

# GOOD LIFE

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## 9 QUESTIONS

### WITH DAVID EGGLE

By Frank Ready  
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Arts Fest is racing to the finish line.

On Sunday, hundreds of people from near and far will gather at Medlar Field at Lubrano Park for the Sue Crowe Memorial Arts Festival races.

Runners can choose between a 10-mile, 10K, or 5K race, coordinated by almost 40 community volunteers. Proceeds will benefit the Nittany Valley Running Club and other youth running activities throughout Centre County.

Race co-director David Egger recently discussed the challenges awaiting Sunday's runners.

**Q:** How long have you been involved with the Sue Crowe Memorial Arts Festival races?

**A:** I've volunteered for about 10 years and I've been race director or co-director since 2008.

**Q:** Why did you get involved?

**A:** I've been an officer of the Nittany Valley Running Club for about 20 years. I'm involved in many club activities and in many races that are not club races. I would have been more involved 10-20 years ago, but I was out West every summer teaching a Penn State geology field course.

**Q:** This race has existed in one form or another since 1975. What do you think has helped it to endure for so long?

**A:** Once it got going, tradition has helped it endure. The time doesn't move around; it's always on the last day of Arts Festival. For many families, it's a part of the festival. Parents ran with kids, now the kids have families. We certainly

ly have some excellent runners at the top of the awards charts, but most of the runners are out to enjoy the day, their friends and families, and some new friends they meet on the course or afterward cooling down.

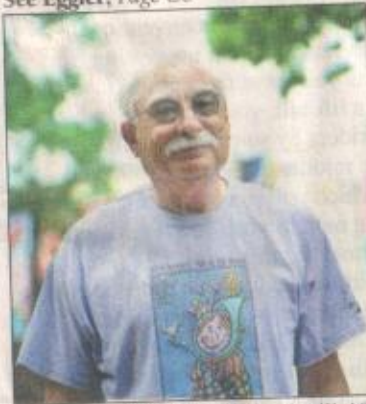
**Q:** How many runners do you usually have each year?

**A:** We had 725 finishers in 2013, which was an all-time high, and 626 in 2014. We hope we are not seeing a downward trend, although every local race is tailing off in participation. Maybe the "running boom" is over.

**Q:** Runners have the option of a 10-mile race, a 10K, or a 5K. Which is the most popular? Why do you think that is?

**A:** Just under half the runners choose the 5K, probably because they run recreationally. You need

See Egger, Page C6



CDT photo/Christopher Weddle

David Egger is co-director of the Sue Crowe Memorial Arts Festival races.

## Arts Fest race director

Egger, continued from C1

to put in some miles every week to do a 10K or 10-miler.

**Q:** Do you run in the race?

**A:** I'm too busy on race day from 4 a.m. to early afternoon. I ran it a few times in the 1970s when it was a 10-miler.

**Q:** In your opinion, what is the toughest stretch of the

10-mile run?

**A:** Definitely the stretch coming up the West Park Avenue hill between mile 7 and mile 8. Uphills are always tough, especially if weather is hot and humid, which is typical for Arts Festival. The 10K, incidentally, comes up the same hill.

**Q:** How else do the race and Arts Fest complement one another?

## or willing to go the

**A:** Arts Fest is about art, of course, but it's also about a break in the summer routine, a time for family reunions and family outings, and a celebration of being alive in State College. That's what the race is about also. We do give a nod to art by having artisan ceramic mugs as awards.

**Q:** Race proceeds benefit the Nittany Valley Running

Club and other youth running activities throughout Centre County. What do you think that opportunities like the Arts Festival races offer people?

**A:** This race is in fact the major source of income for the NVRC, income that we use for grants to youth programs like Nittany Track and Field and for sending under-18 athletes to national competitions. Races like

## extra mile

Arts Fest and First Night are popular because they are part of a bigger celebration, because they let both average and elite runners test their fitness, and because they let a kid run together with, or beat, his or her favorite uncle from out of town.

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