

## **A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EARLY YEARS OF FIRST NATIONAL BANK MARATHON**

On April 29, 2023 the First National Bank Marathon/YMCA Riverbank Run had it's fiftieth anniversary, celebrated by 2,591 entrants.

It began with Wally Small, an officer of the bank, thinking how to celebrate First National Banks' centennial (1873-1973). He thought of a foot race, and after sharing his idea with bank officer Bill Cregg, the two presented it to bank president Randy Jacobs. Randy immediately approved it; he then opened the dictionary, located the word marathon, and said: "call it a marathon which means long run."

At the inaugural event in the spring of 1973, over 300 runners entered the First Bank Marathon.

From an advertisement in the Missoulian: "First National Bank challenges you to participate in the First National's second annual (1974) 7- mile marathon. Runners and joggers of all ages will run from Disbrow's IGA in Milltown to the First National Bank on Saturday, May 4, beginning 10:00 a.m."

In 1977 there were 1,037 signed up and in 1979 1,787 filled the streets.

After a few years as First Bank Marathon the Missoula YMCA asked if they could use it as a fundraiser.

David Curd

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