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THE VULCAN RUNNER

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— *By Ed Hardee, Amelia Island Runners*
(<http://www.running.net>)

Life has its little ups and downs, the noted philosopher Jerry Lee Lewis once intoned. When you're tallying things on the positive side of life's ledger, high on the list should be: running buddies.

Unless you really enjoy the loneliness of the long distance runner, you probably know what a blessing running buddies can be. The best of them will gently nudge you out the door (figuratively, at least) when you'd just as soon

stay in bed, keep you smiling as the miles roll by, lift you up when you're feeling good, and more importantly, when you're not. I've been blessed to have many truly wonderful running buddies, most of whom are Amelia Island Runners. But the one who's on my mind today is Sara.

I met her a dozen years ago. From that first moment I knew she was a runner, through and through.

Thin and muscled and bursting with energy, she had a runner's body, mind and spirit. It was a foolish conceit to think I could train with her, or even keep up with her. But

A MAN AND HIS DOG <Continued on Page 1>

DO THIS

Hip Flexor muscles originate in your low back (lumbar spine) and inside your hip bone (iliac fossa). They connect on the inside, top part of your leg (lesser trochanter). You use them to pull your leg up and forward with each step in running. They also contract when you are pushing off to counterbalance forward momentum provided by your glutes.

If you average 1600 steps per mile, that's 24,000 hip flexor contractions during a Saturday morning 15-mile run.

TO STRETCH THESE MUSCLES:

Stand in a lunge stance. Step back with the leg you want to stretch. Bend your forward leg without letting your knee go over your toes. Perform a posterior pelvic tilt, pulling your abdominal muscles up and in. Squeeze the glute muscle on the side you are stretching. Increase the intensity of this stretch by reaching overhead on the side you are stretching.



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it didn't matter, because she also possessed the heart of a running buddy. The "buddy" part came first; running was a close second.

Thus it was that she'd rouse me up each morning – once she'd determined I was already awake – and not-so-gently pull me out the door and down the walk to greet the dawn with a workout. It's no wonder she was breathtakingly fast, because she was into intervals. A burst of speed, then a pause to sniff out some interesting bit of flora or fauna, or maybe even take a pee (we runners are an indelicate breed). And then, back to the run as I tried my best to keep up, tethered to her by a leash and the bonds of affection. She ran me ragged, I slowed her down, but in the spirit of running-buddyness, neither of us complained.

And then there was the race, with Sara as my partner.

It was the Jacksonville Humane Society's 2002 Beaches Dog Run. Fitting, since Jax Humane was where Sara and I got together. The setting was a fine late-September morning on Jacksonville Beach.

Hard as it is to believe, I was capable of 7-minute miles back then, and was very much into racing for age-group awards. But on this day, Team Hardee straggled in at 33:08, my slowest 5K ever. Up to that point, anyway.

And yet my "worst" 5K time was also the time of my life. Sara, capable of being so fast, had freed me from the notion that fast is all that matters. Not when there are a hundred kindred spirits to meet and greet, a beautiful blue sea to splash through, glorious breezes alive with the scents of people and poodles and Plott hounds. Why run the tangents when a zig-zag route is so much more interesting? Sometimes it's better to stop and smell the roses, perhaps lovingly fertilized with a smidgen of dog poop. Which we'd pick up, by the way.

The memory of that race means more to me than any age-group award ever could have.

We had countless adventures on the run, and met scores of friends both human and canine. We even had a brush with Hollywood once. Edie Falco had been filming Sunshine State two houses down, and a crewman knocked on my door to ask if she could use my bathroom mirror for a quick makeup check. He left, she arrived, and suffice it to say that when she did, there was no question which occupant of my house had movie-star

A MAN AND HIS DOG <Continued on Page 3>

A MAN AND HIS DOG

<Continued from Page 1>

looks.

But she saw the beauty in Sara, and proclaimed her “a sweetheart.” And upon leaving, the Emmy-Award-winning actress leaned over and planted a kiss right on her mouth. Ever-unpretentious, Sara wasn’t star-struck, just happy with the attention. Although she didn’t wash her face for days.

The years roll by, faster it seems as we grow older, and in dog years, much faster still. The Beaches Dog Run ran its course. Sunshine State came and went. My running companion was slowed by arthritis, but kept our morning routine, just not necessarily at sunrise anymore. I don’t think it’s coincidental that as her steps began to slow, mine did too.

Then one day she chose a neighborhood walk over a sprint along the shore, which wasn’t like her. The first cancer diagnosis came some time later. Fortunately she had wonderful care from a veterinarian she had quickly come to love, Dr. Jennifer Ferrin of the Fernandina Beach Animal Clinic. A runner herself, Dr. Ferrin helped Sara keep going longer than I had dared hope.

Even as she accumulated dozens of lumps, bumps and tumors, including a huge, inoperable one on her side, Sara would take me for daily walks. Every so often she’d feel up for a run, or a trot at least. One morning a couple of years ago, she wanted to take off – and finding a deserted spot, I let her go. For maybe five minutes, it was like she was magically transported back to her youth, bounding along, barking, grinning, racing the wind. Running with gleeful abandon, for the sheer joy of it.

That night she could hardly walk. As I parceled out extra pain meds, I wondered if I’d done the right thing by letting her grab for those fleeting minutes of ecstasy.

Absolutely, I decided. She’s a runner.

In the last few weeks, I knew again that something was wrong as Sara’s walks grew shorter and more labored. The last few days I truly think she was only going out at all because she knew I wanted to. A true running buddy to the



Sara and Ed Hardee, during a Christmas run.

end, she didn’t want to let me down. But she was sick, and very tired, and it was time, one final time, to let her go.

The following Saturday, a 5K dog run for the Jacksonville Humane Society returned to Jax Beach. It was the Chariots of Fur, about the most perfect name I can think of for a dog run. And the thought of it brought me full circle, even amid the sadness of losing my Sara.

We were running buddies. And she will live in my mind’s eye exactly as you see here, happy, eager, fast and strong, leading her friend to another run for the sheer joy of it, toward the light of a promising new day. •

Ed Hardee is newsletter editor and member of Amelia Island Runners in Florida and has been named as the winner of the RRCA’s “Club Writer of the Year” award. This story was published in the club’s newsletter and is an excellent example of why Hardee was selected for the RRCA honor. Ed Hardee is also a volunteer at the Nassau Humane Society in Fernandina Beach. If you’ve been thinking of adopting a dog, please visit a humane society or animal shelter in your area, or check out Petfinder.com. There are thousands of wonderful rescue dogs in need of a good home, and ready to be your best friend — and running buddy — for life.

Interested in advertising in this club newsletter?

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BTC Mission Statement

The primary purpose of the Birmingham Track Club (BTC) shall be the education and training of individuals in and around the community of Birmingham, AL, as to the benefits of jogging, running, and walking for fitness, health and recreation.

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Race Results Find the latest and most complete local race results at the following:
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ATTENTION BTC MEMBERS!

'Vulcan Runner' is available MONTHLY in color!!

PRINTED newsletters are mailed out QUARTERLY only. Please send your CURRENT EMAIL ADDRESS, along with your name/contact info. to Judy Loo, Membership Chair, at btcmembership@gmail.com so that you can receive (via email) the monthly **password** in order to download the newsletter (.pdf format) from the below webpage link (including past issues which require NO password):

<http://BirminghamTrackClub.com>



April BTC President's Message

— Jennifer Andress

My family and I recently returned from our first trip to Walt Disney World in Orlando. We planned our trip around a meeting my husband was attending. As it so happened, the dates of our trip also fell on the date of the Disney Princess Half-Marathon, so I signed up. Hey, I could get my long run and speed work in and get a medal for it as well! Win-win. On race day, I lined up with almost 20,000 other runners, mostly women and almost all in tiaras or tutus. It was adorable, and Disney put on a heck of a race. I highly recommend it for anyone considering adding this to her (or his) race schedule.

I tell you this story for a few reasons. One, was the dichotomy of running a half-marathon after walking through all four Disney parks in the days leading up to the race, and being struck by how many people were on motorized scooters. The vast majority were morbidly obese. It is striking to see the toll that a lack of exercise and a poor diet has taken on our country. The numbers don't lie, and when you see it all at once in a sea of humanity and scooters, it becomes clear. We have got to get moving as a nation. It is a battle for our health and our quality of life.

The volunteers at the Disney race were some of the nicest I have ever

met. When I picked up my bag after the race, a sweet woman said to me, "Congratulations. I wish I could do that, but I never would be able to." And I told her, "You could, you know, you really could! You just start off slowly, and smartly, and work your way to your goal!" (I had Danny and Micki Haralson on my brain as I said these words to her).

That day at the race I had spent some time with two new friends from Homewood, where I live. They were both fairly new to running, and were running the race with their daughters. They all finished strongly, and the girls, high school-aged, completed their first half-marathon! I thought of my sons, age 7 and 8, who run with my husband and me. My seven-year-old will do a one mile fun run, but my eight-year-old is like his mom: he loves long distances, has participated in many 5km's and is always concerned with how he places in his age group.

I think it is vital to share our love of running with the kids in our lives. How many people look at you like you have two heads when you mention you need go for a run? My wish is that as routine as our running is to us, it would be to the majority as well. No one would ever say to you "I wish I could do that, but I would never be able to". Think about

how much pleasure running brings to our lives. I wish I could tell everyone I know how great it feels, and how good it is for you! If we introduce running to kids, then perhaps exercise won't be so foreign to them as adults, and they will benefit from the healthy lifestyle that comes as a result of all of those miles.

There is a national program that opened a local chapter last fall, Girls on the Run, that aims to add running to the lives of girls in the 3rd-5th grade. The GOTR curriculum "combines training for a 5km run with lessons that inspire them to recognize and honor their individual strengths and talents and to celebrate their inner selves". The GOTR coaches work with the girls on life skills and coping mechanisms, as they introduce them to running. Last fall Birmingham had 3 teams of girls; this spring there are 8, and the GOTR booth at the Mercedes expo drew interest from other cities and counties as well. The spring season will conclude in downtown Birmingham with a 5km on Saturday, May 12 (www.girlsontherunbham.org/girlson-the-run-5k/). I plan on running with my boys, and celebrating the love and sport of running with these girls, and the rest of our community! •

jenandress99@gmail.com

ONLINE CALENDAR

Upcoming BTC Races/Events

<http://BirminghamTrackClub.com/calendar.php>

Alabama Running Calendar

<http://Running.net/Alabama-Running-Calendar>

Miles reported through March 15th, 2012**1,200 Mile Club**

BTC MEMBER NAME	TOTAL	FEB '12	JAN '12	BTC MEMBER NAME	TOTAL	FEB '12	JAN '12
Adamy, Mary	230.6	100.5	130.1	Jenkins, Mike	163	102	61
Affuso, Olivia	141	60	81	Jones, Delpha	223.94	114.39	109.55
Allen, Darnell	216.4	107	109.4	Jones, Latoria	193	97	96
Andress, Jennifer	359.5	175.5	184	Kahn, David	173.06	121.58	51.48
Armstrong, Tommy	115.2	47.1	68.1	Kirkwood, Teresa	228	138	90
Atkins, Brian	191.2	104.2	87	Langston, Richard	264.78	126.45	138.33
Ballard, Bill	216.1	99.5	116.6	Kuhn, Jimmy	364	176	188
Barry, David	306.6	145	161.6	Lindsey, Jonathan	195.31	94.5	100.81
Baskerville, Jennifer	274.9	131.1	143.8	Longshore, Les	11	8	3
Benner, Kimberley	88.4	49.9	38.5	Loo, Judy	212	106.2	105.8
Benson, Wayne	205	105	100	Losole, Liz	218	109	109
Bettis, Natasha	88	32	56	Lowell, Allison	253.38	115.06	138.32
Bonatz, Ekkehard	607	279	328	Lupinacci, Tim	180.2	62.3	117.9
Booher, Lisa	277.59	147.73	129.86	Lyle, Randy	415.7	199.3	216.4
Bradshaw-Whittemore, Al	151.7	51.5	100.2	McCalley, Charles	204.9	93.6	111.3
Brown, Charlie	192.92	92.48	100.44	Meadows, Bryan	211.09	101.41	109.68
Bryant, David	308	136	172	Milam, Heather	347.83	178.92	168.91
Bullock, Sharon	243.6	127.1	116.5	Morgan, Danielle	260.1	135.1	125
Burnette, Jack	219.8	91.2	128.6	Morgan, Phil	263.1	117.1	146
Caldwell, Greg	261.8	101.2	160.6	Morrow, Alex	307.9	112.72	195.18
Chandler, Teresa	198	94	104	Muck, Randall	65.2		65.2
Clay, Brad	500	298	202	Myers, Bill	302	140	162
Crain, Teresa	101.5		101.5	Nealon, Tonya	192.21	57.75	134.46
Crawford, Jennifer	254	136	118	Northern, Kristie	52.2	13.1	39.1
Creed, Brad	160.9	60.8	100.1	Oehrlein, Kimberley	186.2	82.4	103.8
Davis, Wayne	262	116	146	Parr, Michele	165	84	81
DiMicco, Al	225.6	90	135.6	Pasqualini, Ellie	294	142	152
Dodson, Brooke	273	120	153	Pasqualini, Greg	173	89	84
Dortch, Cherie	230.43	96.43	134	Patterson, Cathy	243.5	111	132.5
Dunham, Kelly	201	88.7	112.3	Pearce, Julie	90.21		90.21
Dunn, Wade	366.8	188.8	178	Perry, Jeff	415.3	200.1	215.2
Engels, John	216.4	106.2	110.2	Pezzillo, Katie	22	18	4
Evans, Bob	209	95	114	Phillips, David	171	70	101
Farrell, Meredith	97		97	Phillips, Stefanie	371	166	205
Fite, Rebecca	153.28			Porter, Chilton	109	49	60
Ford, Joe	245	111	134	Randall, Lisa	315.38	162.73	152.65
Franklin, Shane	179.1			Reisinger, Kaitlin	165	89	76
Frederick, Winston	228	114	114	Richey, Jim	131.4	80.6	50.8
Ganus, Jack	251	119	132	Roberts, Tim	188		188
Gann, Michael	245	137	108	Rollins, Stephanie	65		65
Gast, Laura	139.3	38.7	100.6	Ross, Nate	317.1	144.2	172.9
Gillis, Sam	230	120	110	Rushing, Lance	128.51	65.76	62.75
Glaub, Chris	313	142	171	Russell, Tom	224.12	104.27	119.85
Goode, Johnny	347	181	166	Rutherford, Keith	222	100	122
Goolsby, John	162.36	84.05	78.31	Sample, Holly	366	212	154
Gordon, Stacey	102		102	Schedler, Amanda	230.47	111.32	119.15
Greenwald, Bill	112	68	44	Shinn, Ron	46.07	27.11	18.96
Grossmann, Christopher	219.1	128.2	90.9	Silwal, Suman	326.3	116.3	210
Hales, Susan	200	112	88	Skjellum, Jennifer	234.65	113.3	121.35
Hallmark, Daryl	202.5	96.4	106.1	Smith, Jerry	231	106	125
Haralson, Danny	225	108	117	South, Christopher	51.12	32.88	18.24
Haralson, Micki	212	101.5	110.5	Stearns, David	195	111	84
Hargrave, Alan	159	84	75	Stewart, Amy	100		100
Harris, Vickie	135	78	57	Stockton, Rick	114.09		114.09
Harrison, Lisa			109	Stroud, Vanessa	188.7	79.2	109.5
Hathorne, Chad	217.87	93.74	124.13	Thursby, Vann	144.05		144.05
Henry, David	187.9	62.4	125.5	Turner, Kile	122.71		122.71
Hickerson, Patrick, 236	100	136		Turner, Sara	173	105	68
Hill, Jim	171	97	74	Washburn, Kevin	353.04	159	194.04
Hiller, Russ	237.26	104.92	132.34	Weisberg, Scott	357	155	202
Hinton, Gretchen	170.1	82.6	87.5	Whatley, Prince	388.9	162.1	226.8
Hopper, Erica	549.5	273.5	276	Whitford, Ray	348	192.7	155.3
Hulsey, Donnette	125.26	64	61.26	Woody, Bill	250	89	161
Ingram, Joseph	196	70	126	Wu, Xing	235.75	103.15	132.6
Ingram, Kimberly	101		101	Yancey, Lisa	158.3	93	65.3
Izard, Melody	200.73	108.5	92.23	Zehnder, Justin	315	133	182

Email monthly mileage, errors, omissions or questions to: 1200@BirminghamTrackClub.com

MINDSET MATTERS

— Submitted by Kevin D. Washburn, Ed.D.

As runners, we tend to check our state from the neck down. Heart rate? Monitored. Quads and hammies? Feeling good. Pace? On target. Gait? As close to Ryan Hall's as it can be. However, improving our performances requires action further north, in our heads—in what psychologists call “mindset.” The message from researchers seems simple: We learn, grow, or improve when we focus on effort—results rather than on “natural” ability.

I'm not suggesting that genetics does not play any role in how we run, but reality is much more complicated than “natural ability,” and that works to our advantage. We may not be chasing world records, but we do chase PR's, or age group awards, or the completion of new distances, or.... For these pursuits your mind is as important as your training. In fact, your mindset influences your training.

Research suggests that we learn optimally when we 1) are willing to attend to our mistakes, 2) believe that effort results in learning and improvement, and 3) focus on giving that effort.

I recently ran a new marathon. Because I had run the host city's streets many times in the last few years, I thought all the hype about hills was overblown. Yes, some streets had slight inclines, but hills? The warn-

ings seemed unwarranted. I had big goals going into the race. I was chasing a new PR, and felt confident that I could cross the finish line faster than I had before. I prepared thoroughly. My coach and I reviewed the course elevation information, plotted a strategy, and I toed the start line more ready than I'd felt for any other race. My mantra for this race was, “Give the effort.”

It would be so convincing for this to end on a victorious note—for me to say that I focused on the effort and crossed the line in a blaze of glory. Alas, that is not how the race played out. The course ran through parts of the city I had not run—much hillier parts—and the hills killed me. I began to see the PR slip away, despite my effort. As I scanned my state from the neck down (Heart rate? Who knows. Quads and hammies? All screaming. Pace? Turtle. Gait? Ugly, no doubt), I realized finishing would probably be my only accomplishment.

How can I learn from this experience and improve my running? How can we apply a beneficial mindset to our setbacks?

1. Examine the setback, searching for causes, not blame.

That does not mean fixating on failure and repeating, “Woe am I. I failed.” It means looking at the result and searching for causes. I could whine about the hills, curse the race director, and find excuses for my less-than-expected

performance. None of those actions will make me better the next time I toe the start line. The true cause was my preparation. I erred by running all my long runs on relatively flat routes. I was not accustomed to hitting hills late in a run, nor to the number of hills I had to climb in the race. Those two runners who passed me, still running between miles 23 and 25, probably weren't born with special hill-conquering DNA. They had probably trained differently and prepared for hills late in the distance. That is a change I, too, can make, and focusing my efforts on those changes will improve my performance. Excuses do nothing to make us better.

2. Trust your effort. I'm not suggesting we lose touch with reality. I will not outpace Meb Keflezighi no matter how hard I work at getting faster. But I can, by applying myself, discover and achieve my potential at this stage in life. I can run hills (the infamous “Y-hill” in Mountain Brook knows my name), and I can focus on training for hills late in a long run. Individuals who believe strongly in “natural ability” tend to avoid challenge and give up faster than less capable individuals who work hard and persevere. Those who redirect their efforts and apply themselves achieve more even when they possess less “natural ability.”

3. Give the effort. Plan for success and faithfully work that plan. The best athletes are those who train consistently. Training wisely to minimize injury risk will enable you to give the consistent effort you need to succeed.

Seeing my recent marathon “failure” this way enables me to learn, to make changes that will ultimately make me a better, stronger runner.

Next time you go through your neck-down scan, give your head a thought. What are you thinking, right now, about effort and success? If the answer is anything other than effort enables success, adjust your thinking.

And for those who need a victorious ending to make these points credible, I did set a new PR in that hilly marathon. I PR-ed by one second. •

Kevin D. Washburn is a runner and RRCA-certified coach who specializes in cognition and learning. He lives and works in Pelham, AL.

SPIRIT SCAMPER SET FOR MAY 4TH

Homewood City Schools' will host the second annual Spirit Scamper 5K, 10K, and One Mile Fun Run at Homewood High School on May 5 at 7:30 a.m.

The new and improved Spirit Scamper course will feature more entertainment as well as a flat terrain. Participants will also get to jam across the finish line as the D. B. Cooper Project performs the finish line festival rock show.

The proceeds from this event will go to support the HHS award winning choir program.

Packet pickup and the Fitness Fair will be May 4 from 6 to 8 p.m. at HHS. The Fitness Fair will feature local businesses in the fitness industry, demonstrations from HCS Physical Education Programs, and The Movement.

The Spirit Scamper will kick-off "We Love Homewood Day" which will be located at Homewood Central Park from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Movement is designed to change the way students and staff members think about health and wellness. Its purpose is to create a culture change in an effort to better address the challenges of obesity, hypertension, high cholesterol, stress, cardiovascular disease, and other related illnesses.

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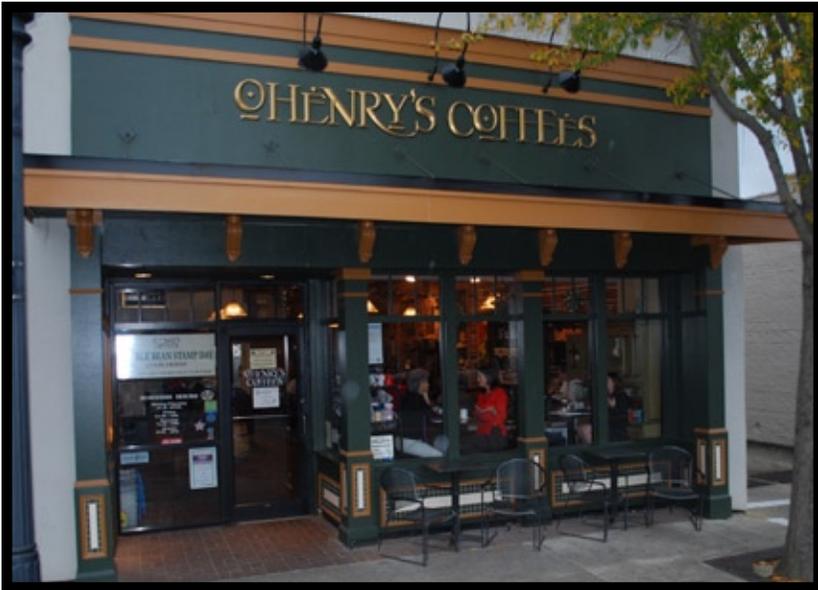
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MEET US FOR COFFEE!!



We know you wouldn't get out of bed on Saturday morning for just a cup of coffee, so we're going to go for a little run too! Plan on joining the BTC and Birmingham's many local running groups on **Saturday, April 28th, 2012** for a 5, 10, or 15-mile long run with an O'Henry's social afterwards. If you have never been to a group run before, now is the time meet people your pace and make new friends! Pace Leaders, water stops and directions will be provided. Oh, and the coffee... We'll have a big pot of coffee and smiling BTC officers waiting for you when you get back.

Look for updates on the BTC Web Site. If you have any questions about this run or other group runs in the community, contact the BTC Running Coordinator Natalie at NatalieZL@hotmail.com

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DIRTY RUNNING

**NEW
MONTHLY
COLUMN!**

— By Alex Morrow

For those of you that love trail running, you'll love this news! Red Mountain Park officially opened more than 10 miles of trails to the public! You and your family now have access to 10 miles of amazing scenery and it is open 7 days a week from dawn to dusk. In the interest of full disclosure, I sit on one of the Red Mountain Park boards, but even if I did not, I would be raving about this gem located right here in Birmingham.

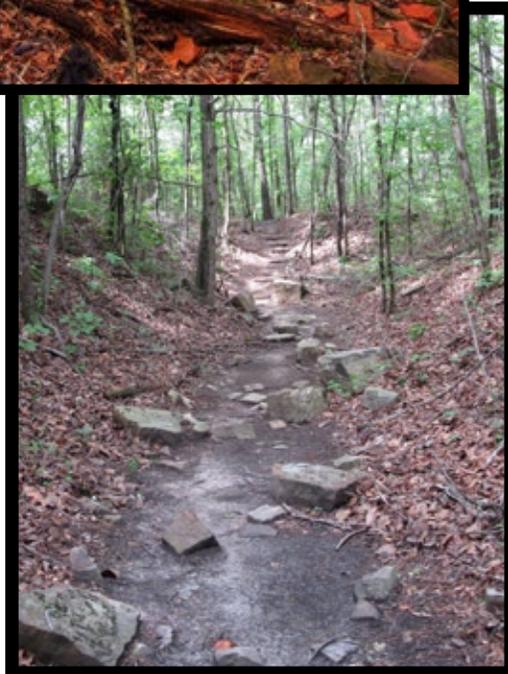
The BTC held its annual Resolution Run at the park in January. 300 runners were able to experience the wonders of Red Mountain Park firsthand, but for those of you not familiar with the park, a little history is in order. As most locals are aware, Birmingham and the surrounding areas were once thriving mining communities. In fact, when you look at some of the old maps of Red Mountain you would be amazed at the number of mines which crisscross underneath the surface. Red Mountain Park was created to preserve much of that history and to establish one of the largest urban parks in America. Upon completion, all of you will have access to a park which is 40% larger than Central Park in New York City!

The park trails offer a little bit of everything for the runner. There are some extremely technical singletracks winding their way up and down the mountain which are sure to get your heart pumping! There are also many wide open dirt roads with lengthy flat stretches for a leisurely hike or run. One of the highlights of running these trails are the occasional surprises you happen upon. Whether it is the newest mine opening which the archeology team of Red Mountain Park is uncovering; a recovered railway line which transported the iron ore dug out of the shafts; or running by the hoist house buildings which housed immense cable systems, you can almost hear the clatter of the machines and the voices of the miners from a bygone era working away.



The trails are clearly marked and there are now kiosks which display maps of the entire trail system. What surprises most people is that the park is within sight of downtown Birmingham! In fact there are several overlooks which will give the trail runner reason to pause and soak in the sights.

If you would like to take advantage of these new trails, visit www.friendsofredmountainpark.org for more information. There you will find the latest news, maps and directions to the park. Here's hoping your next run is a dirty one! •





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Find the BTC on
Facebook

Facebook.com/BirminghamTrackClub

BTC Mini-Meets have been SUSPENDED

Due to the absence of a venue/location at which to conduct the meets, until further notice the monthly BTC Mini-Meets have been suspended.

Watch *"The Vulcan Runner"* newsletter for updates.

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HERG RUNS PAST 100 MEMBERS

— Natalie Ferguson

Imagine staying in bed on Saturday morning; no alarm, no snooze button. I'm talking about really staying in bed. Could you sleep later than the sun, open your eyes but stay under the covers, linger and read a book or maybe even miss breakfast?

Probably not, and it's okay because you're a runner.

Donnette' Hammac Hulsey is a runner too. She started running in 2010. At two different times, she tried that sleeping in thing, but it didn't seem to work for her. After completing her first half marathon in November of that year, she was hooked. Unfortunately, when her running partner got hurt, she took an involuntary break too.

"I found myself sleeping in and not going out to run," she says of when she no longer had a running partner.

Not being satisfied with sleeping in, she joined Team in Training. She loved the organization and loved socializing with other runners, but that ended too. Her next option was to drive all the way to Homewood – that's 15 miles – to meet people she didn't know and run on streets she was not familiar with. Hulsey was a little concerned about getting left behind, so she tried out those lazy Saturday mornings once again. Then, with support from her husband she started posing on message boards, looking for running partners.

It didn't take long to find other folks who didn't want to make the 15-mile drive. Stefanie Phillips and her husband David contacted Hulsey first. They offered to meet at the local coffee shop for a run and hung out after.

Thus, began the Saturday morning tradition of HERG.



Members of the HERG after completing the MERCEDES MARATHON.

Helena Endurance Running Group now has over 100 members. Amongst those members are a few people with nutrition, personal training and coaching backgrounds. For a small town, it's nice to have access to that kind of expertise when a running partner needs advice about strengthening or training plans.

On most Saturdays, the group can be found at La Reunion Coffee shop in downtown Helena. If not, then they are probably on a road trip somewhere, like the recent one they took to the Mercedes Marathon where members David Phillips, Gretchen Hinton and Brooke Dodson completed their first full marathon. You might also find some of group members at the upcoming Country Music Marathon in Nashville.

Stefanie Phillips is a personal trainer who used to drive to Home-

wood to run with Meredith's group. She was excited when her husband found the facebook page and answered right away. When they moved to Helena, she felt out of place everywhere, including the grocery store. At the time she saw Hulsey's facebook post, she hadn't really met anyone and didn't feel like she fit in anywhere. With HERG, she feels like she belongs to a community and does everything she can to help the group grow.

Right now, group runs are offered on Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings with regular facebook posts looking for running partners on other days.

HERG is an open group. They can be found at <http://www.facebook.com/groups/hergs> and you can join the page, but they prefer you show up for a run with them first. •

nataliezl@hotmail.com

22nd Annual

The Ellis Porch - State Farm Statue to Statue 15K Run

BTC Managed, RRCA Sanctioned, USATF 15K Certified Course

Saturday, April 21, 2012 at 8:00 am

Transportation

Transportation will be provided from the parking lot of Zona Rosa Restaurant (near Miss Liberty 3732 River Run Drive, Birmingham, AL 35243) to Vulcan Park for the start of the race. Please be there early (FIRST BUS WILL LEAVE AT 6:30 am. LAST BUS LEAVES PROMPTLY AT 7:30 am. Please do NOT wait for the last bus. If it's full, you WILL BE responsible for your own transportation). Baggage transportation is provided to the finish area.

NOTE: THERE WILL NOT BE ANY TRANSPORTATION BACK TO VULCAN PARK AFTER THE RACE.

Registration

For entries received by 3/31/12 - \$25.00 All entries day of race and those received after 3/31/12 - \$35.00 On-line Registration: raceit.com
(There will be no refunds)

Race Day Registration will be at the River Run parking lot starting at 6:15 a.m.

Post-Race Party/Awards

Refreshments//Food! Awards will be presented at approximately 10:30 a.m. in the River Run parking lot. Awards and shirts will NOT be mailed.

RACE PACKET PICKUP AT HOMEWOOD TRAK SHAK on Friday, April 20, 2012 from 10 a.m. to closing.

For more information: email btcmembership@gmail.com
Also, check the web site for more information
www.birminghamtrackclub.com

Statue to Statue 15K RUN ENTRY FORM

Make check payable to: BTC Statue to Statue Run

Mail Entry to: Statue to Statue 15K Run, 317 Broadway St, Birmingham, AL 35209 or drop off entry form at the Trak Shak (Homewood store)

Print Last Name: _____ Print First Name: _____

Address: _____ Zip: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Sex: _____ D.O.B. _____ Age: _____ T-Shirt: _____ Phone: _____

Email address: _____

RELEASE

In consideration of the acceptance of this registration entry, I, the undersigned, assume full responsibility for any injury or accident which may occur during my participation in this race or while I am on the premises of this event, and I hereby release and hold harmless the Birmingham Track Club or any sponsors, promoters, persons, or entities associated with this event from any and all injury or damage, whether it be caused by negligence of the sponsors or promoters or other persons or entities associated with the event or their agents, employees or otherwise. Further, I hereby grant full permission to any and all of the foregoing to use any photograph, videotape, motion pictures, recordings, or any other records of this event for any legitimate purpose.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

The View from the BACK OF THE PACK

— By Michele Parr

So I talked my colleagues into signing up for Scale Back Alabama this year. In fact, we have two teams, no small feat for a staff as small as ours. Including the principal and the administrative assistant, there are twelve of us. With two teams that means 2/3 of our staff is participating.

I'm a big fan of this program, having dropped 13 pounds as part of it a couple of years ago, so I sold this hard to get a team in place. With my competitive nature, this program was made for me. Well, you can imagine how embarrassing it was becoming when week after week the number on the scale just wasn't moving while my teammates each told me they had already surpassed the 10 pound goal of the program. I had to do something.

It all goes back to that old saying: If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always had. I had to change something if I wanted to achieve different results. For me that meant pre-packaged food so I know how many calories I'm consuming. It meant putting my sugar habit on hold, at least on weekdays. It meant doing more than just talking about getting back to that fourth day of running every week. Once I made those changes, the pounds began to drop off. I'm not there yet, but I'm on the way.

Have you figured out yet that this isn't a column about weight loss? We all want things. I see that up close and personal day in and day out with the middle school students I



Michele Parr

try to teach. They want what they want when they want it, and they sure don't want to work for it. Their instant gratification mindset frustrates me on a daily basis, but it also pushes me toward a bit of personal reflection.

I'm a lazy runner. That seems like a bit of a contradiction, especially to non-runners, but it's true. My non-running friends see me "racing" year after year and think I really love running. I love being able to run. I love having run. I don't much love the actual act of running 99% of the time. Running is hard. Yes, I know. If it was easy, everyone would do it.

All of this leads me to the question of what I want as far as running is concerned? I'd really like at least one sub-30 5K before I toddle off to the home. I'd really like to break 2:30 in a half marathon. I'd like to get back to running at least 1200 miles every year. Just like removing myself from the Clydesdale racing division, achieving these things won't happen without some changes to what I'm doing.

I can keep slogging along at my nice comfortable pace, walking the uphill and coasting the downhill, but that's not going to get what I really want. Since the only way to run faster is to run faster, I'm going to have to suck it up and RUN. It's one thing to know that. It's quite another to actually do it. We'll see if that happens. •

micheleparr@mindspring.com

GET INVOLVED... CONTRIBUTE TO THE VULCAN RUNNER

Got a running story, running advice or running photos you'd like to share?

Send an email to: btcpresident07@gmail.com

RUNNING TIDBITS

— Compiled by Randy Lyle

INTERESTING TIDBIT

Running in hot weather

Of all the adversities runners face, heat is probably the number one offender. This is because it can bring on two conditions that will adversely affect your performance: Overheating and Dehydration. Living in Alabama, we all know how difficult it can be to run in the summer months. The recent weather is just a small reminder of what we have to look forward to in the coming months. The following tips will help you run safely in hot weather:

1. Acclimatize. It takes time for your body to adjust to hot and/or humid weather. The American Running and Fitness Association recommends that you cut your intensity by 65 to 75 percent on your first run in the heat. Afterwards, slowly build back to your previous level over the next 10 days.

2. Check the index. It's a good idea to check the air quality index and heat index before heading out on your run. If the air quality index is orange, you may not want to run if you are sensitive to air pollution or have respiratory issues. It is not suitable for anyone to run if the index is at code red. The heat index tells you what the temperature feels like when combining the air temperature with the relative humidity. The higher the index, the more you need to adjust your effort.

3. Hydrate! Hydrate! Hydrate! Most runners will hydrate after their run and some consume water or sports drink during their run, but it is more important to be well-hydrated before you run. As a rule of thumb, drinking 16 ounces of water two hours before your run will ensure good hydration levels and give the water time to pass through your system so you do not have to make any pit stops during the run. Hydrating during your run depends on the temperature and the length of your run. A run of four miles or less probably will not require hydration but anything longer probably does, especially when it is hot and humid. Do not wait until you feel thirsty to drink because that means your body is already low on fluids. After your run, you need to replenish the water you lost.

4. Know the warning signs. Dehydration occurs when your body loses too much fluid. Not drinking enough can cause muscle cramps among other things. When you are dehydrated, you may feel faint, experience nausea and/or vomiting, have heart palpitations, and/or experience lightheadedness. Runners also need to be aware of signs of severe dehydration such as heat exhaustion and heatstroke, not only for themselves, but when they are with fellow runners. Cooling off is the main treatment for heat exhaustion but if you suspect heatstroke, call 9-1-1 immediately.

5. Buddy up. Be sure to run with someone in severe heat so that you can keep tabs on one another. Sometimes it is hard to tell if you are starting to suffer the effects of the heat, but your buddy may be able to spot the signs before it is too late.

6. Run early. If possible, run in the morning because the hottest part of the day is typically around 5pm. If you cannot run until after work, wait until later in the evening.

7. Go technical. Wearing light-colored shirts and shorts made of wicking fabrics will help keep you cool and allow moisture to evaporate more quickly. Staying dry will also prevent chafing.

8. Change your route. If your normal route is treeless, find one that provides more shade.

9. Lather it on. Be sure to wear sunscreen. Research shows that runners have a higher rate of skin cancer. You should use a sports sunscreen that is waterproof with an SPF of 15 or higher. Also, it is advisable to wear sunglasses and a hat or visor.

10. Have a plan. Let your family and friends know your running route. If you are gone too long, they will know where to look for you. If you run on rural greenways or trails, it is a good idea to take your cell phone with you. Do not change your route at the last minute without telling someone. It is better to be safe than sorry.

Common sense is the key to avoiding problems. Keep these things in mind when running in the Alabama heat and humidity. They call it the Deep South for a reason!

SOURCE: <http://www.active.com/running/Articles/10-Tips-for-Hot-Summer-Runs.htm>

RUNNING QUOTES

"The marathon is a charismatic event. It has everything. It has drama. It has competition. It has camaraderie. It has heroism. Every jogger can't dream of being an Olympic champion, but he can dream of finishing a marathon."

— **Fred Lebow** (New York City Marathon co-founder)

"If you feel bad at 10 miles, you're in trouble. If you feel bad at 20 miles, you're normal. If you don't feel bad at 26 miles, you're abnormal."

— **Rob de Castella** (winner 1983 World Marathon Championships)

"You should run your first marathon for the right reasons, because you'll never be the same person again. You must want to do it, not do it because your boss did it or your spouse did it."

— **Bill Wenmark** (running coach)

"A marathoner is a marathoner regardless of time. Virtually everyone who tries the marathon has put in training over months, and it is that exercise and that commitment, physical and mental, that gives meaning to the medal, not just the day's effort, be it fast or slow. It's all in conquering the challenge."

— **Mary R. Wittenberg** (president, New York Road Runners Club)

"No doubt a brain and some shoes are essential for marathon success, although if it comes down to a choice, pick the shoes. More people finish marathons with no brains than with no shoes." — **Don Kardong** (1976 Olympic marathoner and current Runner's World senior writer)

"There will be days you don't think you can run a marathon. There will be a lifetime of knowing you have."

— **Unknown**

Birmingham Track Club

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



www.BirminghamTrackClub.com
www.Facebook.com/BirminghamTrackClub

We would like to take this opportunity to invite you to be a member of the Birmingham Track Club or to renew your existing membership. The Club sponsors or sanctions many local races and keeps members informed of upcoming races, training runs, results, socials, etc. through our monthly newsletter 'THE VULCAN RUNNER'. Additionally, BTC Members receive merchandise discounts at local merchants. It's a great way to meet other runners and stay informed of running events in the area. Again, thanks for your participation and we hope that you will join us as we promote individual and community fitness through running.

PLEASE check one:

New Member application **Renewal** **Change of Address**

Last Name _____ First Name _____ Middle Initial _____

Address (Street or P.O.) _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ Birth Date _____

Email Address (print clearly) _____ Male Female

Sponsored by (BTC member name) _____

Other family members to be included in membership:

_____ Male Female

Last Name First Name M.I. Birth Date

WAIVER: I know that running and volunteering to work in club races are potentially hazardous activities, and as a member I assume all risks involved. Therefore I hereby, for myself and anyone entitled to act on my behalf, do waive and release the Birmingham Track Club, Road runners Club of America, USA Track and Field, all sponsors and any others involved from any claims or liabilities arising out of my participation in these activities. I grant permission to all the foregoing to use any photographs, motion pictures, recordings, or any other records of such events for any legitimate purpose.

Signature (Parent's signature if under 18 years of age)

Date

YEARLY MEMBERSHIP (please circle one): \$25 (single) \$35 (family)

Send this signed application and check made payable to the BTC to the following address:

Birmingham Track Club
P.O. Box 530363 Birmingham, AL 35253

btcmembership@gmail.com

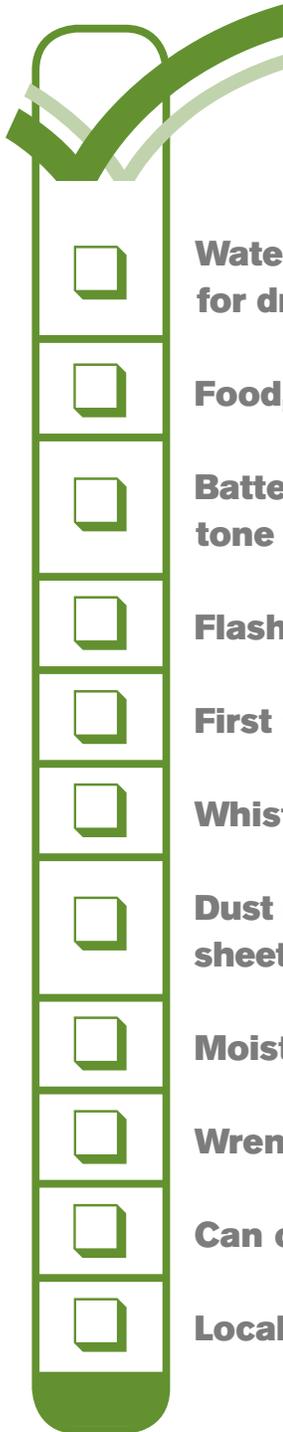
PREPARE. PLAN. STAY INFORMED.

Through its Ready Campaign, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security educates and empowers Americans to take some simple steps to prepare for and respond to potential emergencies, including natural disasters and terrorist attacks. Ready asks individuals to do three key things: **1) Get an emergency supply kit 2) Make a family emergency plan 3) Be informed about the different types of emergencies that could occur and their appropriate responses.**

All Americans should have some basic supplies on hand in order to survive for at least three days if an emergency occurs. Following is a listing of some basic items that every emergency supply kit should include. However, it is important that individuals review this list and consider where they live and the unique needs of their family in order to create an emergency supply kit that will meet these needs.

Individuals should also consider having at least two emergency supply kits, one full kit at home and smaller portable kits in their workplace, vehicle or other places they spend time.

Recommended Items to Include in a Basic Emergency Supply Kit:



- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation**
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food**
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both**
- Flashlight and extra batteries**
- First aid kit**
- Whistle to signal for help**
- Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place**
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation**
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities**
- Can opener for food (if kit contains canned food)**
- Local maps**

www.READY.gov



BTC MILEAGE LOG



	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	MONTH GOAL	TOTAL
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