



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Racing for Space! Community Comes Together for First 5K Run/Walk**

“This is my second 5K!” reported Joshua Caldwell, age 9. Joshua was just one of several families who ran and walked in the first annual Race for Open Space 5K Fun Run/Walk. Serious runners and casual walkers put on their shoes Saturday to support their community and local nonprofit Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust.

The community event, held at the Philadelphia Town Park in Philadelphia, NY, highlighted the farmland conservation Tug Hill Tomorrow has recently completed in the area. Linda Garrett, land trust executive director, informed the group before the race started, “As you run or walk down the road, please know that on both sides of the race route are protected farms,” Linda explained, “These farms will be protected from development forever, and will continue to be farmed or used for agriculture.”

On both sides of the 3.2 mile race route were over 1,100 acres of family farms permanently protected through a partnership program between Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust, Fort Drum and Ducks Unlimited. The Army Compatible Use Buffer program (ACUB) helps to minimize encroachment surrounding Fort Drum so soldiers can train more effectively and farmers can keep their land and continue to farm.

“Protecting these farms is so important!” expressed overall race winner, Brett Kessler, as he accepted his first place prize, “It’s so important to keep programs and community events like these going!” Kessler, a resident of Philadelphia, ran the 3.2 miles in 20 minutes even.

The first annual run and walk would not have been possible without the generosity of the Philadelphia and surrounding communities. Race sponsors were: Philly Fuels, Countryman’s Garage, Otter Creek Winery, Upstate National Bank, Nirvana Natural Spring Water and Price Chopper. A special thank you to the Town of Philadelphia, the Town of Philadelphia Hwy. Department for their hard work, and the Friends of the Philadelphia Town Library for bbq-ing after the race.

Tug Hill Tomorrow Land Trust is a nonprofit regional organization that works with private landowners to protect and foster responsible stewardship practices of working forest, farm, recreation and wild lands in northern New York’s 2,100 square-mile Tug Hill region. The Tug Hill region covers parts of Jefferson, Lewis, Oneida and Oswego Counties.

Tug Hill Tomorrow provides conservation planning, land registry and conservation easement programs for landowners. The local land trust also works to increase the awareness, appreciation and stewardship of the Tug Hill region through publications, fieldtrips, and special events. For more information visit our website at [www.TugHillTomorrowLandTrust.org](http://www.TugHillTomorrowLandTrust.org), email [tughilloutreach@nnymail.com](mailto:tughilloutreach@nnymail.com), call 315.779.2239 or write P.O. Box 6063, Watertown NY 13601.

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