



2023 EMERA BLUE NOSE MARATHON REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

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Executive Summary

The Emera Blue Nose Marathon welcomed more than 8,100 participants to the start line for one of the six running and walking events at the 20th Annual Blue Nose Marathon. Over 400 fundraisers participating in the event have raised more than \$255,000 as part of the Giv'er Charity Challenge program. The Blue Nose Marathon was a tremendous success and reached a variety of new 'Mylestones' in its twentieth year running. Key takeaways in the 2023 Emera Blue Nose Marathon include:

- Community impact
- Training programs
- Virtual Run
- Local Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run community events
- Blue news
- Volunteers
- New title sponsor
- New venue and routes
- The return of the Blue Nose Marathon Expo presented by Subaru
- Sustainability
- New partnership with Karen For Good Health



About the Emera Blue Nose Marathon

The Emera Blue Nose Marathon, known as ‘the people’s marathon’, is the signature event of Blue Nose. This event welcomes all ages, abilities, and fitness levels, traditionally occurring annually on Victoria Day weekend. Blue Nose Marathon is a community-based and volunteer-driven organization, consisting of three key pillars:

1. Walking and running events, including the Karen For Good Health Marathon, Killam Marathon Team Relay, Medavie Blue Cross Half Marathon, GoodLife FITNESS 10KM, Lifemark 5KM and the Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run – 2KM and 4KM.
2. The Giv’er Charity Challenge, a fundraising initiative for charitable organizations and Blue Nose participants to raise funds for local communities. In 2023, 61 charities and more than 400 fundraising participants joined together to raise over \$255,000—exceeding the event’s fundraising goal.
3. The Blue Nose Marathon Expo presented by Subaru, a two-day lifestyle event taking place on May 19 and 20, occupying the beautiful Zatzman Sportsplex facility.

Historical Background

The Emera 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; an event that promotes inclusivity and encourages everyone—no matter their age, ability, or fitness level—to celebrate healthy living and active lifestyles. Blue Nose Marathon became 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 just over 3,500 participants to the start line. Now, 20 years later, the event has more than doubled that figure, reaching over 8,100 participants with the support of the community, partners, volunteers and participants.



The first-ever Blue Nose Marathon start line.



Impact

The Emera Blue Nose Marathon holds a different meaning for everyone. While some view it as just another weekend, for others, it is a cherished annual highlight. For many Nova Scotians, the Blue Nose Marathon represents far more than a race. It is an event that has helped them find community and acts as a constant reminder of why they lace up and “Giv’er”. Blue Nose Marathon strives to be the premier fitness event in Atlantic Canada by providing an extraordinary experience, but they cannot do it without “Blue Nose Nation”. Each person who lines up at the start line has their own unique story. This year, their partners at Subaru conducted participant interviews to highlight some of the amazing stories that come from Blue Nose weekend:

[Michelle Hughes – Just Live | Subaru Adventure On](#)

My Journey To Just Live, that is where you can find Michelle Hughes on Facebook or Instagram. She became a daily blogger for her three children, so they could always see how hard this 36-year-old is fighting incurable stage 4 sarcoma cancer (Epithelioid hemangioendothelioma, or EHE for short). Her journey to "just live" is now inspiring millions to do the same.



Andrew Seely | Subaru Adventure On

Andrew Seely, a 42-year-old grade eight teacher born with spina bifida, doesn't let his abilities stop him from accomplishing his goals. Andrew proves anything is possible with the right mindset and sets out to complete the Emera Blue Nose half marathon.



The Aninga Project | Subaru Adventure On

The Aninga Project is a dynamic, grass-roots organization working to educate and empower girls and young women in east Africa. Team Aninga, a dedicated fundraising group of runners and walkers, annually takes to the streets of Halifax to move in support of The Aninga Project's mission.



Training Programs

Team Myles

In 2023, Team Myles consisted of 56 individuals in the training group, which included coaches, mentors, and team members, also known as ambassadors. Team Myles ambassadors receive complementary training, fitness plans, race entries and more to help them achieve the goal of living a more active and healthy life. In partnership with Lifemark, ambassadors embark on a 12-week training regime to help them complete their preferred distance in the Emera Blue Nose Marathon. This process fosters a strong bond among the team members and creates lifelong friendships.



Ambassadors are walking testimonies to the power of dedication and community. Some members who initially doubted their ability to complete a 5KM race managed to surpass their expectations. By the end of the program, the majority of ambassadors not only accomplished the Lifemark 5KM distance, which in and of itself is an incredible achievement, but also pushed themselves to take on the GoodLife FITNESS 10KM. Over 93% of ambassadors completed the 10KM or the Double Up, consisting of both the 5KM and 10KM.

Team Myles applications are posted in the early new year and reviewed carefully by staff and coaches. Each participant becomes a living testament to the transformative power of movement, regardless of age or prior fitness experience.



Team Myles Powered by Lifemark 2023 Graduation.

Learn2Run

With over a hundred Team Myles applications, the Emera Blue Nose Marathon recognized a need for more supportive and welcoming spaces to help promote active living. With this realization, the Learn2Run (L2R) 5KM Running Clinic was created.

The L2R program runs twice a week for 10-weeks, consisting of two group running sessions and an in-class training component to learn all things running—clothing, footwear, hydration and more. The goal of the program is to build a running foundation and encourage more people to experience the unforgettable feeling of crossing a finish line. Registration for the 2023 program included two coaches and multiple pacers, a 10-week training plan, 50% off a Lifemark 5KM race entry, 10 clinics with professional speakers, 10 punch passes for Zatzman Sportsplex, a Blue Nose Marathon branded running belt, and more. The program was a great success, welcoming 53 participants in it's first year running.



Learn 2 Run 5KM Running Clinic post-race of the Lifemark 5KM.

Virtual Run

The Emera Blue Nose Marathon offers a Virtual Run option, allowing individuals to participate in the distance of their choice from any location. Virtual participants can run, walk or wheel from their own front step, the cottage, overseas, or wherever they feel most comfortable. For those residing in the community, they can choose to follow the Blue Nose routes available online. However, if distance prevents them from joining those routes or if they prefer a different location, they are provided with tools to map their own course. After completing their chosen distance and submitting their results, participants receive a Finished'er Certificate as a token of their achievement. The virtual race kits also include a race bib, a finished'er shirt, and a beautiful finished'er medal (or two if completing the Virtual Double Up). This year, Blue Nose Marathon had more than 800 virtual participants.

Local Youth Run Community Events

Local Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Runs are a great opportunity for communities where distance prevents youth from attending the in-person event to get involved and celebrate physical activity and the great outdoors. Communities are welcome to organize a Local Youth Run, and Blue Nose Marathon supports the events by having staff attend and bring a finish line gantry, shirts, medals, refreshments, paint for blue noses and their beloved mascot, Myles.

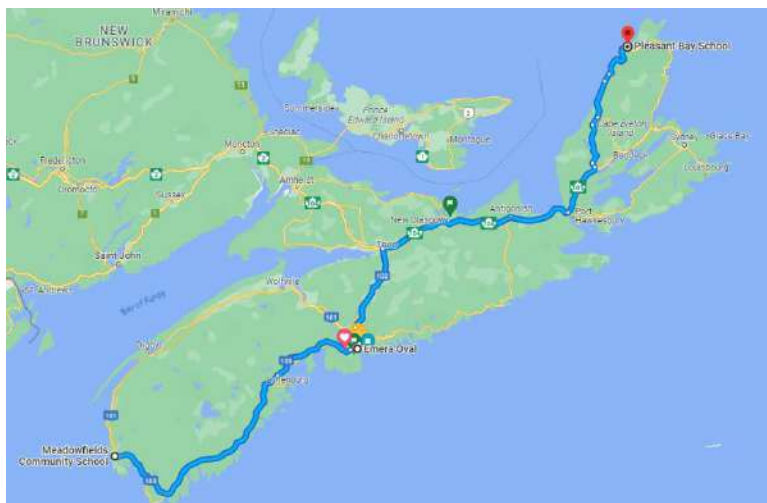


Pleasant Bay School, Cape Breton, Local Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run.

In partnership with the Nova Scotia Teachers Union and the Teachers Association for Physical & Health Education in Nova Scotia, this year Blue Nose Marathon was able to help financially support three elementary schools’ events, bringing nearly 400 youth their very own start line. There were also two community groups that hosted an event: Taylors Head and the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Halifax. Through this unique program, multiple communities spanning Nova Scotia were able to come together to bring a truly exceptional experience to their youth. All participants were provided finished’er shirts and received their well-earned medals as they crossed the finish line.

Location	Number of Youth participants	KM from Blue Nose start
Taylors Head (Sheet Harbour)	50	103KM
Pleasant Bay (Cape Breton)	235	439KM
Meadowfields (Yarmouth)	80	303KM
Debert	50	110KM
Boys and Girls Club	80	10KM
Total	495	

A visual of the farthest Local Youth Runs to the Emera Blue Nose Marathon location:



Blue News

Many amazing stories come out of the Emera Blue Nose Marathon. Some examples of news stories include:



Volunteers

The Emera Blue Nose Marathon is owned by the community and thrives through the dedication of its “Giv’er Crew”. This year, nearly 1,000 individuals and groups generously volunteered their time and energy, many of which have been long-standing supporters of the event, some volunteering annually since 2004.

There are various volunteer opportunities available in the Blue Nose Marathon, encompassing different roles such as marketing and communications, participant services, race operations, and more. There are shifts available weeks in advance of the event to help notify communities and prepare kits, as well as many on-site event weekend positions, such as course marshals, course photographers, start and finish line support, food and hydration services, and medal presenters. Engaging in the Blue Nose Marathon as a volunteer offers an opportunity to actively participate in the community, forge lifelong friendships, and gain valuable hands-on event experience.

Blue Nose volunteers are provided with a commemorative Giv’er Crew shirt; free Halifax Transit transportation on Victoria Day long weekend, May 19-21; the opportunity to develop and strengthen critical skills; and a Certificate of Achievement for their records.



2023 Participant Numbers

The Emera Blue Nose Marathon welcomed participants from across Canada and the United States. Blue Nose Nation also reached as far as the United Kingdom, Austria, Qatar, China, Japan, Hong Kong and Australia.

Event	Number of Participants
Double Up (5KM + Full Marathon)	32
Double Up (5KM + Half Marathon)	128
Double Up (5KM + 10KM)	308
Virtual Double Up	100
Karen For Good Health Marathon	303
Killam Marathon Team Relay	416
Medavie Blue Cross Half Marathon	1092
GoodLife FITNESS 10KM	1465
Lifemark 5KM	1426
Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run 4KM	763
Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run 2KM	1402
Virtual Run	177
Virtual Youth Run	528
Total	8140



‘Mylestones’ for 2023

New Title Sponsor

The Blue Nose Marathon proudly welcomed a new title sponsor—Emera Inc.

From a single electric utility in Nova Scotia, Emera has grown into an energy leader serving over 2.5 million customers in Canada, the U.S., and the Caribbean. With a focus on safely delivering cleaner, reliable energy, Emera is committed to their team and the communities they serve. This commitment has led the organization to many community-based initiatives, including a new partnership with the Blue Nose Marathon.

This year, Blue Nose Marathon celebrated 20 strong years of community-building. Since the inception of Blue Nose, the organization has been focused on creating a safe and welcoming environment to celebrate healthy living and physical activity; however, they recognize that creating space for everyone to feel welcome at the start line comes well before race day. As an extension of Blue Nose Marathon’s longstanding efforts to ensure people of all abilities are included, the organization collaborated with numerous equity-seeking groups across the province to explore and address what barriers exist for race participation. With the support of Emera, Blue Nose is continuing their journey towards creating an inclusive sporting event where all communities feel welcome. Not only did Emera introduce Blue Nose to many community groups to begin these conversations, but they also funded more than 115 race entry invitations to welcome group members to experience the excitement of the event.



The Emera team at the 2023 Blue Nose Marathon Launch.

Other initiatives taken to promote inclusivity include working to translate the Blue Nose Marathon website and registration process to French. Also, by offering communications and promotions in French, there is more opportunity for Blue Nose to engage with the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial schools.

Translation didn’t stop with French! The Blue Nose also worked with the Mi'kmaw community to develop cheer signs for spectators, now offering encouragement to participants in three languages. Moving forward, the organization is looking to grow these efforts to represent more groups within Blue Nose Nation.



Cheer banner placed by Emera on Lower Water Street pedway.

New Venue and Routes

This year, the Emera Blue Nose Marathon had the opportunity to refresh their courses, while still touring some of Halifax's and Dartmouth's main attractions. The start and finish line for all races, along with the post-race Atlantic Superstore Celebration Zone, was held at the stunning Emera Oval.

This location permitted for some beautiful new routes. The Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run and Lifemark 5KM races remained relatively flat routes while exploring historic Halifax. All Sunday races still incorporated the Angus L. Macdonald Bridge before showcasing the vibrant streets of Halifax, and the Karen For Good Health Marathon had the opportunity to experience the stunning Halifax Waterfront.

This new, open venue also allowed participants to access the post-race celebration zone, while spectating and cheering for other runners and walkers. It also created a cheer alley for finished'ers to experience as they moved through the oval to the finish line.



The Return of Expo

After a three-year hiatus, the Emera Blue Nose Marathon was thrilled to announce the return of Atlantic Canada’s largest gathering of active and health-conscious consumers—the Blue Nose Marathon Expo presented by Subaru.

The Expo is the first stop for all participating in the Emera Blue Nose Marathon. This vibrant two-day active living event takes place at the beautiful Zatzman Sportsplex and provides the opportunity for all ages to learn new ways to maintain or establish a healthy lifestyle.



Our unique exhibitors are industry leaders who attend the Expo to showcase the latest innovations in health and wellness. Exhibitors offered professional advice, exclusive retail sales, photo activations, product sampling and amazing giveaways to all attendees.



Sustainability

Since inception, Blue Nose Marathon has been mindful of its impact on the environment and greater community. The organization maintains several core values, including sustainability: *We honour the land on which we operate and respect the resources that we use to ensure we are responsible to leave the community better than we found it.*

Continuing their commitment to sustainability, the Emera Blue Nose Marathon is aiming to be the first Atlantic Canadian event to achieve Gold Level Status with the Council for Responsible Sport. Since 2007, the Council for Responsible Sport has been helping people measure and manage the social and environmental impacts of their events. Council for Responsible Sport certified events are some of the world’s leading examples of responsible sport in action, and Blue Nose Marathon endeavours to join this group. Some of Blue Nose’s ongoing initiatives include:

- Bottle free in 2017. Thanks to Halifax Water, Blue Nose is able to use the hydrants throughout the city for their hydration stations.
- Reducing carbon footprint. Thanks to Halifax Transit, complimentary transit services are offered to participants and volunteers on race weekend. The event also introduced a Bike Valet with the help of Halifax Cycling Coalition.
- Re-use signage. Blue Nose reuses signage year over year to reduce the amount of printed material on site on race weekend. Signs that are no longer relevant are repurposed at water stations for stacking boards.
- Leftovers and left-behinds:
 - **Nutrition.** Like most events, despite best efforts, there is usually foods and drinks remaining. Blue Nose works with organizations, such as Souls Harbour Rescue Mission, to ensure these items go into the hearts and hands of those in need in Nova Scotia, not landfills.
 - **Participant Shirts.** Remaining participant shirts are upcycled by Prescott Group and converted into reusable bags, repurposed for Age Category Awards and other Blue Nose organized events. This initiative ensures finished'er shirts can live on for daily use.
 - **Shoe Mountain.** Each year, participants and community members are encouraged to bring their gently used footwear to Kit Pick Up. All shoes are then donated to those in need through partnering organizations, such as Souls Harbour Rescue Mission.



New Partnership with Karen For Good Health

This year, the Emera Blue Nose Marathon welcomed a one-year partnership on the Full Marathon event, known for 2023 as the Karen For Good Health Marathon.

Karen For Good Health is an all-natural Canadian supplement brand that is full of nutritious Phytoplankton. Phytoplankton are microscopic plants that are the primary producer of nutrition in the food chain and play a critical role in the global carbon cycle.

Karen Phytoplankton is committed to helping everyone feel their best, so they are able to conquer anything that come their way, including a Marathon.



Giv'er Charity Challenge

The Giv'er Charity Challenge is a unique fundraising program available at the Emera Blue Nose Marathon, providing participants the opportunity to make their run, walk or wheel more meaningful by raising funds for a charity in Halifax, Nova Scotia, or anywhere in Canada. For charities, it provides a platform for friendly fundraising competition, hence the “challenge”.

This year, Blue Nose Marathon had 61 Official Charity Partners and more than 400 fundraisers involved. Collectively, thanks to the dedication of our fundraisers and generosity of donors, the program raised more than \$255,000 in support of many unique initiatives in our communities.



Team Aninga with The Aninga Project.

Official Giv'er Charity Challenge Partners

Autism Speaks Canada	Ovarian Cancer Canada
President's Choice Children's Charity	Lung Cancer Canada
Eating Disorders Nova Scotia	Canadian Mental Health Association
Dartmouth General Hospital Foundation	Prescott Group
Nova Scotia Talent Trust	Family SOS
Dartmouth Adult Services Centre (DASC)	Souls Harbour Rescue Mission
Alice House	St. George's YouthNet
Nova Scotia Youth Orchestra	Aphasia Nova Scotia
Brigadoon Village	Diabetes Canada
Epilepsy Association of the Maritimes	MS Canada
Laing House	Breaking the Silence
Cassie and Friends Society	Bide Awhile Animal Shelter Society
Aninga Project	BGC Greater Halifax Clubs
Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia	Start2Finish Canada
Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia	Unison Choruses Canada
United Way Halifax	Blind Sports NS
Ocean View Manor Foundation	Colorectal Cancer Resource & Action Network (CCRAN)
Ronald McDonald House Charities Atlantic	Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia
IWK Foundation	LEARNINGO
Ecology Action Centre	Chisholm
MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning	Pathway to Progress Nicaragua
Margaret's House	Heart & Stroke
Nourish Nova Scotia	Adsum for Women & Children
Nova Scotia SPCA	ElderDog Canada
Halifax Dance Association	Threads of Life
Shelter Movers Nova Scotia	Cape Breton Regional Hospital Foundation
My Grandfather's Cat	Meadowfields Community School Playground Project
The Nova Scotia Sea School	
True Patriot Love	
Easter Seals Nova Scotia	
Cystic Fibrosis Canada	
Spay Day HRM Society	
Avalon Sexual Assault Centre	
Kids Help Phone	