

# December 2018



# Volume 40 Issue 12

## Who's Who in the KRRC: Who's Who in the KRRC:

Hello! My name is Amber Sproul and I have been a club member for about a year. I started getting into running when I trained for a half marathon with a group of friends while I was working on my undergrad at Olivet. Our group of friends all played high school sports, and we accepted that we would never be collegiate-level athletes. We wanted to find a way to stay in shape and while we trained- that's when I fell in love with running. I love the feeling when you get a new PR or just when you get to run with your friends.

When I started teaching elementary school, I found that my teaching partner (Amy Sluis) also loved running. We are both KRRC members and we try to do a race every month!



**Amber Sproul**



**Pictured left to right:  
Amber Sproul  
Valery Denby  
Amy Sluis**

## ON THE EVE OF MY 1,000TH RACE

BY  
DAN GOULD

On December 2nd, I will run the Jingle Bell 5K in Kankakee, my 1,000th road race. How did it all begin?

My road to 1,000 races started in the Fall of 1981 as I read an article on health and fitness. I was as healthy as a 37-year old overweight cigarette smoker in a stressful and sedentary job could be, but I was only fit to sit. Once a week bowling league does not beget fitness. The article made clear what I might expect in the coming years if I continued that lifestyle. My story would not have a happy ending.

The first step was clear. I had to quit smoking. How should I reclaim fitness? I consulted three younger co-workers who, I learned, were all runners, so it was no surprise that they recommended that exercise. There was nothing complicated about it. I wouldn't have to join a gym. Lace up the running shoes, go out the door, and run for my life.

I knew from experience that I would have to go cold turkey to quit smoking and, about November 1st, I pitched the cigarettes and made a deal with myself. I would focus on not smoking until March 1, 1982. Eat and drink as much as I wanted, but don't smoke. Besides, winter is not a good time to start running. On March 1st, a Monday, I would get up half an hour early and start running my way back to fitness.

My "quit" was successful, but I knew I had substituted a lot of food and drink for those smokes over the four months. I wouldn't have been surprised if the bathroom scale said "One at a time, please!" when I weighed in on March 1st, but it quietly displayed 177. That was a never to be repeated personal record.

I set forth to run my first miles. That would require more than one day in my condition. I jogged about three-quarters of a mile to exhaustion in twelve minutes. I knew nothing of run-walk or hard-easy. I set forth each day to run as far as I could. By some miracle, I didn't injure myself and my endurance increased. I was dedicated. On really cold mornings I jogged around my basement.

I hadn't heard of the Kankakee River Running Club and about all I knew of road racing was the Boston Marathon. I hadn't heard of the KRRC's signature race, the Governor's 10,000, a ten kilometer race that drew hundreds to the Kankakee River State Park nor the Performance Sports' 5-Miler. As my endurance built, the subject of road racing became a topic of conversation with my running mentors and I thought I should try one.

After three months of running, I could jog five miles. On May 30, 1982, I joined about 200 other runners in the starting queue for the Performance Sports' 5-Miler at Kankakee Community College. The race came the day after my 20th high school class reunion. Jim Sollo, a classmate in town from Virginia and an avid photographer, would take my finish line photo. When the gun sounded, it seemed everybody was running away from me. I forgot the cautionary words about pacing my friends had given me and went in pursuit. It was hot and humid. I knew nothing about evaporative cooling and had worn my souvenir class reunion cotton tee shirt which, although I had lost some weight, fit snugly. By the 4-mile mark, I had to walk. If Jim hadn't been waiting to take my photo, I might have just walked to the car. I resumed my jog and finished my first race, a very tired and sore ball of sweat.

Why, after that experience, do I find myself looking forward to my 1,000th starting line? First, racing helped give focus to my training, a goal, a measure of success. My weight was coming down and I had more energy. Second, I discovered the fun of athletic competition, a competition that knows no age limit and in which we compete with those who are our age. In



Florida, there are age groups to 90+ in many races. Third, there is the fellowship. Most of my best friends, whether in Illinois or Florida, are people I've met in this running life.

Road races and running clubs depend on volunteers. I was a race director for three races totaling 14 years. I was the co-editor of the KRRC newsletter for 11 years and served a year as president of the Manasota Track Club, my Sarasota running club. Just as there is fellowship in the racing, there is fellowship in volunteering. More great people!

My greatest thrill in racing? In 1985, I ran the Milwaukee Marathon in an attempt to qualify for the Boston Marathon. On a beautiful October day, I ran 3:09:25, only 35 seconds under the 3:10:00 cutoff. I have a framed, poster sized photo of me crossing the finish, hands upraised in victory. I would run Boston four times.

In my running prime in the 80's and 90's, I ran 35-40 mile per week and, peaking for a marathon, I once had a 65 mile week. I now try to run four days a week and my mileage will total 15-20 miles. I ran my 50,000th mile in August.

What does my 1,000th race mean? It simply means another day of health, fitness, fun and fellowship. There is a bit of "poetry" in the venue for my 1,000th race. Jingle Bell, like my first race, is staged from Kankakee Community College. My classmate Jim Sollo won't be there to take this finish line picture, but my classmate and love of my life, Linda Hodges, will be.

To all who have shared my running life, thanks for the memories - and run for your life!



Feb. 2015 - #900 - Music Half Marathon, Sarasota, FL

# races/events:



## December 2, 2018:

You still have time to sign up for Jingle Bell Run! You can come and join us or do it at home in your jammies with the virtual option!

**Join Team KRRC!!**

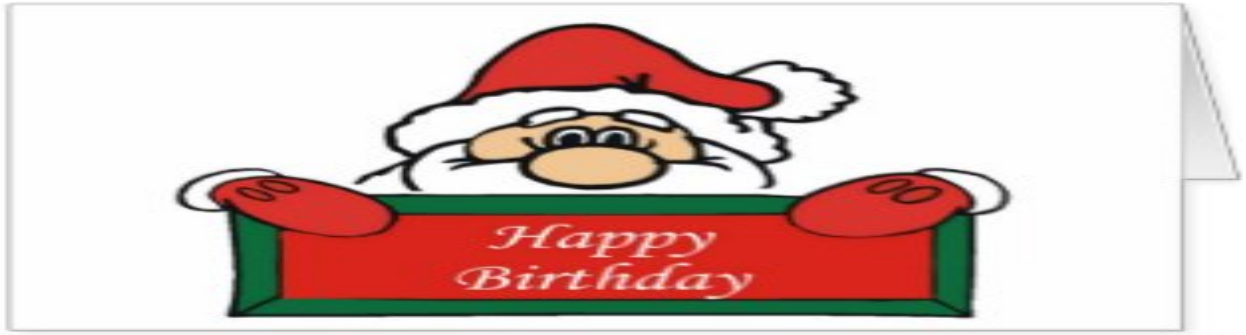
Click on the Jingle Bell logo to take you to the web page to get signed up today for a great cause!



Some KRRC smiles for the 2017 Jingle Bell Run

Marc Spenard  
Jen Deets Ingram  
Matt Wenzel  
Dan Bullock

Debbie Martin Dye, Jonathan Arendt, Taylor Harper, Laura Loica, Valery Denby, Heather Fox, and Rachel Simington. All festive to run the 2017 Jingle Bell Run in Kankakee.



12/01	Mileen Joines	62
12/03	John Schimmel	69
12/03	Lorri Simpson	55
12/05	Kyle Lovell	16
12/05	Melissa Zigrossi	38
12/12	Beth Rademacher	57
12/13	Cindi Chouinard	58
12/13	Tierra Arendt	19
12/15	Chris Fritz	42
12/15	Daniel Hall	56
12/17	Lucas Rattin	42
12/18	Julie Loving	50
12/25	Diane Morris	49
12/28	Ryan Broom	39
12/29	Logan Rattin	13





## **Fa(r), La, La, La, La We Run!**

By Chris Walsh

December 1984. Finals Week at the University of Illinois. I was cold. I was tired. I was hungry. And I was definitely not looking forward to the 5:00 pm workout Coach had scheduled for us. As I hurried back to my room to change, I pondered the workout possibilities. Surely she would take pity on us thinking a quick 30 minute run around the country club would be perfect. I would even settle for the track workout she titled “short and sweet” which meant eight 400 meter repeats starting every two minutes. And yes that means if we ran each 400 in 70 seconds, we would only have 50 seconds rest! It was short but no one would ever call it sweet. Whatever Coach decided, I just hoped we would be done fast so I could get back to the myriad of studying I had left to do.

Heading back to the indoor track at the Armory, a light, misty rain began to fall making that “short and sweet” workout actually sound enticing. Alas, it was not meant to be. As soon as I entered, I was greeted by a large sign reading ROTC Practice-Track Closed. Okay so no track workout but I still hoped for something quick. We warmed up and stretched quietly until Coach dropped the bomb – a 90 minute run! A litany of complaints rang out, none louder than mine. Yes I was a senior and supposed to be a leader but I also knew what was at stake. A 90 minute run not only meant I would be too tired to stay up to get all my work done, but more importantly, the cafeteria would be closed and that meant no dinner! Of course my “end of semester” cupboards and piggy bank were bare too. I was going to starve!

Still grumbling, we headed south out of town. By this time, it was completely dark and the rain was becoming heavier. Despite this, there was one girl in our group who refused to see any negative in our situation. You know the type-the perpetual optimist. I had known her since high school where she had been hit by a car making an illegal turn. Her arm was broken but all she could talk about was how bad she felt for the driver. She suggested we run to the lights in the distance just like we were Mary and Joseph following the Christmas star. Of course her positivity was contagious. We started to share our holiday plans and memories and the miles flew by. Turns out that the lights in the distance were actually a small town about 30 miles away, so we headed to our favorite neighborhood to enjoy all the beautiful holiday lights and decorations. By the time we headed home, it was snowing and we were singing Christmas carols. Our attitudes had completely changed for the better! Back at the dorm, we all pooled our limited resources and created our very own Christmas feast. As the week went on, one by one my teammates finished finals and headed home but we continued with our new tradition of caroling and Christmas lights during practice.

Every year, as things get hectic around the holidays, I remind myself of this story. A positive attitude is all we need sometimes to make everything better. So take some time to enjoy the simple beauty around us this holiday season, whether it be physical decorations or just the joy of having loved ones home for the holidays. And if you can do this while running, its even better! As Buddy the Elf would say, “The best way to spread Christmas cheer is by singing loud for all to hear.”

**Happy Holidays**



# A Year in Review:

As 2018 comes to a close, I want to take a moment to thank all of our members for a great year. One thing I love about KRRC is the sense of community. This club is full of people always quick to share an encouraging word and help others out.

One thing I think not everyone realizes though, is how you all, as part of KRRC, give back to the community we live in in a larger sense. Through club membership fees and race entry fees, this past year KRRC donated \$2,028 back to local charities and schools. Club members also donated 36 pairs of used running shoes to our Shoe Pantry that go to those in need. Without each of you, we would not be able to give back to our area like this.

I also want to personally thank Tina, Marc, and Mileen as they step away from the KRRC board. You three have done great things for us, and have left us in a great place as we head into the future. Our new board members will have big shoes to fill.

Lastly, I hope each of you have a great Holiday season and a Happy New Year. I'm looking forward to seeing what we can all achieve in 2019.

Steve Anderson, KRRC President



**Steve Anderson**

## Out with the old, in with the new...

Thanks to Marc Spenard for serving as newsletter editor for the last 2 years. He has done a great job, but now feels it is time to step down.

Taylor Harper will be taking over the position starting with the January, 2019 issue.

The content of the newsletter depends on input from YOU, Dear Reader. Please send in your personal running stories, race reviews, etc. Send them by email to [krrclub@gmail.com](mailto:krrclub@gmail.com). Without input from our members, there would be no newsletter. Your fellow members enjoy reading about other members.