

A word from the editor--

1. *Hello, everyone.*

Here's the first of what I hope to be a long series of ACRR newsletters. I want to thank everyone who gave of their time and creativity to contribute a story for this issue. I want to thank Kevin Sweeny for coining the newsletter moniker a couple of years ago. And I want to thank Jay Floyd for making the move to resurrect this publication.

My goal with this newsletter is to showcase the wonderful variety of people and interests and voices that make up our club. Our website is probably the best place to get a "real time" portrait of our club, but this newsletter is the place to get more of a "let's sit down and talk" portrait. I truly hope that you enjoy reading these articles as much as I have.

And I truly hope that you will be inspired to contribute a story yourself in the future. Two of the features in this issue--"In Her/His Shoes" and "Cross-training Corner," I'd like to make regular features. I know that we have many people in the club who cross-train in various ways, and everyone is worthy of being profiled. Even as you read this issue, you can be thinking of what you'd like to see in the next issue.

Please enjoy. And don't hesitate to send me feedback, either by e-mailing me at jburdan@att.net or posting on the bulletin board. I'm open to suggestions and to volunteer authors.

Regards,

Judith

The Loop

Ancient City Road Runners

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A Little Matanzas 5K Q&A

What happens in St Augustine every 4th Saturday in January? The Matanzas 5000 race, an annual event for the last 28 years, draws an eclectic group of runners, walkers, and spectators from all over the country. The race course provides its participants a picturesque view of our historic city.

Give us a short history? Almost 30 years ago, the city leaders needed a group to sponsor this run through town. The call was answered by a small running group led by Don Hollingsworth. From this came the Ancient City Road Runners (ACRR), and since then, the club has grown to over 200 members with its main mission promoting healthy living within St. Johns County and beyond.

What about today's Matanzas? Its reputation as one of Florida's premier 3.1 mile certified road races has made it a mainstay for local as well as national runners, with over 1300 finishers this year. Runners prepare with both personal PRs and potential money prizes in mind as incentives. Most of all, better health habits are an ACRR goal for area residents.

What other events are included? In addition to the 5K there is a Fun Run. This Fun Run is headed up by Jaime Bacari from The St Johns County Recreation Department, our co-sponsor, and supported by Danita Thomas Heagy, a local chiropractor. A few hundred enjoy this one mile walk/run to get children under 13 started on a healthy pathway in life. Also,

on this day is our giveaway of great door prizes. These give every Matanzas entrant a chance to be a winner. Prizes range from cruises to jewelry to gift certificates.



Race Director Judy Neville

How is the Matanzas run? The race is totally supported by donated work hours from ACRR members and financial sponsorships from the local community. The Ancient City Road Runners' membership is the race's mainstay, working year round in preparation for this great event.

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There She Blows...

To say the Gate River Run was windy is an understatement. There were gusts up to 40 mph and continual gale the entire run. When asked before the race what my pace would be, I replied, "When the wind is behind me I'll run fast, when it isn't, I will be standing still." And I was accurate.

After 60+ ACRR members met in the library parking lot, we caravanned to the stadium. The lines were remarkably long at every venue-traffic, potties, running corrals.

The start was calm enough, but around the sixth turn headed to the

Main Street Bridge, a wind gust pushed me 5 feet to the right. Everyone around me looked shellshocked. After a quick body assessment, we started forward again. It was wild. The waves in San Marco were at least four feet high and provided a chilling spray. The usual Wendy's frosty blow-up was missing, along with most of the mile markers—lying down due to the wind. Pacing was comical, coasting one street and battling the wind the next.

I knew the bridge would be a factor, but when I heard a cop say, "Watch your spacing, it's bad up

there," I was concerned. And, rightly so. A vortex comes to mind; both heading up and down the Hart Bridge I was pushed, pulled, swirled, and assaulted by the wind's velocity.

The down and into the stadium finish offered little consolation to the 9.3 mile run; I liked the old finish better myself. The best part was meeting everyone back at the Southwest Airplane for a recount of the race; the most common word? Windy. But still, most of us P.R.'ed even with the outrageous conditions!

—Jessica Born

Upcoming Races:

- Vilano Bridge 5K, 17 May 2008 at 8.00am
- Mickler Mile, 26 May 2008 at 7.30 am
- Neighborhoods at WGV 5K, 7 June 2008 at 8.00am
- OE&S Run for the Pies, 14 June 2008 at 8.00 pm.

Check out ancientcityrr.org for details.

Matanzas, continued...

Funding is also essential, and we couldn't run this race without the financial support of the local business leaders who generously support us each year. Besides financial support the ACRR believe that giving back to the community is important. As they benefit from Matanzas, each St Johns County HS School provides student athletes that volunteer their time and energy on race weekend.

Best Thing/Worst Thing? The best thing would be the way all the volunteers work together to provide a huge amount of

positive energy so that every runner, walker, or spectator considers the Matanzas Race a great one. The ACRR want the "perfectly run race" with everyone who came planning to return with better fitness and personal goals for the next year.

As for the worst thing, it is definitely the unpredictability of "the weather." This year it rained, but it didn't dampen our participation.

—Mary Ann Andrews and Judy Neville



Spotlight on the ACRR Running Camp

Our Next Hash Run
is Coming Soon!!!



Watch
ancientcityrr.org for

In March, 2006, Justin Taylor—a long-time ACRR member, six-time state champion, and member of the UF Cross Country and Track team—came home for spring break and encouraged the ACRR to have a summer running camp for middle school and high school students. The club leadership agreed that this would be a worthy project since the ACRR already had a considerable investment in the local high school running programs.

Several devoted club members rallied behind the project and brought a wealth of knowledge and experience to the camp. The counselors and volunteers were past collegiate runners from UF, Duke, UMass, FSU, Flagler, and SCAD. Also,

two guest speakers who have coached several team and individual state champions added to the campers' experience.

The camp, now gearing up for its third year, is broken into two commingled topics. The first is the five core running values that each participant can apply to running and everyday life. The second is the periodization of training over the course of a season.

The 2008 camp runs from July 7-12 from 2PM to 6PM at the Holiday Inn on Anastasia Island. For more information, email Todd Neville at todd@twncpas.com.

—Todd Neville

In Her Shoes...

...as in the saying "you can't understand someone unless you run a mile..." Leah Beck is our featured club member for this issue

Leah, tell us a little about yourself. I was born and grew up in Jacksonville. It was rough at times but my posse at St. Mathews (the Purple Unicorns) had my back.

I understand you went to an arts school. Yeah, I went to Douglas Anderson where I took curriculums in both theatre and dance. It was an awesome school. My husband David (who's the interviewer for this profile) teases me that it must have been like that show "Fame" where everyone is dancing on the tables at lunch.

After DA you went on to UNF? I went right to college at UNF which was really cool. It was where I met David.

So how did you end up in Saint Augustine?

The opportunity to take over a book of insurance business here in Saint Augustine came along. It was unbelievable because I had always said that I wanted to retire in Saint Augustine. I guess we just got here a little early.

You are one fine woman. How do you do it? Oh, stop. I am just trying to stay in shape along with David so we can enjoy a long healthy

life together. At our wedding, the song



"Grow Old with Me" from John Lennon was played, and we won't get very old if we are in bad health.

I understand that you have lost a little weight since running with the ACRR. That is supposed to be a total secret; 20 pounds.

What is your next running goal? I am trying to break 30 minutes for a 5K, and I am signed up for the half marathon in San Antonio. The 30 minutes may not sound very fast, but running is relative. As long as I feel good and continue to progress, I am happy. I did have the chance to run the Gate River Run this year, and that is the longest race I have ever participated in. It was tough, but I loved it.

—David Beck

The Cross-training Corner

Cross-training is any exercise that supplements your main sport—in this case, running. Whether you're a beginner or an experienced marathoner, you can benefit from cross-training. In my opinion, there are three reasons why runners should cross-train: injury prevention, muscular balance, and improved performance. As a personal trainer, one of my favorite forms of cross training is strength training. In correct dosages, the benefits can be enormous.

Correct strength training will assist in the prevention of injuries, increase muscle endurance, and strengthen weak

joints and muscles. It will also minimize fatigue in the upper body, allowing you to run farther for longer. The aim of any good strength training program is to help maintain and develop one's body to deal with the stress of running. For example, the strengthening of your upper body is essential for hilly courses and bridges, and it is most beneficial for maintaining rhythm when your legs begin to fatigue.

A great amount of drive can be generated from your arms when climbing hills or attacking bridges like the Hart Bridge in the Gate River Run. Dumbbell and barbell curls, pull-ups, military presses,

chin ups, bench press, and rowing are excellent exercise for building upper body strength.

Whatever your goal might be, it is safe to say that a well-rounded strength training program for the lower body, upper body, and trunk is the ticket to better performance and injury prevention.

—Cindy Treaster, Certified Personal Trainer, Real Women Lift, LLC



“There are three reasons why runners should cross-train: injury prevention, muscular balance, and improved performance.”

We runners are all pleasantly addicted to the sport and the invigorating, rejuvenating sense it gives our physical and mental well being. Being the zealous lot we are, our running can introduce imbalances in the body, and sometimes we get sidelined with injury. Common running injuries and complaints are tightness of hamstrings, calves, achilles tendon, back pain, knees, sore feet, and plantar fasciitis. Getting sidelined can and does usually affect our relationships with others and the inner (almighty) ego, causes physical pain, and impatience, and we begin to bore our friends with our latest injury updates and on-going cures and bargains with our bodies.

Yoga and running are a great marriage of strength and flexibility. I would like to introduce to you only one pose (asana) which our streamlined, efficient running minds can benefit from. This asana is the panacea of yogic cross-training. It will stretch the entire backside of the body, especially shoulders, arms, hips, hamstrings, calves, achilles tendon, and feet. It strengthens the hands, arms, and upper body, opens the chest and improves breathing. This overall body stretch removes fatigue and rejuvenates the body. It lengthens the spine and decompresses the spinal discs. It greatly increases circulation to the brain by

counteracting gravity.

Here you go: DOWNWARD FACING DOG, or in sanskrit, Adho Mukha Svana-sana (down-face-dog)!!

1. Start in kneeling position with hands placed slightly forward from the shoulders. Hands shoulder width apart, knees hip width apart. Spread the fingers wide and press into the outer and inner edges of the hands to straighten the arms and lift upward out of the shoulders.
2. Curl your toes under and lift the knees (keeping them bent), press into your hands, and lift the pelvis upward. Knees remain bent as you slowly push the hands into the floor and extend your arms and torso back and upward, tip the pelvis upward, keep the arms straight by pressing the elbows in towards one another to keep extending (not rounding) your spine to its full length.
3. Continue breathing smoothly and deeply into your stretch. Soften behind your heart center between the shoulder blades. Keep your head relaxed downward; you're looking at your legs and feet.
4. As you exhale, begin straightening the legs; then contract the fronts of the thighs and lifting the kneecaps. Press the upper thigh bones back to help spread the buttocks. You are building a relationship

between your legs and your spine. Keep pushing evenly into the full palm, stretching the fingers straight and tip your pelvis upward. Let your heels descend to the floor. Maintain the length between the hands and feet.

5. Breathe softly as you relax, physically holding the pose 30-60 seconds

6. To release, come down to your hands and knees, keeping the arms extended and press the pelvis back towards your heels to relax into child's pose—invite the breath into your back ribcage. Repeat two more times!!

For some variations, try “walking” your dog by bending one knee and stretching the opposite heel downward as you walk in place. You can also try slowly extending one leg upward by pressing outward through the center of your lifted heel till your leg is even with your pelvis.

The great yoga innovator and teacher BKS Iyengar states, “Approach your yoga with passion of an artist, the precision of a scientist and the love of a philosopher.” Keep harmony in your body and in your mind!! When we are in balance and harmony, we run great, feel great, and look great! Namaste, Yogis.

—Peggy Bliss



Ancient City Road Runners

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Volunteer Coordinator	Peggy Bliss
Club Merchandise	Jay Decker
Floatmeister	Fred Schmidt

The **Ancient City Road Runners** are runners just like you who meet several times a week to... run. Fortunately, club members also tend to meet and gather for the social aspect, which is so well-deserved after spending so much time hitting the pavement together. **We run hard, and have fun!**

The ACRR started in 1982 when some like-minded people saw the need for a running club in our city. The club's constitution states:

"The prime object of this association shall be the promotion and encouragement of long distance running and the education of the public to its benefits."

This still rings true today as we volunteer our services in the timing and management of local races like the **Matanzas 5K**, raise money for St. Johns County high-school track and cross-country teams, and hold a running camp each summer.

ancientcityrr.org

And Now a Word From Our President...

I'm tired of reading the "why-I-run" articles. I think it's time for a "**why-I-don't-stop-running**" perspective instead. Admit it. All of us have suffered injury, sickness, fatigue, and/or burn-out to the extent that we wonder why we don't simply stop running. "Rest heals all," right?! Well if that's true, I wonder why I don't stop doing what is apparently making my knees hurt on a fairly regular basis. Here's why:

I won't stop running because I don't want flat-butt syndrome caused by too many hours sitting at a desk and too few hours out on the road. I see much of that in my profession.

I won't stop running because I don't want to feel guilty about drinking that

200 calorie beer at Henley's. Sure, light beers are not as bad for you, but the taste of a frosty Harp is compelling liquid entertainment. I want to be able to drink that Harp and know that those calories will be put to good use.

I won't stop running because it is now ingrained in my mind and body that anything short of a 20-mile week is failure. I would rather contend with aches and pains than the guilt-ridden psyche of a man clinging to his youth while staring at middle-age from an ever decreasing distance.

I won't stop running because doing so would mean giving in to the bulk of our society that has apparently found better things to do with its time. Life is not

meant to be lived in the Wii environment. We need to get out there. We need to "do things." We have this body for a reason. Otherwise, God would have given us an amoebic physical existence as a container for the mental self.

Finally, I won't stop running because doing so would mean I wouldn't see my fellow Road Runners. I wouldn't sweat with them or celebrate a race with them. I wouldn't hear women cursing like a sailor and men crying like a baby. And I wouldn't have an audience for my corny jokes!! I would miss all of that!

—Jay Floyd