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From the President's Desk

The last two months have been a whirlwind! We've formed a club, received over 100 membership applications, held our first club-sponsored event, designed and ordered club shirts, and participated as runners and volunteers at a HARRA race. Wow! What a beginning! When we had first floated the idea of a local running club in Katy we got a lot of encouragement. Folks said that there were a lot of people looking for a way to find running buddies, learn more about running, and who were interested in a network of runners participating in local and destination events. The actual response in the way of real, live memberships has been super impressive.

Today we are officially a 501(c)3 non-profit organization formed under the auspices of the Road Runners Club of America (RRCA). One of the benefits of our membership in RRCA is that we do have general liability and accident insurance - your membership dues at work. Generally, the RRCA membership allows us to access their network of clubs and information for clubs and it allows individual runners to find us and our events. It's a good thing.

Locally, we are also members of the Houston Area Road Runners Association (HARRA). HARRA supports a wide variety of activities in the Houston area relating to running and is a great clearinghouse for information about local events. I feel good that we can contribute to our running community in this way. Also, if you are an individual member of HARRA then you receive Texas Runner and Triathlete monthly. Watch for the May edition for our very first club report in there!

As a club we are now trying to build our identity and purpose in the community and among our members. Getting you out at our group runs - Tuesday, Thursday, or

Saturday - and at our monthly club races and social events is essential to that point. This is your club and there are many ways you can be involved. Come out and let us know what's working for you and what we can improve or develop. We've got lots of ideas and you might just find that your idea is one that we are anxious to work on or you might just give us another great thing to do for the club. Anyway, we want your participation and we want to hear from you.

And you'll be hearing from us. In addition to the Facebook group and our frequent emails you'll also be receiving this newsletter. Our intention is to issue this newsletter monthly. As you'll see from this inaugural edition we want to fill you in on a variety of topics we expect are of interest to you. If there are topics you think have general interest to our membership just let us know and we'll figure a way to work those things in.

Welcome to KARC!

Getting Together

On Saturday April 9th we held our spring picnic at the park across the street from the Cinco Ranch Beach Club. The only running done was by kids and dogs. The adult members enjoyed a relatively sedentary evening, having a picnic meal, excellent spring weather, and the friendship of nearly 30 club members. If you missed this one make sure to check our calendar for the next social outing. Remember, there's always a group that meets after the long runs and the tempo runs.



Club Runners Review

At the Katy Half Marathon on February 6th, several club members finished on the podium for their performance in either the half marathon or the half marathon relay. Gordon Christie completed the half marathon in 1:30:41 for a 2nd place finish in his age group. Susan Freeman turned in a 1:41:38 followed by Delia Salinas in 1:45:38 for 1st and 2nd, respectively in their age group. Sonia Dhodapkar won her age group with a time of 1:35:25. John Saunders won his age group in the 5k with a time of 25:43.

Club members running at The Woodlands Marathon and Half Marathon on March 5th also brought home some hardware. Gordon Christie completed the marathon in 3:12:20 for a 1st place finish in his age group. Nancy Husby finished the half marathon with a time of 1:54 for 3rd place in her age group. Other club members participated in the 4-person relay. Craig Prevallet, Arturo Quintero and Jacob Nielsen's team turned in a 3:12:30 for 2nd place. Natalie Perry, Ben Shepard and Delton Friedman's team finished in 3:16:18 for 3rd place.

Later the same evening the Cross Creek Half Marathon was held and Gordon Christie, showing his exceptional endurance and sense of fun, ran a 1:50:45 for a 3rd place finish in his age group while wearing a really short gothic mini-skirt/kilt. Why not! In the 5k Sonia Dhodapkar was the overall female winner with a time of 22:30.

The Club had a good showing at the Bayou City Classic 10K on March 19th with members Rick Bozanich, Mike Healey, Mike Masse and Kim McClintic running the 10K course in very windy conditions. Sarah Priest and Jacob Nielsen served as volunteers at finisher shirt hand-out and course turn-around, respectively.



From L to R: Mike Healey, Mike Masse, Rick Bozanich, and Kim McClintic at the Bayou City Classic.

Mike Healey ran in the Shamrock Shuffle 8k in Chicago on April 3rd with 23,462 new friends! That's a big 8k. It was probably a good thing there were so many since they needed to huddle at the start - it was so cold it was snowing!

Of exceptional note, was the completion of the Tokyo marathon by club members Mohamed Thowfeek and Phil Trumbly on February 27th. With prior finishes at Boston, New York, Berlin, Chicago and London, this marked the completion of their quest to run all six major world marathons. Well done guys!



Mohamed Thowfeek (left) and Phil Trumbly (right) at the start of the Tokyo Marathon.

On March 26th JoAnn Fadeley won her age group in the Green 6.2 10K.



Well done JoAnn!

We run. But, some of us swim and cycle, too. On April 10th, Dana Cashman, Torrey Kramer and Gordon Christie competed in the Ironman 70.3 in Galveston. Dana, Torrey and Gordon completed the 1.2 mile swim, 56 mile ride and 13.1 mile run in 7:14:56, 7:14:56 and 5:26:06, respectively.

Area Running News

The new Willow Fork Park behind Cinco Ranch High School is coming along nicely. The pavilion is framed and it appears that the paved path is nearly complete. Though, one bridge linking the path still needs to be installed. The pavilion will have bathrooms and a drinking fountain and there's a large parking lot, too. The path inside the park will probably be about a mile. But, I've run from the parking lot along the bayous and other completed sections of the Willow Fork trail for a 10 miler recently. While the forecast completion date is "spring 2016", the state of development suggests a later finish. Anyway, keep an eye on this as it will very likely be a great place to meet for runs of almost any length.

Training Corner

On the KARC application form, most members indicated they were interested in training. That begs the question - what are you training for? Please let us know those races you are planning to run. You can email this information to us using the club's email address (training@KatyAreaRunningClub.com). If we receive this

information, we will be able to organize group training runs and plans targeting the more popular races for our club members. We are planning to offer training programs focused on fall marathons and half marathons (including the Houston Marathon). However, to best meet the needs of club members, we would like to do the same for other distances.

On the club's website (www.katyarearunningclub.com), there is a "Training" tab, under which, you will find training programs for the 10K, half marathon and marathon distances. Eventually, this tab will be fully populated with plans targeting distances from 5K to marathon for runners at the beginner, intermediate and experienced level.

Recently, we added a 10K training program targeting runners at the intermediate level. This means, runners who are capable of running longer distances than a 10K, but want to improve their 10K performance. This 12-week program contains the four basic phases found in our marathon and half marathon plans (endurance - building up the base, strengthening through hill repeats, increasing speed through interval training on the track, and tapering to ensure a quality race). Check it out and let us know what you think!

Member Profile

From time to time we'd like to offer a profile of one of our members. Everyone has a story whether it's about what motivated them to start running, what the effect of running has been on their life, how their running has influenced others, or a multitude of other things. I'm continually impressed how this thing we call running serves as a common, unifying thread among us. For that reason, we think you'll enjoy hearing something about one of our club friends. And who knows, maybe you'll be inspired to tell your story!

This month we'll hear from Craig Prevallet. He tells us about his journey as a runner and how it brought him to the Boston Marathon which he'll run for the first time on Monday! Next month, Scott Spencer will tell us something about what it takes to run 10 consecutive Boston Marathons!

Here's Craig's story:

I certainly didn't set out initially wanting to run the Boston Marathon. It was a long process. It took years to get to that point. If you'll indulge me a bit, I'll explain.

I started running to lose weight and look better. I was 5'10" and over 205 lbs and completely out of shape. My first attempts left me drowning in sweating and gasping for air after five minutes. It was slow and painful. After four or five weeks the novelty was gone and every morning was a challenge to continue. So, over time, I made some changes. I ditched the cotton T-shirts and retread shoes for dri-fit clothes and better running shoes. I changed my diet. The weight began to come off. Once I had dropped 40 lbs, I ran a local 5K with my sons as a fun way to celebrate New Year's Day.

The race and competition were gateway drugs. Now free of my excess baggage, running became easier and my motivation was to improve my times. Later that year, I completed my first half marathon. I began to think of myself as a runner. After the half I realized I needed new challenge. A marathon? Any marathon. Could I do that?

I joined a training group which, in hindsight, was stupendously ~~lucky~~ wise move. That summer and fall my new teammates schooled me every week. (Hill work? Tempo runs? Sprints? Stretching? Hydration? Lube? Core? Oh. My. God.) I learned a lot, made some mistakes and some crazy new friends. They held me accountable. I "ran" my first marathon on a scorcher of a day and my teammates helped me finish as cramps took my legs. I missed my goal time. My wife and kids saw me hobble in. Honestly, it kind of sucked. So I had to try again to see if I could make it suck less.

I wanted to run a marathon without stopping to walk: to race it. I trained another season and learned more and my times improved. I raced the 2014 Houston Marathon and did much better - missing a BQ by only four seconds. More importantly, this time I enjoyed the experience. Deep inside I felt good about my progress but also disappointed in having coming so close to qualifying for a prestigious race. Once I realized what was possible, I found a new inspiration. I was going to get that jacket with the unicorn I'd seen some of my teammates wearing. That was my inspiration: a jacket. Silly, right? But a jacket that runner

ethics says you have to earn to wear. A Super Bowl ring for the common man. Motivation comes from strange places sometimes.

Eventually, following another year of training I started to "podium" in smaller races then in a few larger ones. It became a virtuous cycle. Finally with the help of a new age bracket, fast comrades and favorable weather I ran a PR. And then another one. After five years of running in all kinds of conditions, I had accomplished something I would have thought impossible earlier. I had qualified for the Boston Marathon.

But why the Boston Marathon? Well most importantly was that jacket and a sense of accomplishment. I could say I earned it. But beyond that, the Boston Marathon is the world's oldest annual marathon and ranks as one of the world's best-known road racing events. It's prestigious. It has a long colorful history and its own folklore. For example: Johnny Kelley overtaking Ellison "Tarzan" Brown in 1936 on what later became known as Heartbreak Hill; the 1982 "Duel in the Sun" between Alberto Salazar and Dick Beardsley; Kathrine Switzer in 1967 as the first woman to run and finish despite an having a race official try to rip off her number and eject her from the race; and the terrorist bombing attack in 2013. If you don't know the stories, look them up. They are fascinating.

In addition to the history and prestige of the race are other fun aspects and the city of Boston itself. There are large crowds supporting the runners throughout the race. There's the thrill and noise and excitement of the "Scream Tunnel" at Wellesley College. There are banners and flags flying and statues to runners and running. There are local landmarks like Fenway Park, the Citgo sign, and Boylston street as well as the tourist sites such as the Freedom Trail with its Revolutionary War history. And to top it all off this is the 120th anniversary of the running of the marathon which will be a celebration in and of itself.

What more could a runner ask for?

Upcoming Event Calendar

The following running events are suggested for club participation. Each month we'll have a "focus race" where we expect a group of club runners will compete. So, for instance, in May the focus race is the Cinco de Mayo 5k in Bear Creek Park. We've

also listed the Cow Patty Classic on the same day if you'd prefer a 10k or would like your race entry fee to sponsor the Tompkins HS FFA program. Either way, you can kick-back and chill with your club peeps at the No Label Brewery later in the day at our May club social outing. In June, the focus race is the 1st Street 5K which starts and finishes at the brewery.

April 24th - Run for Wellness 5K, Freedom Park (this chip-timed race is free!)

April 30th - Big Little JC 5K and 10K at Lone Star College benefits families having children with severe disabilities.

May 7th - Cinco de Mayo 5K at Bear Creek Park benefits Tornados scholarship fund.

May 7th - Cow Patty Classic Run 5K and 10K at Tompkins HS benefits the Tompkins FFA Booster Club

May 7th - No Label Brewery Outing 11:45am - 3:00pm

May 21st - Beach to Bay Marathon Relay in Corpus Christi

May 25th - "Brews and Shoes" - Exclusive social event for KARC members - Pizza, Beer and a 20% discount at Luke's Locker (7pm)

June 18th - No Label Brewing 1st Street 5K at the Brewery in Katy