

Lippman's Legacy Runs On

July 08, 2009 - All it takes to start a tradition are a touch of ingenuity, a degree of organization and, most importantly, a willingness to stay the course. Those qualities can all be attributed to Jim Lippman, who loved the Palisades-Will Rogers Race so much that he wanted to get his whole company involved.

Suffice it to say the former Palisadian has succeeded and then some. It started back in 1989 when he and his family ran in the race for the first time. Each year he invited more of his friends and extended family to run.

In 1991, his third year living in Pacific Palisades, Lippman started his company JRK Property Holdings. He began encouraging his employees to participate in the race. The idea gained momentum from there until for the first time in 1995 company employees all wore Hotel Oceana t-shirts for the first time in recognition of the charity associated with the race.

"I think we had around 20 or so the first time and today we have 102 people registered to run, which is the most we've ever had," Lippman said proudly from underneath the gigantic tree at the entrance to the Palisades Recreation Center--the place his group always gathers on the morning of the race. "It's hard to believe we've been doing this for 18 years already."

The mix of red, white and blue t-shirts they wore on Saturday were a tribute to the group's dedication to fitness and honoring America's birthday. The commitment, however, starts long before July 4.

"We train as an office from May until race day every Tuesday and Thursday," Amy Ruka said. "So this is a big deal for all of us." Lippman and his wife Linda lived in the Palisades until 1994.

Their children, Alex (21), Matthew (18) and Danny (15) all went to Village School. Since the company is located in nearby Brentwood, employees can run local streets leading up to the race.

"I always do the 10K but we have some people who do the 5K," said Lippman, 51, who completed this year's race in 58:33. "Some of us have run it many times, others might be trying it for the first time. What's important is that we're all doing something fun and healthy and for a good cause."

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