



# Race Pledge Packet



[www.grwsa.com](http://www.grwsa.com)

# Dear Participant,

The first word that comes to mind when I talk about the Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association (GRWSA) is MOVING! Not only am I moved by your commitment to raise money and awareness for GRWSA while participating in the 2010 Fifth Third River Bank Run, but, using the word moving as 'MOVING FORWARD'... which is exactly what we are seeking to do as an organization.

Since 1980, the Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association has provided a fun, healthy forum for hundreds of youths and adults with physical disabilities who are interested in playing recreational and competitive sports. The GRWSA supports a nationally ranked traveling wheelchair tennis team, hosts an internationally sanctioned tennis tournament, sponsors the nationally ranked Grand Rapids Pacers wheelchair basketball team, an adult sled hockey team, an adaptive water skiing clinic, and co-sponsors the Jr. Pacers youth basketball team.

During this year's Fifth Third River Bank Run, we are proud to introduce our new Hand Cycling Racing Team! This is a group of teens and adults that know how to stay in shape and take to the trails to train for races they will participate in, such as this one. The GRWSA will be presenting the first Mary Free Bed alumni who crosses the finish line, with the Mary Free Bed Alumni Award – a new award that will be given annually by our organization at the River Bank Run.

In this packet, you will find all the information you need regarding our organization as your Charity Partner choice. Please let us know if you have any questions, thoughts or ideas. We are really looking forward to being a part of this exciting event with you in downtown Grand Rapids!

The GRWSA not only provides 'Sporting Abilities', but also empowerment, healthy exercise, and the fostering of life-long friendships.

Thank you for your support and your friendship!

Fondly,



Maria L. Besta, CTRS

GRWSA President





# Benefits

As a participant raising pledges for GRWSA, you will receive...

- This packet providing you with the materials you need to gather pledges
- An exclusive invitation for you and your family members to join us at the GRWSA tent in Charity Village on race day. It will provide a great spot to view the race, store your gear, beverages, and snacks.
- Pledge incentive gifts that will be available for pick-up at our booth during the Fitness & Sports Expo on Friday, May 7<sup>th</sup>. The Expo is at DeVos Place from 11:00 am through 8:00 pm and will have more than 100 vendors, food samples, discounted apparel and prize drawings.

## Pledge Incentive Gifts

**\$150 - \$249**

Wicking Running Shirt

**\$250 - \$499**

GRWSA Aluminum Water Bottle  
+  
Wicking Running Shirt

**\$500 - \$999**

GRWSA Baseball Cap  
+  
Aluminum Water Bottle  
+  
Wicking Running Shirt

**\$1,000 +**

Four West Michigan  
Whitecap Tickets  
+  
GRWSA Baseball Cap  
+  
Aluminum Water Bottle  
+  
Wicking Running Shirt



# Sample Pledge Request Letter

Dear [\[Insert Family or Friend Name Here\]](#),

I am excited to share that I will be participating in the 2010 Fifth Third River Bank Run, which features the largest 25K road race in the country, including both Handcycle and Wheelchair Racing divisions, a 10K and 5K run, 5K walk and Junior events.

To really impact my participation this year, I have decided to [\[run/walk/ride\]](#) the entire event to raise funds for the Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association, a non-profit organization. In addition to my personal goal to complete the [\[25K, 5K, etc.\]](#), my Charity Partner goal is to raise [\[insert amount here\]](#). But, I can't do it alone. I need the help of individuals – like you – to sponsor me on this challenge.

The money I raise will help the Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association achieve THEIR goal of \$15,000.

I truly appreciate every level of pledge; every penny counts toward my goal. When you have decided on a sponsorship amount, please visit my personalized fundraising pledge page at [www.\[insert website\].com](http://www.[insert website].com). To learn more about the GRWSA, you can visit [www.grwsa.com](http://www.grwsa.com). You will quickly understand why I am committed to supporting the Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association.

Thank you for your support!

[\[Insert your name here\]](#)

P.S. – Many companies match their employees' charitable giving – please ask your employer to match your contribution. Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association is a 501(c)(3) organization, so your donation is tax deductible as well.

**\*\* PLEASE NOTE:** Phrases in blue should be personalized to match your event, goal, and contact information.

For an electronic copy of this letter, please see our website ([www.grwsa.com](http://www.grwsa.com)) and download a customizable Microsoft Word document for your use.



# Pledge Collection

We are able to accept all forms of pledges including check, cash, or credit card. Please see below for detailed options. All Pledge Forms and check payments need to be received by the GRWSA no later than April 23, 2010. This will ensure you receive your Pledge Incentive Gifts.

You may choose to collect pledges as follows...

## Use Active.com

Our online fundraising page is at [www.active.com/donate/grwsa](http://www.active.com/donate/grwsa). You may also direct friends and family to your personal runner's page on Active.com to contribute using this online tool. On these sites, people will be able to make a pledge using their credit card.

You may contact Brian Wilkinson at 616.334.3582 for more information about how to set up your individual page.

## Collect Cash and Check Pledges

Collect pledges directly from your family and friends, making sure that all checks are made payable to 'Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association' and have 'River Bank Run' and your name in the memo area.

All pledges, including the pledge form in this packet, should be mailed in one envelope to...

Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association  
ATTN: Fifth Third River Bank Run  
235 Wealthy Street SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

We ask that you not send cash through the mail. Please write one check for all cash pledges made payable as noted above. Please remember to send in your pledges prior to April 23, 2010.



# Our Road Warrior: Jack Doles

Some of the most inspiring athletes I've had the pleasure of meeting in my 20 years at WOOD-TV, have come from the Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association. And I fully intend to draw on that inspiration as I attempt to run and finish the 25k in this year's Fifth Third Riverbank Run.

Lee Montgomery was a world class wheelchair tennis player. He was amazing at wheelchair basketball too. Where he's really made his mark, is as a coach of the Grand Rapids Pacers. Quite a few of his players earned college scholarships.

Joe Burmania earned a scholarship to Texas-Arlington and played for the U.S. Junior Paralympic team in Sydney, Australia in 2000. Joe started playing wheelchair basketball after cancer took his leg and nearly his life. He got hooked on the game the first time he saw Lee play.

Carlee Hoffman took the skills she learned with the Pacers and earned a scholarship to the University of Illinois. She won national championships and has two Paralympic gold medals in her collection.

Elizabeth Stone was born with one leg. That hasn't stopped her from running the 25k at the Fifth Third Riverbank Run, swimming at GR Christian and medaling in swimming at the Paralympic Games in Beijing.

As I train and the voice inside my head says, "you can't do this", I think of them. I think of athletes in GRWSA who do things they may have been told they'd never be able to do. That's why I'm proud to run this race for all of them.

I'm going to raise awareness for the mission of the GRWSA. I'm going to introduce you to some of the athletes who've inspired me. I'll blog about my training and post stories on athletes from GRWSA. I'm also hoping we can raise some much needed funds for GRWSA, so future athletes have the same opportunities that Joe, Carlee, Liz and so many others have had.

So I invite you to join me. You can make a pledge to GRWSA – a donation for each kilometer I run. (I plan on finishing all 25k.) If you feel like running it yourself....GREAT. We'll start a team.

One thing I've found since I started training for my first ever race is it's a lot easier to do with others than it is by yourself. Isn't that the way it is with everything in life?

Check out Jack's blog at <http://blogs.woodtv.com/category/sports/>

# Your Pledge \$ at Work

The Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association (GRWSA) is a nonprofit organization designed to help children and adults whose various physical challenges require them to use a wheelchair to play competitive and recreational sports. Over the years, the GRWSA has helped thousands of youths and adults participate in nearly every sport imaginable – from hockey to rock climbing to basketball and much more.

The GRWSA also sponsors the Junior Wheelchair Sports Camp held each summer at Grand Valley State University. Through various fundraisers and donations, the GRWSA offers a free, five-day week of sports opportunities for youths aged seven to eighteen with various physical disabilities.

As you raise pledges, here is a wish list you can share with supporters to help provide an understanding of our many goals at GRWSA.

## Our Wish List

- **Tennis balls**  
\$50 per case
- **A five-day sports camp experience**  
\$300 per child
- **Specifically designed wheelchairs for tennis and basketball**  
\$3,000 each
- **Hand cycles for recreational riding**  
\$3,000 each
- **Ice time for Sled Wings team**  
\$3,760 per season

## Spread the Word



Share your goals with friends on **Facebook**.



**Tweet** about the upcoming race.



Check out our wheelchair tennis video on **You Tube**.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJakrea90kU>



Keep updated with our **blog**.  
<http://53riverbankrun.com/blog/charitypartners/category/grand-rapids-wheelchair-sports-association/>