

Raue prepares for annual run

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CRYSTAL LAKE – Thirteen years ago, an annual run was formed in Bob Blazier's name. One of the first members of the **Raue Center** for the Arts board, Blazier was eager to see the organization to develop and become an entertainment and arts venue for McHenry County.

In his time as superintendent for District 47 schools before retiring in 1985, art education also was meaningful to Blazier.

"I knew that it was very important for children to have regular exposure to the arts," said Blazier, now 83, who still plays drums for percussion shows. "We constructed art education classes in all District 47 buildings and staffed them with full-time art educators."

Attracting nearly 400 participants each year, organizers with the Bob Blazier Run for the Arts have a new goal in mind: reaching more than 500 people who will support the nonprofit **center's** fundraiser.

"This year, what we decided to do was brand the event, to basically tell a story of who Bob is, how the run came to be, and to really draw the community together," said Christin Kruse, development director for the **Raue**.

"Bob's commitment is to building community, supporting the arts, and staying active."

New additions to the 13th annual fundraiser include an inaugural pancake breakfast sponsored by Benedict's La Strata, a nonprofit showcase, and a 1-mile "Rosemary's Walk" in honor of Bob's wife.

The event itself, to take place May 2, also will include the annual 5K race and a children's 50-yard dash. Early registration is ongoing through April 23, and fees currently range from \$13 to \$30, depending on race classification and age.

The **Raue** has set \$20,000 as its fundraising goal for the 2010 Bob Blazier Run for the Arts.

"During this economic [downturn], it's very difficult to sustain the arts," Kruse said. "The first thing that goes is people don't go to the theater. We really are depending on the community to come out and show their support for us."

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