worldwide recognition in 1979 when he took the famous photos of President Jimmy Carter collapsing in a 10K road race at Camp David.

Wolfe will succeed Stewart, officially stepping into the role on July 1, with a little overlap as the two will work together for several months to ensure a smooth transition. Wolfe has previously served on the organizing committee since 2008, marking this year's event as his 19th.

Wolfe has been grateful for the opportunity to learn from Stewart for the last two decades, and is committed to ensuring Stewart’s vision of the Runner’s Rite of Spring continues: “Phil has left a very large pair of ASICS to fill, but I am excited and confident that the organizing committee and I can continue the excellence that has defined the Credit Union Cherry Blossom events.”

Since 2008, Wolfe has held key roles with the CUCB races as Co-Race Director of the 5K, Assistant Event Director, Start-Finish Director, and Corrals Coordinator. In addition, he served on the Cherry Blossom, Inc. Board of Directors and as Treasurer

from 2016 - 2025. Wolfe has also led championship and invitational cross-country meets, organized annual club races, and served on the DC Road Runners Board of Directors. He is a certified race director and coach through the Road Runners Club of America and USA Track & Field. Wolfe is a DC Road Runners Hall of Fame inductee and recipient of the Cherry Blossom Les Kinion Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service, reflecting his sustained commitment to promoting the sport of running through event leadership and management.

A runner for over 40 years and a finisher of more than 80 marathons and many other races, Wolfe brings a competitor's perspective to race leadership and event execution. For over three decades, he has coached youth and young adult runners and is committed to developing runners for life-long participation in the sport. Wolfe is leaving a long and rewarding career as a teacher, administrator and coach at St. Albans School in Washington, DC, where he has successfully coached students to championships and personal bests, and proudly watched many of his former students continue to pursue their running goals into adulthood.

Wolfe will become the event's sixth Race Director: Gar Williams (1973), Ralph Reynolds (1973), Ed Murray (1974-1982), Jeff Darman (1974-1990) and Stewart (1988-2026).

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About Credit Union Cherry Blossom:

The Credit Union Cherry Blossom, organized by Cherry Blossom, Inc., a 501(c)(3) chapter of the Road Runners Club of America, is known as "*The Runner's Rite of Spring*®" in the Nation's Capital. The staging area for the 10 Mile is on the Washington Monument Grounds and the course passes in sight of all of the major Washington, D.C. Memorials. The event serves as a fundraiser for the Children's Miracle Network, a consortium of 170 premier children's hospitals across North America. About one-third of the funds raised support Washington, D.C.'s own Children's National ("Children's Hospital").

Credit Union Miracle Day, Inc., a consortium of credit unions and credit union suppliers, is the title sponsor of the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile, Double Blossom, 5K and Kids Run. Presenting sponsors include ASICS and Wegmans; Supporting sponsors include Cogent Steps, LLC; Visa; Velera; TruStage; Outside;

Potomac River Running; Gatorade Endurance; Suburban Solutions Moving; the Embassy of Japan; Runna by Strava; Select Event Group; and United Lifestyle Brands.

The 10 Mile is sanctioned by [USA Track & Field](#) and the [Road Runners Club of America](#) and is a proud member of the [PRRO Circuit](#), a series of this country's classic road races with circuit stops in Jacksonville, FL; Washington, DC; Spokane, WA; Peoria, IL; Utica, NY; and Davenport, IA. The 5K was voted the Best 5K in the country by a 2025 *USA Today* poll.

To learn more, visit <https://www.cherryblossom.org>.

About Credit Union Miracle Day:

Credit Union Miracle Day is a partnership of over 100 credit unions, CUSOs and partner organizations united to sponsor the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile & 5K benefitting Children's Miracle Network Hospitals nationwide and promoting the difference credit unions make in their communities.

About the National Cherry Blossom Festival:

[The National Cherry Blossom Festival](#) is one of the world's great celebrations of spring. The 2026 Festival takes place March 20–April 12 and includes five weekends of events featuring diverse and creative programming promoting traditional and contemporary arts and culture, natural beauty, and community spirit. The Leadership Circle Sponsors for the 2026 National Cherry Blossom Festival are Events DC and ANA, All Nippon Airways. The National Cherry Blossom Festival's Official Communications Partner is LINK Strategic Partners.

Mark your calendars! [Save the dates for the 2026 Festival signature events](#). Visit NationalCherryBlossomFestival.org or call 877.44.BLOOM for more information. [Get the latest updates via email](#) and follow the Festival on social media! Facebook (@CherryBlossomFestival), Instagram (@CherryBlossFest), Twitter (@CherryBlossFest) and YouTube (@CherryBlossFest). [View all events on the website](#).



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