



The Runaround

The Inside Loop

Inside this issue:

Inside Loop	1
Ann Singer -50 States Marathoner	2
Sheila Casey- Elite Runner	3
Active International Turkey Trot	4
Holiday Party	6
RRR Wins Volunteer Award	7
Chicago Marathon	8
Alumni Run	9
South Nyack Ten Miler	11

By JC Santa Teresa, December 2008

This year marks our 25th anniversary, and what a year it has been! In February, our club was honored with the Community Service Award by the Association for the Visually Impaired. While in November, we received the Outstanding Volunteer of the Year Award from the Rockland Development Council.

The success of our three earlier club races, George Wodicka Half and Hope 5K, Marissa Fund Run, and Women’s Distance Festival, continued to our two remaining races. Despite the current economic climate, The South Nyack 10 Miler had an increase in participation of over 10%. Congratulations to race directors Mike Angarola, Bernie Casserly, and Kathy Daly for ensuring a great race. The last club race of the year, Active International Turkey Trot 5 Miler, had an impressive turnout. Registration was two shy of 2000 runners, an increase of over 20% from last year. Runners from New Jersey to New Mexico, from the Carolinas to California, and even one from Ireland participated in this memorable event. Great job, Michael Greco!

To all those who volunteered – **Thank You!** Without your support, assistance and generosity, our races and other events would not have been run as smoothly or successfully. BTW – Bill Carpenter’s name was picked from a raffle at the last general meeting for volunteering for the South Nyack race. Bill, enjoy your Panera gift certificate!

Thanks to Bob Goldsmith and Enilda Indyk for getting the bus for the NYC Marathon and planning and organizing our holiday party. Congratulations to all fall marathon finishers. Several PR’ed and some qualified for Boston!

RRR’s very own Ann Singer completed her 50th state (Maui Marathon). One year, she ran a marathon in RI on Saturday, and then drove to CT to run another the next day! In one year, she completed 14 marathons! These accomplishments are a testament to her passion for running. (Complete article on page 2)

Several members who participated in the summer track workout improved their times thanks to our experienced coaches Jamie Kempton, Jesse Hackell, Steve Borton, Bill Fortune, and Bernie Casserly. I hope to see them back next year!

Adopt-a -Road organizers, John Melican and JoAnn Hodges, and their crew of volunteers did a superb job cleaning the outer loop during the year. Thanks, guys!

Mark your calendars – the inter club challenge will be on March 15, 2009. After seven years in Orange County, this event will finally be held in Rockland County. With the help of RRR member Tim Englert, we were able to narrow down our venue to the Rockland Lake (RL) Firehouse. If anyone is interested in volunteering, you can email me at president@rocklandroadrunners.org.



**JC Santa Teresa,
RRR President**



Rockland Road Runners promotes running and jogging in Rockland County. Membership is open to all. Yearly dues are \$25 (individual), \$15 (junior- under 18 and senior - over 64) and \$45 (family of two or more).

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The following stores offer members a 10% discount on running shoes and gear: The Running Company, NJ (various locations); Cleats & Sneaks, Nanuet. Orange County Sporting Goods in Middletown offers 20% off its list price on shoes. Gracie's Ravioli in Nyack offers a 10% discount to members and families.

On the Web

www.rocklandroadrunners.org

Weekly E-News:

www.rocklandroadrunners.org/RRRNews.html

Group Runs:

www.rocklandroadrunners.org/groupruns/workouts.htm

50 States Marathon Journey Ends in Hawaii for Team Singer

By Ann Singer

To say I was overanxious to reach the starting line of the Maui Marathon, September 14, 2008 would be the understatement of the year. John and I went to the Whaler's Village Shopping Center at 2:30 a.m. in Maui, Hawaii to catch the first 3:30 a.m. bus to the start of the Maui Marathon at the Queen Ka'ahumanu Center.

Fifteen long years ago I had convinced the director of the Atlantic City, New Jersey Marathon to let me leave one hour before the actual start to see if at age 50 I could finish a marathon, walking the 26.2 miles. In 1993 there were no marathon walkers and no early starts for races. Did I finish? Need you ask? This was the prelude to a wonderful journey of visiting states to do marathons – and John and I visiting Maui for the grand finale.

Fifteen years later I still have the same husband who has traveled with me to all the marathons, and I still wear the same 50 States Marathon running t-shirt for each marathon. This shirt is worn and tattered but I know it will survive the journey today. If I finish, the shirt will be replaced with a brand new "Certified 50 Stater" T-top by the 50 States Marathon Club

(50statesmarathonclub.com). The husband is a keeper and will not be replaced.

The question always asked at the beginning of the marathon to every wearer of the 50 States shirt from the runners standing around is, "Which state will this be today?"

"Today this is my 50th state," I say with tears in my eyes.

It is 5:30 a.m., the air is a bit cool and the only light comes from the torchbearers who will light tiki torches along the initial stretch of the course. We have received the Hawaiian blessing.

There have been no trade winds for days in Maui to keep the island cool. As the hours pass in this marathon, the temperature climbs steadily. Eighty-five degrees, then into the 90s. The sun is scorching and the high humidity leaves the air soaking wet. The majority of the Maui Marathon is along the Pacific Coast, Kuihelani Highway 30, which is paved today with hot black asphalt. There is absolutely no shade except inside one tunnel, which was steaming up from the ground below. At mile 13.1 I am way over my projected time. Everyone had told us to add one hour onto their expected time.

Many Japanese runners travel to do the Maui Marathon. As we pass these runners they turn slightly toward us and bow in silence. We share their honor just to keep moving on. At each first aid stop we are sprayed with sunscreen so our skin does not burn up. We are given bright orange sponges that have been dipped in cold ice buckets to cool our body's inner core all during the mileage.

Finally the finish line appears. There is none of the usual banter between John and me on this day. At the finish line



John and Ann Singer in Hawaii



The 50 States Tee Shirt

(Continued on page 6)

Still Learning, Casey Ascends Ranks Toward Marathoning Elite.

By Jamie Kempton

Who knows how low Sheila Casey can go? Still a relative novice in the marathon, she clocked an outstanding 2 hours 52 minutes 1 second in the 2008 New York City Marathon to place 34th out of 12,880 women. A Rockland Road Runners member since 2006, she hopes to continue improving and make a splash on the masters circuit when she turns 40 in May 2009.

"I plan on training a bit harder in 2009, adding a bit more mileage and working on my speed. I need to start to move out of my comfort zone," says Sheila, who lives just over the Rockland border in Park Ridge, N.J. "I've been achieving my goals so far. I think I still have yet another marathon PR in me."

Among female runners with Rockland ties, she already stands in some pretty heady company. Her marathon time is surpassed only by the sister combination of Doreen Sottile and Kathy Culla. Doreen is the fastest female Rocklander ever, having run 2:47:15 at the 1986 Philadelphia Marathon to qualify for the 1988 Olympic Trials. Her older sister, Kathy, clocked 2:47:47 at Boston in '84 to qualify for the 1984 Olympic Trials.

Sheila says the 2012 Olympic Trials are not on her radar, but at her rate of improvement it's not out of the question. Never an athletic type in school – she attended Ridgely Park (N.J.) High School – she started running at age 30 when friends asked her to do the Tappan Zee Sports Run 10K in 1999. She was drawn to running by its recreational and social aspects, but when her racing times started falling she developed a stronger competitive appetite as well.

"When I raced, that's when I caught the bug," she says. "Having a goal – that's what got me hooked. I felt like I was goal-oriented."

Sheila has run six marathons in the past seven years, progressing from 4:14 in '01 and 3:45 in '02, both in New York, to 3:41 in '03 in Philadelphia, and back to New York again the past three years – 3:25 in '06, 3:09 last year and the breakthrough 2:52 in '08. She took a sabbatical from marathoning in 2004-05 to have a baby girl, Ava, who is now 3.



Sheila Casey at the Queens Half Marathon

A self-coached runner, Sheila devised an unorthodox training plan enabling her to balance running with her responsibilities as a mom. She began running speed intervals on a home treadmill while Ava napped. "I figured the fast running would get me more running back for the buck, and that's when I took my fitness to a whole new level." She was healthy enough to run through her entire pregnancy (even running the 2004 RRR Turkey Trot while pregnant) and sprang back into competitive shape quickly after giving birth.

Joining RRR two years ago and running the Central Park races with club members also played a role in her development, she says, citing the camaraderie and time spent with like-minded runners. "It makes all the hard workouts worth the effort knowing you're achieving your goals and supporting your team at the same time," says Sheila, who would join RRR members for runs at Rockland Lake – folks like Laura Bergen, Ernest Joseph, Gokhan Ozuner, Logan Scott, Roy Altman and Dan Mitlof. Due to time constraints with the baby, Sheila currently meets up with club members only at races.

It's clear that Sheila has made a serious commitment to competitive running. After graduating from Montclair State with a degree in computer science, she worked for 10 years as a computer programmer with Insurance Services Office, a data mining company in Jersey City. But when she had Ava she left the work force and has channeled much of her time and energy into running. Her husband of nine years, Steve ("my biggest fan and supporter"), a natural gas broker, supports the family and takes Ava on weekends so Sheila can focus on workouts, races and recovery.

Sheila manages to juggle the demands of motherhood and running even though Sheila's training incorporates elements of flexibility, strength and speed. For flexibility, she does weekly plyometric drills such as jumping up onto a box and back down, quick toe-tapping on a step, maximum vertical leaps, and standing broad jumps. For muscular strength, she does body-weight exercises like pushups, pull-ups, dips and squats. For cardiovascular strength, she's a firm believer in hill resistance, mixing into her schedule outside hill bounding or sprints (8 x 40 seconds up, walk back down) and treadmill hill intervals, alternating between an 8.5 to 9 percent incline for a minute and a moderate gradient for two minutes. Her flat treadmill workouts consist of 1-, 3- and 5-minute repeats, as well as mile repeats at about 6:30 pace.

A typical training week might look like this: Monday, strength training and drills but no running; Tuesday, treadmill intervals; Wednesday, treadmill hills; Thursday, a variation of Monday; Friday, outside hill bounding or sprints with 2-mile warm up and 2-mile cool down; Saturday, race or long run of 60 to 90 minutes; Sunday, race or tempo run, 30 to 40 minutes. Total mileage for the week is a maximum of 40, even when she's in heavy marathon training.

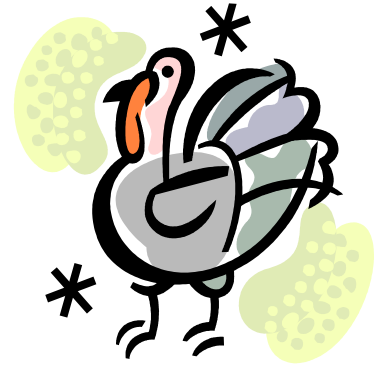
It's clear Sheila still has plenty of untapped potential. Her personal bests in the 10K and half-marathon are modest, compared with her marathon time: 38:06 at the Paramus Run 10K in October and 1:24:32 en route to winning the women's division of the Queens Half Marathon in September. To improve her speed and competitive savvy, she intends to get a taste of track racing this winter at the Armory Track & Field Center in Manhattan. "This will be brand new to me," she says with a hint of trepidation.

Then it's on to the 2009 road-racing circuit and the opportunity to make a name for herself in several marquee races, including the Boston Marathon and Cherry Blossom 10-miler in Washington D.C., both in April before she turns 40; the Boilermaker 15K in Utica in July; and the New Haven 20K in September.

RRR's Active International Turkey Trot Another Smash Hit!

By Mike Greco race director

Wow! What we pulled off on Thanksgiving morning was absolutely unimaginable in the early years of the Turkey Trot! Nothing like this has EVER occurred in Rockland County. Collectively, we've created one awesome event with some remarkable images and memories. Those in attendance will be talking about this one for a long time. For those who haven't heard, our unique 17-year streak continues by breaking last year's attendance record.



The official registration for Turkey Trot 2008 was 1998!

The overall winner was Bert-Justin Rodriguez of Valley Cottage in a blistering 25:22 (5:05/mile). The overall female winner once again was Kate Irvin of NYC, breaking her 2007 course record in a time of 28:53 (5:47/mile). An added highlight of the awards ceremony was the announcement of the recent engagement of Kate to Russell Pfeffer of NYC (1st place, 25-29) who ran a 28:52! I guess Russell knew what he wanted and chased her down! Also receiving hardware was Tyler Ryan of Walden, who took 1st place in the wheelchair division in 31:47. Congratulations to our winners and ALL of our participants.

As race director, many things come to mind that make me extremely proud. Honoring our veterans (past and present) behind a patriotic backdrop, the many families who traditionally participate together, the spirit of Thanksgiving accented by our food drive and the overall contribution of so many people and organizations working together to present one spectacular community event are just some of the things that clearly stand out. I've always looked at the Turkey Trot as much more than a race with fast runners, time clocks and awards. The more important message of the day is much simpler and I believe that we have done a very good job in sharing it...to recognize how truly blessed many of us are and to take this opportunity to help those around us who are not as fortunate. As far as I'm concerned, this is what the RRR Active International Turkey Trot is about.

I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the hard work and dedication of those who served on the Turkey Trot committee and those who volunteered their time and effort. You know who you are and I appreciate your sincere commitment. Finally, I have heard from many of you and I appreciate the kind words. It's always gratifying to hear from those who take the time to share their personal comments and constructive criticism. Some of the best feedback comes from you and I value what you have to say. However, make no mistake about it, this event is much bigger than any one person; it could never be what it is without the total team effort displayed by each of you. After all...it is the "People's Race," but it's the people behind the scenes who make it work (and make it work so well). Thank you so much for your contributions and commitment in making the Turkey Trot such a successful and popular community event. The RRR has a lot to be proud of.

God bless our troops and God bless America!

(Inside Loop Continued from page 1)

Team RRR had a good showing in Central Park thanks to team captains Laura and Ernie and Team Singer.
(See more on Team RRR below on this page)

As you may already know, the bathrooms at RL have been closed since November 28, 2008 till the end of March 2009 due to budget cuts. Upon Bernie's suggestion to the executive board, a Port a John for the park users has now been placed outside the administration building between the men's and women's bathrooms. BTW, Bernie has been a longtime RRR member who I know is very passionate about the club. I am indeed very fortunate to have him as my vice president.

I am currently working on a Hamburg (Germany)-New York marathon exchange program. The purpose of this program is to foster exchanges between both cities in commerce, education, art, sport and many other areas. One of the important aspects of the exchanges is the personal contact between people from both cities. I have been planning and organizing this marathon exchange between New York and Hamburg since the beginning of the year. The plan is to have New York runners participate in the Hamburg Marathon and vice versa. During their stay in Hamburg, marathon runners will be hosted in private homes, similar to a bed and breakfast. There are currently 15 spots for New Yorkers who'd like to participate in the Hamburg Marathon 2009 exchange. The program will last one week and friends or spouses of runners are invited too. Although, the number 15 is not set in stone, my Hamburg contact confirmed that about 15 runners could be hosted. The New York guest marathon runners in Hamburg have no obligation to host Hamburg runners in New York. Hosting is not a condition to run Hamburg as a guest. My counterpart in Hamburg is set; however, I am open to suggestions on how to host the Hamburg runners. I will keep you posted.

If you have articles, pictures, or anything of interest, send them to our club editor, Herb Conrad, at runner5k61@hotmail.com. Please send race results to Myrna Rivera at myrunnergirl262@gmail.com.

Don't forget to renew your membership.

Happy holidays to you and your loved ones!

Keep moving!.

Weekly EMAILS

If you have not been receiving the weekly email communications from the club, please send your email address to News@rocklandroadrunners.org



Team RRR

Team RRR is looking forward to 2009. Many thanks to departing captains, Laura DiMarino and Ernest Joseph for all their hard work over the last few years.

Ann and John Singer will continue their excellent job of being the *Swift Sixty*s coordinators.

Shelly Shrem, Logan Scott and Steve Blackburn have agreed to captain the 2009 RRR Team.

We are currently looking for more people to step up and help. If interested, please contact: secretary@rocklandroadrunners.org

Holiday Party

As usual, the RRR Holiday Party was a big success. There was lots of dancing, good food awards, an occasional drink and most important of all great company.

Special thank you to Bob Goldsmith and Enilda Indyk for planning the Rockland Road Runners holiday party.

Following is a recap of the 2008 RRR awards :

Our annual RRR awards

Don Cordisco : **Ann & John Singer**
Volunteer of the year: **Allison Luscher**
George Wodika Inspiration: **Dave Goldwasser**

This year 2 new awards were added:
RRR 2008 Runner of the Year - Female:
Sheila Casey

RRR 2008 Runner of the Year -Male:
Michael Nusblat

Congratulations to all our winners!!!

(50 States Continued from page 2)

the wonderful “surfer dude” announcer explains to the crowd,
“This is Grannie Annie from NY and at 6:44 she has completed her 50 states marathon journey.”
I thought I would be hysterically crying at the finish line, unable to contain my joy and excitement – I had planned to thank John for his support and give him a big kiss...
But John and I were physically dehydrated and exhausted; he went to get us something to drink and I stood under a cold shower.

At the awards ceremony, it turns out that the surfer dude announcer is fluent in Japanese, repeating each sentence in English and then Japanese. We all enjoy our accomplishments this day and the Japanese find this energetic and enjoyable announcer much to their liking.

Mahalo...Thank you to all who have lived this journey with us. Without your encouragement and support, the journey would not have been the same.

Team Singer



Mike Nusblat and Sheila Casey
Photo by Cliff Fromm



Mike and Sheila proudly holding their RRR Runner of the year awards
Photo by Cliff Fromm

RRR wins Volunteer of the Year

By Amy Stern, United Hospice of Rockland, Inc.

The Rockland Development Council at its national Philanthropy breakfast, presents a volunteer of the year award each November. This year, Amy Stern of United Hospice of Rockland graciously nominated RRR for this award. Amy, a proud RRR member has worked closely with RRR on the Hook Half Marathon for which United Hospice is the beneficiary. Thank you, Amy for this kind recognition of RRR's accomplishments. Here, in part is her nomination letter.

I am pleased to nominate **Rockland Road Runners**, for 2008 Volunteer of the Year from the Rockland Development Council.

You might ask the question, "Why would a running club be the perfect selection for the 2008 Volunteer of the Year?" The answer is that it has made a conscious effort to take the activity loved by its members and turned it into a philanthropic endeavor. I am unable to identify any other group of volunteers that has made such a lengthy commitment to raising money for so many organizations across Rockland. RRR serves as a wonderful example of what is possible when you combine a core of committed volunteers with a big heart, generous sponsors, and passion for something you enjoy doing.

Founded in 1983 (as the Rockland Lake Runners Association), the Rockland Road Runners is committed to promoting and supporting running, racing and jogging in Rockland County. Presently the club boasts more than 600 members and has become known as the clearinghouse for running information in the county.

RRR raises money for local and regional causes through five popular annual races:

In April, RRR holds the George Wodicka Hook Mountain Half Marathon, Walk & Run to benefit **United Hospice of Rockland**. Held for 19 years, together these races have raised well in excess of \$150,000 for UHR.

In May, the club presents its annual Marisa 10K Run and 3 Mile Fun Walk to benefit the Marisa Fund for the Pediatric Blood & Bone Marrow Transplant Program at the Children's Hospital at New York Presbyterian and Columbia University. This race supports the foundation established in memory of the beloved daughter of club member, David Goldwasser.

In July, the RRR sponsors a Women's Distance Festival to benefit Rockland Family Shelter. In 2007, RRR celebrated the 20th anniversary of this race.

In September, RRR sponsors the South Nyack 10 Miler to benefit the Piermont and Nyack Volunteer Fire Departments and Nyack Ambulance Corps.

And in November, the club holds its ever-popular Thanksgiving Day 5 Mile Turkey Trot, the largest running event in Rockland County. This year, the race proceeds will benefit the Active International Cardiovascular Institute at Good Samaritan Hospital and the scholarship fund of the Rockland County Police Hispanic Society.

In the past, race proceeds have supported additional organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and the American Lung Association

In 2007, RRR partnered with Nyack Hospital to help them grow their 10K race.

In addition to its significant fundraising efforts, RRR has contributed to the community in other ways, including: As part of the annual Turkey Trot Race, RRR conducts a food drive for People to People, encouraging racers and spectators to bring non-perishable food for needy families in Rockland County.

An RRR Team participates in the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life each year at the Silver or Gold Sponsor (\$5000/\$10,000) level and maintains runners on the track for the entire length of the event (18 hours).

"Adopting" a stretch of county road at Rockland State Park through the Adopt-A-Road program, its members conduct regular "cleanups," keeping it clean and trash-free throughout the year.

RRR purchased a bench for parents visiting the Children's Cemetery at Rockland Lake.

Although initially established to support and unite people who share an enthusiasm for running, the Rockland Road Runners has added a philanthropic dimension to its mission, having become one of the community's most active and involved special interest groups. The Rockland Road Runners clearly demonstrates a proven record of exceptional generosity and civic responsibility, and is deserving of the Volunteer of the Year Award from the Rockland Development Council.



CHICAGO—My Run to Remember

By Dee Jacobs

I started running in my early 40s and ran my first marathon at age 51. It was going to be my only one...I just wanted to say I'd done it. In fact, every marathon I've run (now all four of them), I've said would be my last. Each time I meant it and each time I seemed later to come up with a good reason to run just one more. (Sound familiar, anyone?) I should have been satisfied after NYC #2 because I placed in my age category. Or after the Rock 'n' Roll Arizona when I won my age category. But two goals I'd had since landing in the emergency room at the end of the first marathon continued to elude me: 1) pacing myself to avoid my inevitable walk/run finish from mile 22 on, and 2) finishing with an average pace of 7:30.

When the opportunity to run Chicago for the National Hospice Foundation was presented in June, I couldn't resist. My mom's death a couple of years ago was made vastly more comfortable by Hospice care. Plus, I had always wanted to run Chicago, having grown up there; a trip could resurrect lots of family memories for my brother, sister and me. I hadn't been back except for a very short trip with my son when University of Chicago was on his list of college choices. Brother Roy now lives in suburban St. Louis and sister Jean in Phoenix, but Roy's older daughter, Nikki, lives in a Chicago suburb. So a "Run to Remember Mom" was born and I launched my first charity drive.

The backbone of my fundraising was my "Run to Remember" link to an Active site provided by National Hospice Foundation. I personalized the page, decided on a goal of \$2000, and started an e-mail campaign to meet it. In addition, I made flyers to put up at local businesses and libraries with my picture included. I hoped that people who didn't know me by name but who lived around my running routes would connect me to the picture and support me.

It worked! Thanks to all, I was able to raise \$2,265 for NHF within six weeks.

And I felt almost famous: the Sunday before the race, as I was running Piermont pier, a man called out, "Did you run that marathon yet?" He'd seen my flyer, up for a couple of months by then, at the Community Market.

Training seemed long this time. I used a different schedule in an attempt to improve my distance stamina: Pfitzinger & Douglas recommend an "18 week, 70 miles or less per week" plan in *Advanced Marathoning*. It features more regular longer runs paired with shorter recoveries than the Glovers' *Competitive Runner's Handbook* I had used for past training. A schedule helped keep me focused and dedicated, but generally the last weeks before tapering got a little tedious. Keeping Mom in mind really helped and so did seeing so many of you out doing your Sunday long runs in Upper Nyack or (Mary and Maureen) along the Sparkill Rail Trail. As did sharing the odd greeting with Steve Ozer or Jon Gleason during Piermont jaunts. And watching Art Gunther fly by in the wee hours with his long, loping stride helped, too. I wanted to "run relaxed," and Art was my inspiration for that: no one I know covers as much ground looking so effortless in the process!

On Friday before the race, we hit the Expo at McCormick Place early. It was definitely the right thing to do! No traffic and manageable crowds at the event. Best things: meeting my Hospice liaison and, since I wouldn't have time to drive the marathon course, studying the virtual tour that played continuously on a big screen.

The Memory Lane part of the Chicago trip was all I'd hoped for. Back in the 60's when I was attending Carl Schurz High School at Milwaukee and Addison, the first Chicago Marathon was still 13 years away and whatever running I did was focused on catching a CTA bus to school, Foster Ave. beach, or my job at Sears Roebuck in my Forest Glen neighborhood.

My mom would corral us for window shopping and people-watching in the lobbies of the Palmer House and The Regency, Dad took us all to learn to ice skate in Grant Park, made sure we toured all the cultural hot spots, took Sunday afternoon rides along the lake and attended (the kids under protest) the Sunday Evening Club to enjoy regular performances of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. We revisited all these and our old house on Las Casas Ave., I with a runner's eye. And Chicago is runner-friendly! The Lake Shore Drive paths are long and scenic and north of the Drive proper, the urban lakeside communities all have streets ending at beaches. I did my last training runs in these areas, which included the Loyola University campus.

I realized that arrival at my B corral for the 8:00a.m. start Sunday would require careful planning, or else the race would be ruined by my lack of sleep and shattered nerves. We were staying in Skokie, a northern suburb. So, on Saturday, we checked out corral/bag check set-up at Grant Park, the parking, schedule and route of the red-line El we would be boarding at 5:30a.m., and we bought weekend Metro passes. This preparation, eating my usual pre-race meal of ravioli, reviewing my race strategy and getting to bed early did a lot to calm me.

The big day dawned without a cloud in the sky, and though the 84 degree temp by 11:00a.m.



Dee and her brother Roy



Race Tank

(Continued on page 10)

Alumni Harriers Enjoy “Run” Down Memory Lane at Bear Mountain

By Jamie Kempton

Furst, DiMarino individual champs; Suffern, Monroe-Woodbury team titlists

The Bill Markiewicz Memorial Rockland Alumni Cross Country Run unleashes a flood of memories for the local cross-country community. Like the swallows returning to Capistrano and worshippers journeying to Mecca, the harriers make their annual pilgrimage to Bear Mountain on Thanksgiving Saturday to run – and to remember. They remember the pristine autumn afternoons, the trees’ multi-colored palette, the sun glinting off Hessian Lake, the welcoming embrace of the Inn. And the hill: How can they ever forget the chin-scraping, lung-searing climb to the old ski-jump launch?

“We don’t run anything with a hill like that on the college courses,” said Stephen Furst, a North Carolina State grad who captured this year’s 26th annual event. “It’s kind of a shock to the system.”

“The hill is still the hill,” said Laura Bergen-DiMarino, the women’s champion, with irrefutable logic. “It seems to get steeper every year.” Conquering the infamous incline is a forbidding challenge, but 223 harriers were equal to the task at the Nov. 29 event. Included among them were four participants who gave the race an international flavor by having attended secondary schools in Germany, England, Ireland and Canada.

“Obama’s influence is already being felt before he even raises his right hand,” quipped Tom Doherty, who conceived the Alumni Run event back in 1983 and has teamed with Ralph Coleman and a host of minions to shepherd it through ever since. “When Ralph sets up the course in the morning I look around and say, ‘Oh boy, I wonder how many people will show up.’ But then they start arriving and it all comes together. It’s always a fun day and there’s a lot of goodwill.”

Mary Haugh, a native of Ireland who attended secondary school in Woodford, County Galway, participated for the first time and was joined by her son, John, Nanuet class of 1993, and daughter Erin, Nanuet class of 1997. Erin was a two-time Rockland County champion – at Bear Mountain, of course – and the 1994 New York State Class C champion while at Nanuet.

The sun did indeed shine on the plains of Bear Mountain, bathing the throng in mid-40-degree temperatures and warming the hearts of the reuniting revelers. One of those celebrants was Matt Markiewicz, Goshen class of 1993, a son of the late Bill Markiewicz, for whom the race is named.

“There’s a great spirit here and it’s continuing to grow every year,” said Matt, who was joined in the race by his uncles Tom and Mike, both Albertus Magnus alums, aunt Margaret (Rosary Academy ’76) and cousins Mark and Patrick. “This is a great turnout. It shows how much everyone is dedicated to the event and the sport.”

The Markiewicz clan also included Matt’s brothers Danny (Goshen ’96) and Luke (Goshen ’99), his uncle Pete, Danny’s 13-month-old son Ian William, and of course Bill’s widow, Janet. (Bill’s other brother, Duke, would have been there too had he not been delayed by the heavy holiday traffic on I-95 coming up from Virginia with his wife, Jackie.)

Janet Markiewicz attends the race faithfully each year and assists in presenting the Bill Markiewicz Award as the runners are assembled at the starting line. This year’s honoree was Fred Adler, the longtime head of the Rockland and Southern Catskill officials association and the race starter for the Alumni Run. Adler and Markiewicz were fellow teachers in the Clarkstown Central School District.

Bill Markiewicz was a 1967 Albertus Magnus graduate and spent 11 years (1978-89) as Clarkstown North’s head cross country and assistant track coach. He coached the Rams to the Section 9 cross-country championship in 1983 but more importantly, his infectious enthusiasm and unshakable commitment to kids left a profound legacy on everyone who knew him. The award named for him is presented to an individual who has made a lasting contribution and rendered distinguished service to the sport of cross country in Rockland County. Fittingly, he was the award’s first recipient in 1991, when the race was renamed in his memory. He had succumbed to cancer earlier that year, at age 41.

Bill Markiewicz would have been proud that the event named in his honor continues to flourish into its second quarter-century. The exhortations he imparted as his runners ascended the signature hill would have been gratefully accepted by any number of participants this year, including DiMarino, who was reduced to walking for a brief stretch on the steepest part of the incline. The 1984 Nanuet alumna managed to regain her momentum after the hill and went on to win the women’s division in 19:50, a 20-second improvement over her runner-up performance last year. Kelly Thompson, a 1995 Pearl River grad, was second in 20:24.

“Seeing all the people like the old coaches and everyone makes me feel young again,” said DiMarino, the 1982 Rockland County champion, who at 42 has been revitalized as a masters runner, having completed the recent New York City Marathon in an excellent 3 hours 13 minutes. “I was nervous that men would see me coming and say, ‘Here comes grandma. Not only is she a girl but she’s old too.’”

While DiMarino is enjoying a middle-age running revival, men’s winner Furst is parlaying his youthful experience into a bid for national prominence. The 2003 Goshen alum ran the grinding Bear Mountain course in 15:06, the fastest time since Art Gunther’s 14:46 in 2001. Furst finished a full 30 seconds ahead of his closest pursuer, Kyle O’Brien, Monroe-Woodbury class of 2006.

“I had this race on my calendar since August,” said Furst, whose best high school time on the course was 15:27 in ’02, when the layout was slightly shorter due to a change in the downhill section. “I wanted to take it more seriously but I got a virus and that forced my body into a rest period. I would like to come back again some year and go after the course record.”

That record is no piece of cake – 1992 Olympian John Trautmann’s blistering 14:08 from 1994 – but if anyone has the potential to threaten it, it’s Furst. He won the Penn Relays college division 5,000 meters in April in an outstanding 13:49 and matched that time to place 10th – and

(Continued on page 10)



(Chicago Continued from page 8)

was higher than any of us runners would have chosen, at least the humidity wasn't too bad. Everything leading up to the start at Corral B went smoothly. The start was slow. In fact it was so tight everyone walked over the start mat. I've had the typical novice's problem pacing myself in marathons...always starting out too fast. I don't use a watch or clock my progress except by the split times provided, so have always gone low tech. In Chicago, though, there is no real question of running the first half too fast...it's too crowded! The streets seemed narrower than in New York, particularly without the wide Verrazano to start, and it wasn't until after mile 6 that the crowd thinned out a little. I saw one guy trip over someone and fall, and later in the I nearly collided with a young girl crossing the street on a blind curve.

I met my cheering section at mile 22, where I usually have problems. My husband, who knows me best, could tell I was flagging. I had ingested Powergel at mile 18 with water, but was feeling nauseous. I called on Mom, did my 1 to 100 counts, and thought of everyone who had helped me get to Chicago in the first place, but...what can I say? My familiar walk/run kicked in. The spectators were great, urging me forward. And, hey! The great thing about the Chicago Marathon is coming up Michigan Ave. and rounding the last bend into Grant Park. The FINISH banner is huge and beckoning...and I did what I'd promised myself: I RAN to and across the finish! I may have looked worn out in every race picture before the finish line, but I am proud of that finish picture!

My time was 3:27:39. So I didn't make a PR or meet either of my goals. I didn't even stay out of the medical tent (third time now)...I passed out while having my chip removed. But! I was fine after 30 minutes, met my family, walked back to Millennium Park in the fine weather, got some pictures, and headed back with only one blood blister and a black toenail to show for the effort. No cramps, no sore muscles the next day...and a second in my age category! Not bad for an aging lady's last hurrah.

I was in Chicago to remember my (Parks) family's experiences there. We walked in Grant Park, and talked about our little histories there. And three weeks later on Nov 4, in the same park, BIG history was made!!! A great trip, and a great follow-up. Try the Chicago, everyone!

(Alumni Run Continued from page 9)

claim the eighth and final All-America berth – at the NCAA outdoor championships in June. Furst also scored a difficult 10,000/5,000 double at the Atlantic Coast Conference championships the week before Penn, giving him three major triumphs in a seven-day span.

Furst is currently a volunteer assistant coach at his alma mater, N.C. State, where he earned his undergraduate degree in aerospace engineering in 2007 and is set to graduate in December 2008 with a master's in mechanical engineering, also from N.C. State. He plans to remain in Raleigh for the next few years to pursue a Ph.D in mechanical engineering while continuing to train under his college coach, Rollie Geiger. His goals include finishing in the top six in the U.S. national XC championships in February to qualify for the World Championships in Jordan the following month. In track, he wants to take a shot at a sub-4:00 mile (he has an indoor 4:07 to his credit and a 3:48 1,500), make some U.S. traveling teams and, long term, gear up for the Olympic Trials in 2012.

On the team scoring front, the Suffern Mounties took home their fourth Alumni Run men's crown with 60 points, while the Clarkstown North Rams shaded the Nanuet Golden Knights for second, 124 to 126. In the women's division, the Monroe-Woodbury Crusaders edged Nanuet, 62-65, to notch their sixth team title and move into a tie with Pearl River for most women's championships.

For the third time in recorded race history, the team participation title was shared. Suffern and Monroe-Woodbury each fielded 25 participants, followed closely by Clarkstown North (23) and Pearl River (22). The other ties occurred in 2002 and 2004. Overall, 49 high schools were represented as alma maters of participating runners, including schools in California, Minnesota, Illinois and Virginia.

Among the notable female entrants were seven-time champion Julianne Littmann-Viscardo, Monroe-Woodbury '95, who gave birth a few months ago but still managed to place sixth; Janet Pietropaolo, Nanuet '80, the 1978 Rockland County champion; Laurel Gilhooly Reilly, Albertus Magnus '81, the 1980 Rockland County victor; Lisette Hautau, Tappan Zee '78, the 1975 and '77 Rockland champ; Lauren Tuchband Cullen, Nanuet '98, the 2002 Alumni Run winner; and Sue (Gulla) Lanoce, Pearl River '83, who has participated in the Alumni Run more times than any other woman – 25, missing only the inaugural event in 1983.

On the men's side, Brian Crowley, Albertus Magnus '82, has been aging gracefully since winning the Alumni crown in 1990. The 44-year-old continued to upstage the younger runners, finishing eighth for the second straight year.

Three entrants kept alive their streaks of having participated in all 26 editions of the meet: Pat Chambers, Albertus Magnus '76, who won the inaugural '83 race held in blizzard-like conditions; Larry Beckerle, Albertus Magnus 1973; and Walt Johnston, Suffern '65. Johnston waxed enthusiastic about his daughter Diana's first-time participation in the race. Diana, a 2005 Clarkstown South graduate who attends Villanova, ran with her dad for the first half of the race before pulling away on the hill. She was the 23rd female finisher and 148th overall in 26:14. Walt wound up 164th in 27:44.

“As her father/coach, I advised her to go out with me so she would have energy for the hill and at the end of the race,” Walt said. “I had this vision of running the whole race together and letting her cross the finish line ahead of me. Well, when we got to the big hill, she just started to fly away from me and by the time I reached the ice skating rink, she was a good 200 meters ahead of me. So much for my plans!”

Introducing his daughter to running and taking part in events like the Alumni Run clearly mean a lot to Walt: “I feel that some of me has rubbed off on her. I feel that by doing what I love and care for, it has somehow had a real impact on what she has chosen to incorporate into her lifestyle.”

Well said, Walt. Here's to the next 26 years!

South Nyack Ten Miler More Popular than Ever

By Kathleen Daly, Bernie Casserly and Mike Angarola

The weather was perfect for the 20th annual South Nyack Ten Miler, even though the race organizers suffered a tense 24-hour period wondering whether Tropical Storm Hanna would show up as an uninvited guest to the event.

However, with beautiful skies, a lovely breeze and a record 440 registrants, we had nothing to worry about. For the 12th time in 14 years Art Gunther, 37, of Nyack, came in first with a winning time of 53:58, almost three minutes faster than the second place finisher Brylan Kovalsky's impressive time of 56:54. Claudia Camargo, 37, Danbury, Ct., was the repeat female winner from 2007 with a time of 1:03:04. Rockland Road Runners member Carol Guzinski did us proud as the third place female with a time of 1:09:16. For details on all the results visit: <http://www.rocklandroadrunners.org/races/SN10/index.html>.

We have already received great feedback on this year's event, but as many know, such an event is a team effort. We would like to thank the race committee members: Mike Angarola, Bernie Casserly, Jon Gleason, Bob Goldsmith, Bill Carpenter and Allison Luscher.

A new beneficiary, Junior Achievement, was added this year. We were privileged to work with this organization and staff, especially Howard Hellman and Walter Goldman. Please visit: <http://hudsonvalley.ja.org/>

We would like to importantly thank our generous sponsors. Please support them: Provident Bank, KDF, Orange & Rockland, Westgate Capital Management, LLC, Gracie's Ravioli, New Leaf Tea, Porky Products, Route 59 Beverages, Dana Distributing, All Bright Electric, JCC – Rockland, React, On Track, David's Bagels of Valley Cottage and Diplomat Health Spa. Special thanks to Michael Greco/Turkey Trot and David Goldwasser/Marisa Fund. A big thanks to John Sullivan, Bob O'Malley and Brian Luscher for arriving very early every year and setting up the entire course.

It is impossible to thank all the volunteers by name in a short article, but please know how much we appreciate your assistance and donation of valuable time. Volunteers are the backbone of every one of our events. We encourage all race participants to pick one event in 2009 and volunteer. Not only will you enjoy yourself and learn more about all the hard work that goes into our events, but you will be supporting local charities.

Look forward to seeing you all in September 2009 for the 21st annual South Nyack Ten Miler.



Winner Art Gunther
Photo by Herb Conrad

The Runaround

Next Issue: **Deadline Wednesday, March 17, 2009**

Send articles, photos, publicity, anything of interest:

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Next Club Meeting
7:30 p.m.
Tuesday, February 3, 2009
Nanuet Restaurant

Note: This will be the last printed and mailed copy of The Runaround. Starting in 2009 all RRR newsletters will be on the internet at the RRR Website. If you require a printed copy, please contact JC Santa Teresa at 845-304-1276