



## Scotiabank Blue Nose Marathon 2020 Report to the Community

## Executive Summary

The 17<sup>th</sup> annual Scotiabank Blue Nose Marathon occurred virtually on the November 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> weekend. Due to COVID-19, it was not possible to stage the Blue Nose Marathon with thousands of people gathering in downtown Halifax over two days. While participants were encouraged to complete their distance over the November 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> weekend, they were given from October 12<sup>th</sup> to November 22<sup>nd</sup> to complete their run and upload their results. We welcomed 3,492 virtual participants from all ages, abilities, fitness levels and from all over the world. We saw participants from as far away as New Zealand. For the first time, we had participants join us virtually from South America.

While 2020 was a challenging year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was a tremendous success and reached a variety of new 'milestones' in its seventeenth year running, including:

- Blue Nose Distance Run Victoria Day weekend
- T-shirt colour and slogan
- Unique medal design for the double double
- Team Myles training continues as COVID-19 restrictions ease
- A significant increase in the number of Charities
- Scavenger hunt
- Mascot video
- School Contest

## Historical Background

The Scotiabank Blue Nose Marathon began with a dream – that Halifax, Nova Scotia should have its own annual marathon; a marathon that would be different than the rest!

A unique idea came to life; the Scotiabank Blue Nose Marathon became a weekend of events for all ages and abilities to promote and celebrate healthy living and active lifestyles. It would hold an opportunity for everyone in the community and beyond to get involved as a volunteer, sponsor, spectator or participant, be it as a runner, walker, or nordic walker.

In its inaugural year, Blue Nose Marathon welcomed 2,979 in our adult races and 555 youth in the youth run.

## About the Blue Nose Marathon

In March of 2019, Blue Nose Marathon made the decision to postpone the event from its traditional home, Victoria Day weekend to November 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the early days of the pandemic, there was great optimism we would be able to host an in-person event in the fall. As time progressed, it became apparent for 2020 the Blue Nose Marathon would be a virtual event.

The Blue Nose event weekend consists of **two key pillars**:

- **Walking/Running events**, including a Full Marathon, Marathon Team Relay, Half Marathon, 15KM, 10KM, 5KM and two Youth Runs – 2KM and 4KM
- **Scotiabank Charity Challenge**, a fundraising initiative allowing Blue Nose participants the option to raise money for a charity of their choice. In 2020, 76 local charities and 460 participants joined together to raise \$240,000.

The Active Living Expo did not occur in 2020 to be sure we adhered to the public gathering limit.

## Blue Nose Marathon Distance Run

Although we were unable to stage Blue Nose Marathon on the Victoria Day weekend, we came up with the idea of the Blue Nose “Distance” Run, playing on physical distancing. The world as we knew it had changed and everyone was living in lock down. The goal of the Blue Nose “Distance” Run was to encourage people to get out and be active all while following the COVID-19 guidelines of their respective governments. In such uncertain times, we wanted to give people something to look forward to and to still be together albeit in a different way.

The Blue Nose “Distance” Run was free for people to participate in. Participants were able to sign up and record their results. They received a digital bib they could download and wear on race weekend. We created digital frames for participants to use celebrating their achievements in the social space. They were also able to download a digital medal and Finished'er certificate. Scotiabank created a playlist specifically for race weekend. As well, several sponsors; Hotel Halifax, Aerobics First and Superstore offered prizes for the ‘best of’ categories (best cheer station, best finish line and one more).



We welcomed 2,688 participants to the Blue Nose “Distance” Run completing distances from 3KM to 42.2KM. The Blue Nose “Distance” Run was one of the first virtual events of to occur in Canada during the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Our Beloved Mascot, Myles

Not even a pandemic could keep our beloved Myles locked down. Throughout the summer Myles played “Where Am I?” on social media showcasing some iconic locations in Atlantic Canada.



## 2020 Participation Numbers

In 2020, we welcomed participants to the virtual event. Geographically, participants from every province in Canada, as well as parts of the United States; including Indiana, Nevada, California, Texas, Florida, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Georgia, New York, Maine, and South Carolina. Europe; the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Switzerland and as far away as Argentina, Australia and New Zealand.

Event	Number of Participants
Scotiabank Full Marathon	173
Medavie Half Marathon	554
Blue Nose 15KM	162
GoodLife FITNESS 10KM	720
Lifemark 5KM	758
Tim Hortons Double Double	538
Killam Marathon Team Relay	30 teams, 179 participants
Virtual Run-no distance specified	20
Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run 2KM	229
Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run 4KM	129
Total	3,491

## The Blue Nose Impact

For some, the Scotiabank Blue Nose Marathon is just a weekend like any other. For others, it is an annual highlight. For many Nova Scotians, the Blue Nose Marathon is the event that started it all for them; it's the event they look forward to year over year; it's the event that reminds them of how much fun it can be to lace up and Giv'er.

We strive to be THE premier fitness event in Atlantic Canada by providing an experience like no other... and this held true throughout the pandemic. Now more than ever it is important to keep moving and active for both the mental and physical benefits.

But, we can't do it without the 'Blue Nose Nation'... each person who lines up at the start line has their own story, a story that makes what we do worthwhile beyond measure! Our start lines looked a little different this year as people laced up safely from their homes for the virtual edition of Blue Nose Marathon.

We're pleased to share these remarkable stories from our participants in the 17<sup>th</sup> annual Scotiabank Blue Nose Marathon:

### Taylor Head Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run:

Community members along with Halifax Parks and Recreation & Friends of Taylor Head organized a virtual 4KM Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run. The community was able to secure a sponsor to cover the cost of all 18 race entries for the Grade 5 & 6 students with Dr. Gordie Rudolf to be sure no one would be left out.

"It was a great day – you could see the joy in the faces of the youth as they crossed the finish line," organizer Jody Taker told The Journal. "While organizers followed provincial guidelines, the event allowed everyone involved to feel a much-needed sense of normalcy. Organizers were so thrilled with the event that plans are in place to do it again next year."

– Source: Guysborough Journal



**East Dartmouth Boys & Girls Club:**

East Dartmouth Boys & Girls Club on Caledonia Rd. joined the virtual fun with about 20 kids from the age of 5 to 10 years of age. They made cheer signs, painted their noses blue and GAVE'R! Amazing seeing this group take the time to celebrate each other's achievements. They had so much fun and you can see it in these faces!



## Creating Your Own Race:

So many amazing groups came together to create more excitement for their virtual run. Whether it is a run club in Thunder Bay Ontario sporting their Blue Noses in the fog or getting your bubble to help you fundraise for Alzheimer's Nova Scotia with a Relay team in Calgary. Participants really made it something to remember. Posts were followed by amazing comments of encouragement and congratulations from friends and families. People felt these achievements far and wide. Blue Nose Nation never disappoints when it comes to the love we all have for this event.



## Team Myles

The Team Myles Program powered by Lifemark welcomed 30 Ambassadors to the 2020 program. They kicked off their training in the beginning of March, however as COVID-19 cases increased and Nova Scotia moved into locked down, training had to be halted. As the restrictions eased in the summer, the team was able to get back to it. Training resumed in August with COVID-19 protocols in place for the Ambassadors. On race weekend, thanks to Halifax Citadel National Historic Site through the support of Parks Canada we were able to host a 10KM timed race for this group. We were able to have a start/finish line in the Fortress along with a scenic 10KM route throughout the North end of Halifax. The team was joined by their coaches and mentors. The 78<sup>th</sup> Highlanders were on site to give the official start to the Team Myles 10KM race. And of course, they received their medal at the finish line. Congrats to our 2020 Team Myles Ambassadors.



*Please note all members of Team Myles were prescreened prior to the Run to ensure we adhered to government protocols surrounding COVID-19. The group gathered for less than 5 minutes to capture the above photo as a keepsake of their journey in 2020.*

## Halifax Citadel National Historic Site through the support of Parks Canada

Thanks to the generosity and support of Parks Canada, we were able to stage a finish line for Blue Nose Marathon participants on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

As participants joined us at Citadel Hill, they got their Finished'er photo and a big congratulations from our beloved Myles. Everyone deserves their finish line moment!



## Shirt

This year, the t-shirt contest came with a new spin/twist. Instead of asking participants to submit slogans, we created three unique designs with slogans and participants were then able to vote on what they wanted to see as the official race shirt for 2020.



'I found my sea legs in Halifax' was the fan favorite, receiving with 38% of the votes.

## Medal

The 2020 medal was a unique design and even more unique was the double double medal. For those participants who opted to do two distances, a 5KM followed by a 10KM, 15KM, 21.1KM or 42.2KM, they received the second medal with the two medals fitting together. The double double medal was a tremendous hit with our participants driving a huge spike in registration for two races.



## Scavenger Hunt

To encourage participants to make the most of their Scotiabank Blue Nose Virtual Marathon a scavenger hunt was developed. Participants were inspired to take photos of eight items along their run and post them to social media to be entered to win a grand prize of \$500 in gift cards from our partners. Participants received the scavenger hunt card as part of their race kit. We promoted the scavenger hunt through social media, and email newsletters. Not only did it generate great content, but it added a little more fun and interest for those who were feeling a bit of virtual fatigue.



# Mascot Pass the Sneaker Challenge

For the past two years, we have hosted a Mascot race as part of Blue Nose race weekend. With no events happening in Halifax, the many amazing mascots of Halifax were up for the challenge of doing something a little different this year. A huge thank you to Paul Service with Halifax Search and Rescue who made this happen. We created a 2-minute video with 30 mascots where they helped get Myles' sneaker back to him in time for race weekend. We borrowed a page from Tik Tok challenges to create the Pass the Sneaker challenge where the sneaker goes frame to frame until it gets back the owner – Myles – who needed it race weekend! We saw over 14,000 views and 45 shares on this video.



## School Challenge

Each year we welcome thousands of youth along with their families and schools to the downtown streets of Halifax. As the saying goes, if the mountain will not come to Myles, then Myles must go to the mountain, and that he did.

A contest was developed to engage youth by asking parents and teachers to submit a video or photo telling us why exercise is so important to their child or student. We randomly chose one class to win thirty Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run registrations and \$250 from Atlantic Superstore for the entire school. We heard not only from those who entered the contest but those who used this as a jumping off point to talk more in depth about the importance of physical education with their students. We were so happy to deliver 27 race kits to an amazing grade 6 class at Rocky Lake Elementary. The excitement from these students shared on Facebook with over 3,000 people tuning in to the outdoor dance party!



## Scotiabank Charity Challenge

The Scotiabank Charity Challenge unites the unbreakable spirit of runners and walkers with a unique fundraising program to help create a stronger future for young people and build vibrant communities. This year was no different, with so many charities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic it was even more important to raise funds for these worthy causes. We were joined by 76 Charities and 460 fundraisers in the 2020 Scotiabank Charity Challenge.

### Shelter Movers:

Shelter Movers is a charitable organization that provides free moving and storage services for women and children fleeing abuse. They are new to the Charity challenge this year with a fundraising goal of \$10,000 to help 50 families. They embraced the social media space to fundraise, showcase their amazing people and to educate the community about what they do. Happy to say they were less than \$1,000 short of their fundraising goal this year and cannot wait to see what they do in 2021!



**Congratulations to all 76 charities on their incredible accomplishments this year!**

Aninga Project	Adsum for Women & Children	AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia
Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia	Aphasia Nova Scotia	Autism Nova Scotia
Bide Awhile Animal Shelter	Blind Sports Nova Scotia	Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Halifax
Brain Injury NS	Brain Tumour Foundation of Canada	Breaking the Silence-Tatamagouche Centre
Brigadoon Village	Chisholm Services for Children	Club Inclusion
CNIB Foundation	Craig's Cause Pancreatic Cancer Society	Crohn's and Colitis Canada
Cystic Fibrosis Canada	Dalhousie Medical Research Foundation	Dartmouth Family Centre/Dartmouth North Community Food Centre
Dartmouth General Hospital Foundation	Dress for Success Halifax	Easter Seals Nova Scotia
Eating Disorders Nova Scotia	Ecology Action Centre	Epilepsy Association of the Maritimes
Family SOS	Habitat for Humanity Nova Scotia	Halifax Public Libraries
Halifax Refugee Clinic (HRC)	Halifax Search and Rescue / HSAR	HaliFIX Overdose Prevention Site
Heart and Stroke Foundation	Hope for Wildlife Society	HOPE Worldwide Canada
Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS)	IWK Foundation	JDRF (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation)
Jonathan David Wayne Lewis Foundation	Laing House	MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning
Make-A-Wish Foundation of Canada / Children's Wish Foundation of Canada	Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia	Mocean Dance Society
MS Society of Canada, Atlantic Division	Muscular Dystrophy Canada	Nourish Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia Sea School

Nova Scotia SPCA

Nova Scotia Talent Trust

NS Trails

Ovarian Cancer Canada

PACT Family Resource Centre

Pathway to Progress

PC Children's Charity

Playing and Learning

Nicaragua

Together

Prescott

QEII Foundation

Schizophrenia Society of NS

Shelter Movers Nova Scotia

Special Olympics Nova Scotia

Symphony Nova Scotia

The Canadian Paraplegic  
Association of Nova Scotia

The Canadian Red Cross

The Leukemia and  
Lymphoma Society of  
Canada-Team in Training

The Lung Association of Nova  
Scotia

The Roméo Dallaire Child  
Soldiers Initiative

The Salvation Army Maritime  
Division

United Way Halifax

Wee Care Developmental  
Centre

Wonder'neath Art Society

Wounded Warriors Canada

YMCA of Greater Halifax  
Dartmouth

4-H Nova Scotia

4-H PEI

As always, we also award the top three charities with a cash prize in three specific categories, the winners are as follows:

**Charity with the Largest Total Dollars Fundraised**

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Hope for Wildlife raising \$30,960
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - PC Children's Charity raising \$15,465
- 3<sup>rd</sup> - Nova Scotia Sea School raising \$5,375

**Charity with Largest Number of Fundraising Runners**

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Shelter Movers Nova Scotia with 28 fundraisers
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - Ecology Action Centre with 20 fundraisers
- 3<sup>rd</sup> – Nourish NS with 16 fundraisers

**Charity with Largest Average Amount Raised per Fundraising Runner**

- 1<sup>st</sup> – Pathway to Progress Nicaragua with an average of \$4,971 per fundraiser
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - The Aninga Project with an average of \$1,690 per fundraiser
- 3<sup>rd</sup> - The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society of Canada with an average of \$395 per fundraiser

**Rookie of the Year Charity**

Shelter Movers Nova Scotia who raised an astonishing \$9,122 in their first year.

**Most Improved Charity**

Pathway to Progress Nicaragua who saw an increase of \$18,830 in fundraising from 2019 to 2020.

## Volunteers

Each year, we have hundreds of volunteers helping us execute the Blue Nose Marathon. Although we had less volunteers this year, they were some of the hardest working we have had. We had two volunteers in particular, Jane Rafuse and Shelagh Hagen who were extraordinary. They spent hours upon hours packing and labeling race kits and assisting with kit pick up. These two core volunteers along with some help from Team Myles ambassadors were a tremendous help as we aimed to get race kits to almost all participants before race weekend.



## **Thank you!**

On behalf of all of us at the Scotiabank Blue Nose Marathon, we want to thank our fantastic sponsors for helping make the 17th annual Scotiabank Blue Nose Marathon.

We want to thank our incredible volunteers who helped us pack thousands of race kits and helped with Kit Pick Up.

We want to thank each and every participant who joined us for both the Blue Nose Distance Run and the Scotiabank Blue Nose Virtual Marathon. We can't wait to see you next year, hopefully in-person!

~ Your friends at the Scotiabank Blue Nose Marathon