It's one thing to be passionate about a favorite hobby or a skill that you enjoy using, but quite another to take that passion and channel it into some worthwhile cause that helps others. This is exactly what Rachel Dalton did when she helped to establish Run for the Village, a 5K race that raises money and awareness for the plight of orphans in Africa.

The 4th annual Run for the Village 5K Run/Walk is ready to kick off at 8am on Saturday, July 21, from Eastern High School in Pekin. One hundred percent of the proceeds will go to benefit Eden Children's Village, a safe haven for at-risk kids, including those suffering from the continent's AIDS epidemic.

Eden Children's Village, located in Mhangura, Zimbabwe, is run by Kevin and Susan Fry, missionaries associated with Goshen Christian Church in Goshen, Ind. They currently take care of 160 kids, provide an education for them through Eden Christian Academy, and run a medical clinic that's open to everyone in the area.

Dalton, who has served as Director of the 5K since its inception, credits a member of her church named Myra Wells as her main inspiration to start the annual fundraiser. "She had come back from visiting the children's home and really inspired me to do something," Dalton recalled. She decided to take what she knew, running, and turn it into Run for the Village as a small way of raising funds for Eden's cause.

"The first year we had 100 runners and raised $1400 dollars," Dalton said. "We've had around 150 runners the last two years and raised about $3000 each time." The young director says that support from the community has been incredible every year and that the race has been fortunate enough to continually get sponsored by local businesses like Pacers & Racers Running/Walking Store of New Albany.

Above all though, Dalton is thankful for the support of her church family at Salem First Baptist and wears her faith on her sleeves when she talks about Run for the Village. "It's been a blessing to be able to help other people...I'm a Christian and I feel like this is something God really wanted me to do."

The registration fee for entering the race is $20. You can send in your registration form early or else register on site the day of the race beginning at 7 am. Registration for the 1/4 mile Kids' Run, which will take place at 9 am following the regular 5K, is only $8.

Trophies and $50 gift cards to Pacers & Racers will be given to the overall male and female winners of the race. Trophies will also be given to the top three male and female racers in each of the seven age divisions. Medals will be given to all who takes part in the Kids' Run.

Dalton hopes that everyone who participates in this year's Run for the Village has a great time while remembering the cause they're racing for. She also wanted to to emphasize that the 5K has both run and walk at the end of its name. "If you can walk three miles, you can help."

Registration forms are available for download at www.runforthevillage.com. For more information on registering or the 5K, contact Rachel Dalton at 812-620-9172 or email her at red_runner61@yahoo.com.