

AIM Group becomes sponsor of race

By DEBORAH ROWE
Villager staff

The AIM Group in The Woodlands recently became the latest sponsor of the Woodlands Trail Classic, a 5K and 1-mile Fun Run family event to be held in the greater New Orleans area Dec. 31. Proceeds from the event will benefit the nonprofit organization, Woodlands Trail and Park in Louisiana, in its long-standing mission to unite the river communities of Orleans and Plaquemines parish with a series of educational, recreational and historical greenways.

The public was first given a bird's eye view of Woodlands Trail on National Trails Day in June. Hurricane Katrina severely impacted the bottomland hardwood forest dedicated to Woodlands Trail. Proceeds from the first Woodlands Trail Classic will help re-establish trails and expand the efforts of Woodlands Trail in creating a future for generations to come.

The name and concept for Woodlands Trail and Park was inspired by the Woodlands community long ago on trips to the community by Katie Brasted, president and founder of the organization. According to Brasted, The organization is developing 13.6 miles of pathways in bottomland hardwoods.

"The pathways lead to a grouping of 10 WWII Ammunition Magazines nestled in the forest," she said. "With nominations by both Plaquemines Parish President Benny Rousselle, and New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin, we received recognition as a part of America's Wetland Birding Trail."

The AIM Group is known for providing services to the oil, gas, refining and petrochemical industry worldwide, as well as a vested interest in the environment.

"All geographical areas require homes, bridges, roads and other basic infrastructure, but without the quality of life and sustainability of the environment, we won't have livable communities," Michael Child, executive vice president of the AIM Group, said. "We want to ensure that future generations will benefit from the seeds sown today, and we want to urge others to also



AIM Group in The Woodlands recently became the latest sponsor of The Woodlands Trail Classic, a 5K and 1-mile Fun Run family event to be held in the greater New Orleans area Dec. 31, benefiting Woodlands Trail and Park. Michael Child, executive vice president of the AIM Group, presented a \$1,000 check to Katie Brasted, president and founder of Woodlands Trail and Park.

Courtesy photo

stand beside Woodlands Trail and Park and help them in 'creating a legacy.'"

Child explained that the AIM Group is a civic-minded company, and wanted to help rebuild the wetlands. The AIM Group is also involved in helping rebuild in Iraq for the government.

This project provides the opportunity to expose the public to the function and value of wetlands in a recreational setting, thereby increasing awareness of Louisiana's environmental treasures and its dwindling coastline issues, Child said.

"Following the devastation by Hurricane Katrina, the organization is faced with massive restoration to reestablish and expand the pathway system," he said. "We want to do our part to help with this important issue."

Woodlands Trail and Park also received an award from the Kodak American Greenways Awards Program for its innovative local efforts to connect greenway corridors that help preserve a sense of peace to a growing community.

The race will be held at 9 a.m. in Belle Chasse, La. Registrations for the event and sponsorship opportunities are available at www.woodlandstrail.com.