




Slavic Village Pierogi Dash 5K Run & Fun Walk



- **Slavic Village Development**
 - Health & fitness
 - Accessibility, special needs, & socializing
 - Nature
 - Culture & history
- **5k Run & Fun Walk along the Morgana Run Trail in Historic Slavic Village**
- **2012**

County: Cuyahoga
(Cuyahoga District #)

Project Partners:   

City logo

The Annual Slavic Village Pierogi Dash 5K Run and Fun Walk (formerly known as the Morgana 5K Run 2007-2012) was started by Slavic Village Development in 2007 as one way to introduce the new trail to neighborhood residents and recreational cyclists throughout the City and to promote a healthier, more active community. Expanded in 2012 to include a Fun Walk complete with a contest for best Polish costume and renamed the “Pierogi Dash”, the race has now doubled in size. The Pierogi Dash promotes the active living component of our brand identity.

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Slavic Village Pierogi Dash 5K Run & Fun Walk



- **Participants:** All are welcome. Attracts 650 + runners and walkers
- **Location:** Slavic Village neighborhood of Cleveland, the course follows along the asphalted Morgana Run Trail and through the streets of the Historic Warszawa District.
- **Program frequency:** Annual Event. Cost is discounted for local residents to \$15 from \$25 entry fee

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Because the Pierogi Dash is also a key fund raiser for Slavic Village Development there is an important staff component to the event.

Our initial corporate partnership with Third Federal Savings & Loan (TFS) assisted SVD in determining the logistics of the race and the location. The start of the race is held on the Third Federal campus because not only is there ample parking, Third Federal has an external one mile asphalt trail that weaves throughout their campus and is the focus of the "Fun Walk". This makes it so families or young kids can still participate without having to do the entire 3 mile course.

SVD hires Hermes (race event promoter) whose expertise in assisting with the creation and coordination of the actual event, makes everything run smoothly the day of and volunteers assist with registration and water stops.



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- Unique!**
- Benefits, Goals and Results:** Promoting fun, safe and healthy activities on the trail to neighborhood kids and their families creates lifelong advocates and trail users
- Transferability:** Several neighborhoods have copied the 5K concept since we started as a way to promote their neighborhoods.

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Since the 3 mile Morgana Run Trail opened in late 2006, adjacent or nearby to the Trail, there has been a remarkable amount of new investment including: Trailside Slavic Village (new housing development), Mound k-8 Elementary School), Cleveland Velodrome, Union Community Garden, 5 public art projects (Pixelating Morgana Mural, RotaFlora, Bird House Project, History of Steel Making Mural and the Freedom Mural), Trailview Park (a new pocket park) and Morgana Bluff (a new trail entrance at E.55th St.).

Greenspace adjoining or near to the Trail has been expanded to include: A total of 3 Reimagining projects (repurposing vacant land into greenspace) and 9 new Rain Gardens (done in partnership with the Greater Cleveland Botanical Gardens).

Along with the physical improvements that have occurred along the Trail, has been SVD's dedication to community building events and programming along the trail. First and foremost is

the Pierogi Dash, then there is Hallo-green and Treasure Trek. Hallo-green is a Halloween event held on the Trail, where kids have to do physical activities in order to get their Halloween goodie bag and Treasure Trek brings cyclists to the neighborhood to participate in a scavenger hunt!.

All of the improvements and activities that have sprung from the energy and physical infrastructure of the Morgana Run Trail has helped Broadway Slavic Village see a fledgling rebirth and boosted neighborhood confidence. Our bike-a-thons along with bike repair sessions attract hundreds of neighborhood kids and help educate them on Trail etiquette and safety.

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- “ I think the trail is one of the best features to brag about in Slavic Village!”
- “Trail has brought activity to the Slavic Village area!”
- “The best part is the pierogi’s – after the run!”
- “Pierogi’s, Smokies, & Polka, oh, and I walked 3 miles!”

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One of the interesting notes that we have found from talking with runners that besides donating to wonderful causes is that the “Fun Factor”, a cool T-shirt and fun snacks goes a long way in helping them figure out which races they participate in!

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Walk



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Hermes, the race event coordinator handles all the actual racing logistics and SVD enlists other volunteers to take care of the remaining tasks. And, while it may seem like serving pierogies and smokie's is a surprising snack choice at the end of the race (we also serve fruit) in a neighborhood branding itself with healthy living, we have found that it is more about having fun and being inclusive. The pierogies, the accordion player, the best dressed polish racing team, all serve to continue to remember the roots of the community and create a pride in the heritage of the community. Like being "Irish" for a day on St. Patrick's Day, being Polish for the Day is the same.

Slavic Village is beginning to be viewed as an affordable, eclectic and accessible neighborhood for people wanting to live closer to job centers like University Circle and Downtown. Our tag line is "LIVE CLOSE, GO FAR". It is a community where our residents can reach for their personal goals, whether owning their first home, sending their children to quality schools, living "lightly" environmentally, or engaging in an active healthy lifestyle.

