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Emerald Across the Bay 12K *\$1K Payouts for 12K Records*

SAN FRANCISCO/SAUSALITO (March 21st, 2010): Founded in 1984, *Emerald Across the Bay 12K* is the oldest race across the Golden Gate Bridge. On **Sunday, March 21st** 5,000 runners, many of them veterans of the Emerald 12K, will take on the challenging route from Sausalito to San Francisco across the Golden Gate Bridge. For most, the challenge is fun and inspiring. For an elite few there's some serious money at stake.

In addition to an overall \$3,000 prize purse, a \$1,000 bonus is offered, by title sponsor Emerald (Diamond Foods, Inc.), for any and all runners who beat the men's or women's course record. The open-ended offer -- if more than one runner beats the course record, each earns \$1,000 -- stands against two tough-to-beat records.

Phillip Reid of San Luis Obispo, barely missed the extra \$1,000 pay day, his 2009 win (35:57) just nine seconds shy of the course record (35:48) set by Bill Donakowski in 1987 (the race was known then as the 'Houlihan's to Houlihan's 12K). Reid and his two closest challengers in the 2009 Emerald race, Sergio Reyes of Palmdale, (2nd) and San Francisco's Crosby Freeman (3rd) have set their sites on beating Emerald's 23-year old course record. As teammates in the elite Aggie Running Club, they plan to train and pace each other toward that goal.

Reyes said recently, "I'd love to see that course record go down." He added, "I think it's doable, but very challenging." In addition to his second place finish in 2009 Sergio Reyes won the Emerald 12K in 2007 and 2008. He also won Cincinnati's Flying Pig Marathon last May, the third largest marathon in the country.

Women's course record holder, Linda Somers-Smith, ran the 7.45 mile distance in 40:27 in 1995, on her way to Seoul, with the 1996 U.S. Olympic Marathon Team. In 2008, at 46, she finished second at the Emerald 12K. Magdalena Lewy-Boulet won (41:01), on her way to Beijing with the 2008 U.S. Olympic Marathon Team. A member of the U.S. World Cross Country team, Lewy-Boulet will be on her way to the World Championships in Poland on Emerald's race day. But, Canadian World Cross Country team member, Chantelle Wilder, is traveling from Hawaii to take on the Emerald course record challenge. Wilder, who ran for the University of Hawaii (2008 graduate) continues to train on the islands.

Having never run Emerald's unique point-to-point 12K course from Sausalito to San Francisco, Wilder's biggest challenge will be the half-mile climb up to the Golden Gate Bridge. While some aspects of the course have changed over the years, evolving with the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the Golden Gate Bridge, with its stunning height, stays unchanged and at the heart of the Emerald 12K challenge.

The starting line at East Fort Baker looks across the Bay at the city skyline. In the first mile runners descend down to sea level at Horseshoe Cove, then climb up to the west side of the Golden Gate Bridge. Midspan is the highest point on the course. Once across the bridge the course winds back down to the water's edge at Fort Point, along Crissy Field and Marina Green and into Aquatic Park on Fisherman's Wharf. Challenging, but runners are never wanting for inspirational views.

Rewards are in no short supply either, thanks to sponsor generosity, especially that of title sponsor, Emerald.

Emerald Nuts is the snack brand of Diamond Foods, Inc, a company committed to promoting healthy, active lifestyles. Emerald is proud to be returning for the sixth year as the title sponsor of the Emerald Across the Bay 12k. Diamond Foods, Inc, which is based in Stockton, Calif., is a leading branded food company specializing in processing, marketing and distributing culinary nuts and snack products. Its 550,000-square-foot facility on 70 acres is the world's largest nut processing facility. Diamond was founded in 1912, and became publicly traded on the NASDAQ stock exchange in 2005 (DMND). Under its Emerald brand, the company has been providing U.S. consumers with healthy, natural energy snack products since 2004. The Emerald line has grown to 35 products, including premium-quality traditional snack nuts, sweet and savory glazed nuts and trail mix. The newest innovation to hit the market are four 100-calorie Nut items, which combine nutritionally dense snacks with a sensible portion control size.

Taglined "A Celebration of Running", the Emerald 12K introduces kids to the joy of running as well. Edgewood Center for Children and Families has been the beneficiary of 'Emerald Across The Bay 12K' since its inception. These kids train as runners to help them set and achieve goals and to raise their self-esteem. Edgewood Center for Children and Families is a nonprofit that helps children overcome severe challenges like abuse, neglect, mental illness, and family crisis. Edgewood provides essential services to more than 5,000 San Francisco Bay Area children and families each year.

Runners can register for the 'Emerald Across the Bay 2010' by going to **www.rhodyco.com**. A detailed **race history** is also on the website.

-- See Also 'Key Facts' --

KEY FACTS:

- Event:* **'Emerald Across the Bay 12K'**
- Date:* Sunday March 21st, 2010 • 8:30 AM Start
- Where:* Staged from Aquatic Park (Jefferson at Hyde St.) in San Francisco.
- Course:* Sausalito to S.F. Fisherman's Wharf (runners bused to start).
- Entry:* \$42 pre-reg. (\$20 for 18 & under) & \$50 race day includes free pre-race shuttle to the start, finisher T-shirt and refreshments.
- Registration: **www.rhodyco.com** - for info., race history & online registration,
or: (415) 759-2690
- Benefits:* Edgewood Center for Children & Families
- History:* **27th Annual**
- Highlight:* West Coast 12K Championship (USA T&F)
- \$3,000 prize money + thousands \$ in potential bonuses
 - \$1,000 Emerald Course Bonus for runners who break the course record.