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January/February 2011 Newsletter Vol. 27 Issue 1

President's Message

A new decade has arrived and who's not grateful? Political issues aside, for the runners it's better than ever. Has anyone ever been aware of more races? Granted, some of them are not the most professionally organized but they still present a start line and hopefully an accurate course. The days of two weeks between races have certainly gone by the wayside. A runner may choose to run a race within a short distance of their house every weekend. This dilutes the number of runners at any given race so directors are struggling to offer something unique to the runner to attract them to their race.

That brings us to OUR races. While others struggle to attract a hundred or more, with luck, the club races almost to a race sell out. It is not an accident. When a runner enters an LVRR event they know they will be treated to a dead-on accurate course with plenty of amenities, usually including good eats and a good value for their entrance fee. Keep this in mind as the

Emmaus 4 Miler will also be sold out shortly.

The Club would like to offer grateful thanks to Nancy Hofmann who headed South Mountain 10 Miler for the past 14 years. Race directors are as scarce as "hen teeth." Nancy hung in for those fourteen years and provided runners with one of the most unique running experiences in the valley. It will be a tough act to follow.

Next up on the club's racing calendar is Super Bowl, but sorry, as you read this it is already sold out, one more proof that your club produces races that are in demand. To offer further proof of this, by the time you receive this news letter the club's premier event, St. Luke's Half Marathon may be sold out as well. This is only accomplished by the HUGE group of club volunteers who step up to help the club continue to offer the financial support to the large number of youth groups we aid.



You don't often think of major innovative things coming out of Allentown, particularly in the area of physical fitness, but consider this: the first triathlon held east of the Mississippi, the first race in the nation to go totally paper-free, the first race to have competitors' names on the bibs, the first race in the nation to bus spectators to points on the course. Not bad for a small regional club that also happens to be one of the very few clubs that has its own property.

We hope you will attend one of the remaining Happy Hours at our club house, you know you have been getting mega messages about them, stop by and meet some new people and reacquaint with someone from past races.



As always, Good Running,
Neal

RACE CALENDAR January / February / March 2011

Sunday, 1/2/11, 11:00 a.m.

Shiver By The River # 2, 10K & 5K

Jim Dietrich Park, Muhlenberg Twp.

Reading, PA

Contact: Sue Jackson

610-779-6556

sjackson@fes.com

Sunday, 1/16/11, 11:00 a.m.

5th Annual Chilly Cheeks 7.25M Trail Run

Reading, PA

Contact: Ron Horn

610-779-2668

rhornpcs@aol.com

Sunday, 2/6/11, 10:30 a.m.

LVRR Super Bowl 10K

Lehigh Parkway, Allentown, PA

Contact: Carly Patterson

www.lvrr.org

Sunday, 2/6/11, 11:00 a.m.

Shiver By The River # 3, 10K & 5K

Jim Dietrich Park, Muhlenberg Twp.

Reading, PA

Contact: Sue Jackson

610-779-6556

sjackson@fes.com

Sunday, 2/27/11, 11:00 a.m.

8th Annual Ugly Mudder 7.25M Trail Run

Reading, PA

Contact: Ron Horn

610-779-2668

rhornpcs@aol.com

Saturday, 3/5/11, 9:00 a.m.

Rotary Run for Youth 4M & 10M Races

Quakertown, PA

Contract: Bill Tuszynski

267-374-1631

[wtuszynski@verizon.net](mailto:w tuszynski@verizon.net)

Sunday, 3/6/11, 11:00 a.m.

Shiver By The River # 4, 10K & 5K

Jim Dietrich Park, Muhlenberg Twp.

Reading, PA

Contact: Sue Jackson

610-779-6556

sjackson@fes.com

Saturday, 3/19/11, 9:00 a.m.

Run To Live 8K

Whitehall, PA

Contact: Sharon Geroulo

610-704-5655

sgeroulo@yahoo.com

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TRY Chips by Laurie Reinhart

As I discussed in my last newsletter article, my experiences in the past year with endurance running and nutrition have lead me back to real food and away from snack and tech food for training and racing In Oct, while these things were fresh on my mind, I was doing a 26-mile trail run in Lock Haven, PA and bumped into Tim and Jackie, who I had met a year and a half before doing the 42-mile Black Forest Trail in Tioga. Perhaps, my favorite mountain running experience.

While we were catching up, Tim handed me a pouch of dried fruit and asked me to TRY it. I delighted in the crunchy, fruity sweet snack as Tim told me how he and his friend Jerry developed the product, they were calling TRY CHIPS. He explained an experience, parallel to mine, where they were becoming increasingly active and not happy about consuming all the junky fuel.

Recognizing that fresh, whole food isn't convenient they created a natural, nutrient packed "action snack" infused with antioxidants and other phytochemicals. They took this seriously as they traveled the world to tropical fruit farms and personally investigated the growth and processing of their ingredients. The result is a great-tasting healthy and convenient snack unlike anything I've seen.

Tim, Jackie and Jerry are promoting their TRY CHIPS at racing events big and small. They have made generous donations to LVRR's First Strides, attended our November

Chili Cook off and will be at our St Luke's Half marathon expo, pasta dinner and race. You can purchase and learn more about TRY Chips at www.trychips.com and on Facebook. Also, keep an eye out for them at retailers. I will surely be munching, stocking and selling them at my office.



Running My Way Back by Amanda Westphal Radcliffe

I haven't run in weeks. Four and half to be exact. My last run was the day before surgery, and I knew at the time to treasure it. I ran eight divine miles through the horse farms, just beginning to burst with spring color, near my home. Knowing what was coming, I enjoyed every step of putting foot to earth, moving through space and time by my own power, a strong body and stronger will combining to make me feel momentarily invincible.

Over a month has passed since bilateral mastectomies and breast reconstruction. It was a monster of a surgery, and I think only because of my years of running, do I feel that a short walk right now is even possible, not to mention, the highlight of my day. My doctor says I'm his miracle patient, healing quickly, and surprising each of the three surgeons who worked on me. Unable to stand up straight or raise and swing my arms, struggling to make it through the day without a nap, and feeling as though someone has taken a

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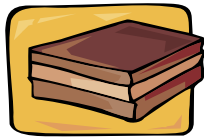
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staple gun to my midsection, doesn't feel very miraculous to me right now. What's with the staple gun remark you ask? My reconstructive choice was a "free flap" which means I had a hip to hip incision to remove fat from my abdomen in order to create new breast "mounds." Who knew the technical term was a "mound?" So now I have mounds, not breasts, interesting. I just keep checking them out and thinking of all the brownies I ate so I'd have enough mutton for my new "mounds." Mission accomplished, size A achieved! I'm not greedy and there are only so many brownies a small gal can eat.



As a fellow runner, you may know the lottery for entry to the New York City Marathon was April 7th, I sure did. Every year, over 100,000 marathon hopefuls compete for 30,000 precious race bibs through an open lottery. With surgery scheduled for the 13th, I'd been holding on to the lottery as an emotional anchor, the one thing that would make everything else okay. I wasn't scared of four inch radioactive needles stuck in my breasts, thirteen hours of anesthesia, cancer, or the surgical results of an armpit, breast, and abdomen operation. Bring it all on I thought. But please oh please, let me get one spot in the lottery! I've run that great race three times, entered the lottery four, but never gotten in, always "buying" an entry

through running for charity. A little luck would be a good omen, a bib earned this way would mean good fortune in all things. I needed that.

The email from the New York Road Runners, the organization that runs the race, arrived. I didn't get in. Again. I sobbed like a baby. I'm no psychologist, but I think the official term for it is "transference". I whined to my friends, which I knew was a mistake, because with all that was to come, their common reply was, "Say what?" No one understands the psychosis of serious runners.

Surgery came and went and was successful. I have to say, six days in the hospital with a morphine button in my hand wasn't all that bad. Coming home has been a bit more of a challenge with difficult days spent in bed, followed by the busy life of work, three children, home and family creeping in faster than I can physically handle. The commode, walker, and step stool are now gone, but there's a long way to go before I can run freely and painlessly through those beautiful fields again. I can see them in the distance from my kitchen window, tears sometimes streaming down my face. Recovery, in my mind, will come only when I can run again. More transference? Hey, at least I'm consistent.

Friends can be true angels and in an act of exceptional

kindness one of mine phoned her brother in law, who happens to work for ING, the company that sponsors the New York Marathon. Now, I know that ING doesn't just give away prized race bibs, but somehow this dear friend, through her equally dear brother in law, found me a bib for the November 7 Marathon. My thank you note was filled with so many ridiculous clichés of how much it meant to me, I'm certain it's been forwarded to the proper authorities, and the men with white coats will be arriving momentarily to collect me.



We all have something by which we define ourselves. Something that makes us feel our honest best with the deepest connection to only ourselves, knowing the furthest extent of our abilities, and the dim reality of our limitations, but making us feel totally whole nonetheless. I never knew that for me, it was running. It took taking it away from me for me to truly realize it. I may not get my breasts back, but I will get my running back. I can't run today and probably not for a few more weeks, but I know in my heart I'll be crossing the finish line in Central Park on November 7. I can go from nothing, to something, and build it to 26.2, starting with the farms just outside my



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window. It will take a lot of work to get there, but I know I can do it. My love for running, that divine feeling of moving through space and time by the force of my own strength and will, can bring me and my mounds to the finish line this year. There, momentarily invincible and medaled, I'll still be changed but also the same, just what I've always been, a runner, and truly whole again.

A Day for Youth at the Habitat 5K

It was a good day to be young on Saturday November 27 at the Quakertown Rotary's Habitat for Humanity 5K at Quakertown United Methodist Church (QUMC). Seven of the first ten male runners were 21 or under, led by 20 year old Timothy Coyle who won in a very fast 17:32. Quakertown high schooler Colin McLaughlin (15) was second in 17:49 while Mike Musiowski (20) edged Elias Wetzel (35) for third with both being clocked

in 17:54. Young women ruled as well with Megan Hutchinson (24) finishing 11th overall in 19:03, besting 19 year old Marie McKenna (20:54). Janet Lewis, daughter of QUMC's Senior Pastor Nancy Ross, captured third overall in 21:20. Other members of QUMC's parish family were represented with Assistant Pastor Josh Meyer (91st in 28:100 and his new wife Kim (65th in 25:35 and first in her age group) also participating.



Habitat Board President Scott Belveal and his family participated in the run. Scott, Carolyn and their two children, Catherine and Scottie all ran the 5K with Scott, Catherine and Scottie all winning awards in their age groups. They were joined by Family Program Co-Director Stefanie Clark who pushed her three children in a

stroller aided by her sister Emily Litschi.

Colonial Avenue homeowner Judy volunteered as part of her sweat equity hours and served as official starter for the 201 runners and walkers who took part. The race is organized by members of the Quakertown Rotary Club with support from Quakertown United Methodist Church and with the help of volunteers from the Bux-Mont Running Club. The race also depends on the generous support of sponsors such as Visionetics Hearing and Optical, QNB, ING Financial, Ivanhoe Industries, Physical Therapy and Wellness of Quakertown, Born To Run Running Store, Sal's Pizza Randa, Quakertown Italian Deli (Q-Mart), The Chocolate Factory (Trumbauersville), Eagles' Peak Water, Bucks Bagels, The Spinnerstown Hotel and St Luke's Hospital Quakertown.

Full race results are at www.peakrace.com & top 30 finishers are listed on page 14. Photos from the race are posted at www.flickr.com.

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'Cross' Training by Chris Garges

Recently there has been a lot of good press about Cyclocross, and in my opinion it is deservedly so. Furthermore, it's no secret that cross training is a valuable tool for not only runners but for anyone. Swimming, biking, yoga and strength training can all be used to enhance your running

Your God gives you a mind, a body
and a soul. We should exercise
and develop all three.



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ability as well as overall fitness. But is cyclocross a valuable cross training tool and is it FUN?

Those were the prominent questions in my mind leading up to my first race in November 2008. I had been running for nearly 10 years completing 5k through marathon distance races. I had recently picked up cycling and tried some multisport events so I figured I was ready to try something new.



Photo by Dennis Smith

But first off, what is cyclocross? I like to call it the cycling equivalent of cross country running....grass, gravel, mud, hills and obstacles. The races are generally high aerobic intensity, 40 to 50 minutes in duration and the courses are generally 1.5-2.5K (1 to 1.5 miles). The bikes generally look like road bikes with some knobby tires and greater mud clearance. There really are no set standards on how to navigate the course, for instance if you come upon an obstacle, hop off the bike and run. Theoretically could run the whole course if you wanted to, but you'd have a hard time carrying your bike for 40 minutes!

I was lucky enough to find a used cyclocross bike on Craigslist and I was on my

way. I raced the Philadelphia Marathon on November 23, 2008 and immediately signed up for the PA State Cyclocross Championships on November 29 at Jordan Park in Allentown...a mere 6 days post marathon! I asked around and got some pointers, but I was pretty green.

It was a windy, cold pre-winter day. The gun went off and my heart rate skyrocketed, my tongue was dragging the whole way around the course, but I had this smile on my face that you could not miss. I felt like a kid again, like it shouldn't even be legal for an adult to have this much fun. I mean really, a bike made to carry you over whatever you throw at it, a course made of plastic posts, tape & imagination and a bunch of guys (and ladies) throwing elbows at each other trying to see who can go the fastest without hitting the dirt. Bring back any memories? Now throw some mud in there...you got yourself a real party.

I found the answers to my questions and needless to say I was hooked. I no longer run a marathon in the fall, the fall is now dedicated to cyclocross. It has proved to be a great cross trainer that refreshes the mind and the legs.

This fall I organized my first event just south of Bethlehem. Next year I hope to combine a running event with the

cyclocross race as well. Get some runners to ride and some riders to run. Keep your eye on www.townhallcross for more information regarding the 2011 event in October. If you would like any more information about cyclocross racing, training, courses or the bikes feel free to email me at garges329@yahoo.com

Please Excuse My Ignorance by Michele Sosnowski

Yes, you read it right....my ignorance!! I will explain. But let's start here--I just read one of the most inspiring and well-written books I have read in a LONG time. Now don't get me wrong, I am not a big reader or particularly fast reader, due to my poor eyesight; however, I could not put this book down and read it in about 3 days! Yes, I read 249 pages in 3 days!!! I could not get enough. It was The Long Run by Matt Long with Charles Butler.

This is the story of the NYC firefighter who was run over by a 20-ton bus while riding his bike to work during the transit strike in 2005 and miraculously lived to tell about it. The book was written in a style where I now feel like I know Matty (as his friends call him). While reading the book,



I almost felt like I was right there with him going through his struggles and achievements, it was great fun and quite emotional! I am in such awe of the courage, will and strong mindset Matt has as an athlete and a person. In addition, I am quite envious of his courage and mindset which adds another element to the book for me. I really cannot say enough good things about this book. It is a MUST read for anyone! You don't need to be a runner to appreciate it; as long as you are a driven person in any aspect of your life you will be able to connect with the words Matt speaks and with everything he overcame.

Now for my ignorance.....it was October 15, 2010 at the Women's 5K Classic Expo, the night before the big race and I was working at the Expo at The Finish Line Running Store booth promoting my new women's apparel line, *Oiselle*.... There they were...Matty and Charlie....25-50 feet from me....and I did not know Matt's story or take the time to wonder over and find out who these unfamiliar faces were.....days later I read a blurb about Matt on the web.....shortly after that I read his book and to this day, I am so sorry I did not take the time to go over and meet my new hero! Another lesson to be learned.

How Cold Is It Out There?							
ACTUAL THERMOMETER READING, WIND CHILL DIFFERENCES							
Degrees Fahrenheit	50	40	30	20	10	0	-10
Wind Speed	THIS IS HOW COLD IT FEELS						
No Wind	50	40	30	20	10	0	-10
5 MPH	48	37	27	16	6	-5	-15
10 MPH	40	28	16	4	-9	-21	-33
15 MPH	36	22	9	-5	-18	-36	-45
20 MPH	32	18	4	-10	-25	-39	-53
25 MPH	30	16	0	-15	-29	-44	-59
30 MPH	28	13	-2	-18	-33	-48	-63
35 MPH	27	11	-4	-20	-35	-49	-67
40 MPH	26	10	-6	-21	-37	-53	-69

The Muffin Madness Marathon of 2010 by Christina Roberts

“The Day Will Come Where I Can No Longer Do This... Today is NOT That Day”

I have spent most of my living years driving people mad: parents, siblings, teachers, students, boyfriends (who soon became ex-boyfriends), strangers, enemies, neighbors, the list goes on. I extend a special mention to my husband and to my friends/family, who have embraced the madness they have come to know as Muffin.

Please don't think that I am unscathed in this whirlwind of Muffin. I have driven myself mad. I like to believe that this madness has formed me to be the near-perfect individual I am. (Insert laugh track here) Those close to me know my extreme passion for just about anything: I'm passionate about teaching yoga, my job (no matter how much it's killing me), cooking,

maintaining a messy car, blotting the oil off my pizza, my family...this list continues, as well.

About two years ago I started running for the sake of getting the near 60 lbs of baby fat off my body. This was as much of a motivator as the \$110 I spent on shoes! Since this time I've lost the weight, and then some, ran numerous 5K's, 10K's, three half marathons, gone through three pairs of shoes and raised close to \$1,000 for a charity dear to my heart. I've run two races in costume, got beat by a pair of bananas in one race and passed a lone banana in another. I love the adrenaline rush at the starting line; love the satisfaction of crossing the finish line. A few people ask if I'll ever run a marathon - a question that makes me cringe.



For two Biggest Loser seasons I have watched contestants run a marathon. Some of the losers go home vowing to run a half marathon...or a marathon...

some of them successful in their journey. Well, I've just about had it. It burns me up that I have been fairly regular with my running...through snow, rain, hills, whatever...and I haven't run a marathon. And anyway, if I was going to run a marathon it would be something prestigious like Boston or NYC. One small problem with that: I need a qualifying time or an invitation, or lottery or blah, blah, blah... My husband, the silent genius, told me to run a marathon. Run a marathon, in the summer? There aren't any good marathons in the summer. With a glimmer in his eye he turned to me, "Who says you have to sign up to run a marathon. Just run 26.2 miles." This is exactly what I set out to do.

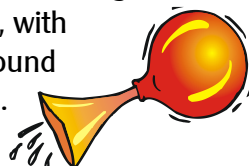
On June 14, 2010 I notified my friends and family that I would be creating a 26.2 mile route laid out with hydration stops. I solicited some friends to become a member of the hydration team – after all, I needed all the help I could get. I thought it would be a nice idea to order some shirts, ya know, make it look somewhat official. I planned the run for July 3, 2010 which didn't leave me much time to plan.

The level of support I received from friends and family was absolutely remarkable. The morning of July 3rd, I was greeted by a few friends wishing me off. Two started the race with me as we were escorted by a close friend on bicycle. We



were engaged in conversation for the majority of the leg. Tour de France, movies, cars, houses, work, chi running, losing weight, past races and this marathon. Maybe I should have saved my energy and kept my mouth shut, but the group naturally lent itself to verbal communication. The first seven miles kept my mind off the upcoming challenges I would face after the half-way mark. I was greeted at the first water stop by a gaggle of friends and family cheering me on with signs ("Go Muffin", "Go Mommy"), a cowbell and high fives. What a wonderful sight to keep me going! Each subsequent hydration stop proved to be a surprise with the number of Muffin supporters.

The half-way mark became a challenge as the road ahead was a decent incline. The remainder of the marathon appeared to be an uphill challenge (both literally and figuratively) until I ran past my parents' house. With each trot the house became more visible. My daughter was running in the yard and Mom stood on the front patio. My vibrant purple shirt caught their eye and in a flash I saw my mom place her hand proudly on her new hip, anchor her arm straight into the sky and, with authority, sound the air horn.



Mom got a high-five and a kiss on the cheek, while I crouched down (without

stopping) to high-five my two year old daughter. She cried after realizing that I didn't stop. "Mommy," she screamed. I placed my hand over my heart as I felt a faint ache. One day she'll understand.

I planned to have an experienced marathon runner, and friend, meet me at mile 20; it couldn't have worked out any better. We all exchanged pleasantries as I introduced him to the crew. He immediately fell into step with me and asked how I was doing. I knew I asked for the right person to be by my side. Aside from the blisters developing on my feet, the aching in my ankles and the tightness in my hamstrings I felt pretty good. He remarked on how good I looked for being at mile 20. He could have been full of bologna, but it worked. The rest of the route faded from my memory. I remember the actual roads and the turns, but the details are gone. They weren't important anymore; they weren't worth saving. My mental and physical drive focused on running home.

The caravan of cars carrying my hydration team flew by from the last stop with their horns blaring. We rounded the corner onto my street...ugh, another hill. As if I had fresh legs, I started to kick and leave my team behind I heard the cowbell and distant screams traveling down the street from my driveway. People had parked on my lawn to clear the path for me, balloons were tied to the mailbox and there



were little muffins attached to stakes in the ground lining the driveway. I ran up to the driveway, over the 'Almost There' chalk writing, pointed to my daughter and ran through the paper finish line. I reflexively stopped my watch and began to rip off my shoes. A foot cramp left me paralyzed, but I was helped me over to the grass. The socks came off just as I collapsed onto the ground. Ava ran over to me, lay on my chest and gave me a kiss. "I love you, Mommy."



- I finished in 5:03:24.
- I loved seeing everyone along the way.
- My friends ran way more than I ever imagined.
- I motivated people to get their buns in gear. I have the responsibility to be a role model for my family & friends.
- We ran through a total of four sprinklers and got hosed down by a woman in a tube top.
- I spouted off approximately 300 expletives just during the last 6 miles.
- During the race I ate 3 gel packets, 1 packet of electrolyte/carb jelly beans, 1 serving of shot blocks and 1 piece of gum; I drank 32 oz. of Lemon Lime Gatorade and 48 oz. of water.

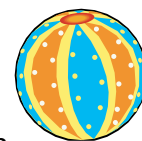
- After the race I ate 3 hot dogs, 1 cheese burger, 2 large handfuls of ruffled potato chips, 1 cup of macaroni salad, 1/2 cup of potato salad, 1 piece of cake and a lot of Doritos.
- My pre-race weight was 125; my post-race weight was 125 (this proves my science of hydration worked).
- I burned over 2200 calories.
- I gained 11 blisters on my feet, semi-permanent sport bra marks and a whole lot of respect for myself.
- It took me three days to get my legs back.
- I have one hell of a group of friends that support me...no matter how crazy the idea.
- I will do this again...and I plan to shave an hour off my time.
- I went out for a run that following weekend.

Running Therapy by Erin Lopes

Through an interesting turn of events my son Thomas and I started running together last spring. Whether it was fate or circumstantial, the process of teaching him to run and develop physical endurance has had an extraordinary impact on both of us.

Thomas is 11 years old. He has both autism and epilepsy. Physical activity has always been challenging for him. When he was a toddler my husband Tim and I noticed that he was more accident-prone than other kids his age. As a preschooler we still had to watch him carefully to keep him from falling or knocking things over. By the time Thomas was in elementary school he had learned to avoid involvement in gym class, particularly in competitive activities. Although Thomas is verbal, intelligent and thoughtful, coordinating movement, even basic motor planning, is difficult for him.

When I would try throwing a ball with him in the yard he would often fall down and become frustrated. "Mom, I'm just not sporty." We tried and failed so many times that I had almost resigned myself to this conclusion along with him.



Kids are meant to run. I started running when I was eleven years old. I was an overweight child and my stepfather, a former boxer who had competed at the olympic level, was determined to help me develop some athleticism. At



first I was less than willing to forge outdoors first thing in the morning to go jogging (as it was called then) with my parents. But by the time I was a senior in high

school I was running not just because it was a way to stay fit. I found that running was also a way to stay healthy both mentally and physically. Over the last 25 years I've rarely gone more than two days without running. I've been characterized by some of my friends as being addicted to it. I'm not sure addict is appropriate but I've always been able to rely on running as a way to center myself and stay emotionally grounded.

I never planned on turning my stepfather's approach into a tradition but it certainly worked out that way. In May, Tim and I made an agonizing decision to pull Thomas out of his public school. We had a laundry list of concerns but chief in our decision-making was that Thomas' self esteem was suffering badly. It's a decision that many parents raising children with autism confront; when to pull your child out of a program that isn't working. We had no other option for a school placement that was appropriate for him at that time so we started a home school program. Physical activity would be part of that program. At our last meeting with the public school, right before things fell apart, Thomas' physical education teacher had given us a grim assessment of his motor skills that ended with her saying, "He can't even catch a ball."

I took Thomas for his first run at the Swarthmore College track



on a beautiful Monday morning last May in part because I wanted to get out and run around. My goal for him was to complete one lap. When we arrived Thomas declared again that he wasn't sporty and he didn't like running. He wouldn't get out of the car.

"I'll make a deal with you kiddo."
"What?" came the reluctant response.

"You run. And we will go at whatever pace you're comfortable with. But while we're running you can talk about any topic you want to talk about. Is that a deal?"

For Thomas this was a pretty good offer. He has a narrow range of preferred topics, characteristic of many individuals with an autism diagnosis. In an effort to teach him functional conversation we often have to prompt him to stop talking exclusively about Spongebob or his beloved maps of cities in the United States.

His reply came quickly. "Yes. That's a deal."

When we walked down to the track there were a few other runners. We got some looks at first as he chattered away several decibels above typical

conversation tone. We found a tree under which to stash our waters and our bags. The other runners just kept moving. I checked his shoes and adjusted the laces. We did a few range of motion exercises in the hips and ankles, which were hard for him because they required balance. He took a drink of water. And we got started. He took off taking giant exaggerated strides.

"Whoa, whoa, whoa." I shouted. "You're not going to last if you start like that."

He stopped and looked back. I caught up to him. "Thomas, what we're doing here isn't about going fast."

"Then what's it about!" He asked, frustrated with me.

"This is about learning what your body can do. This is about learning to be an athlete."

He frowned. "But I'm not an athlete. I will never be an athlete."

I've learned over the years to refrain from correcting him. I use a question instead. "Okay," I asked. "Then what is an athlete?"

"An athlete?" He was now quoting from some TV show that he had seen and adopted the voice of a character that sounded like Foghorn Leghorn. "An athlete is anyone who can run a mile."

That was perfect. "Great, Thomas. That's our goal. You run a mile. Then you'll be an athlete. Do you know how long a mile is?"

"No."

"Well, it's four laps around this track."

That first morning we completed one lap. He had a rough go with it. He frequently stopped. He complained. He dragged his feet. I was patient. I consulted with his pediatrician that afternoon – was there any reason he shouldn't run? Her response was quick, "No. Get him out there and have fun."

The following Wednesday we returned to the track at Swarthmore College. This time Thomas and I completed two laps and something changed. He seemed to appreciate that he had accomplished something. Before we left he asked when we would be coming back.

Throughout May and June we went to the college track every other day. And each time he talked about Spongebob or Harry Potter or Ford F150's. I listened and encouraged him. I prompted him to breathe, to organize his movement and to keep a steady pace. We ran slowly.

By late June we completed one mile around the track without stopping. I congratulated him. "You did it Buddy, you're an athlete now."

"I am?"

"Yes, absolutely."

Tim and I started noticing a change in Thomas' overall physical ability about two weeks after initiating our regular running schedule. He was stronger. He wasn't falling down as much and his gait was more organized. He started sleeping better at night. But something I had not anticipated changed, too. Thomas' verbal and communication skills started improving. He was more engaged with us. He started asking us questions. One afternoon he asked me how my day was and I nearly fell over. After a dinner in which Thomas led the conversation Tim approached me and said, "We need to keep this running thing going." I agreed.

By July Thomas and I were venturing out into Swarthmore and Media

boroughs. He would study his maps and memorize our routes. We would talk about the next street we would turn on. I quickly came to love this time I was spending with him. One of the toughest things about raising a child with autism is the work of communication. But when we were running the conversation seemed natural for him and for me. I allowed myself to take a



break from prompting him or redirecting him. He was free to talk about what he wanted. I gave myself permission to just go with it. The elements were so simple. It was just Thomas, me and the road ahead.

And however uncertain the road ahead, through running, I was learning a valuable lesson about how to enjoy just being with Thomas in the moment.

By September we were up to two miles. Our search to find the right school for him had been far more difficult than we anticipated. Thomas, still home schooled, had free time in afternoons after his tutor left for the day. We filled up that time with running. Either Tim or I would take him. We noticed that after roughly 3 months of regular running his body had changed. He was leaner and more muscular. His legs were stronger. The clumsiness that used to plague him was gone. He was catching a ball very well and asked about playing basketball in a league, something that would have been completely out of character a few months earlier. I talked to him about running in a race.

"I think you have it in you to do three miles, Thomas. Do you want to do a 5K?"

"Where?" I could see him drawing up a mental image of the street maps he studies."

"How about Swarthmore?"

“Yes.”

“We will have to train. Are you ready for that?” I asked.

“Yes.”

In November we were ready to try three miles. We went to Ridley Creek State Park

with the goal of completing the distance, hills and all, without stopping. I told him we could slow down and recover but we should try to keep going until we finished. By now we had a routine that included range of motion exercises and walking to warm up. Our first mile was smooth. At the end of our second mile he stopped to get a drink and then we kept going. He asked how much farther and I encouraged him,



“We are really close. Keep breathing.”

Before we reached our end point we came to a hill. It rounded upwards and to the left, putting the end out of sight. He groaned as we started to go up. “I can’t.”

I collected him and got him going again. “Yes, you can. Small steps forward. Because even small steps are still progress. Let’s go.”

When we reached the third mile he breezed past it, distracted by his own conversation about the differences between Ford Mustangs and Dodge Challengers.

I stopped him. “Thomas, we just passed the third mile – you did it.”

An enormous smile came over his face. I hugged him. Red cheeked and breathing, I heard him say, “Yeah, I did it.”

As winter approaches, running outside is becoming less of an option. Snow piled up over side walks will make it too unsafe to venture out. So Tim and I bought him a treadmill.

Thomas continues to run while talking about



Spongebob, only now on the treadmill. Focused on the things that interest him he plugs along at his pace reaping all the benefits that come with regular running. When the weather changes we will be right back out there.

“Running is my sport, Mom.” He says to me. “I’m an athlete.”

Habitat for Humanity 5K Results -- Top 30 Finishers November 27, 2010

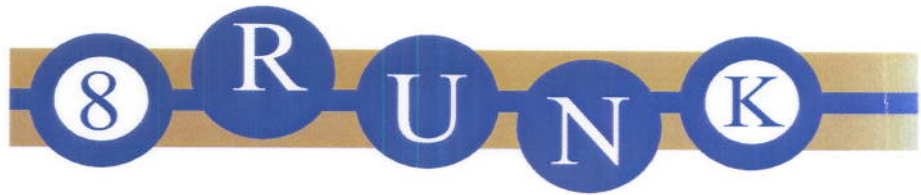
Place	Last	First	M/F	Age	Time	Age Group	Place	Last	First	M/F	Age	Time	Age Group
1	Coyle	Timothy	M	20	17:32	1M	16	James	Rick	M	44	19:48	AG2
2	McLaughlin	Colin	M	15	17:49	2M	17	Cole	Brian	M	35	19:58	AG2
3	Musiowski	Mike	M	20	17:54	3M	18	Guth	John	M	35	20:07	AG3
4	Wetzel	Elias	M	35	17:54	AG1	19	Williams	Tom	M	39	20:24	
5	Kirsch	Nate	M	21	18:04	AG1	20	McKenna	Marie	F	19	20:51	2F
6	Henry	Caleb	M	19	18:25	AG1	21	Rodriguez	Angel	M	37	21:02	
7	James	Dylan	M	15	18:36	AG2	22	Covell	Joseph	M	25	21:08	AG2
8	Helson	Guy	M	41	18:48	AG1	23	Lewis	Janet	F	38	21:20	3F
9	Klingseis	Preston	M	26	19:00	AG1	24	Raisner	Gary	M	55	21:22	AG1
10	Learn	Greg	M	18	19:02	AG3	25	Mahnke	Bruce	M	38	21:27	
11	Hutchinson	Megan	F	24	19:03	1F	26	Faucette	Dan	M	25	21:32	AG3
12	Krupa	Jim	M	49	19:08	AG1	27	McLaughlin	Jeanne	F	47	21:33	AG1
13	Gallagher	Rob	M	45	19:16	AG2	28	King	Reuben	M	50	21:43	AG1
14	Fairbaugh	Jeremy	M	17	19:33		29	Adams	Rich	M	62	21:44	AG1
15	Fischli	David	M	34	19:42	AG1	30	Pernia	Heidi	F	42	21:48	AG1

For full race results, visit www.peakrace.com



Pediatric Cancer
Foundation of the
Lehigh Valley, Inc.

"Enabling Children with Cancer to LIVE"



2nd Annual Pediatric Cancer Foundation

8k Run / 5k Walk RUN TO LIVE!

March 19, 2011



9:00 a.m. ~ Rain or Shine

Ironton Rail Trail Race begins at Coplay Park

Schedule of Events

7:00 am - 8:30 am	Registration/Packet Pick-Up Fruit & Snacks Available
8:30 am - 8:40 am	Welcome
8:40 am - 8:50 am	Group Warm-Up
9:00 am	8K Begins
9:15 am	1/2 Mile Fun Run Begins
9:40 am	5K Walk Begins
11:00 am	Awards Ceremony/Raffles
11:30 am	Post Race Refreshments

Team Registration

For information on how to become a team captain, please contact the race director. All teams must be registered by March 4, 2011. If your Team Captain has registered your team, please write the team name at the top of the registration card.

Race Director - Sharon Geroulo
Email: sgeroulo@pcflv.org Phone: 610-704-5655
Fax: 610-433-1926

Awards for teams: Most Spirited, Top Fundraising Team & Largest Team.

About PCFLV

The Pediatric Cancer Foundation of the Lehigh Valley is a local non-profit organization dedicated to helping improve the lives of children diagnosed with cancer and their families through ongoing quality of life and long-term survivorship programs, support and events. We provide free programs, services and support to local Lehigh Valley families regardless of where their child receives treatment. On average, PCFLV serves more than 100 families annually and is committed to serving local families from date of diagnosis forward through a continuum of care model.

Online Registration

ONLINE REGISTRATION CLOSES 3/17/11

Online registration, as well as fundraising options, are available at: <http://www.firstgiving.com/pcflv>

**You can also register by mail or fax

Race Day Registration

Registration will be held at the Pavillion at Coplay Park, Front and Keefer St. Please plan to arrive by 7:30 am if you are not preregistered. Forms filled out in advance are appreciated, however, blank forms will be available.

(Only cash & checks will be accepted day of event)

The registration table will be located under the pavilion at the Coplay Park, Coplay, PA.; report to appropriate line. *Race day entrants are not guaranteed a shirt or goodie bag.*

Parking is limited. If at all possible, please car-pool with friends and family. For a trail map: www.irontonrailtrail.org/IRTmap.htm



For more information visit our website:
www.pcflv.org or call 610-393-9215

LVRR Inc.
P.O. Box 592
Allentown, PA 18105

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LVRR Membership Application (Please print)

Name _____ Occupation _____ Birthdate _____

Name _____ Occupation _____ Birthdate _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Email: _____

Phone: (Day) _____ (Evening) _____ Mobile: _____

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL (Please circle) \$20.00 INDIVIDUAL \$25.00 FAMILY

Your active participation as a club member is important. All members are asked to volunteer their help each year for at least two club activities as described on the website. Please list the two activities for which you would like to volunteer. You will be contacted in advance of each event. Thank you.

1. _____ 2. _____

Club Membership Application Waiver: I know that running and volunteering to work in club races are potentially hazardous activities. I should not enter and run in club activities unless I am medically able and properly trained. I agree to abide by any decision of a race official relative to my ability to safely complete the run. I assume all risks associated with running and volunteering to work in club races including, but not limited to, falls, contact with other participants, the effects of the weather, including high heat and/or humidity; knowing these facts, and in consideration of your acceptance of my application for membership, I, for myself and anyone entitled to act on my behalf, waive and release the Road Runners Club of America, The Lehigh Valley Road Runners and all sponsors, their representatives and successors from all claims or liabilities of any kind arising out of my participation in these club events even through that liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of the persons named in this waiver.

Signature _____ Date: _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

Parent's Signature if under 18 years _____

To join the Lehigh Valley Road Runners, fill out this form, enclose a check and mail to:
Lehigh Valley Road Runners, PO Box 592, Allentown, PA 18105-8692