

THE PACESETTER

APRIL 2020 ✨ Volume 45, Issue 2

SPECIAL EDITION

Newsletter of the Prairie State Road Runners—Will County's Running Authority Since 1975

www.psrr.org

With special memories as we celebrate our club's 45th anniversary this year.



**WE SHALL
OVERCOME**



CLICK BELOW
TO FIND US ON
FACEBOOK



The Pacesetter
is for Runners,
Walkers and
Fitness
Enthusiasts of
ALL abilities.

PRAIRIE STATE ROADRUNNERS



WILL, KENDALL & GRUNDY COUNTIES, IL SINCE 1975

WWW.PSRR.ORG

PRAIRIE STATE ROAD RUNNERS -- The Pacesetter



SPECIAL EDITION 2020

www.psrr.org

Volume 45, Issue 2

Everywhere you turn these days you hear people saying things like “these unprecedented times,” “a tipping point,” and “life will never be the same,” which all sounds like a lot of gloom and doom.

A global pandemic is undoubtedly a difficult experience for those of us who are used to life being more predictable, whose freedoms have never been curtailed, and who were unprepared for being told to sit home and wait instead of going out and doing things.

Many people now expect point-and-click change to be easily effected, TV watchers want all plot lines neatly resolved in a 60 minute episode, and readers crave a happy ending where the good guy wins.

Yet we are faced with a contagion that is capricious, illogical, rife with uncertainty and unlike anything we expected to exist in our lives.

We wanted to put out a special edition of The Pacesetter so that friends and neighbors who make up the PSRR running community could reminisce about some familiar events, give encouragement to one another and share our optimism that life will not only go on but actually return to a semblance of what we once called normal and probably get even better.

So here it is.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MANHATTAN IRISH FEST PARADE 5k PHOTOS and RESULTS LINK	3
“WHAT THEY DID INSTEAD” RACES	16
MESSAGES FROM CLUB MEMBERS	23
REMEMBERING THE NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR 25k by Dave Cyplick	26
TRAVELIN’ PSRR	32
PARTING THOUGHT	33



Founded in 1975, the Prairie State Road Runners (PSRR) are one of the oldest running clubs in Illinois. The majority of our members are from Will, Grundy, and Kendall counties. The club sponsors the Thanksgiving Day morning Poultry Predictor 4 Mile Race in Joliet’s beautiful Pilcher Park and the Manhattan Irish Fest Parade 5K.

The Prairie State Road Runners is a member of the Road Runners Club of America (RRCA) www.rrca.org and is a defined 501(c)(3) organization under the RRCA charter.

CLUB EVENTS:

Irish Fest 5k

BELOW: Just a fraction of our wonderful corps of volunteers: (from left) Sarah Hintze, Caroline Portlock, Rheta Murdaugh, Cathy McQuarters



ABOVE: Jody James with Rheta at packet pickup.

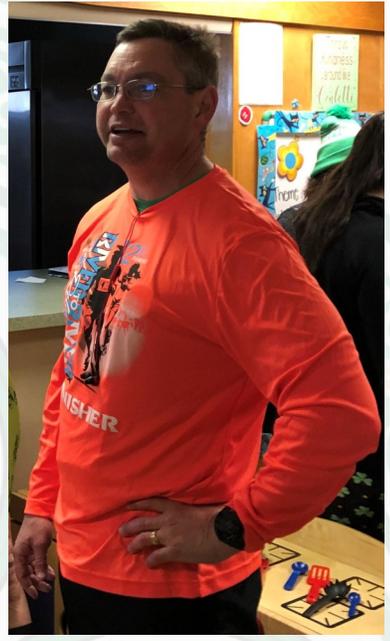


Happy bus riders on their way to the race.

Hanging
out
before
the race



Nydia Beard,
Mark Walker,
Clinton James
are chatting...



while Natalie Pociask,
Judith Warren, Lianne
Holloway and Larry
Bornhofen practice their
smiles and...



Frank Koehler goes back to school.



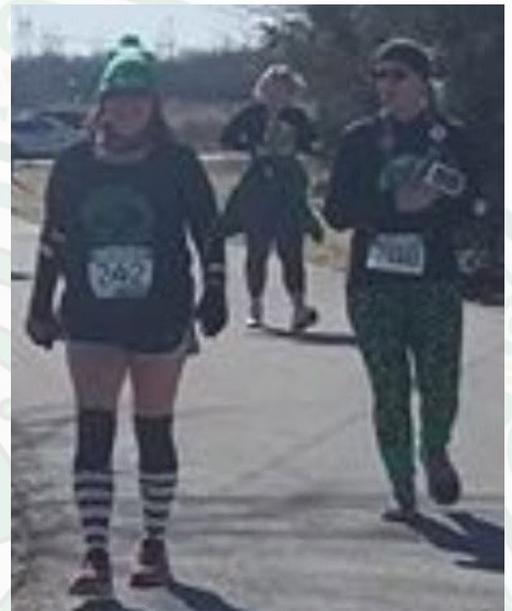


AND THEY'RE OFF!!!

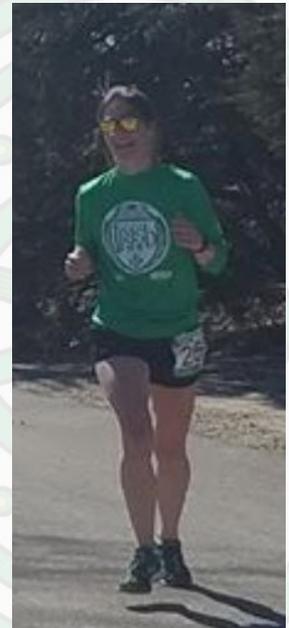




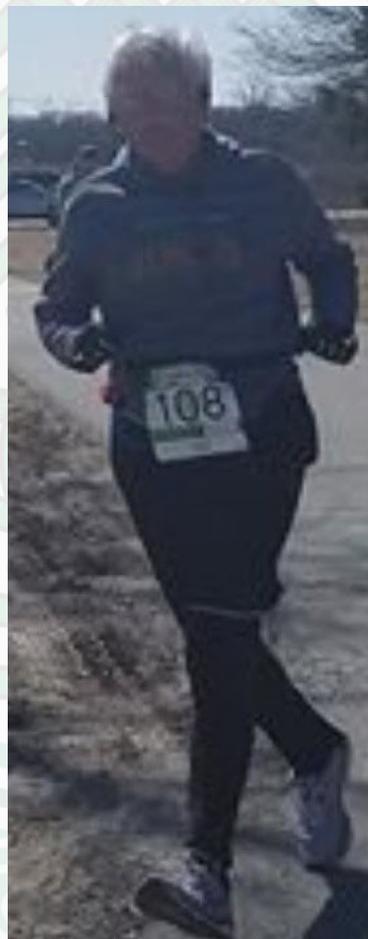


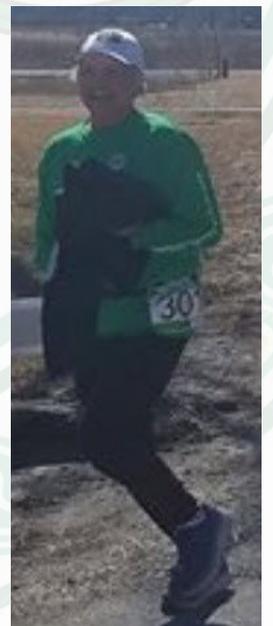
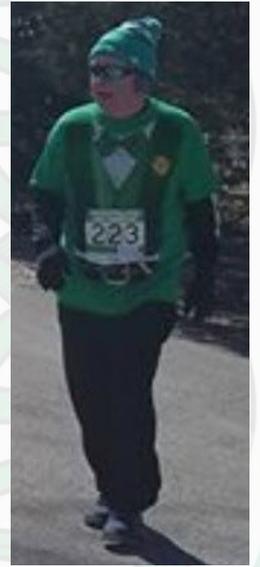


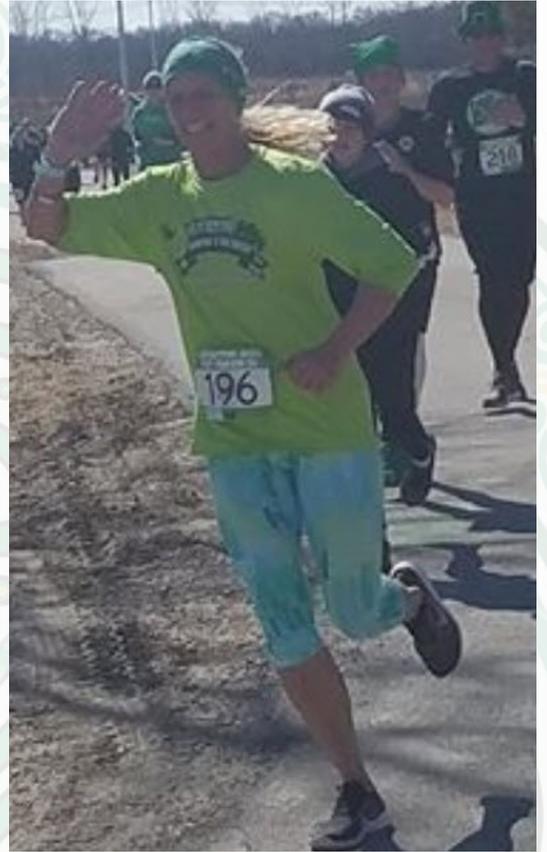
Sat
7
52°/23°
Hist. Avg. 43°/25°



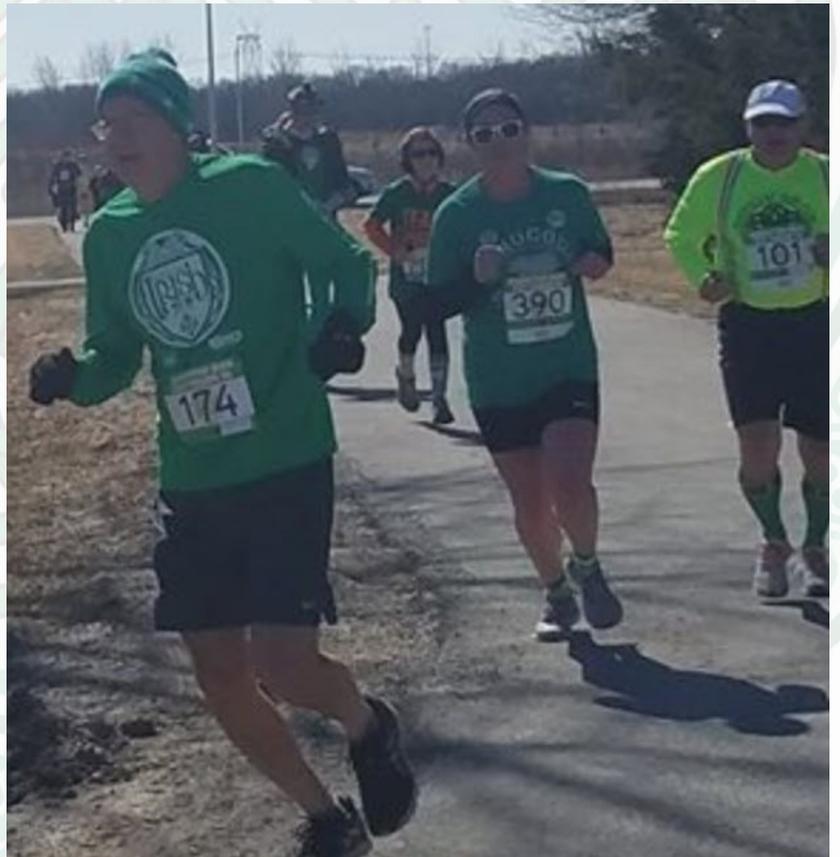
ACTION SHOTS



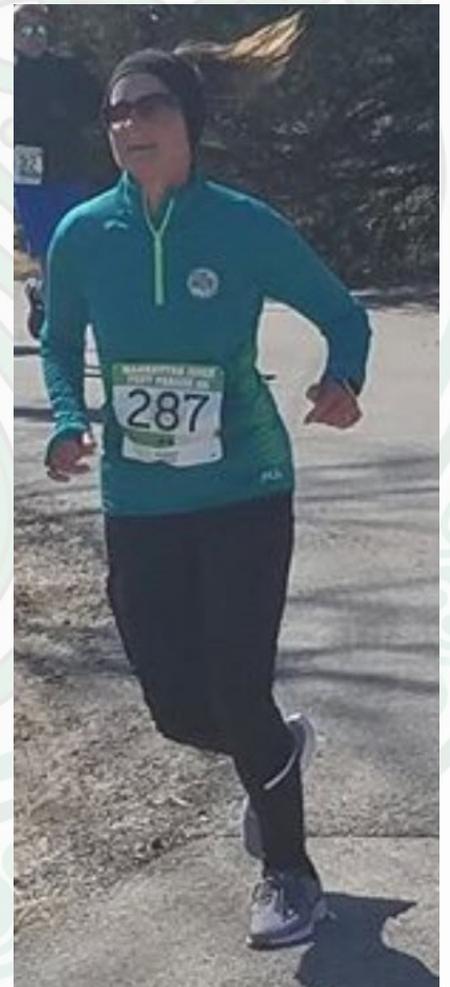




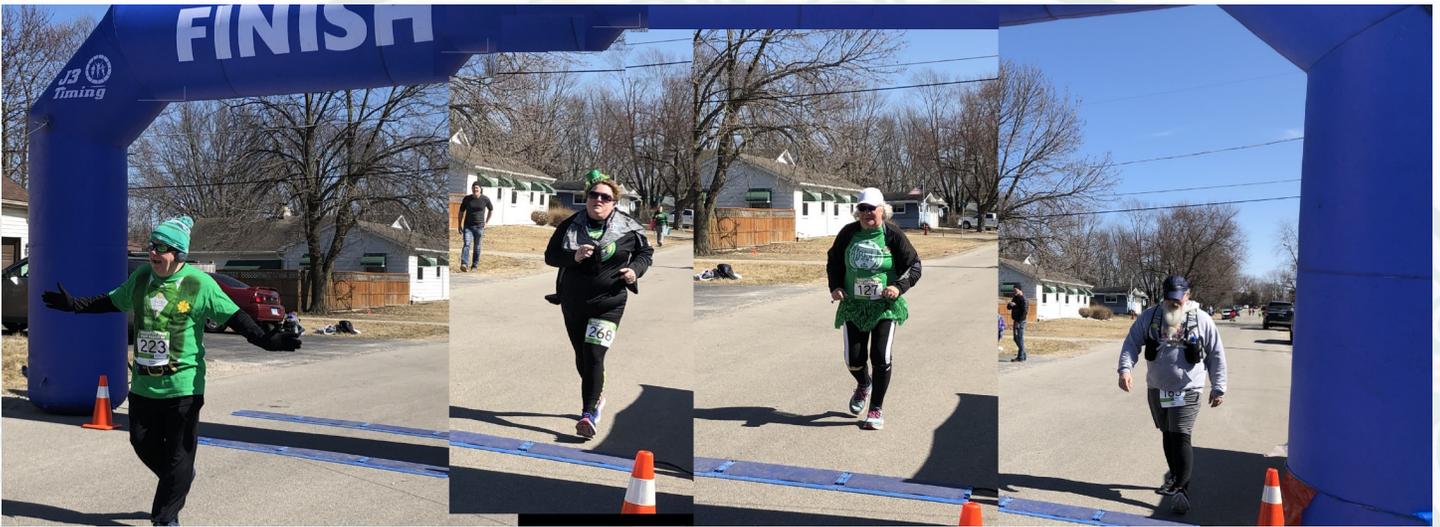
26TH ANNUAL
MANHATTAN IRISH FEST
HEATED TENT FOOD LIVE MUSIC











BUT WAIT! We're not done yet....

Without all of our dedicated volunteers, there would be no races anywhere. We would like to acknowledge and thank the following club members whose enthusiasm and assistance made this race possible:

Aidan Calvey

Alicia Tocwish

Angie Freeman

Bob Jungwirth

Carla Hutley

Caroline Portlock

Colleen Calvey

Dan Aguilar

Debbie Scheckel

Debra Walters

Dick Macknick

Eileen Skisak

Fawn Acup

Gary Westefer

Harry Scheckel

Heather Hall

Jaylyn Miller

John Sheridan

Mike Auld

Nikki Underhile

Patrick Koerner

Rebecca Rice

Sarah Hintze

Stephan Meehan

Tammy Smith

Tiffany Norris

Tina Pirc

Tom Podlin

Race Directors:

Steve Koven, Cathy McQuarters, Rheta Murdaugh, Mark Walters

MANY MANY MANY THANKS!



DRUM ROLL PLEASE...

**Your Prairie State Road Runners
Manhattan Irish Fest Parade 5k age
group winners are:**

FEMALE CATEGORIES:

- F20-24 Kayla Rice
Brittany Pirc
- F40-44 Kelly Curiel
- F45-49 Nydia Beard
- F50-54 Lori Quigley
- F55-59 Tina Pirc
- F65-69 Susan McLean
Mary Raino
- F70-74 Carol Stapleton



LORI

MASTERS WINNERS:

- Javier Martinez
- Eileen Skisak



JAVIER and EILEEN



JULIAN

MALE CATEGORIES:

- M15-19 Julian Heidrich
- M25-29 Alexander Erchinger
- M30-34 JT Markland
- M35-39 Damien Mangabhai
- M45-49 Mark Walker
- M50-54 Apolonio Esquivel
- M60-64 John Warren
Larry Bornhofen
- M65-69 Mark Bowman
- M70-74 Patrick J. Koerner
- M75-79 Harry Scheckel



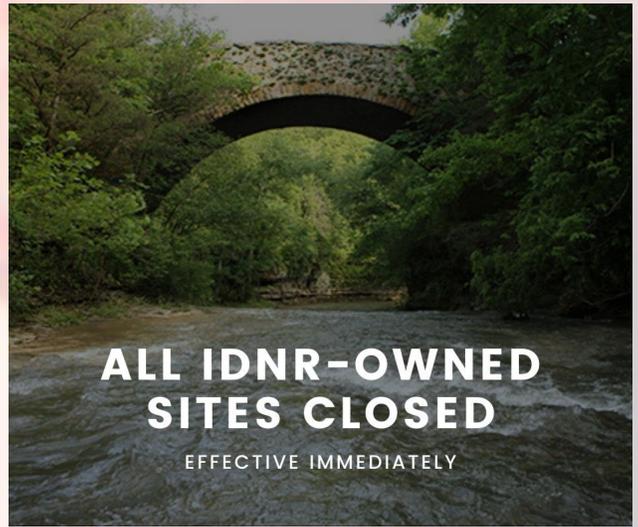
PATRICK

CLICK
FOR RACE RESULTS

AND THEN ALONG CAME

COVID-19

and the world of organized racing got turned on its head when large public events were cancelled....



I call this photo "The 2020 race season."



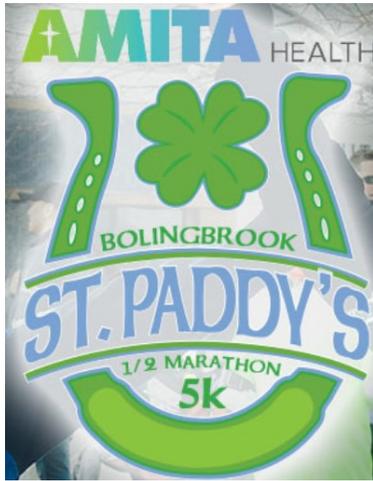
BUT WHAT'S THE OLD SAYING ABOUT "WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH"?

That's right.

THE TOUGH KEEP RUNNING!



CLUB EVENTS: Bolingbrook St. Paddy 1/2 Marathon and 5k



2020 RACE POSTPONED —

The AMITA Health Bolingbrook St. Paddy's Half Marathon & 5K has been postponed to a later date in the year yet to be determined. Out of an abundance of caution for race participants, volunteers, and spectators, this decision has been made together with village officials, sponsors and race management taking guidance from health officials regarding limiting large public gatherings to help reduce the spread of the Coronavirus.

The Thursday packet pick up at AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center Bolingbrook is also postponed.

We are working closely with village officials and sponsors to try and establish a revised event date by this Friday, March 13th, end of day. While the event will still happen this year, we want to provide you multiple options so you can choose what works best for you.

Run the postponed event:

As you are already registered for the event, your registration will automatically be transferred to the new event date and you do not need to do anything.

Run next year's (2021) event:

When we send out an email communicating the revised 2020 event date we will also include instructions for how to transfer to next year's March 14, 2021 event. Your 2021 registration will include the 2020 quarter zip up, 2021 finisher medal and 2021 finisher pint glass.

Run the virtual event:

In addition to the above options, we encourage you to race this weekend virtually. You are all trained up so you can run the distance, on your own, on a route of your choosing. Once you have completed the distance, fill out the form [HERE](#) to have your race result added to the online virtual run results board. If you run the virtual race you will still be able to run this year's postponed event or transfer to next year's event as well.



In true PSRR fashion, some of us were not willing to be stopped by a virus or postponement of a race so a group run at Waterfall Glen followed by a meal at Chuck's was organized and enjoyed.

How do I get my gear?

You will be able to pick up your gear at the packet pick up of the new event date or at the 2021 event packet pick up if you choose to run next year.

If you would like to get your quarter zip now, you can get it at Road Runner Sports, 2555 W 75th St, Naperville, IL 60540 on Sunday, March 15th from 10:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

We thank you for your understanding that in this time of uncertainty we are working to provide you with as many options as we are able.

Stay safe and happy running,

Peter Starykowicz
President
All Community Events



WATERFALL GLEN “instead of Bolingbrook” FUN RUN

#socialdistancing

#psrr



Runners in alphabetical
order:

- NYDIA BEARD
- SHELLI BLENCK
- KELLY CURIEL
- ANGELA FREEMAN
- DAMIEN MANGABHAI
- JT MARKLAND
- LORI QUIGLEY
- MARK WALKER



AND THEN...



THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

Social Distancing Or Quarantined: How Are You Spending Your Time?



RUNNER'S WORLD

How to Run Safely Amid Coronavirus Concerns



IT ALL REALLY HIT THE FAN

CHICAGO'S VERY OWN **WGN9** NEWS CORONAVIRUS WEATHER SPORTS TRAFFIC MORNING

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

All Illinois bars, dine-in restaurants will close to the public for 2 weeks due to COVID-19 concerns

TRAIL RUNNER

Go Ahead, Run Outside.

abc 7 EYEWITNESS NEWS WATCH LIVE Chicago & Suburban Cook Co.

- SHARE
- TWEET
- EMAIL

HEALTH & FITNESS

Coronavirus Illinois update: Pritzker bans gatherings of 50 or more as COVID-19 cases climb to 105

And it was changed to “No Groups of More Than 10”

...so in the spirit of social distancing and running, a group run was organized with everyone arriving separately and staying 6 feet away from one another. Even the post run breakfast was handed out “contactless” and directly from the bag at a safe distance .

Diana Gonzalez Sorich explained:

“There’s a bunch of us either retired or working from home these days due to the virus. So we gathered less than 10 to run some miles at Moose.

Dave Cyplick suggested we run the first mile of [a 25k PSRR used to have](#) and that’s what we did!

And there was cinnamon bread handed out by a fork so no one was ever in contact with anyone else.

And of course, we still needed a group pic!”

SEE [PAGE 26](#) FOR A HISTORIC LOOK AT THAT 25k.



CLUB EVENTS: Shamrock Shuffle 8k



Again, not to be denied a run, there were those who ran alone and were willing to share their shuffle with the club as well as some crazy guys in Chicago who ran it together, green body paint and all, each 6 feet apart.



Event update

STATEMENT ON THE CANCELLATION OF THE BANK OF AMERICA SHAMROCK SHUFFLE

The safety and wellbeing of our event participants, volunteers, event staff, and spectators is always our top priority. Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) and the unique impact it continues to pose to our community, we have made the decision in partnership with the City of Chicago and local public health authorities to cancel the 2020 Bank of America Shamrock Shuffle.

For more than 40 years, the Bank of America Shamrock Shuffle has been recognized as the kickoff to the outdoor running season in Chicago, welcoming runners of all abilities to enjoy a fun and healthy way to continue Chicago's St. Patrick's Day celebrations. We came to this decision mindful of our core commitment to the health and wellness for everyone in our community.

Registered runners for the 2020 Bank of America Shamrock Shuffle will receive a refund for their entry fee. We are working through all of the elements resulting from the event cancellation and are committed to providing an update to runners in 7 to 10 business days.

We are already looking forward to the 2021 Bank of America Shamrock Shuffle, which is scheduled for Sunday, March 21, 2021. Event updates and information are available at shamrockshuffle.com.

In the meantime, we encourage all of our participants, volunteers, event staff, partners and vendors to keep themselves and their loved ones safe and healthy during these unprecedented times.



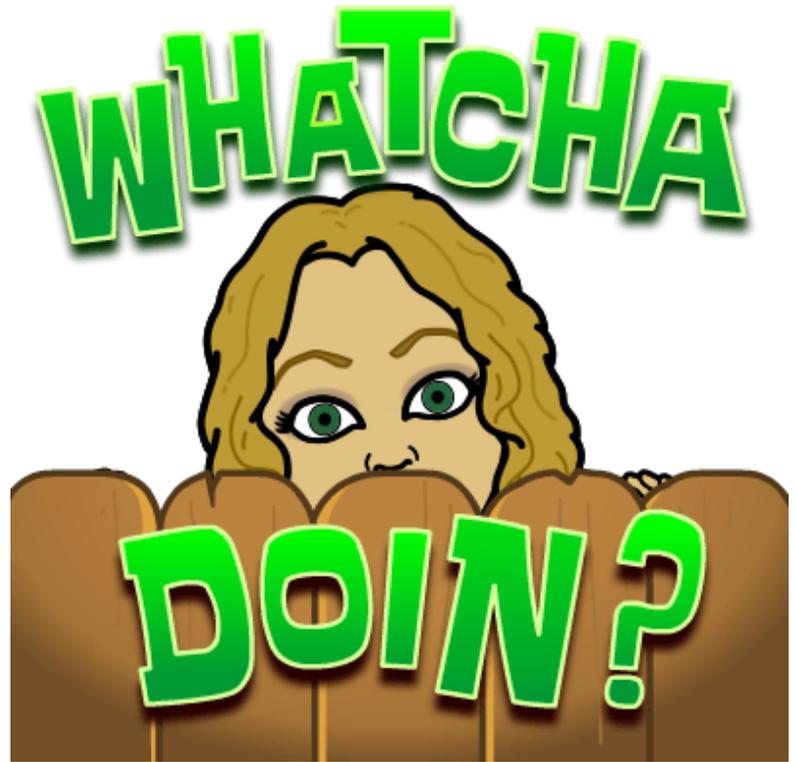
#RunningAloneTogether

Judith Warren said:

"It's no secret Shamrock Shuffle is my favorite race. It's the only race I've run every year since John and I started running. Today would have been number 11. Today WAS number 11. Ran on Salt Creek Trail. Yelled to all my fellow green-clad runners. Won my age group. Thank goodness I'm not yet moved into Eileen's!" (Skisak, whom she saw on the trail.



When worse virus news and longer sheltering-in-place came, suddenly everything got even more serious and it felt like we'd never get to run as a club again. But PSRR is not just a club, it's a family — a running family. And when life gets hard, families still touch base, give encouragement and let each other know that it will be all right again soon. So we asked our members to do just that, and this is what we heard...



Joe from Fitness Premier is sending daily You Tube videos and he has 3000 hits per day. He also signed us all up to the MY ZONE fitness videos so that keeps us busy.

Because of the hours I work I am a loner on the trails and run outside only in good weather as inclement weather is hard on the lungs, which COVID 19 is particularly hard on.

I'm also finding that this is a great time to work on my book as I have a lot to contribute to the running world and I want to share my experiences.

Check on your parents to make sure that they are ok. Many stores have seniors only hours just for them

Raymond O. Wertelka

I've still been working and so life hasn't changed a lot for me but I kept on training for my next event (a duathlon in August) by running and starting to bike when the weather got better. I'm looking forward to this being over so I can play with my friends again!

Lianne

As this is happening, I have been doing a lot of reorganizing of my apartment. I am able to still work, but things at work are ever changing. I was beginning to restart my running game but got sick first and now its shelter in place. Looking forward to when we all can began racing again. Was so looking forward to the Shamrock Shuffle.

Terrí Putnam (E-Bunny)



MARK NELSON

responded with a photo



We Are Educators. We Want To Be In School With Our Kids. We Miss You, And We Are Still Here For You.



DARCY WELSH is running and missing the kids

LAURA LOICA

responded with a photo



Greetings fellow PSRRs, and here's hoping that everyone is able to avoid the latest Great Plague aka Covid-19. This loathsome infectious agent has had massive negative impacts on too many incomes and also our planned circuit events. As of March 16, the Bolingbrook St. Paddy's Half and 5k is 'postponed' (similar to the prestigious Boston Marathon) and next the huge Shamrock Shuffle 8k - 5 miler is toast. So far, the wonderful Arboretum 10k is still on for April 19th ... though stay tuned on that one.

Probably many non-circuit races have been ruined also. Especially with Bolingbrook going down, I needed some competition to boost my undisciplined road work and had signed for a local race in Downers Grove, their 'Mustang Trot' 5k. This was an attractive, well organized flat n' fast 5k through mostly quiet side streets. Unfortunately, this morning an e-blast advised that it has joined the depressingly long list of cancellations.

After the 9-11 attacks many of us found significant comfort and solace in running. Perversely with the Plague even that relief has been taken away. Sure, the most focused club members will maintain their conditioning and form by themselves, and perhaps set up some informal races for small groups, for the happy day when the official PSRR schedule resumes. However, along the lines of "no substitute for" I'd wager that the best challenge for many of us comes from running an actual event, against the clock and other runners. This might be especially true for those prepping a ramp-up for the Chicago Marathon (here's hoping on that one). In any case...

I wish everyone well and look forward to the cessation of these dark days.

Glenn Gabryel

Our Board meeting that was scheduled for last night was cancelled. Next meeting is scheduled for April 16th.



The only new info that I'm aware of is that the Canal Cleanup that was scheduled for April 11th was also cancelled and will not take place this year.



When we do meet again, the Board will try to determine what to do regarding circuit credits given all the race cancellations.

Stay healthy and keep running!

Eva Rahn

CLUB MEMORIES: A Look Back at the National Heritage Corridor 25k Run

by Dave Cyplick

On September 23, 1990, the Prairie State Road Runners held their inaugural National Heritage Corridor 25K run on the I&M Canal towpath. Runners were bused to Stratton State Park in Morris and ran back to Channahon. The race, scheduled to start at 8:30 that morning, was delayed because not everyone was bused to the start line in time. Some runners had to drive to Morris and then arrange to be driven back to Morris after the race to retrieve their cars. At that time the bridge at the Aux Sable Creek had not been built so the runners had to maneuver their way around and then back to the towpath. Runners left the towpath at Bridge street in Channahon to work their way over to the finish line where the Frosty Five currently starts. Long time PSRR member Clint Carter was out running on the towpath the day race director Jim Hubbell and future race director Gary Moss started out from Morris and Channahon respectively to map out the 25K course. Keep in mind with no GPS back then, roughing out a course prior to getting it certified was no easy task. The logistical challenges to this point to point course led the club to use an out and back race format thereafter.

In the early 1990's, half marathons were not that common and the 25K proved to be a perfect long distance warm up race for the Chicago Marathon which was held in late October. Many runners came from Chicago to do the race and eventually Chicago Area Runner Association (CARA) Marathon training groups did the race. Hal Higdon, long time Runners World contributor and author of many books on running did the race with his son Kevin, several times. Kevin Higdon won the race at least once during the early years. In his book *Marathon-The Ultimate Training and Racing Guide* (second edition) Hal talks about Marathon running as well as other long races. He said "Among my favorite runs are two 25K races: the popular Old Kent River Bank Run (now Amway River Bank Run) in Grand Rapids, Michigan in May and a lesser-known race along the banks of the Illinois and Michigan Canal in Channahon, Illinois in September.

From 1991 through 1995, Gary Moss was the race director. The race started where the Frosty Five starts and made its way to the towpath via Bridge Street in Channahon. From there, it continued out to McClindon Road and then turned left

and went another mile or so to the turnaround point and then back to Channahon. There were 3 to 4 water stops which the runners could use in each direction. The race grew rapidly in popularity and had more than 500 runners by 1995. Gary had authentic Native American hand-made items such as dream-catchers, dance sticks and deer-skin as age group race awards.

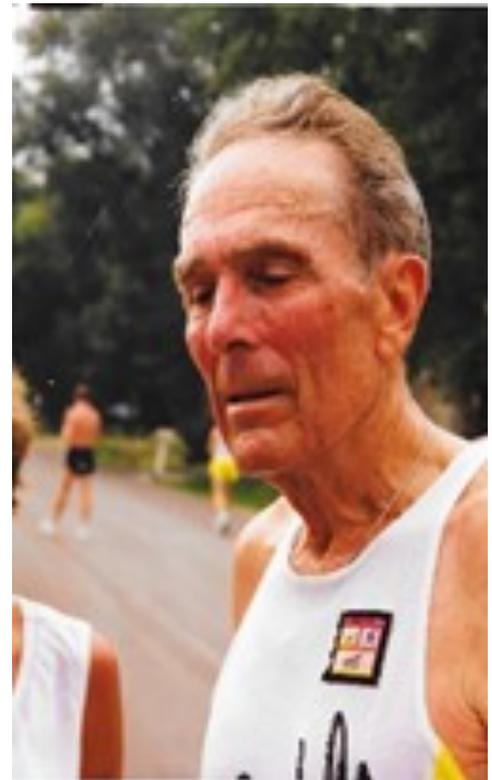
By 1995, Gary Moss had moved to Geneva and Dave Cyplick and Gary Westefer took over as 25K race directors for the 1996 through 1998 races. John Collett, who had ran at North Central College, (and is still a superb runner) held the men's record and Wileen (Willie) Gausmann who had ran at Lewis, set the course record for the ladies of 1:34:15. 1996 was a great year for Illinois runners as Jenny Spangler from Gurnee won the Olympic Marathon Trials and a total of 11 Illinois females ran in the Trials. Two of the qualifiers, Nany Rollins and Charlene Soby, nearly set National age group records at the 1997 25K.

1997 wound up being the peak year for participation in the 25K as 782 runners signed up. That number was close to capacity for the course as we had runners going in both directions on the towpath once they completed the stretch on McClindon Road and came back on the path. At this point, we needed approximately 450 gallons of water and Gatorade plus 75 volunteers to support the course. The Troy Middle School Cross Country team under the direction of John Davis, handled one of the water stops for many years. We also had help from the Joliet West Girls Cross Country team and the Minooka High School teams at various times. The following pictures were taken on Joliet Street just west of Pioneer Path School (Frosty Five), the first picture close to the start and the second one at the finish line.





In 1997, the greatest age group runner in U.S. history, Warren Utes, from Park Forest, ran the 25K. Warren ultimately accumulated 54 U.S. and World age group records and undoubtedly would have set more except for the requirement that he be timed by at least 3 timers for a record to be validated. I had spoken to Warren about 4 weeks before the race and he indicated he would be glad to run if he felt OK after running the Park Forest Scenic Ten Miler on Labor Day. Warren was 77 years old at the time and wanted to set a National age group record at the Scenic 10 which was directed by his son-in-law, Bud James. He shattered the Scenic 10 record and he proceeded to go after the 25K record. He ran the race in 1:52:57, a 7:15 per mile pace. That record still stands in the USATF record book and was a faster pace than the world record for a half marathon by a 75-79 year old. The picture of Warren below was taken shortly after he finished the race. Warren came back and ran when he turned 80, but we weren't able to validate that one.



Mary Jones directed the 25K in 1999 and 2000. In 1999, the men's course record was broken by Greg Lyons, who ran 1:21:35. The second place finisher, Bob Cisler, also broke the old course record with 1:22:49. It was awesome to be working the first water stop and to see the lead runners flying by and then the thundering herd of runners passing through the area on the towpath where the bridge that connects to Moose Island was later built. For the year 2000, the race started and ended by Arrowhead Park in Channahon. We ran towards Rockdale on the towpath with the turnaround being just east of Larkin Avenue. That course was utilized through 2005.



The 2001 race started out with very promising preregistration. It looked like we might have gotten close to or surpassed the 782 runners we had in 1997. Then came the national tragedy of 9/11. Only about 350 of the 444 runners that had preregistered to that point came out for the race. Race Director Jeff Biggs had to place the order for race shirts not being sure what was going to happen. In succeeding years right through 2005, our runner count started to decline as other fall races started up. The Chicago Half Marathon held in September was probably our biggest single problem as many Chicago runners started to do that race rather than the 25k.

Carol Walters directed the 25K in 2002 and 2003. Carol was an excellent runner that ran on the Lucent Technologies Corporate track team for several years and convinced a group of us to head up to Duluth Minnesota to run in Grandma's Marathon in 2002. The 2002 25K was run in very hot conditions and the runners were in rough shape when they crossed the finish line. By 2003, only 379 runners ran the race.

The highlight of the 2003 race was the appearance of Wilson Chepchuwuny from Eldoret, Kenya. Wilson was training for the Chicago Marathon and staying at the home of one of the CARA members. The night before the race he had his first pizza. Apparently, the pizza didn't give him indigestion as he ran the race in a course record 1:18:32.

Mary Jones was back as race director in 2004. The race was the second highest rated CARA race that year and was well received by the runners. Unfortunately, there just weren't enough of them. That led to 2005 when Mary and I directed the race. We had a total of 271 runners that year and took a loss of nearly \$2,000 on the race. The 2005 race was the National Championship 25K for Clydesdale runners.

We decided to discontinue the 25K at that point, realizing that too much competition in the fall no longer made the race viable.

In 2006, we began to hear about Moose Island in Channahon being acquired by the Will County Forest Preserve District. Eventually, we started to think about trying to bring back the 25K in the spring. We even floated the idea of the club putting on a spring Marathon (we only had Chicago at that time) but the problem was that we would be limited by the capacity of the towpath to about 800 runners.



In 2008, we brought back the 25K. It started by the Dow Pavilion, which is the bigger pavilion closer to the Four Rivers Environmental and Educational Center. The race then went over the bridge and out on Blackberry Lane to Bridge Street where we crossed the Canal and turned right at the Bridge street parking lot. From there the rest of the race was on the towpath. The turnaround point was roughly 1.5 miles west

of McClindon road and the finish line about 50 feet from the bathroom where our club picnic is held.

The weather for the 2008 25K was not great. The temperature was about 34 degrees and rainy. About 240 people signed up for the race and maybe 150 showed up. That did not bode well for future years of the race. From 2009-2011, we never had more than 200 runners sign up and we had about 120 runners by 2011 and decided to pull the plug on the race permanently. We did try everything possible to promote the race including ads in Chicago Athlete, race brochures passed out at races like March Madness Half Marathon in Cary and the Western Springs 10K. Facebook Ads, which are great for races weren't an option at that time. Here is a link to a video we did for the 2011 race. It was produced by my son in law, TJ. My daughter Amy is the runner. <https://vimeo.com/16487550>

One story worth sharing from 2009 - I reached out to the Art Department at Minooka High School to see if someone would draw a shirt design for the race. The teacher had the perfect person and they would get right on it. A couple of weeks later, the

teacher called me and said the student wouldn't be able to complete the project. The student had done something that would not allow them to represent the school. The teacher told me don't worry, I have a replacement artist lined up. The end product was a drawing of the locktender's house in Channahon that looked like a haunted house. That was a far different shirt design than the well-done shirt from 2010-2011 that hung proudly at Lallo's until they relocated to their present location.

As I look back and reminisce a little about the 25K and think about the superb reputation it had in the Chicago area for many years, I remember Becky Criscione, one of all-time greats (she won her Chicago Marathon age group by 20 minutes) say to me after seeing cars parked just about everywhere before the race something like "Wow- it's hard to be believe that a club our size can actually do this". But we could do it due to the tremendous number of club volunteers along with our families and the running community. That's my best memory of this race!



TRAVELIN' PSRR

Before almost everything in life got

CANCELLED

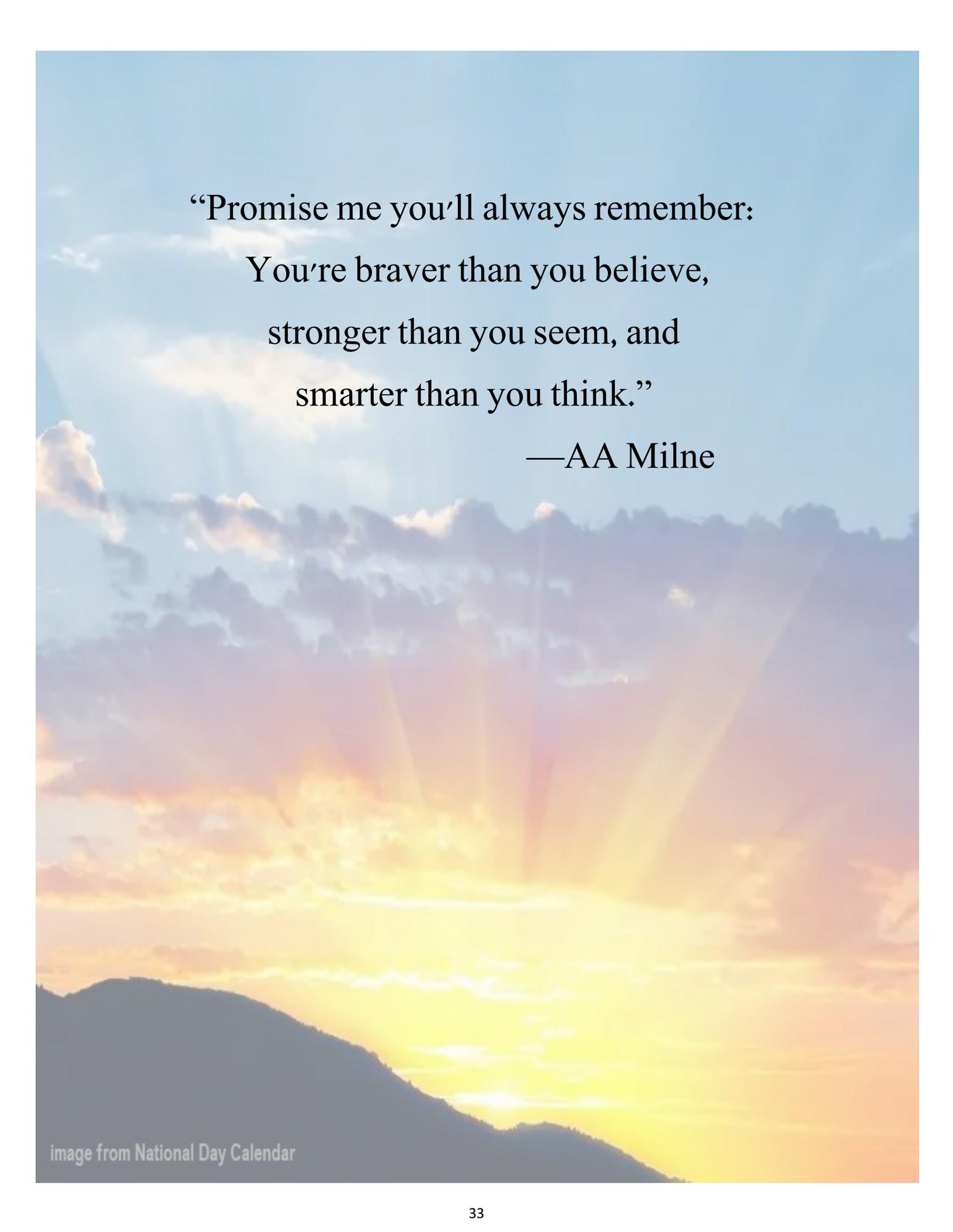
a couple of us managed to go on a trip

LIANNE HOLLOWAY in Playa del Carmen, Mexico



CATHY MORMAN at Bernheim Arboretum in Kentucky

Show off your club gear and/or send your race photos to us at this [link](#). Then come back and find them here!

A sunset over a mountain range. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright yellow and orange glow. Rays of light break through the clouds, creating a dramatic effect. The sky transitions from a deep blue at the top to a warm orange near the horizon. The mountains in the foreground are silhouetted against the bright light.

“Promise me you’ll always remember:
You’re braver than you believe,
stronger than you seem, and
smarter than you think.”

—AA Milne