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J.P. SQUIRE/The Daily Courier

The start line for the Campus to Campus Half Marathon on Sunday was moved to the end of Curtis Road because residents along a private road, right, closed the farm gate and quietly watched as a record 500 runners set off for Okanagan College's KLO campus.

# UBCO, neighbours making inroads

By J.P. SQUIRE  
The Daily Courier

UBC Okanagan's top bureaucrat is willing to meet with property owners on a private road who disrupted the Campus to Campus Half Marathon on Sunday.

Property owners past the end of Curtis Road in North Glenmore say their private road has become a thoroughfare as a result of vehicles dropping off students at UBCO's back door.

So they closed a farm gate on Curtis Road Sunday, forcing the relocation of the half-marathon's start line. They claim UBCO has ignored 30 of their letters during the long-festering dispute over a road easement.

"I can't swear to this, but I cannot remember any request for a meeting on the part of the residents' association coming to my office in the 2 1/2 years I have been there," Doug Ooram, UBCO deputy vice-chancellor, said on Tuesday.

"I'd be willing to meet with them at any time to discuss mutually agreeable solutions. The difficulty is they start with the position that we have no rights on the road. Our position is that we do have those rights

and that we are like them: we are one of the owners and one of the people with access to that road."

Even so, UBCO has been "really careful to try to be good neighbours," Ooram said.

"We have barred all vehicular traffic . . . because we are very conscious of not wanting to create a burden on the people who are on that road. I think it is quite reasonable for us to have pedestrian and bicycle access. We don't see that as a major disruption."

Although UBCO has easement rights, "at the same time, we recognize we are a public institution and we cannot simply open the gates and have our students driving on by the thousands."

However, he has heard cyclists and pedestrians have been berated for using the road.

Ooram noted the easement, registered in 1981, pre-dates UBCO, which inherited the easement rights from Okanagan University College when it was the North Kelowna campus.

Ooram also expressed disappointment that "some residents, not all, felt it was appropriate to disrupt a fundraising community run that involved no vehicles."