

Run Santa Run: Downtown Elon hosts fun holiday-themed race

By Jessica Williams

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ELON — If you spotted a group of Santas running down North Williamson Avenue, Saturday, Dec. 8, don't worry.

The spectacle was part of the Town of Elon's first Santa Fun Run, which challenged runners of all ages to complete six different obstacles set up along the downtown strip.

There were two rules: Santas had to donate a canned food item or new, unwrapped toy to be given to Allied Churches of Alamance County, and they had to be wearing at least three pieces of Santa Clause attire.

There were red and white sweaters, hats, gloves, and some full-on suits in the crowd as the race began and they tackled the first obstacle: tossing marshmallows into cups of hot chocolate.

Following that, they had to throw a hoop over a candy cane, spray on a whipped

cream or shaving cream beard, decorate a stocking, navigate the candy cane maze, and, finally, eat a chocolate chip cookie and drink a cup of hot chocolate.

The two winners — one adult and one child chosen randomly from a box of names — won stockings filled with candy, coloring books and goodies from sponsors.

Downtown merchants got in the spirit as well, decorating their store fronts and serving holiday foods and drinks, and Elon University and Western Alamance High School sent out volunteers to man each station in the course.

The event was led by Davis Montgomery, a member of the Elon Board of Alderman and District Manager for Duke Energy, which sponsored the night's activities.

“This was the result of a couple of creative folks sitting around a table and thinking about, ‘What can we do to draw some people into our downtown and have a little Christmas celebration where we can have some fun?’ And you can tell this was not a serious race. It was all about kids and it was all about having fun,” Montgomery said.

After the race, the Grinch (Scott Lackey) and Cindy Lou Who (Kathy Barham) joined Mayor Jerry Tolley to countdown the lighting of Elon's downtown Christmas tree.

“It was a wonderful event and I was glad to be the start of the race and, at the end of the race, I was glad to count down to turning on the lights,” Tolley said. “It was a wonderful evening for the Town of Elon and we appreciate Duke Energy and all they've done to promote this and put it on.”

Montgomery said they're already thinking about how they can expand it next year.

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