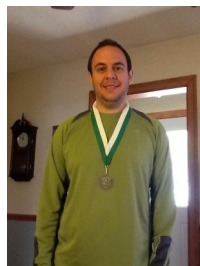


The Paper Race

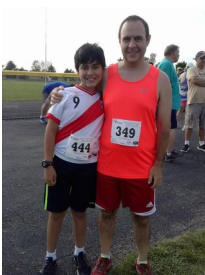
BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

Alan Toronjo, Vice President

Hello, greetings, and happy November from your newly elected (I was the only nomination so there was no need to stuff any ballots... 😊) Vice-President for the Kankakee River Running Club. Ok, introductions are a must: I'm Alan Toronjo (there's a common misconception that our surname is Hispanic with the "j" pronounced as an "h," whereas it is actually French-Canadian with it sounding just as it's spelled, rhyming with "Toronto"). As of this past August I'm 46 years old, father of three, and am the extremely lucky partner to my better half, Amelia, who by the way is Hispanic by way of Perú. No worries, I don't take offense, as I'm completely used to mispronunciations and will respond to just about anything. In high school it was Big Al and Sasquatch, and now it's Dad or Bro or even Sweaty Runner. I work at the local wastewater treatment plant (aka Poop Hill) and graciously thank all locals for contributing to business with every flush, shower, and by washing dishes and laundry. I took up running in 2009/2010 as a way to combat the ever-rising digits on the bathroom scale. I'm sure everyone is familiar with the "freshman 15," but I was pushing the "new father 30 to 40!" I also took up the sport to be proactive on tackling possible predispositions to heart issues. Cardiac disease along with short stature and a thinning loss on the top of my head have been my biological inheritance.



Kankakee Trinity Trot 5K - October 6, 2012 - when I first started signing up for multiple yearly

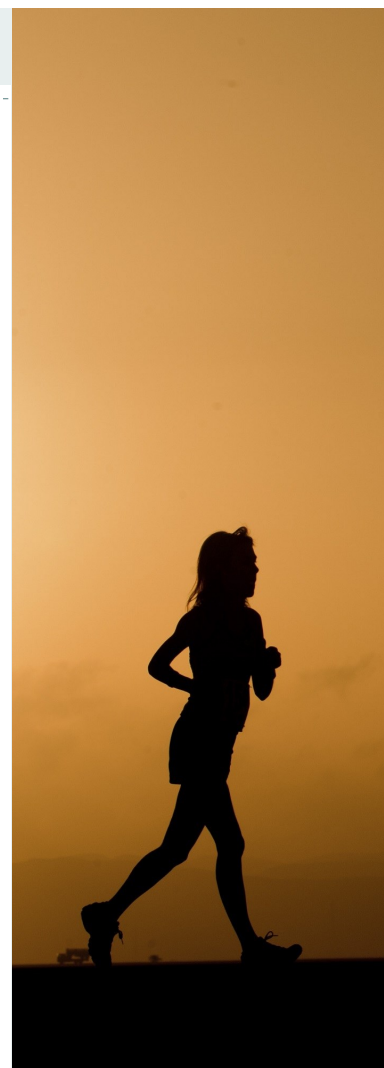


Herscher Hare & Tortoise - September 4, 2016 - where Alec first started his running journey

I work at the local wastewater treatment plant (aka Poop Hill) and graciously thank all locals for contributing to business with every flush, shower, and by washing dishes and laundry. I took up running in 2009/2010 as a way to combat the ever-rising digits on the bathroom scale. I'm sure everyone is familiar with the "freshman 15," but I was pushing the "new father 30 to 40!" I also took up the sport to be proactive on tackling possible predispositions to heart issues. Cardiac disease along with short stature and a thinning loss on the top of my head have been my biological inheritance.

What started with simply running around the block numerous times turned into longer jaunts away from our residence, which eventually became finding longer routes at some

of Kankakee County's numerous parks and trails. The first race I ever signed up for was a 5K that took place at Manteno High School. I can't recall the name, and for whatever reason it did not become a cyclical yearly race. Since then, I've done countless more 5Ks, a few 10Ks and 10 milers, an odd 8K, a handful of half-marathons, and what I thought at the time would be a culmination of race preparation and my longest



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Board Profile 1
- On Dan's Run 3
- Happy Birthday 6
- Funny Runs.....6, 8
- Running with Cats.....7
- Hope Alliance 5k9
- Carrera de los Muertos.....10
- Oktoberfest 5k.....12
- Fall Mileage Challenge.....13
- River Rat Race.....13

Continued on page 2

Toronjo, continued

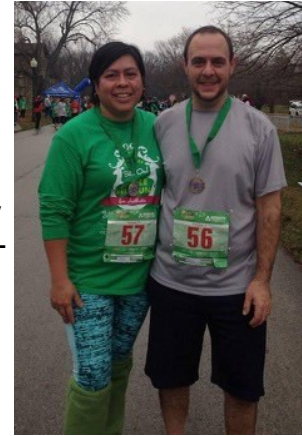
run I'd ever do for the Chicago 2016 marathon. Oddly enough I had my fastest 5K ever just two weeks after the marathon, but when talking and hearing from other runners, this is a pretty common occurrence! A marathon puts quite the toll on one's body; you can expect extreme soreness and tiredness and a general loathing of any staircases you encounter. I didn't place my name into the lottery for Chicago for 2017 as the pain was still fresh in my mind and I focused more on the half as my distance of choice. But as is also common with fellow runners, I conveniently had "marathon conclusion amnesia" and put my name in consistently year after year for Chicago up through 2022 (for 2023). After receiving constant yearly denials and becoming more and more frustrated, I took matters into my own hands and signed up for a gasp..... 50K (that's approximately 31 miles for those metric un-enthusiasts) that occurred earlier this year. It took place in Aurora on April 22, 2023, and was appropriately named (for the local humane shelter and for the distance) the Zoomies 50K (also had 5K, 10K, and 15K distances). I'll save the details for a subsequent submittal but suffice it to say that I acquired the coveted Ultra Buckle.



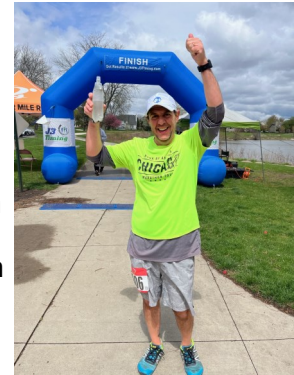
Chicago Marathon 2016

Commonly enough, running can be a love/hate relationship, but my love for movement outweighs the hate. If there is any regret at all, it's that I didn't start earlier in life. I can remember back in high school when we were tested on whether we could complete the 4 track laps under 8 minutes. What would my abilities now have translated into if I could have explored possibilities with track & field or cross country? But I don't dwell too much of what could have been and instead look at what's to come. Besides running, I also am up for walking or hiking numerous miles (shout out to Amelia who recently walked a half-marathon distance in under 3.5 hours), have gotten a tiny bit into bike riding (for cross training), have competed in a Pickle Ball Park District League with Amelia this past summer, and have had the pleasure (as of this writing still in a prolonged season due to a runner making IHSA Sectionals!) this year to become an Assistant Cross Country Coach for Kankakee High School.

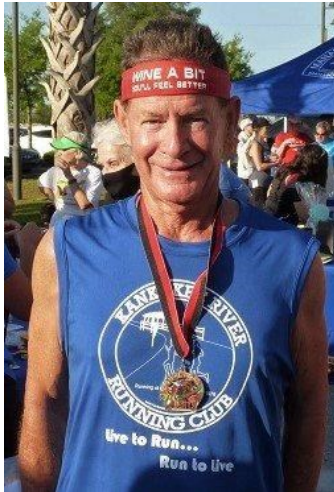
I've learned so much about myself through running. I've worked through countless issues. I was once a constant worrier, and now I've discovered solutions to what I thought were unsolvable problems. I've gotten back a child-like, wide-eyed appreciation of nature. I've definitely improved my health and relieved impacts of daily stress. I encourage everyone to take pride and find their "love" with movement and with whatever your activity of choice may be. Share your successes as well as your failures! Being a co-member assisting the leading of the Running Club board, I am open to everyone's opinions and feedback for events and races. Feel free to send me a message at justinalan@hotmail.com. I also encourage you to seek me out at one of the Club's or any other local races. Quietness is part of my personality, so I'm working on not being such a "lone wolf" (see one of the readily available cartoon memes on types of runners), as it's easily seen I have a passion for running. I can't wait to see what fellow members, as well as myself, achieve for future fitness accomplishments!



Jingle Bell Run (Shapiro) - December 14, 2015 with the better half



Zoomies 50K - April 22, 2023



ON DAN'S RUN THE GOVERNOR'S 10,000

by Dan Gould
DANSRUN@AOL.COM

One of the first things on the agenda of any new running club in the 1970's was the establishment of a signature race. With the birth of the Kankakee River Running Club in May of 1979, the organizers began planning a 10K race at the Kankakee River State Park for that Fall, a venue whose natural beauty would in and of itself be an attraction. Someone suggested that, since it would be at a state facility, calling it the "Governor's." Perhaps the Governor himself could be enticed to start the race some year, presumably an election year.

The Governor was Jim Thompson and, initially, he agreed to attend, start the race, and hand out awards. While that didn't work out, race director Jack Dalton said that the governor's office was instrumental in enlisting the assistance of the state park personnel.



Craig Virgin wins the 1st Governor's 10,000 in 1979

a distance that mere mortals could roll off the couch and complete, jogging, slogging, walking and crawling their way to the finish line. A finish gave them status - they were *runners!*

Jack Dalton, a retired anesthetist who now lives in the Atlanta, GA., area, was the first Kankakee River Running Club President and race director for the Governor's first three years. He, along with former Daily Journal Sports' Editor Dave Dyer, now a Sports' Editor for The Eagle-Tribune in North Andover, MA., were instrumental in attracting big name runners to and promoting the Governor's the first couple years.

The 10K distance was *the* distance at this stage of the running boom. Charities had yet to discover the fund-raising potential of the 5K road race, a



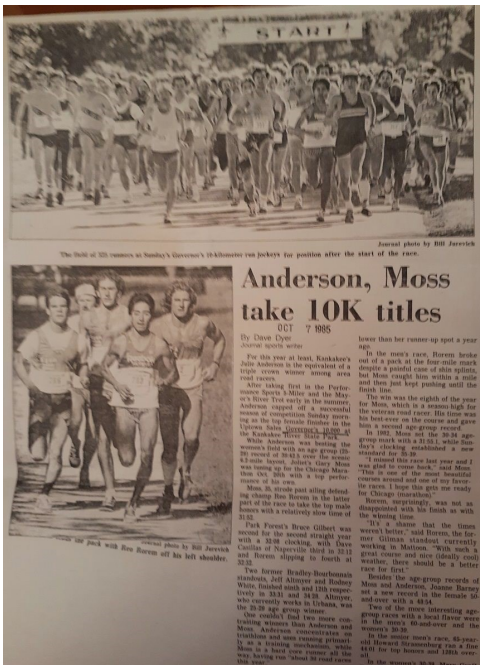
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1980 - Benji Durden and Joan Benoit Samuelson

trophies five deep in each age division. The entry fee was \$5.00 that year. The race started at 10:00 A.M. on October 4th. The first three years saw 400 to 700 runners each year..

Newspaper coverage of the Governor's was extensive into the 1990's as you can see from some of the photos and stories I have included. It was a different era for newspapers.

Putting on the race required a number of volunteers. Since this was KRRC's contribution to the running world, members were expected to volunteer, not race. To encourage volunteers, members were not allowed to race in the early years. That prohibition was lifted in 1988.



1985 - Gary Moss and Julie Anderson won

A 5K was added in '91, the 13th Governor's, and the 10K replaced with a 10 miler in '93, an out and back to Davis Creek.

The course was still scenic and the amenities generous, but the runners stopped coming. In 1992, the 10K and 5K totaled 192. The 10 mile and 5K in 1993 brought out only 155. Only 132 were there in 1994 and 112 in 1995. What happened? October had become a popular month for marathons and 5K races had proliferated. Perhaps it was just the ebb and flow of interest in this running world.

When I started running in 1982, I knew nothing of the Kankakee River Running Club nor did my first running buddies. I don't think the club has ever had a membership chairman, a board member whose job it is to ferret out the uninitiated and bring them into the fold. I probably ran for two years before I became a member and I don't recall how that happened. My introduction to the Governor's was running it in 1982 along with about 600 others. I probably became a club member in 1984 and would be the Governor's race director for a year sometime later in the 80's.

In 1981, the third year, the truly elite runners became a thing of the past. Reo Rorem, a standout at Gilman H.S. and Eastern Illinois University, won the first of half a dozen Governor's with a 30:39. He repeated in 1982, flirting with a sub-30:00 in 30:16. There were 610 runners that year, the last time the race would see that kind of participation.

KANKAKEE RIVER RUNNING CLUB BOARD

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- Alan Toronjo, Vice President
- Karen Dannenhauer, Secretary
- Dave Bohlke, Treasurer
- Renee Whitehouse, Trustee
- Dan Gerber, Trustee
- Pat Koerner, Trustee
- Lorrie Simington, Trustee

Do you have comments? Questions? Something for the newsletter? Please send all submissions to KRRClub@gmail.com

Find race registrations and results at https://kankakeeriverrunningclub.com/krrc/2023_Race_Calendar.html

Gould, Continued

There was, apparently, some serious sponsorship money in the first couple years that could be used to pay appearance fees to some of the elite of the time. Among those who would run the Governor's were Craig Virgin, Benji Durden, Joan Benoit Samuelson, Jeff Galloway, and Mike Durkin. Virgin, who won the inaugural Governor's in 1979 with a 29:04, was a three time Olympian in the 10K, held four Big Ten cross-country titles, and would be the World Cross Country Champion 1980-81. Durden was on the 1980 Olympic Marathon teams and had a PR of 2:09:58. Durkin ran for the University of Illinois where he won nine Big 10 championships and competed in the 1976 Olympics.

Joan Benoit Samuelson is, perhaps, the most famous of the elites. She won the Governor's women's division in 1980 with a 34:12 while Benji Durden was posting a 34:12 on the men's side. She was the women's champion at the 1979 Boston Marathon with a 2:35:15 and again in 1983 when her 2:22:43 broke the world record set by Grete Waitz in London a day earlier, a record that would stand for 11 years. Most famously, she ran to victory in the first women's Olympic Marathon in 1984 with a 2:24:52.



Reo Rorem wins in 30:16 in 1982

The age groups of the early years reflected the perception of the time that senior citizens could not be athletes. I believe there were 10 year age groups to **age 50 and over** in 1979, but that had been expanded to 5 year age groups to age 50 and over by 1981. There was a special award for the fastest runner over 60 and there were

The Governor's course began on the road near the park's heated restrooms and went west to the suspension bridge where runners picked up the trail and turned back east. Approaching the east campgrounds, runners were back on the road, looped the last campground, came back west and crossed a short fence onto Altorf Road. They ran out to Route 102 where they turned west and ran along the edge of the east bound lane to the park's east entrance where an Illinois State Police Trooper slowed the east bound traffic. Back in the park, they ran on the roads, finishing where they had started. The trail would not be extended to Davis Creek until about 1991 which eliminated the need for the Altorf Road - Route 102 section.

Continued on page 5

Gould, Continued

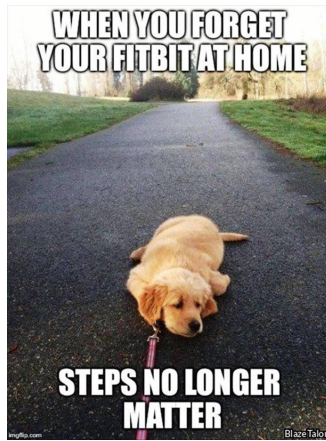


1992 - Gary Moss wins the 10K and Pat Koerner the 5K

In 1996, KRRC started a new race, the Kankakee River 10K, which was run on September 22nd and turned out 81 runners. It was a new month and the old distance, but it didn't solve the problem. I know it lasted until 2000 something and I'm not sure if it died from lack of interest, lack of a race director, or issues with the administration at the state park.

For those of us who ran in those times, the Governor's 10,000 is a happy memory.

Funny Runs...



Happy Birthday!

11/1	Mary Turner	33
11/5	Alec Toronjo	19
11/8	Trevor Edmonson	35
11/15	Jasmine Simington-Oakley	45
11/21	Kelly Martin	47

Running with cats!! **By Darcy Welsh**



So many runners enjoy running with their dogs. I must admit I'm sure you feel safer out on the trail. What about "Running with cats?" I'm 100% sure my Zippy would not ward off an attacker, but he sure does get people to make a double-take and he seems to enjoy the ride. There's extra cardio for me too, as pushing the stroller isn't as easy as running solo.

Happy Tails Shelter in Abingdon Virginia recently had their 9th annual "Run fur their lives 5K" and "Strut your mutt 1 miler" (untimed). I ran this race last year and was amazed that more than half the runners had dogs. Why not a cat? I have a pet stroller and frequently take my 2 cats out in the neighborhood. My older cat is very dog friendly, so why not?

Time to load Zippy into the carrier. He was not happy, I think he thought it was going to be another 13 hr. trip back to Illinois. He meowed the whole 45 min drive. We were lucky to get a parking spot near the festivities, thus making setting up the stroller and transferring Zippy very easy.

The race start time was 2pm, it was sunny and in the mid-high 80s. I was grateful the course would be shaded as the Creeper Trail is a rails to trails project. The entry fee was reasonable at \$25, t-shirts were gray, long sleeved tech material, and included in each bag was a neckerchief which I wrapped around Zippy's harness. He was an instant hit, the director said he was the first cat to do the 5k, dogs were even interested and stuck their noses up to the screen to say hi. Not a single hiss from my boy, he especially liked a young boy and a white pit bull. The dog's owner said she had cats at home.

Time for the race and being an experienced runner I knew my place was even farther back than normal. The trail started out fairly flat and went by a park, athletic fields, horse pastures, under the interstate, and past homes. Being Virginia, flat doesn't last even for an old railroad track. But, the elevations were more "rolling". Zippy was enjoying his ride looking out ahead in front of the stroller. Passersby were amazed that there was a cat in my stroller.

I was doing pretty good with my usual interval running until about the end of the 2nd mile. Oops, while I was used to pushing the stroller on pavement I neglected to consider a gravel



path. My arms felt like they could push no more! I was disappointed we had to walk most of the last mile. My only runs were down hill as gravity took over the stroller.

We finished with an average of 16 min mile, oh well, but it was enough for 2nd in age group. The prize was a certificate and a memory photo album for family pets, how appropriate!

To top the day off I won a door prize basket of BBQ spices and jams. On the way out I grabbed a ball shaped Halloween bat from the dog toy bin and gave it to Zip in his carrier.



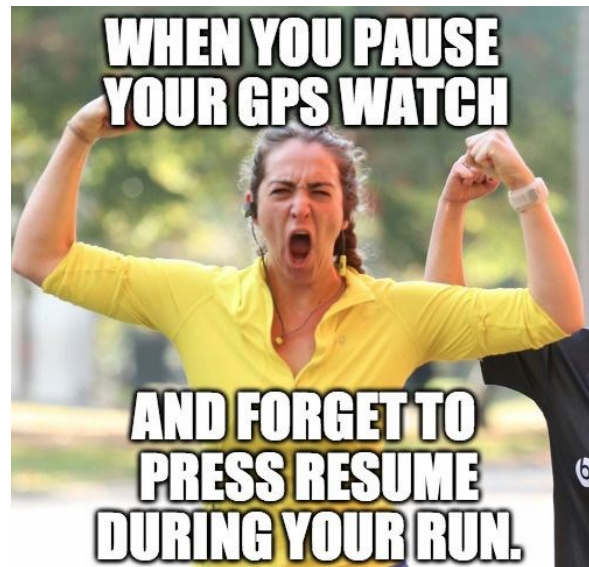
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Running with Cats, continued



Once home my old man immediately took the ball and lay down for a recovery nap. I can't wait to do it again next year, but lesson learned I'm going to train better on the Tweetsie Trail in Johnson City, another rails to trails project. I encourage any runner with a well behaved cat to try a pet friendly run.

Funny Runs...



Hope Alliance 5K 10/7/2023
 Georgetown, Texas
 By Dan Bullock

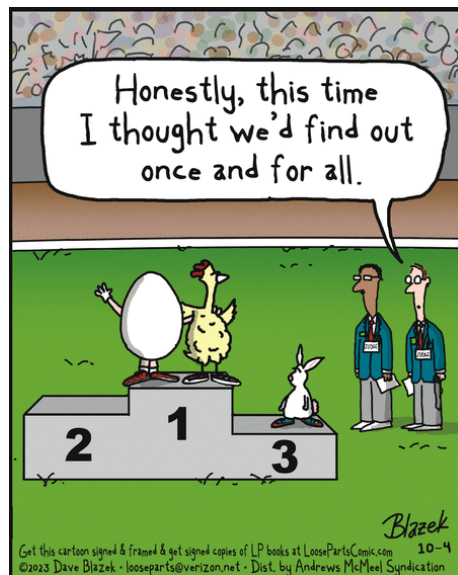


After about six weeks, all the moving, unpacking, setting up utilities are done. It is time to start racing again. I have been running alone in the mornings but we all know it's not the same as racing. The last race I ran was back on June 10th and I was anxious to get going. I arrived early since I didn't know anyone and started chatting up whoever would listen. I noticed this group of three young fellows joking and teasing each other and I noticed one of them was wearing Crocs. I said "surely you aren't running in those" and he replied yes. I'm sure he was joking.



This race was at a popular park in Georgetown. The route was an out and back on a paved trail. The weather has exceptional for Texas; it was about 65° at the 9AM start. It was mostly flat with two or three moderate hills. I did okay on the flats but I did have to walk up the steepest hill.

Times were posted online but awards took quite a while. It was well worth it as I pulled in a 2nd place out of five in my AG. While watching the awards I spotted the guy with the Crocs and indeed he did run the race wearing them. The amazing thing is he finished 4th overall with a time of 18:48! In Crocs! I'm back at it and I will be posting more reviews as I complete them. I miss all you KRRC runners!



UNO Carrera de los Muertos, Pilsen, Chicago

October 28, 2023

By Karen Dannenhauer

Race day dawned way too early, as a group of racers met at Northfield Square Mall to catch a party bus to the race at 5:30 am. Lorrie Simington did a wonderful job of procuring and organizing the bus for all of us, as well as supplying post-race refreshments for the trip home. Racers came from all over, including Darcy and Bob Welsh from Tennessee and Taylor Harper from Indiana. The trip up to Pilsen was quiet, with people napping or putting on their race makeup (yes, that's a thing) during the bus ride. We arrived in Chicago just before sunrise, which gave us plenty of time for last minute race preparations. We hung out on the bus as long as possible, because it was COLD and windy in Chicago. Taking the bus was a stroke of genius, as parking was in very short supply around the race route.



Back Row: Bob Welsh, Diane DesMarteau, Debbie Dye, Karen Dannenhauer, Daniel Hall, Tammy Smith, Rachel Simington, Renee Whitehouse, Tony Kuhl, Angela Munoz, Maria Pilar Acevedo Spargur, Valerie Denby, Tiffany Thompson, Edwin Galvez, Kaylee Cote
 Front Row: Lorrie Simington, Jasmine Simington-Oakley, Taylor Harper

Runners were supposed to be divided by pace, but no one paid attention to the signs, and so the crowd of 6,000 just all moved forward as one. Runners darted here and there between walkers. Many people were dressed for the occasion as Catrines and Catrinas, skeletons, and sugar skulls.

The parade route was festive throughout. Spectators stood alongside the course with signs and cowbells, cheering on the racers. At various corners, many racers stopped to dance with bands that were playing and costumed dancers twirled and spun to the music in front of various businesses.

The city was well prepared for the race. The entire course was blocked off from traffic, and there were police traffic officers at every intersection. Diane DesMarteau added a lot of steps to her race distance by running up to each

one of them at every intersection and giving high fives and thank yous.



Rachel Simington and Lorrie Simington

Continued on page 11

Muertos, continued

After the parade, there was a festival area with performers and booths, both informational and retail. Participants could also trade in a coupon from their bib for a churro or a beer. I have to say, the beer line looked much longer! It was so cold that I did not relish standing in that line, so I gave my coupon to a random person so they could have a bonus beer. They happily accepted!



Dancers along the route

The ride home was a bit more lively. Some people were tired and slept, but, thanks to our bartenders, most of us enjoyed the adult beverage of our choice. It was a great day!

Won't you join us next year?



Our talented bartenders, Debbie Dye and Jasmine Simington-Oakley



Murals of alebrijes could be seen along the race route.



The finishers' medals were great! Apparently I rub my nose when I am walking.



Diane DesMarteau made lots of friends.

10/15/23 Oktoberfest Rotary 5k Run Bloomington, IL.

By Patrick Koerner



Carol Pratt, Patrick Koerner

It's the middle of October. To me, a farmer, that means it's the middle of harvest season and the last thing on my mind should be racing. I had planned on taking the weekend off, but 1.7 inches of rain later, I decided to find a race to run off some of my frustration. A close friend of mine, Carol Pratt, mentioned this race in Bloomington, the Oktoberfest Rotary 5k Run, that I had never heard of before. A 2:00pm start time on a Sunday afternoon is not the ideal time for me to run a race, but I thought why not give it a try. One of the things I like best about racing in different areas is the chance to compete against runners that I do not really know. Out of a field of 176, I may



have known five or six at best. At race time the temperature was 54 degrees with a steady wind out of the North at 15-20 mph. Thankfully the first and third miles were completely sheltered from the wind so it really wasn't a factor.



The race started on a 9' wide bike path so I made sure to toe the starting line not wanting to get boxed in. I don't really have a great opening burst anymore, as most of the fast twitch muscle fibers I once had have long since abandoned me. I must have dropped 20 spots in the first 1/4 mile, but then everything started to click. I managed to hang on to a pack of runners just in front of me and they pulled me through the first mile in 6:54. I felt really good as I battled three

Lap	Time	Distance mi	Avg Pace min/mi
1	6:54.2	1.00	
2	6:50.4	1.00	
3	6:57.2	1.00	
4	0:39.7	0.12	
Total	21:19.0	3.12	6:49

or four runners for most of mile two. I was able to clock a 6:50 split. Now I'm thinking, if I hold it together through mile three, this could be my fastest 5k effort of the year. Still feeling strong, I began to close in on a younger runner who had passed me early on. As we approached the three mile mark, I heard footsteps behind me, so I went all out to the finish. Not only did I manage to stay ahead of the runner who was closing in, but I actually outkicked the teenager just in front of me. My Garmin watch stated that I ran the last .2 miles at a 5:22 pace. I crossed the finish line with a time of 21:19 (6:52) pace which is my fastest 5k since the end of 2017. I managed to win my age group, thus winning the coveted "beer stein" age group award. My friend Carol also placed as she managed to knock off several minutes from her last year's time. Post race we celebrated with the complimentary brat dinner and German beer. Between Carol and myself we have logged over 160,000 miles. I feel truly blessed that I am still able to participate in a sport that I enjoy so much with friends like Carol. I felt this race was well worth the drive. I enjoyed the flat, fast, certified course, the nice dinner afterward, and the German music. I would highly recommend the Bloomington Oktoberfest Rotary 5k Run.

Conclusion of the Fall Mileage Challenge

By Khirastin Schneider

The Fall Mileage Challenge has concluded. The challenge ran from October 1st through the 31st. A huge thank you to all the participants for trying something new. This year we utilized the Strava app, found in either the app store or on google play, to track everyone's mileage. Some were new to it, and some were already using it. I hope to utilize the KRRC Strava group app for some more fun in the future. The group will be open to all paid members to join, so it will be there if you decide to join in the future. If you are unfamiliar with Strava, it is a free tracking app that can be downloaded onto your phone. You can either upload your workout files from a tracking device of your choice into the app or you can use the app itself to track. The accuracy of utilizing the app to track isn't as good as an actual tracking device such as Garmin, but it at least allows for those that do not have a tracking device to participate still. Since you can upload workout files from just about any device it's not limited to the device you are utilizing either. Garmin or Polar users can connect and create challenges with Apple or Fitbit users. It's a platform for all to share. The club group has a running chart that shows the miles everyone has done for the current week and the past week. Every Sunday I would check the group and add everyone's miles to a spreadsheet. I would even go over the last week chart to make sure the total there matched what I wrote down the previous week. This allowed for anyone that may have not uploaded their workouts on time the prior week to still contribute those miles. How did the group do for the mileage challenge? In all we put in a total of 1,565.61 miles. Some of the bigger contributors being Diane, Alan, and MorningSun, who all contributed over 100 miles each. While Nicole, Jen, and Diana all contributed just barely under 100 miles each for the month. Since KRRC decided to donate \$0.25 per mile, the club will be donating a total of \$391.40 to some area school cross country teams. Great job, everyone! I hope we can only grow from here!

Kankakee River Rat Race

Don't forget! The River Rat Race is this Sunday, November 5, at the Kankakee River State Park. Registration is at the shelter closest to the bridge over Rock Creek and opens at 7:15 am. The 10 mile race begins at 8:00 am, and the 5k run and walk and the 10k run begin at 8:30 am. You can register online until 6 pm Saturday at <https://racerpal.com/races/riverrat>. Otherwise, you can register Sunday at the state park. With the clocks being turned back Saturday night, you will have an extra hour to sleep before race time!