

▼ PENNSYLVANIA

# 1,000-mile run to support better redistricting

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Staff writer

A 1,000-mile run around the state began this morning to bring attention to political redistricting in Pennsylvania.

Called The PennUltimate Run, the event is headed by Paul J. Mathison, Philadelphia. Participants are expected to run through Chambersburg between April 5 and 7. They also will run through parts of Adams County, according to Mathison.

The goal of the event is to “raise awareness about 2011 political redistricting and to inspire reform in this once-a-decade process,” Mathison said. “(Today) is the deadline for the U.S. Census Bureau to release all the data required for nationwide redistricting.”



Mathison

Mathison said he met with Sen. Rich Alloway, R-Chambersburg, in 2010 to

discuss the run. More details about the event will be released today.

“This event is meant as an inspirational sort of thing, and not as an angry, burn-‘em-at-the-stake type of endeavor,” Mathison said Tuesday. “I am non-party affiliated. I’m ecumenical.”

Mathison, 51, said he’s happy to see expressions of support, curiosity and interest by the public and various government leaders.

“The PennUltimate Run is a 1,000-mile one-lap human trek around Pennsylvania whose purpose is to place a

spotlight on 2011 congressional and legislative redistricting, and to inspire Pennsylvania citizens to push the Legislature an governor to conduct this effort in an open and transparent manner and produce compact districts,” Mathison said.

The event kicked off this morning at the War Memorial on South Wayne Avenue in Radnor Township, some 13 miles west of Philadelphia.

Following a 9 a.m. ceremony, Mathison, the lead runner, was to begin pushing a full loaded jogging stroller and carrying the “Official Relay Baton” of the run that he received from Radnor High School.

Mathison said the run could take as many as 50 days. The finish date has not

been determined. He hopes to run 15 to 25 miles a day, and cover such places as Pittsburgh, Erie and Scranton.

“We’re going to loop the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia,” he said.

Along the way, anyone who wants to join the run may do so without signing up. People can track the run through news feeds on Facebook and Twitter, an approximate route map, and a GPS-tracking tool.

In professional life, Mathison runs a consulting firm, which does management and government consulting, he said. He also has been a professional lobbyist.

The last time Mathison attempted something similar was in 1998. It was on a smaller scale, he said.

“My goal was to run from the state capitol steps in Harrisburg to city hall in Philadelphia,” he said. “I fell short a few miles. I’d tried to run 50 miles a day. I was running to find the limit.”

Mathison said the experience as a runner sort of dove-tailed into his work and interests over the years.

Information on the PennUltimate Run is available at <http://pjmathison.com/pennultimaterun>, as well as Facebook and Twitter. For information, call (215) 755-4578.

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