

# THE RUNAROUND



A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE LITTLE ROCK ROADRUNNERS CLUB

May 2010

## Spring's In Full Swing, So Let's Take Wing!

By Tina Coutu  
LRRC President

Hello spring and fellow runners! Recovery strolls, training runs among the neighborhoods, scenery on races, and even my own yard give evidence of a blessed season by the fragrant, abundant, colorful blooms. Abundant energy is also evident in the great performances popping out from our members in races and running events this month. Capital City Classic, Hogeye Marathon and Relays, Boston Marathon, OT Trail 50K/Miler, Oklahoma City Marathon, and several 5K races as well. Many members had fine times and not just speed wise at these events. Participants, volunteers, cheerleaders, and organizers came out in high numbers offering much enthusiasm, camaraderie, and fellowship.

The LRRC had a huge turnout (over 500 entrants) at the Capital City Classic. June Barron sent out a thank you to all who volunteered but we need to thank Tom and June for all their hard work assisting Bill T. getting this race together. The Club did not make a huge profit but we did okay and of course the awards, eats, drinks, cool shirts, and results were much enjoyed by the running community. There is something to be said about giving back tangibly.

The Thursday preceding the Boston Marathon we had our first potluck meeting at the river and I must say it was a nice, quaint, friendly group – we all enjoyed the visiting so much that we hated to start the meeting. Brian and Andrea S-ski, Bill T., Leah Thorvilson, new member Stacy Matson, and Jenny Weather shared their Boston Marathon experiences which gave Boston Marathon

venturer Ethan Neyman much to go to Beantown with (he experienced a PR!).

The fellowship of this Club and the running community was bursting in spirit and giving back by doing something really cool this past month. Bill Torrey got some of us (mostly Tuesday track people) together and we timed the local junior and senior high school track meets at Scott Field. This was an interesting experience as we watched these kids run their hearts out and how much they have yet to learn (i.e., passing the baton, not stopping before the finish line, etc). It was serious business as these kids earned points for the events in which their schools competed. The smiles/anguish of the kids' when hearing their times was reflected indeed. The support for the kids by the coaches and parents was inspiring as well as they incorporated team spirit. I hope we as a Club can do more of this type of support to the youth in the community.

Club, running loyalty, and frolics were evident by a trip up to Fayetteville for the 34<sup>th</sup> Hogeye Marathon and Relays. Many runners from around the state gathered to stomp the hills, cheer, encourage, and partake in the festivities of the sun and fun-filled, perfect temperature weekend. (Part of the support on the first part of the Hogeye course included a crowing rooster and at the same time a "screeching" (?) peacock perched in glory in a tree as runners passed beneath). Many LRRC encouragers, supporters, and participants were in attendance for another beautiful "perfect for hanging outdoors" type of day at the OT 50K/Miler. The Cabot Spring Fling and Catholic High's Rocket 5K both were blessed with the pocket of dry weather

between torrential downpours to graciously let the runners pass through the finish line on Sat. April 24<sup>th</sup>.

Let's hope we can keep the spring high in our step and the humidity down as we sweep into May for Toad Suck GP10K race on May 1. This race always seems to be the one where we first acclimatize to the hot and sticky Arkansas weather. Hope to have our men's and women's team in place but even so keep in mind this quote Ginea Hildebrand Qualls posted on Facebook: *"It's very hard in the beginning to understand that the whole idea is not to beat the other runners. Eventually you learn that the competition is against the little voice inside you that wants you to quit."*

Enjoy Mother's Day and the sprinkling of 5K's during the month for fun and the 8K GP Rock Run on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Here's hoping you will take time out to relax and attend our monthly meeting on Thursday, May 20<sup>th</sup> where Dr. Mike DuPriest will be the guest speaker.

"See you there"!

Note: *(The LRRC extends its condolences and much sympathy to Brian Watson over the loss of his father, Robert Lee Watson, April 24. Please keep Brian and his family in your thoughts and prayers).*

### May Meeting

May 20, 2010  
Murray Park Pavilion 2  
6 p.m. to eat  
6:30 p.m. speaker

Speaker: Mike DuPriest



# Running Wild

By Jacob Wells

Depending on your mood the last weekend of April, you had marathon options of five hour drives in either direction. With the Boston Marathon already old news, most Arkansas runners were oblivious that for one glorious weekend, they were in the epicenter of the marathon universe.

The Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon includes the names of all 168 victims of the 1995 tragedy on flags lining the course. A prayer service is held by the Survivor Tree and 168 seconds of silence are observed to honor those who perished. In stark contrast, Nashville's Country Music Marathon has over 30 bands lining the course and there is nothing silent about it.

The inaugural Memorial Marathon was established on the fifth anniversary of the tragedy with 2010 marking the 10<sup>th</sup> running and the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Country Music Marathon was one of the original races in the Rock-n-Roll Marathon series. Despite the conflicting implications of the name of the series and the music for which the town is famous, it includes nearly every kind of music, with official bands at every mile and many more unsanctioned entertainers scattered along the course. In 2007, one family offered breakfast while another had living room furniture set up in the front yard for runners to sit a spell.

The Memorial Marathon has such significance that the Little Rock Marathon changed its date after its inaugural running in 2003, so as not to conflict with it. Its race director, Mark Bravo, comes to the Little Rock Marathon every year and serves in various announcer capacities at the start and finish line. In addition to the flags lining the course, the Memorial Marathon allows runners to carry the names of one or more victims. I selected an elderly couple in 2009, Luther and LaRue Treanor, who died while visiting the Social Security office to sign up for Luther's retirement benefits. Photographs and stories of each of the victims are included in a book from which each runner can select who they wish to honor. Luther was a farmer. The Treanors' children described them as having never had a harsh word for each other. When I looked them up a moment ago to make sure I had their names correct, I read for the first time that their four-year-old granddaughter Ashley died with them. Despite my delirium during the later stages of the race, I looked up around mile 24 and saw their names on a flag gently waving in the wind.

The 2008 Country Music Marathon included approximately 30,000 participants, with the half marathoners outnumbering the marathoners by five to one. This is perhaps the only race in the world where the second half is lonely by comparison, as you finish the course with only 5,000 other runners. The starting corrals are released each with a two-minute delay resulting in an hour long street party for the back of the

pack. The winner of the half marathon likely finished as the last runner crossed the starting mat.

While every race is meant to be enjoyed by the runners, volunteers, and spectators, the Memorial Marathon is one that I don't describe as fun, but simply as meaningful. I first wrote about the Memorial Marathon in May 2009. That article ended with a quote from race founder Thomas Hill, "Each person carries their own memories of pain and loss that combine with the common experience, and the result can be overwhelming. However, we do not want to stay in the past. The Memorial is not an anchor that binds us to some tragic past, but it is a springboard that propels us into an open and promising future. We are committed to making this a *Run to Remember* because the way we remember our past shapes the way we face our future."

With two such popular marathons to run and unique experiences to be had on the same weekend, Arkansas runners are caught betwixt more than any geographical sect of the running population. The races are not held on the same day, so if you are one of those crazy 50-State Club members or Marathon Maniacs, you might run them both, but the rest of us will have to choose.

For me, the Memorial Marathon led the Country Music Marathon by a margin of 3-2. Would 2010 bring about a tie or shift the balance to the West? I'll have to wait another year to decide. I stopped referring to any particular marathon as "one of my favorites" when I realized that description gave no distinction to any race. The terms "must do" and "can't miss" are often associated with marathons, but these two are unique for me in that they are two that have to share me.

*The Runaround* is published electronically each month by the Little Rock Roadrunners Club, P. O. Box 250229, Little Rock, AR 72225. The deadline for copy is the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the month for publication in the next month's issue. Send articles to the Editor at 3800 Bruno Road, Little Rock, AR 72209-6714 or e-mail [lhouse@pcssd.org](mailto:lhouse@pcssd.org).

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# Iron Man Sidelined At Marathon By Creaky Achilles

By Jesse Garrett

It was the Saturday night before the Little Rock half marathon. Despite my sincerest, most desperate efforts to stop the pain, my Achilles creaked with every movement and hurt with every step. I sat in my hotel room contemplating my options for the next day.

Should I sit this one out? After all, I'm only here because Little Rock has a special place in my heart, and I'm here for friends ... right?

Should I walk it? After all, 13.1 miles of hobbling and pain will be worth it once that medal is around my neck ... right?

Should I go out guns ablaze, ready for whatever suffering that destiny has in store for me? I've run through Achilles pain before, what's different? After all, runners are a tough lot and this is what I've been training for ... right?

I thought back to the Iron season I completed last year. In order to complete an Iron season, a runner must instill in themselves a somewhat foolish racing philosophy:

Start and finish the race, at all costs.

The homestretch of August through November brought to me an acute case of almost every common running injury imaginable. By the end of the season, my body harbored soreness in what felt like every pain receptor from the chest down. After the 20<sup>th</sup> and final race of the Grand Prix, I stood looking at a stairwell leading up to the room in which the awards ceremony was being held, wondering if it was worth the trouble to climb.

But I finished the races, at any cost. My year-long goal was achieved and my recurring nightmare of having to claw myself across the finish line with a ruptured Achilles was gone forever.

So then, on this Saturday night before the race, why was my chip not fastened to my shoe? Why was my bib still in my packet and not pinned on my shirt?

On the Sunday morning of the race, I woke up with a feeling of

determination! Recalling my Iron philosophy, I was going to do everything in my power to start. That's right, injury! You lose! Good day, sir! So I wrapped an Ace bandage around my Achilles, put my socks on, stood up, and the pain hit me: This isn't your best idea, Jesse.

Two articles of clothing mockingly sat on the foot of my bed representing the choice I had to make. On one side laid my running shorts. On the other side were my jeans. After a few long moments, I reached for my jeans. My wife and Jennifer Liles-Dorris, our roommate for the weekend, reassured me that I had made the right decision, but I was not convinced. I put on the rest of my street clothes and walked with Jennifer to her corral.

Ah, this walk of shame. Every friend of mine I passed looked at me with a look of solemn apology or puzzled bewilderment. Time after time I repeated: "No, I'm not running. Yeah, my Achilles hurts. I'll be alright, good luck with your race, man!" Slowly I made my way from back to front, seeing countless friends amongst the thousands of runners preparing to start. Finally, I made my way to the Elite corral. Michelle Rupp, who had been training so diligently in anticipation for this race, stood there in street clothes watching Leah getting prepared to defend her title. The week prior, Michelle was diagnosed with a quadriceps tear, sidelining her for 2-4 weeks. I gave her a reassuring hug and told her that today we're both in this together.

It was there I stood when my feelings of the day started to change. I looked at the thousands of runners standing in their corrals making sure they were prepared. Swaying in nervous anticipation, they checked their pockets for gel. They looked at the clock. They looked at their shoe to confirm their chip was there. They checked their iPod playlist. They looked at the clock. They checked their Garmin. They looked at their shoe again to make sure the chip hadn't fallen off. They looked at the clock. I realized that I hadn't experienced

these starting line jitters in quite some time.

Again, I thought back to my Iron season. Racing every other weekend in 2009 brought with it an unintended consequence. Lately I have only been going to races to be in the company of my friends. I receive great joy from seeing them accomplish their goals, and I love to hear their stories. But lately, I have not been experiencing joy from accomplishing my own goals. Racing, to me, had become a routine: Gear up, run race, receive medal, repeat.

The starting horn woke me up from my introspective trance. Thousands of runners flocked past us from right to left, and for five minutes or so we watched each of them start their race. Some looked nervous, some looked happy, some seemed emotionless. All we could hear were cheers and the thuds of foot strikes around us. Michelle turned around to me and we both had bittersweet tears in our eyes. We both should be out there, but for the first time all weekend, I wasn't thinking about that. What I had just witnessed was one of the most awesome things I've ever seen. It was ironic since I was not running, but for the first time in a long time, I experienced that kind of unbridled anticipation that only the starting line can give you.

For the next few hours that experience continued. We watched first-time marathoners in their first few miles, unaware of what they were about to experience, and we saw veteran 50-staters soaking up the urban scenery. Alea Humes made a sign cheering on the runners, and many of them playfully repeated the "Whoop whoop!" from the sign as they ran by.

Then we moved to the finish line. Through the chute came familiar faces as they finished their 13.1 or 26.2 mile journeys. The finish line is always my favorite place to watch, but today was different. We had seen many of these people not long ago, and each of their emotions had changed dramatically. Those who had looked nervous just hours

# Converting Non-Runners Will Answer Their ??????

By Jenny Weatter  
LRRC Racing News Editor

One thing that really makes me laugh is hearing the comments of non-runners when you are talking about anything running related. Let me first start by saying that I think this is something I can joke about because I remember a few years ago asking some of these same questions. When in the presence of a non-runner, it is best to avoid discussing the recent marathon you just ran because you know exactly what's coming.

#1: How far was this marathon? Um, all marathons are 26.2 miles.

#2: Wow! I don't even like to drive 26 miles. Well I don't either, I'd rather run it.

#3: I only run when someone is chasing me. Really? How often do you have people chasing you?

#4: Did you win? Uh, no. The people that win are a couple hours faster than me.

#5: Then why did you run it if you can't win? I guess I just thought it would be good for my health or something crazy like that.

#6: Don't you know how bad running is for your knees? I guess for some reason I thought the cardiovascular benefits would be more worthwhile to my health.

I think what we runners need to do is convert all the non-runners to runners and then they will have the answers to their questions. Now let's take a look at the people who ran all different marathon distances this month.

March 27<sup>th</sup> was the **Big Rock Mystery Run** in North Little Rock. A few of our members ran. Roy Hayward finished in 1:54:36; Jessica Osorio in 2:06; Tina Coutu in 2:20; Rhonda Ferguson in 2:21 and Rosemary Rogers in 2:41.

The **Capital City Classic 10K** in Little Rock was the next Grand Prix Race of the season. This year this race was considered a championship race which brought out a lot of racers. For the women: Mary Wells finished in 45:16; Andrea Sieczkowski in 47:27; Tina Coutu

in 48:53; Shareese Kondo in 48:57; Ginea Qualls in 54:01; Condly McConnell in 55:36; Jessica Osorio in 55:54; Trina Bright in 55:54; Rhonda Ferguson in 57:45; Alea Humes in 58:00; Carol Torrey in 58:39; Kim Webb in 59:21; Angela Gattin in 59:30; Abigail Ethington in 1:00:31; Elrina Frost in 1:00:45; Erica Nordin in 1:03:03; Donna Trawick in 1:04:22; Michelle Rupp in 1:05:01; Rebecca Humes in 1:05:14; April Rand in 1:06:34; Alesa Davis in 1:07:19; Rosemary Rogers in 1:08:57; Sandy Straessle in 1:09:22; Jessica Bubbus in 1:09:28 and Waynette Traub in 1:14:51.

For the men; Justin Radke finished first in 34:35; Brian Sieczkowski finished in 36:12; Ethan Neyman in 36:16; Steven Preston in 37:09; Kevin Golden in 37:48; Steve Yanoviak in 38:20; Joel Perez in 38:56; David Williams in 39:02; Timothy Steadman in 41:05; Mark Hagemeyer in 41:24; Charles Gattin in 42:57; Jacob Wells in 44:10; Brian Watson in 44:19; Jon Honeywell in 46:11; Gregory Sorenson in 46:16; Daniel Butler in 47:17; Scott Sander in 47:50; Bill Crow in 47:51; Mark Thompson in 47:53; Roy Hayward in 49:43; Harold Hays in 51:52; Kenneth Bland in 51:56; Jeff Hildebrand in 53:14; Roy Smith in 53:50; Dan Belanger in 54:12; Steve Straessle in 56:25; Michael Harmon in 57:26; John Russell in 57:27; Greg Dahlem in 57:42; Bert Sanders in 1:04:39; Jesse Garrett in 1:05:02; Roger Thompson in 1:06:17; Michael Watts in 1:09:23; Brad Patterson in 1:09:33 and Carl Northcutt in 1:18:36.

The **Tour de Paul 5K** was held on April 10<sup>th</sup> in North Little Rock. For the men, Brian Neukirch finished in 22:01; Steve Straessle; Michael Harmon in 26:30; Gordon Rostvold in 26:49; Scott Sanders; 36:55. For the women; Shareese Kondo in 24:01; Ginea Qualls in 26:17 and Paula Cigainero in 35:19.

April 11<sup>th</sup> was the **Hogeye Marathon, Half-Marathon, 5K and Relay Marathon** races in Fayetteville. This year the Hogeye Marathon was a Grand Prix race instead of the Hogeye Half-Marathon as it usually is. For the marathon men; Brian Sieczkowski finished second in 2:59:26. Joel Perez finished in 3:25:38; Charles Gattin in 3:36:19; Jacob Wells in

3:51:43 and Howard Hendrickson in 4:54:28. For the marathon women; Tina Coutu finished fourth in 4:06:13; Trina Bright in 4:34:56; Jessica Osorio in 5:40:59 and Angela Gattin in 5:49:43.

For the half marathon men: John Martin finished in 1:52:55; Allen White finished in 1:55:07 and Scott Sander finished in 2:02:00. For the half-marathon women; Melanie Baden finished in 1:53:22 and Allison Martin in 1:55:51.

Two teams full of LRRC members competed in the **Hogeye Marathon Relay** but only one could be the winner. I hear that there was a lot of smack talk going on but The Terrified Pickles were victorious. Their team consisted of Jesse Garrett, Leah Thorvilson, Dan Belanger and Ginea Qualls. They placed fifth in the Mixed Relay division finishing in 3:40:40. Rups Rangers did a good job as well finishing in 4:31:21. Their team consisted of Michelle Rupp, Michael Harmon, John Russell and Becky Humes.

Also on April 11<sup>th</sup> was the **St. Louis Marathon, Half and 5K**. LRRC member Murat Gokden finished the marathon in 4:37:11. Lynette and Michael Watts ran the 5K in 42:10 and 42:11.

April 17<sup>th</sup> was the **Civitan Services "Peace, Love and 5K"** in Benton. For the women; Leslie Nix finished in 26:31; Josie Nix in 26:34 and Angela Gattin in 28:40. For the men; Justin Nix finished second in 19:12 and Jeff Maher in 26:21.

Also on April 17<sup>th</sup>, Jacob Wells headed to Jackson, TN for the **Andrew Jackson Marathon** finishing in an awesome time of 3:26.

April 17<sup>th</sup> was also the **Ouachita Trail 50 miler and 50K**. For the 50K, Melanie Baden finished in 6:41:51 (great time Melanie) and Rosemary Rogers in 10:10:57. For the 50 miler, Steven Preston finished his first 50 miler in an awesome time of 9:54:41 (congrats Steven). Jenny Weatter finished in 11:24:38 and Tammy Walther in 12:20:17.

Last but certainly not least, the **Boston Marathon** was held on April 19<sup>th</sup>. Ethan Neyman finished in 2:59:15; Kevin

# Four New Members Added To Club Roster

**By June Barron**  
**Membership Chairman**

**Kelsey Groff** has been running for two years. He averages 25 miles per week at a 7:30-8 minute pace. He doesn't race frequently but prefers the 5K distance. His PRs are 20:32 – 5K; 43:59 – 10K; 1:43 – Half Marathon; and 4:15 – Marathon. His favorite race is the Toad Suck 10K.

Kelsey's occupation is an analyst. He enjoys climbing, biking, wakeboarding and traveling. He is eager to get back to running competitively in Arkansas. He also plans to travel the South to run marathons and half-marathons. His next marathon is in Lincoln, Nebraska, on May 2. Good luck!

**Joshua Behrendt** is happily married to **Melisa**, also a runner. They have one child, Mia Rose, who is two years old. Joshua is an aircraft mechanic in the U.S. Air Force. He has been running for 4½ years averaging 3-6 miles a week at an eight minute mile pace. He doesn't race frequently but is hoping to change that. Currently, the longest distance he would prefer to run would be a half-marathon.

Joshua also enjoys working out, playing any sport, and spending time with family and friends. Running has a big impact on his career. He hopes in joining the Club that it will help him with running and to enjoy it a little more without the pressure of failing a PT test.

**Carl Carter** has two children, Luke, age 7, and Chloe, age 6. He is the

training coordinator for Arkansas Blue Cross. Carl has been running for five years averaging 20 miles a week at a nine minute mile pace. He races a handful of times per year preferring the marathon distance. He just set a new PR in the Little Rock Marathon of 4:00:16. Congratulations!

His favorite running route is a 5K route in North Little Rock Park Hill area that includes going up Snake Hill by the Old Mill. He also enjoys community theater, painting, and helping people achieve weight loss goals. Carl really wants to qualify for Boston within a year or so and would love advice from awesome runners. His first marathon was the Little Rock Marathon in 2006. His time then was 5:43. He has come a long way since then.

## Iron Man (Continued from Page 3)

prior now looked overjoyed. Those veterans we had seen were now introspectively soaking in yet another successful race. A few hobbled through the chute wincing in pain, their bodies unable to take another step, but none of that mattered now that it was over. Again, for the first time in a long time, I shared those feelings with those who I watched. I

felt that joy that only a finish line can give you.

Three years ago, I broke my foot stepping off of a simple curb. I'll leave out the long story, but it was the catalyst that started my running life. Lying up on the couch for a month was no fun, but I'm glad it happened. In a twisted similar way, I'm kind of thankful for this Achilles

tendinitis. My personal running philosophy and perspective was in dire need of an overhaul, and being forced to watch the marathon from the sidelines provided just that. No longer do I take starting and finishing a race for granted; no longer do I view races as events to check off a list. They are experiences.

## Converting Non-Runners (Continued from Page 4)

Lemley in 3:24:05; Steve Yanoviak in 3:28:30 and Alison Acott in 3:57:08.

Congrats to everyone. As always, if you were left out of any race

results and would like to be mentioned next month or you want to let me know about a race you are running out of state

so it can be included, please e-mail me at [jennyweather@yahoo.com](mailto:jennyweather@yahoo.com).

Thank You and Happy Running!

# LRRC Training Groups

<u>Group Name</u>	<u>Days/Time</u>	<u>Meeting Location</u>
Pleasant Valley Group	Tues-Fri 5 a.m.	Pleasant Valley golf course
Full Moon Run	Tues/Thurs 5:30 a.m.	Full Moon parking lot, 3625 Kavanaugh
Track workout	Tues 5:15p.m.	See Arkrrca.com forum*
River Market Group	Sat 6 a.m.	Andina's, River Market
US Pizza Run	Sun 9 a.m.	US Pizza, Kavanaugh & Taylor
Andy's Fun Run	Sun 7 a.m.	Andy's, Markham and Barrow

# Conjuring Timothy McVeigh: A Visitor's Experience

By Angela Gattin

I had seen photos of the Oklahoma City National Memorial before I traveled to the site and even in print I found it the most emotionally stirring memorial that I had ever seen, second only to the Korean War Memorial in Washington, DC. I remember looking at the image of all those empty chairs and thinking it an absolutely brilliant way to memorialize the victims of the bombing. I was prepared to see it with my own eyes this past weekend and expected to be even more affected by standing on the grounds with all of those empty chairs reminding me that there is a void in the spaces the victims once occupied. What I wasn't prepared to see though, was the way the rest of the memorial and the city itself honors the dead yet directs most of the visitor's attention to the survivors. In fact, it seemed that the focus was not simply on the flesh and blood survivors of the attack but on the virtue of survivorship itself.

I've seen lots of memorials in my life, which is a natural benefit of being so well-traveled, and more often than not a memorial to the dead contains a wall or plaque or a stretch of pavement bearing a list of the names of the departed. Not so in Oklahoma City; the wall contains a list of the names of the survivors and that wall is the broken remnant of a surviving wall from the bomb blast itself. It's not elegant in a slick artistically rendered sense but it is achingly beautiful because it is real and because it is not painted over or prettied up. It is cracked and crumbled and warped and pitted, yet it still stands, and upon it are the names of the human beings cracked, crumbled, warped and pitted; yet still standing.

The grounds of memorial have all of the reverence of a cemetery. The reflecting pool and the two statuary slabs at either end of the lawn wear the somber black of dignified mourning and the inscription of respectful remembrance. Yet on the remaining perimeter of the park, the original scarred walls of the battered buildings remain. They are intentionally left unpainted and un-resurfaced.

Shrapnel is there to see and touch. There is twisting and tearing and evidence of collapse. There are words spray-painted on a wall near the ground, begging for justice, left intact just as they were when they were applied in anguish days after the bombing. A section of the chain link fence that contained the area during the search and rescue efforts remains, complete with offerings of sympathy and support from all over the globe still attached.

I didn't know about The Survivor's Tree before I came. It is an elm that was a miracle of survival long before the bombing, refusing to die in the midst of an ever modernizing downtown paved over with concrete and the abuse, restriction, and pollution of decades of progress. When the bomb blast leveled and crumpled everything standing around, under, and above that tree, damaging over 300 buildings, streets, cars, and public utilities, the elm bore the brunt of it and survived. When months of heavy equipment, search and rescue efforts, and demolition followed, the elm remained. The citizens of the city fell in love with the tree and the steadfastness with which its roots staunchly held the ground and began nurturing it right in the heart of ground zero. It was named for the survival effort and seems have become the symbol of the city. Standing at the base of the terraces that radiate from the beneath the tree down to the grounds where the empty chairs stand facing it, it appears that the entire memorial starts at the tree and spreads outward as its branches and roots do, reaching down and out, into the city and into the gaze of the visitors who look upward to view it.

The museum wasn't a building holding artifacts, it was an experience. None of the names-on-a-wall effect here either. Visitors start the tour at the start of the day of the bombing, just as the victims and the survivors started the day and as I took each step further into the corridor I was brought a few minutes closer to 9:02 a.m. by the chronicle of the events of an average April morning for commuters and workers and children going to daycare. Then, visitors are welcomed into a sealed

room in which the doors lock behind them. The lights are dimmed and the only known recording of the bomb blast is heard in the darkness. A public utility hearing was going on across the street from the Murrah building and visitors stand facing a blank screen listening to two minutes of that hearing that began at 9 a.m. Then, in a heartbeat, the blast, and in a blink of the eyes, the faces of the victims illuminate the screen all at once – a collage of human life – and then quickly fades. It went too quickly for me. I wanted to look at their faces longer, but the brilliance of the exhibit doesn't allow it. The lights come up, the sealed doors unlock, and you step from the room into the bombing itself.

The exhibit of the bombing is not constructed uniformly. Sections of display walls are placed at odd angles and aligned with deliberate difficulty so that you have to twist and turn and almost whirl around in circles to see them clearly; it definitely gives the visitor a sense of chaos. You don't know where to look next, but everywhere you do look there is broken glass and devastation and empty shoes and twisted metal. You can't stand in one spot and survey the room, you have to keep going around another corner and still there is something else out of the corner of your eye, and still more behind that and more behind you but no place for the eye or the foot to rest and absorb everything. I thought it was genius to bring the visitor into the chaos. At one point I thought I was looking at a full scale photograph of a collapsed room filled with debris and then gasped as I realized that the heap pinned under a fallen wall had two eyes staring out from the camouflage of the thick dust obscuring her body. She was still alive. The tools used to rescue her were mounted low on the wall beneath her picture: a letter opener, a length of twine, and a pocketknife. I felt the tears well up in my eyes when I stepped around another disjointed corner to find the toys and teddy bears from the daycare center in the rubble.

There were tiny tennis shoes and briefcases and car keys making the victims seem only just gone a moment, not dead

## At The Oklahoma City National Memorial

for 15 years. The items they owned and carried and wore were there, dirty, torn, with jagged shards of glass and shrapnel still protruding from them, and they couldn't be thought of as names on a wall; they were instantly brothers and daddies and grand-daughters and best friends. This connection to the victims was made even stronger in a circular room where the photos that I had longed to look at closer were once again displayed, this time in a clear glass display from the floor to the ceiling, made of smaller square boxes. Inside each box was the photo of each person killed and then something personal that their families donated to the museum; something that they had each loved or enjoyed as a hobby or symbolized their lives in some way. It made them real people; not photos of strangers. You looked at an older fellow and his harmonica together and imagined that he was somebody's grandpa. You saw the middle-aged woman and her needlepoint and imagined her next door neighbor missing drinking coffee with her. You saw the babies, and their toys, and you imagined the arms that donated the stuffed lambs and teething rings now empty; not holding their babies anymore. It was almost overwhelming. I've never stood in a cemetery looking at granite headstones and felt the same way. Looking at their faces next to the Harley Davidson bandanas and the softball gloves, they became lives to me. It was a tribute to which I could actually relate and I thought it honored their lives so much better than a rock in the ground.

The single most moving piece of the exhibit for me was a wall containing letters and cards that school children had made to send to the survivors recovering in the hospital. Among the Get Well Soon sentiments and the depictions of stick fingers crying crayon tears was a single black and white card with an elementary scrawl, "They caught the crooks." The printing on the card was that of a child just learning to write. The struggle to form the letters correctly was obvious in the stop-and-start strokes of the crayon that must have been clenched fiercely tight in a chubby little fist concentrating

on his message. But the realization that tore at my heart was that a child so young had to embrace the concept of justice when in the normal course of his development simply forming capital letters was considered challenging. The innocence of that child was prematurely dispelled by a tragedy of this magnitude, by something as horrifying as terrorism, instead of an ordinary thing like a pet dying. To be so young and have to understand this to the level of trying to comfort an adult with a justice oriented message shook me evenly more violently than the burned teddy bears.

After that came the investigation, trial, and conviction. I was stunned that among the mountains of burned and broken leavings of metal that seemed unremarkable to my eyes that it was a truck axle that led back to McVeigh. That fact had escaped me during the coverage from afar. It was there too, that truck axle, and every identifiable piece of the truck as well, placed as well as it could be to show the skeletal outline of the truck itself. So much of the actual evidence had been donated to the museum that I learned more in the 20 minutes I circled the trial exhibit than I had in all of the media coverage. Timothy McVeigh became a real person to me too, not just a headshot in the newspaper and not just an orange jumpsuit in a news item. I saw his handwriting and the things he touched and the remains of his life as well. I listened to the accounts of the authorities that processed him after his arrest and from the journalists who covered the trial, but I wouldn't think about him in any earnest until the next day.

After the marathon, which also featured a half marathon, a 5K, a relay, a walk, and a kid's race, families were invited to reunite at the memorial, on those same grounds as the empty chairs, The Survivor's Tree, and the poignant reminders of 9:01 and 9:03 – the minutes immediately before and immediately after the explosion. I ran the half marathon and as I made my way to the memorial park to wait for my husband to finish the full marathon and reunite with me there, I sat in the grass near The Survivor's Tree and

watched the families around me. At first I thought that it felt a bit disrespectful, watching the little kids run and play and family sprawling out picnic-style on what felt like hallowed ground, but the longer I sat there the more I thought about Timothy McVeigh. I thought about how this city he attacked channels more of its collective energy into celebrating the survival of the event than creating a cold, quiet monument to the dead. This place of murder and terror was now teeming with life and renewal.

I watched families gathered into groups watching for their runners to come into the park and then the joyous reunions with cheers and hugs and many sweaty pictures taken. I watched little kids occupy their wait by running and jumping and doing cartwheels over the grass now grown over the place where so much American blood was spilled at the hands of one of our own. I listened to the band provided for the families and the runners, two crunchy granola types with a bongo drum, a single guitar, and keyboard playing Top 40 hits that everyone could sing along to and wondered what Timothy McVeigh might think of what had become of what he had done. Here were men and women and teenagers and little kids affirming life in one of the marathon events and then bringing that affirmation to the memorial to celebrate it. It didn't feel irreverent at all; it felt communal, and it inspired me. I felt that sense of connection again, and caught myself singing along to the lyrics of John Lennon's *Imagine* and thinking how beautiful this day was and how everyone walking or running or sitting on the grass with me filled the space around those empty chairs with joy that day, rather than sorrow.

Many runners had donated extra money to run in honor of a victim and raced with that person's name pinned to their backs so that we might remember them as we ran. Tears filled my eyes yet again as I watched those runners take the bib with the victim's name on it to the empty chair bearing the same name and

# Oklahoma City National Memorial

(Continued from Page 7)

leave it like an offering – as one would leave flowers on a grave – and then drape their race medals on the chairs as well. Some even took pictures posing with the chair of the victim they had run to honor. Still the exuberance of city-wide family picnic went on all around and I was suddenly so happy that these families weren't refraining from playing in the grass or running and squealing. To me, they were making this place sacred with the abundance of their lives rather than the restraint of stoic ceremony.

In my heart, I wished that Timothy McVeigh could have some awareness of this miracle. I wanted there to be a periscope through the universe that could be brought to his eyes, wherever they might be in death, so that he could see the thriving of this place, of these people, and of interdependence of all human life. I wanted him to see the seedlings from The Survivor's Tree planted around the perimeter of the park and more seedlings sent to every corner of the earth with a click of a computer mouse. I wanted Timothy McVeigh to face more than his bombing; I wanted to him to face that he had also made this day's gathering and community and gratitude possible with his bombing.

In this single weekend the city hosted a minor league baseball game, an NBA basketball game, a fine arts festival, a marathon, and local high school proms. I wanted Timothy to witness the thousands of people pouring into this park to celebrate the memories and the thousands more that had poured into the city for the entire weekend to celebrate sport and the arts and coming of age. Like The Survivor's Tree, something beautiful couldn't be killed, and in fact thrived and became even more beautiful and bountiful even after a bomb was detonated in its face. I could think of no greater form of protest against domestic terrorism than this. I could think of no better reckoning for a terrorist than to have to face this realization that exactly the opposite of his intention had been created through his crime.

The bomb itself was even transformed in my mind, and instead of a

weapon of mutilation, I saw the answering virtue of these survivors and this community being detonated. I saw it explode toward the heavens and fall back to earth on the bare feet of the children and compassion of the adults to nourish the earth and humanity with richer nutrients than before. The ground under my body vibrated with the force of it and my heart trembled with the knowledge its source could not be killed by any weapon we make with our hands. I saw the wind pick up the ponytails of the women who would bring more life to this place and shirt tails of men chasing toddlers who would grow up and bring their children to this place and my vision widened to the battered walls behind them. The walls seemed to whisper back to me on the wind, *we do not hide our scars in Oklahoma City; yet we are not defined by them.*

I left Oklahoma City aware of all that did define its citizens and I suddenly

understood why breast cancer survivors don't hide their mastectomy scars when they go swimming or why amputees don't hide their limbs. I understood why chemotherapy patients leave their heads brazenly bald and why recovering addicts celebrate two sets of birthdays. They are not symbols of their respective tragedies; they are symbols of their respective miracles. When my husband and I first started dating he gave me a charm bracelet on our first Christmas. Every time I finish a marathon or a half marathon I add a silver charm symbolizing that race. The symbol for this race was The Survivor's Tree held inside a silver circle. As I held it in my hand preparing to add it to the collection I told my husband that I didn't think I could put this charm on the bracelet with the others. I found it too beautiful. I told him that I was going to have to wear it on a chain as a pendant instead, around my neck, closer to my heart.

## Races

(Continued from Page 9)

- 12: Boomtown Half Marathon/5K at Batesville. Call 870-307-4938.
- 12: Ice Cream Social 5K/1M at Berryville. Call 870-480-2187.
- 12: St. Jude Music Fest 5K at Nashville, TN. Call 901-338-5077.
- 12: Poultry Festival 5K at Rogers. Call 479-290-2062.
- 13: Andy's Fun Run.
- 19: Kiwanis AR Children's Hospital 5K/1M at Springdale. Call 479-751-8733.
- 19: Run with the Dogs 5K at Benton. Call 501-315-9252.
- 19: Leslie Homecoming 5K at Leslie, AR. Call 870-365-8294.
- 19: Oil Run 5K at Smackover. Call 870-725-2907.
- 20: Andy's Fun Run.
- 26: Race for Grace 5K at Harrison. Call 870-429-5348.
- 26: Brickfest 5K at Malvern. **GPS.**
- 26: Cancer Challenge 10K/5K/1M at Springdale. Call 479-273-3172.
- 27: Andy's Fun Run.

### July

- 2: Midnight Madness 50M at Tulsa, OK. Call 918-244-6918.
- 3: Firecracker 5K for St. Jude at Memphis. Call 901-765-4409.
- 3: Fireworks Festival 5K at Flippin. Call 8970-453-8522.
- 3: Firecracker 5K at Little Rock. Call 501-231-3730.
- 3: Firecracker 5K at Rogers. Call 479-636-3338.
- 4: Andy's Fun Run.
- 10: National Guard 5K at Batesville. Call 870-307-4938.
- 10: Big Dam Bridge Twilight 5K at Little Rock. Call 501-231-3730.
- 10: Firecracker 5K at Springdale. Call 479-878-2421.
- 11: Andy's Fun Run.
- 17: River City 5K at North Little Rock. Call 501-416-0929.

# Running Calendar

Upcoming races, fun runs, and Grand Prix Series (GPS) races, including state championships {SC}, are listed below. The LRRC sponsors Sunday fun runs beginning at Andy's at Markham and Barrow at 7 a.m. If you know about a race that should be listed, send information to *The Runaround* editor.

## May

- 7: MacArthur Park 5K at Little Rock. Call 501-375-0121.
- 7: Gold Rush 5K at Bentonville. Call 479-619-6726.
- 8: Women Can Run 5K at Conway. Call 501-908-5096.
- 8: Root Rocket 5K at Fayetteville. Call 479-283-9814.
- 8: Whistlestop 5K/10K at Ashdown. Call 870-898-9508.
- 8: German Heritage 5K at Stuttgart. Call 870-673-7001.
- 8: Speedy Skunk 10K/5K at Prairie Grove. Call 479-846-4181.
- 8: Charge of the Warriors 5K at Pangburn. Call 501-728-4431.
- 8: Children First 5K at Poteau, OK. Call 918-647-8601.
- 9: Andy's Fun Run.
- 15: Bison Stampede 5K/1M at Rogers. Call 479-236-5909.
- 15: WRMC 5K at Batesville. Call 870-262-6168.
- 15: Lupus Springers 5K at Hot Springs. Call 501-525-9380.
- 15: Paws on the Pavement 5K/1M at Little Rock. Call 501-603-2273.
- 15: Crawdad Days 5K/10K at Harrison. Call 870-414-4440.
- 15: Ben Geren Regional Park 9M at Ft. Smith. Call 479-879-5232.
- 15: Kendrick Fincher 5K/1M at Rogers. Call 479-986-9960.
- 15: Pioneer Day 5K at Norfolk. Call 870-499-5432.
- 15: River Run 5K at Caruthersville, MO. Call 870-740-1768.
- 15: Picklefest 5K at Atkins. Call 479-641-7591.
- 15: White County 4H 5K at Searcy. Call 501-230-3516.
- 16: Andy's Fun Run.
- 22: Dino Dash 5K at Little Rock. Call 501 396-7050.
- 22: Fight for Air Climb at Little Rock. Call 402-502-4950.
- 22: Challenge for Sight 5K at Fayetteville. Call 479-236-2566.
- 22: Steve Platt Memorial 5K at Vilonia. Call 903-276-9304.
- 22: Crossmark for Kids 5K/1M at Rogers. Call 479-464-2200.
- 22: Run Your Tail Of 5K at Fort Smith. Call 479-783-4395.
- 22: Chili Rumble 5K at Mulberry. Call 479-430-8826.
- 22: Challenge for Sight 5K at Fayetteville. Call 479-236-2566.
- 22: Trinity Race of Faith 5K at Rison. Call 870-325-7606.
- 22: Free2Walk & 5K Run at Fayetteville. Call 479-422-1402.
- 23: Andy's Fun Run.
- 29: Easter Seals Rock Run 8K at Little Rock. **GPS**. Call 501-766-3004.
- 29: Riverfest Rock-N-Stroll 5K at North Little Rock. Call 501-255-3378.
- 29: Early Learning Center 5K/1M at Rogers. Call 479-426-3501.
- 29: Portfest Cintas 5K at Newport. Call 870-523-3618.
- 29: Elm Tree Wildcat 5K at Bentonville. Call 479-621-2369.
- 29: Dino 5K at Nashville. Call 870-845-7405
- 29: South Wind 5K at Gillett. Call 870-509-0576.
- 29: Diamondback Dash 5K at Magazine. Call 479-969-2640
- 30: Andy's Fun Run.

## June

- 5: Mt. Magazine 15K at Havana, AR. Call 479-970-4278.
- 5: Warrior Challenge Money Run 5K at Texarkana, AR. Call 870-703-8590.
- 5: Sole to Soul 5K at North Little Rock. Call 501-614-6061.
- 5: Great Cross Country 4M at Little Rock. Call 501-327-0214.
- 6: Andy's Fun Run.

# Birthdays

The following is a list of Club members and/or spouses who were born during the month of May. Call June Barron at 920-3224 if the information is incorrect.

- 1 – Mary Hayward
- 2 – Milan Lelovic
- 4 – Ivy Pearsall
- 6 – Brian Bell
- 6 – Joe Cordi
- 7 – Mark Hagemeyer
- 12 – Dana Butler
- 12 – Melisa Behrendt
- 13 – Jackie Martin
- 13 – Jerry Senn
- 14 – Bert Sanders
- 14 – Don Cave
- 14 – Joel Perez
- 17 – Alyssa Barron
- 18 – Bill Bulloch
- 20 – Greg Dahlem
- 21 – Cindy Hedrick
- 21 – Paula Anderson
- 24 – Ann Marie Crow
- 24 – Carol Torrey
- 25 – Ashley Honeywell
- 27 – Bettina Brownstein
- 27 – Beverly Smith
- 27 – Scott Wall
- 28 – Ann Butts
- 29 – Allen White
- 29 – Nicolette Barron
- 30 – Deni Golden

### Retreads

First Wednesday of the month  
 Franke's Cafeteria  
 11121 N. Rodney Parham Road  
 (Market Place Shopping Center)  
 Dutch Treat

Wear something to show you are one of the gang -- shirt, hat, scarf, finisher medal, etc. Just show up and look for the Old Runners -- Retreads. For more information contact Charley or Lou Peyton at 225-6609 or chrlypyton@aol.com.