

MEDIA RELEASE  
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SAULT STE. MARIE, Mich.

**OLYMPIC CHAMPION BILLY MILLS VISITS SAULT**  
**May 12 presentation open to the public; join the Billy Mills Fun Run/Walk May 14**

SAULT STE. MARIE Olympian Billy Mills returns to Sault Ste. Marie this May as special guest of the Billy Mills Fun 5K Run/Walk special guest. Mills will appear May 12 at the LSSU Fine Arts Center in the Cisler Center from 6 to 8 p.m. in a presentation open to the public. The community is welcome to attend! Also a motivational speaker, he will give an in-service to Sault Tribe team members May 12 and visit JKL School May 13 before attending the race named in his honor on May 14.

Sault Tribe Chairperson Aaron Payment said, During college, my race was 10K cross country. Fellow Sault Tribe Member Cathy Belogna ran cross country. In 1991, she and I took him to lunch and explained our vision for Sault Tribe recreation. Cathy became our first recreation director. Billy then promised to attend an annual fun run if we create a running team and the rest is history.

Mills was the inspiration for the movie Running Brave, starring Robbie Benson, the story of Mills life on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and the obstacles he overcame to become an Olympic champion. At the 1964 Olympics, Mills came from behind to win the gold medal in the 10k race, setting a world record of 28 minutes, 24.4 seconds. He is still the only American to ever win a gold medal in the 10k event.

Billy is the last American to win the Olympic 10,000 meters in 1964, Payment said. He is one of my heroes and is a role model for Indian Country.

As part of his effort to give back to his community, Mills helped found Running Strong for American Indian Youth and became the organizations national spokesperson. Today, Mills visits American Indian communities throughout the U.S. and speaks to youth about healthful lifestyles and taking pride in their heritage. In 2014, Mills celebrated the 50th anniversary of his gold medal win by founding Dreamstarter, a grant program to jump start the dreams of Native youth.

This years race also sees the start up of the Chi Nodin Running Club, which runs three days per week from June 13 through Aug. 17. Sault Tribe youth aged 12-18 can register at the race or contact Heather Hemming at 632-5210, ext. 21372, or [hhemming@saulttribe.net](mailto:hhemming@saulttribe.net).

The Billy Mills Fun Run/Walk Race on May 14 features a 5K race, a 5K walk, youth 1-mile run, and a tot trot for younger children. Everyone is welcome to participate and there are no registration fees. Race shirts are limited and will be given on a first-come, first-served basis. Pre-register and arrive early on race day to receive the right shirt size.

The youth one-mile run and tot trot begin at 8:30 a.m. on the east side of Chi Mukwa Community Recreation Center across Shunk Road from Kewadin Casino in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich. The 5K run and 5K walk begins at 9 a.m. The top male and female 5K runners in the regular (4-39), masters (40-69) and grand masters (70 and over) divisions and the top overall male and female 5K walkers will receive a plaque. All participants will receive medals.

All participants are required to register. Early registration is preferred and late registration opens at 7:30 a.m. and will end promptly at 8:15 a.m. To register or ask questions, contact Lori Jodoin at 906- 635-5055, or [ljodoin@jkl.school.org](mailto:ljodoin@jkl.school.org).

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