

Webster Girls on the Run reach their goal with 5k event

The skies were threatening rain as the first local Girls on the Run 5K prepared to begin June 5, but more than 70 girls plus family and friends chased the gray away to cross the finish line and celebrate a sunny day in their lives.

The 3.1-mile trek was the culmination of a 12-week program that encourages fourth and fifth grade girls to feel confident about themselves and to live a healthy life.

Begun in Charlotte, N.C. 14 years ago, the non-profit program has gone national, with the local chapter being the first in this part of the state.

"Girls on the Run of Monroe County is a life-changing, non-competitive prevention program for girls. Our mission is to educate and prepare girls for a life-

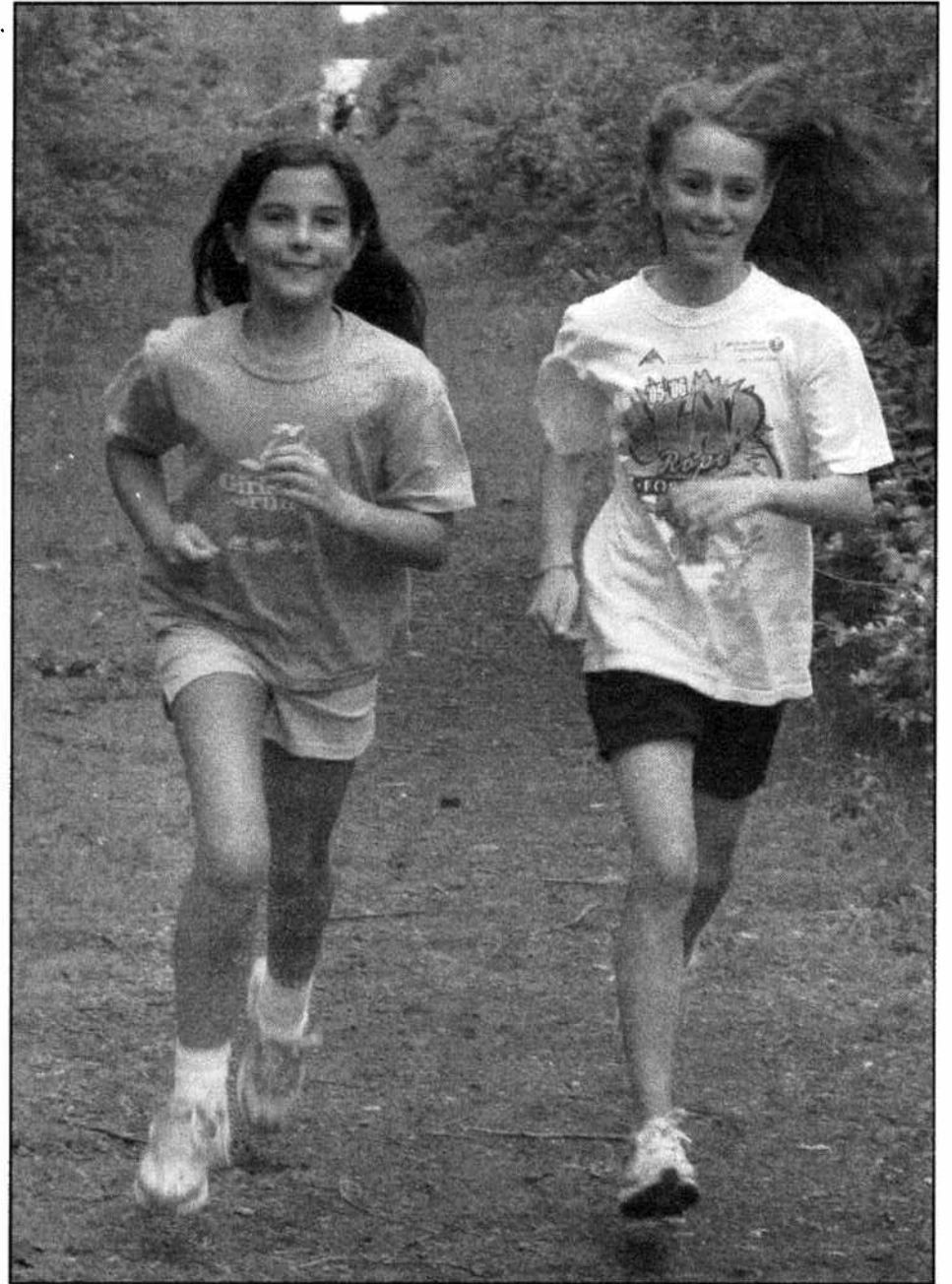
time of self-respect and healthy living," notes council director Paula Burgin.

More than 80 girls took part in the first offering of the local program, which had sites at Klem North, Klem South, Plank North and Plank South elementary schools as well as the Webster Parks and Recreation Center. The program instills self-esteem and strong values through health education, life skills development, mentoring relationships, and physical training. Participants use interactive activities such as running, playing games, and discussing important issues to celebrate being girls.

For more information on Girls on the Run of Monroe County, visit www.gotrofmonroecounty.org.



Fourth graders Julia Wehrle and Nicole Conciardo work together to problem solve a challenge during a Girls on the Run session.



photos submitted

Training for the 5K are Katey Meredith and Alena Wisniewski.