

Tri state attracts athletes across the country

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Surgeon David Giammar of Columbus, Ohio, placed first in the marathon, running it in two hours and forty minutes.

“He runs about six marathons a year,” said family physician Tish Lange, Giammar’s wife. “He runs to work every day, so when he says he is running into the hospital, he is literally running into it.”

The pair came down on vacation with their two children, Matthew, 10, and Sarah, 7, and have been hiking the Grand Canyon and Zion National Park, and headed to Death Valley after the race.

Eric Larson of St. George, Utah, placed second, while Mesquite resident Daniel Ramirez placed third in 3 hours and 20 minutes.

The tri-state races brought participants from as far as Canada, some because of their love of the sport; others bring stories of inspiration and some are just marathon junkies.

“This was my first trip to Mesquite,” said Cyndie Merten, a 55-year-old software engineer who works in Eugene, Ore., “and it’s rainy and very cold in Seattle, so I appreciated the dry sunshine. And besides, there were a lot of desert flowers out today.”

For Merten, the Mesquite Tri-State Marathon marked her 53rd marathon in a year. She moved onto the Valley of Fire Marathon on Sunday, and will run four more marathons this weekend in Seattle.

“Together they call (it) the Quadzilla,” said Merten, “and I’m ready for it. Just doing two of them this weekend is no big deal.”

Merten has ranked as a Titanium Marathon Maniac of the Marathon Maniacs Club.

Runners from across the country took part in the event, including retired professor, 73-year-old Jim Madonna of Fairbanks, Alaska, who ran the half-marathon. He drove the 3,500 miles in five days time to compete.

“When I retired,” said Madonna, “I had a choice to either go fishing or start running.”

Mesquite resident Don Sand, 63; his son, David, 40; and his grandson Henry, 17 all took part in the marathon as well. Don has rebounded from a battle with prostate surgery and has lost about 80 pounds. His son and grandson, who live in Corona, Calif., also have lost weight, for a combined total of 130 pounds.

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“I just got tired of not feeling well,” said Sand, “so I started running a year ago. We all needed to lose weight and running has been the best thing any of us could do.”

“Last year was my first marathon,” said 86-year-old Dorothy Neary. “This keeps me healthy.” Neary finished the 5K in a little over one hour.

Mesquite Gaming Sporting Event Manager Christian Adderson lauded not only the event but the race directors and timing company Planet Ultra/Race Day Timing team of Brian and Debra Bowling of Planet Ultra in Washington, Utah.

“We definitely hit a home run with this one,” said Adderson. “Everything went very smoothly.

“We had many return visitors to Mesquite thanks to the marathon. And you can bet that those who traveled here for the first time will be back.”

Full results of the event can be found by visiting www.racedaytiming.com.

Top Males

First: David Giammar, Columbus, Ohio, 2:40:56

Second: Eric Larson, St. George, 2:54:55

Third: Daniel Ramirez, Mesquite, 3:02:19

Top Females

First: Marcie Jacobsen, St. George, 3:03:23

Second: Jennifer Valentine, Boulder, Colo., 3:10:56

Third: Julie Bertoia, Henderson, Nev., 3:15:27

Number of athletes to finish

Marathon: 187

Half Marathon: 144

5K: 45