2024

REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

Emera
BLUE NOSE
MARATHON

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Executive Summary

This year, the Emera Blue Nose Marathon celebrated 21 years of community spirit and positive impact. The three-day active living event took place on May 17-19, 2024. The Expo was held at the Zatzman Sportsplex, while all races began and finished at the stunning Emera Oval. The Emera Blue Nose Marathon welcomed more than 9,000 participants in-person at the start line and virtually in six different distances. Nearly 400 fundraisers participating in the event have raised more than $222,000 as part of the Giv'er Charity Challenge program. Key takeaways in the 2024 Emera Blue Nose Marathon include:

- Impact
- Training Programs
- Virtual Run
- Local Youth Runs
- Blue News
- Volunteers
- Sustainability
- Inclusion
- New Partnerships
- New Programs
- Giv'er Charity Challenge

About the Emera Blue Nose Marathon

The Emera Blue Nose Marathon, known as 'the people's marathon,' is a signature event of Halifax, Nova Scotia. This event welcomes people of all ages, abilities, genders, and backgrounds, 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 Blue Nose Full Marathon, Killam Marathon Team Relay, Medavie Half Marathon, GoodLife FITNESS 10KM, Purple Cow 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 2024, 61 charities and nearly 400 fundraising participants joined together to raise more than $222,000.
3. The Blue Nose Marathon Expo presented by Subaru, a two-day lifestyle event taking place on May 17 and 18, 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, gender, or background—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, partner, 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, 21 years later, the event has more than doubled that figure, reaching more than 9,000 participants with the support of the community, sponsors, partners, volunteers, and participants.

The first-ever Blue Nose Marathon start line.

Impact

The Emera Blue Nose Marathon holds a unique meaning for everyone. While some might see it as just another weekend, for many, it's a cherished annual highlight. For countless Nova Scotians, the Blue Nose Marathon represents more than just a race; it's an event that fosters community and serves as a constant reminder of why they lace up and "Giv'er."

The Blue Nose Marathon aims to be the premier fitness event in Atlantic Canada by providing an extraordinary experience. However, this wouldn't be possible without the incredible support of "Blue Nose Nation." Everyone involved, whether they are a volunteer, participant, partner, sponsor, or spectator, has a story. This year, our partners at Subaru conducted interviews to highlight some of the special moments from Blue Nose weekend:

Training Programs

Team Myles

In 2024, Team Myles consisted of 47 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 10-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 Purple Cow 5KM distance, which in and of itself is an incredible achievement, but also pushed themselves to take on the GoodLife FITNESS 10KM.

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

Running Clinics

This year, Blue Nose expanded the Running Clinic program to offer training for three distances: 5KM, 10KM, and the Half Marathon. This new structure was designed to cater to the diverse training needs of participants, from beginners to seasoned runners.

To ensure the program's success, we enlisted the support of six dedicated coaches, nine pacers, and a series of partners and guest speakers who played a crucial role in helping participants reach their goals in a safe and motivating environment. With their support, we welcomed 82 participants to our training programs.

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, participant shirt, and a beautiful medal (or two if completing the Virtual Double Up). This year, the Blue Nose Marathon had more than 800 virtual participants.

Local Youth Runs

Local Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Runs bring Blue Nose across the province. They 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 our beloved mascot, Myles. This year, Blue Nose supported seven communities in hosting a Local Youth Run.

In partnership with the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, Blue Nose Marathon was able to help financially support three elementary schools' events, brining more than 150 youth their very own start line.

Blue News

Many incredible stories and excitement comes out of the Emera Blue Nose Marathon. Some examples of news stories from 2024 include:

Volunteers

The Emera Blue Nose Marathon is owned by the community and thrives through the dedication of its “Giv’er Crew”. This year, more than 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.

Super Volunteers: Joan & Gail. Served as Volunteers for 21 annual events.

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, including 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 17-19; the opportunity to develop and strengthen critical skills; and a Certificate of Achievement for their records.

2024 Participant Numbers

Event	Number of Participants
Double Up (5KM + Full Marathon)	23
Double Up (5KM + Half Marathon)	107
Double Up (5KM + 10KM)	259
Double Up (5KM + Full Marathon) Simons Green Bib	2
Double Up (5KM + Half Marathon) Simons Green Bib	2
Double Up (5KM + 10KM) Simons Green Bib	11
Blue Nose Full Marathon	340
Killam Marathon Team Relay	420
Medavie Half Marathon	1224
GoodLife FITNESS 10KM	1438
Purple Cow 5KM	1751
Blue Nose Full Marathon Simons Green Bib	14
Killam Marathon Team Relay Simons Green Bib	39
Medavie Half Marathon Simons Green Bib	68
GoodLife FITNESS 10KM Simons Green Bib	116
Purple Cow 5KM Simons Green Bib	101
Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run (2KM)	1586
Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run (4KM)	764
Virtual Double Up	42
Virtual Run	146
Virtual Youth Run	621
TOTAL	**9,074**

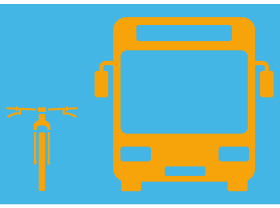
Sustainability

Since inception, the Emera Blue Nose Marathon has been mindful of its impact on the environment and greater community. One of our core values is sustainability:

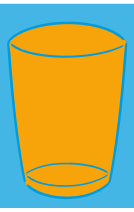
> **We honour the land (which is within Mi'kma'ki) on which we operate and will respect the resources that we use to ensure we are responsible to leave the community better than we found it.**

Continuing this commitment to sustainability, the Emera Blue Nose Marathon began completing third-party certification with the Council for Responsible Sport in 2023. The 20th annual event was awarded gold status after demonstrating, measuring, and managing its social, economic, and environmental responsibility. This certification makes the Blue Nose Marathon the first responsible sporting event in Atlantic Canada to earn such recognition. In 2024, Blue Nose proudly earned evergreen status with the Council—the highest level of recognition. We're now the second sporting event in Canada to earn this elite status. Some of our ongoing initiatives include:

Emissions-free generators. Through Star Power Atlantic, emissions-free portable electric generators were used to power the Emera Oval site, as well as a DJ on North Street.



Transportation. Thanks to Halifax Transit, Blue Nose offers complimentary transit services to participants and volunteers on race weekend. The event also offers a Bike Valet with the help of Halifax Cycling Coalition.



Silicone cups. This year, we introduced silicone re-usable cups at the Kenny Street hydration station. This initiative helped eliminate over 2,000 single-use plastic cups during race weekend.

For our 2024 Sustainability Report and more information on our ongoing sustainability efforts, please visit **bluenosemarathon.com**.

Inclusion

Communications

Gender Inclusion

Emera Blue Nose Marathon registration has four categories for gender identity, and we have worked to remove gender labelling in participant shirts listed in the registration process (e.g., straight fit versus male shirt). Additionally, we offer awards for top male, female, and non-binary participants who place in their race.

Translation

Our registration page is coded with alternate text to aid those who are visually impaired. We have also begun translating our website and registration page into French, as well as produced a variety of promotional materials and race weekend signage in French. This project has been made possible by the Government of Canada and the Province of Nova Scotia.

We have also worked with members of the Mi'kmaw and French community to develop cheer signs for participants in three languages. We hope to grow this initiative to be more representative of Blue Nose Nation in the future.

Race Entries

Emera Entries

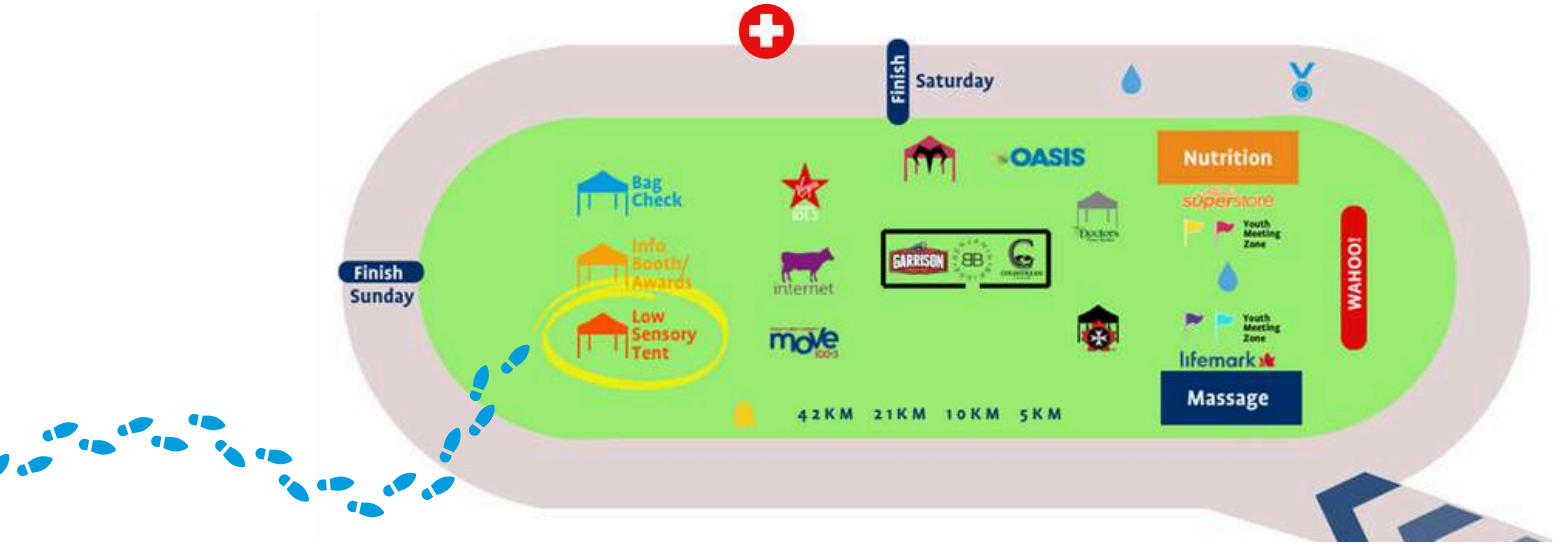
This year, the Emera Blue Nose Marathon connected with more than 20 community groups to explore barriers to race participation. 163 race entries were provided by Emera to invite guests to come experience Blue Nose weekend.

Atlantic Chip Youth Bursary Program

In partnership with Atlantic Chip Sport Timing, 200 entries to the in-person Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run were provided to local youth, granting children the unforgettable feeling of crossing a finish line.

Low Sensory Initiative

Continuing our journey of being an inclusive event, this year we focused on additional resources to make the space more welcoming for neurodivergent participants. In 2023, we introduced a Low Sensory start for the Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run. This year, we increased the promotion of the Low Sensory start, added a Low Sensory Tent in the post-race Atlantic Superstore Celebration Zone that offered nutrition and hydration in a more sensory-friendly space, and introduced social stories recommended by Autism Nova Scotia to help participants prepare for the event and know what to expect on race day.



Representation

321 is a significant number symbolizing the triplication of the 21st chromosome, which is used to promote awareness, acceptance, and inclusion for individuals with Down syndrome.

Runner 321 is a movement to ensure neurodivergent people's representation in mainstream sport. When you don't see yourself represented, it's hard to imagine what's possible, which is why we reserved bib No. 321 in all races for neurodivergent participants.

This year, we had two neurodivergent participants connect with us to proudly represent bib 321 in the Doctors Nova Scotia Youth Run and the GoodLife FITNESS 10KM. We also partnered with Halifax NS Down Syndrome Society who coordinated a cheer station at kilometre 3.21 on the Half Marathon route.

New Partnerships

Purple Cow Internet

You've HERD it correctly! The Emera Blue Nose Marathon welcomed a new race sponsor this year: Purple Cow Internet. Purple Cow has teamed up with Blue Nose to sponsor the 5KM event, known as the Purple Cow 5KM.

Purple Cow Internet, a service provider based out of Halifax, Nova Scotia, is on a mission to make high-speed internet more accessible and affordable for all by providing the same high-quality services as their competitors for half the price. As a company deeply rooted in the community, they strive to be more than just an alternative. Purple Cow is a statement aimed at transforming internet access in Nova Scotia and beyond.

This commitment to the community has led Purple Cow to join forces with the Blue Nose Marathon. The Purple Cow 5KM, which falls on Saturday morning, kicks off race weekend and offers a unique opportunity to explore the scenic city of Halifax from the new perspective. The Blue Nose Marathon welcomed over 9,000 participants race weekend, with the Purple Cow 5KM being the most popular event, attracting more than 2,000 participants.

Simons

In 2024, Simons entered the Atlantic Canadian market with their first store opening in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Shortly after the grand opening, an exciting partnership with the Emera Blue Nose Marathon was announced, centred around our shared commitment to sustainability.

Simons is redefining sustainable fashion by adhering to high standards of sustainable practices, including working to reduce emissions, remaining water and ocean conscious, using low-impact processes, favouring responsible materials, and much more! In 2023, 85% of their exclusive products met these standards. Their goal is to reach 90% by the end of 2024 and have a 100% green exclusive product assortment by 2025.

Aligning with Blue Nose Marathon's ongoing commitment to sustainability, Simons teamed up to help introduce a more sustainable option in registration—Simons Green Bib!

Simons Green Bib registrations do not include a shirt or medal. Instead, a financial donation was made to a sustainability charity on behalf of the participant. Thanks to Simons Green Bib participants, $3,000 was donated to Coastal Action, a non-profit environmental organization based in Mahone Bay, Nova Scotia. For over 29 years, Coastal Action has been dedicated to protecting and restoring the environment in the South Shore region of the province and beyond through research, education, action, and community engagement.

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New Programs

Blue Nose Brand'ers

The Blue Nose Brand'er program was introduced this year to reach new audiences and highlight the many unique individuals within Blue Nose Nation. We selected 15 ambassadors to share their training journeys, aiming to inspire and motivate more communities to get involved. As a result, 38 registrants cited a Brand'er as their inspiration for participating.

Brand'ers were chosen from across Nova Scotia and beyond, including ambassadors from Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Quebec.

We prioritized finding applicants with diverse preferred distances, experience levels, geographical locations, ages, genders, abilities, and backgrounds.

1-For-1 5KM Race Entry Program

Through the 1-For-1 5KM Race Entry program, participants are able to gift the empowering experience of a race by purchasing an entry add-on in registration. Thanks to the support of Emera Blue Nose Marathon participants, 38 5KM entries were distributed to applicants this year.

Giv'er Charity Challenge

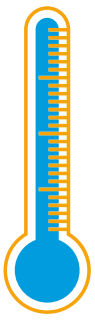
The Giv'er Charity Challenge is a unique fundraising program available at the Emera Blue Nose Marathon, providing participants the opportunity to make their run, walk, or wheel more meaningful by raising funds for a local charity. For charities, it provides a platform for friendly fundraising competition,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

This year, Blue Nose Marathon had 61 official Charity Partners and 392 fundraisers involved. Collectively, thanks to the dedication of our fundraisers and the generosity of donors, the program raised more than $222,000 in support of many unique initiatives in our communities.

President's Choice Children's Charity Team

61

Charity Partners



$222,210.13 Raised

Fundraisers

Official Charity Partners

Adsum for Women & Children
AIDS Coalition of Nova Scotia
Alice house
Alzheimer Society of Nova Scotia
Aninga Project
Aphasia Nova Scotia
Arthritis Society Canada
Autism Speaks Canada
Bide Awhile Animal Shelter
Blind Sports Nova Scotia
Brain Injury Nova Scotia
Brigadoon Village
Brunswick Street Mission
Canadian Mental Health Association Nova Scotia Division
Cape Breton Regional Hospital Foundation
Cassie + Friends
Chisholm
Coastal Action
Community care Network Society
Crohn's and Colitis Canada
Cystic Fibrosis Canada
Dartmouth General Hospital Foundation
DASC (Dartmouth Adult Services Centre)
Eating Disorders Nova Scotia
ElderDog Canada
Epilepsy Association of the Maritimes
Family SOS
Halifax Cat Rescue Society
Halifax NS Down Syndrome Society
Heart and Stroke Foundation
Hope for Wildlife
IWK Foundation
Laing House
LEARNINGO
Lung Cancer Canada
MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning
Margaret's House
Meadowfields Playground Project
Mental Health Foundation of Nova Scotia
Motivate Canada
MS Canada
My Grandfather's Cat
Myeloma Canada
North Mountain Animal Sanctuary
Nourish Nova Scotia
Nova Scotia Sea School
Nova Scotia SPCA
Nova Scotia Talent Trust
Nova Scotia Youth Orchestra
Ovarian Cancer Canada
Pathway to Progress Nicaragua
Please provide the charity name that should appear on the list of charities.
Prescott Group
President's Choice Children's Charity
Ronald McDonald House Charities Atlantic
Scleroderma Atlantic
Shelter Movers Nova Scotia
Surfrider Foundation Canada - Atlantic Canada Chapter
The Ken Gordon Society
True Patriot Love Foundation
United Way Halifax
Wonder'neath Art Society