

# PACESETTER

STARVED ROCK RUNNERS LTD.

MARCH/APRIL 2022 • VOLUME 46 • ISSUE 2



**Streator Memorial Day 5K**



## UPCOMING RACES & EVENTS

- 6/24 - Celebrate LaSalle 5K
- 7/2 - Run For Glory 5K (Streator)
- 7/4 - Genesis Firecracker 5K - (Moline)
- 7/9 - Dog Days 5K (Lake Bloomington)
- 8/6 - Taste 5K (Peru)
- 8/12 - Mr. C's 5K (Wenona)
- 8/20 - Boo Milby 5K - (LaSalle)
- 9/10 - Underground RR 5K (Princeton)
- 9/17 - Dwight Harvest Days 5K (Dwight)
- 9/25 - Quad Cities Marathon, Half & 5K (Moline)



## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

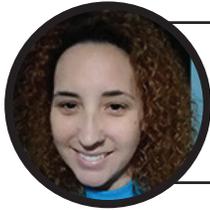
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# Club Officers



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Secretary**



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## 2022 Board of Directors

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# Info

## Mission of Starved Rock Runners Ltd.

Our purpose is to promote physical fitness, health and fellowship through distance running and to educate the public as to its benefits. To disseminate information on running through newsletters, booklets, clinics, meetings, handbooks, press releases and educational programs. To engage in activities conducive to the encouragement of distance running, including race management, fund raising activities, race circuits, and charitable community activities.

## MONTHLY CLUB MEETINGS

are held at 7:00PM the 3rd Tuesday of every month at the Illinois Valley YMCA in Peru. For up to date meeting information, check the "MEETING INFORMATION" tab on the front page of the web site.

**ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME AND ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND.**

## SRRL CONTACTS

### Questions?

Do you have a question, a suggestion, possibly a complaint, or have you ever said "Why are the Starved Rock Runners doing this?" or, "I sure wish the club would \_\_\_\_\_."

Perhaps you don't know anyone on the Board well enough to voice your thoughts or opinions to. We have people in different towns who have agreed to be liaisons and relay comments and concerns back to us. Feel free to reach out to any board member or the following liaisons:

Marsha Zeglis  
815-228-2845  
marshazig@comcast.net

Dan Rolando, Oglesby  
815-252-8997  
skirunbyk@mac.com

## Notes from Our Club Secretary

### Meeting April 19, 2022

Illinois Valley YMCA – Peru, Illinois  
Call to order by President, Kory Katkus @ 7:04pm.

Eleven board members present, four absent. Secretary's minutes and treasurer's report were approved and filed.

**Old Business:** Budget for Social Committee was proposed and approved unanimously for \$1000 for 2022. Budget for Pacesetter was proposed and approved unanimously for \$4000 for 2022.

**New Business:** Theresa Hart has resigned from the board and treasurer. Currently have Canal Connection/Run the Path will be held in Putnam County again this year. Janin Sobin and Rosann Abbott are race directors. Carol Pratt has been inducted into the IV Hall of Fame.  
Adjourned 8:34pm.

### Meeting May 17, 2022

Illinois Valley YMCA – Peru, Illinois  
Called to order by Club President, Kory Katkus at 7:42pm

Nine Board Members were present, six absent. Secretary's minutes and Treasurer's report were approved and filed.

**Old Business:** Representative from Edward Jones presented options for clubs investment account. Bob Zeglis has filled open position for club treasurer. Run the Path will once again be run in Putnam this year. Women and kids running clinic set to start June 6th.

**New Business:** Lake Run reports being good race. Starved Rock Country Marathon races reports numbers were down in all races.

# ON THE RUN

by Club President Kory Katkus

Here we are, entering the longer daylight hours, the warmer temps, the free time of the summer hours where kids have plenty of extra time to spare. But also, the time for the Kid's Clinic!! The Kid's Clinic was always near and dear to former Board Member and Club President, Bob Rehn. This year the clinic is being sponsored in his memory lead by Joe Bornac. I would like to thank Joe and all his volunteers for the time and dedication they put forth in introducing kids to running. The Kid's Clinic has just started and meets on Mondays at Baker Lake.

The Woman's Clinic started a week earlier than the Kid's Clinic led by Mary Beth Potthoff. I would like to thank Mary Beth and her volunteer leads for helping the woman participants prepare for their 1st 5k or improve on past races for the goal race of The Boo Milby 5k. Good luck to everyone!!

As for the rest of the club events, we have had a few races take place since your last issue of the Pacesetter. Those races included The Lake Run races at Lake Bloomington, Starved Rock Country Marathon in Ottawa, and Streator YMCA Memorial Day 5k. The club was represented well at all those races due to great weather conditions as well as great members such as yourself.

With the great news of club presence at these races it comes with some sorrow news as well. An iconic place to meet friends for some food and drinks after races held at Lake Bloomington, Green Gables was lost to a fire just days after the Lake Run races. It is often that these small businesses are the sponsors for many of our races, so whenever possible support them as well.

Not to be overlooked, Global Running Day was 1JUNE2022. Hope you were able to participate in one form or another. Your social committee hosted a fun run for all abilities from Utica led by committee member Amber Heider followed by appetizers compliments of the committee. The committee's purpose is to promote the club itself as well as help interact not only amongst members but the members and its board as well. The hope of the committee is to hold such events that you can feel more relaxed to interact with each other no matter what type of runner (or walker) you might be.

By the time you get this issue we should be right at the next circuit race if we have not already run it. But there are more circuit races coming up. The Streator Run for Glory 5k, the newly added Genesis Firecracker 10k/5k in East Moline as well as Dog Days in July. As noted, remember any circuit race that has multiple distances, any distance will count towards circuit credit.

This year is also a self-reporting system for circuit credit. You need to mark your distance you completed by adding a "1" under the distance in the row with your name. If you have any questions or issues, reach out to Kory Katkus at [kory\\_katkus@yahoo.com](mailto:kory_katkus@yahoo.com) You can access the circuit credit sheet at: [https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1p7G-7DKbtQfxvHwvTjoUow6ljqEapTTh\\_qQ79Ab\\_CLKI/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1p7G-7DKbtQfxvHwvTjoUow6ljqEapTTh_qQ79Ab_CLKI/edit?usp=sharing) or by scanning the QR code at the bottom of the page.

Have there been any races that you ran that you want to gloat about? Write about it and submit it to the pacesetter. We all would love to hear about it. The pros and cons! If it was good, you may inspire another club member to run it. And don't worry about your writing skills, most of us are not professional writers. We just love reading about other runner's adventures. Feel free to submit a story you want to share, remember this is a newsletter built on your stories. Hope all are staying healthy and safe. I hope to see you out there. Stop by and say hi to me. With a club such as ours I may have seen your name but may not know your face, so it would be great to put a face with the name.

Happy Running,  
Kory



# A Few Words From Your VP

by Club Vice-President Teresa Messersmith

## GET INVOLVED

There is a vacancy to be filled on the Board of Directors. Looking for members interested in getting involved. Meetings are the 3rd Tuesday of every month. Meetings generally last 2 hours. Any one interested should contact Kory Katkus

## ♥ Happy ♥ BIRTHDAY

<b>Samuel Ridley</b>	<b>7/1</b>	<b>Candee Lawrence</b>	<b>8/3</b>	<b>Heidi Bubela</b>	<b>8/19</b>
<b>Karen Leifheit</b>	<b>7/2</b>	<b>Kelly Duttlinger</b>		<b>Randy Pratt</b>	<b>8/20</b>
<b>Angela Massutti</b>	<b>7/4</b>	<b>Christi Wilson</b>	<b>8/7</b>	<b>Adrienne VanHorn</b>	<b>8/20</b>
<b>Bill Sparks</b>	<b>7/5</b>	<b>Patricie Hess</b>	<b>8/8</b>	<b>Joy Weide</b>	<b>8/20</b>
<b>Erica Pratt</b>	<b>7/7</b>	<b>Mary Fislar</b>	<b>8/11</b>	<b>Don Kiesig Jr.</b>	<b>8/24</b>
<b>Linda Walter</b>	<b>7/13</b>	<b>Manessa Trench</b>	<b>8/11</b>	<b>John Roets</b>	<b>8/24</b>
<b>Steve Lukancic</b>	<b>7/16</b>	<b>Robert Baierbach</b>	<b>8/12</b>	<b>Lori Wischermann</b>	<b>8/25</b>
<b>Daniel Ricci</b>	<b>7/16</b>	<b>Kathy Pullam</b>	<b>8/14</b>	<b>Bob Steele</b>	<b>8/25</b>
<b>Addison Joyce</b>	<b>7/17</b>	<b>Dick Fislar</b>	<b>8/18</b>	<b>Jan Studer</b>	<b>8/27</b>
<b>Nico Biagioni</b>	<b>7/18</b>	<b>John Gutz</b>	<b>8/18</b>	<b>Rachel Patrick</b>	<b>8/28</b>
<b>Rosanne Abbott</b>	<b>7/23</b>			<b>Gary Kirkpatrick</b>	<b>8/29</b>
<b>Karen Kasperski</b>	<b>7/27</b>			<b>Catie Lukancic</b>	<b>8/29</b>

# RUNNER PROFILE

## Amber Heider



**Date/ place of birth:** April 11, 1987 in Peru, IL

**Current Location:** LaSalle, IL

**Educational Background:** Bachelors in Education from Illinois State University

**Personal Heros:** I look up to a lot of people that have run marathons and ultras. Many of them have overcome setbacks or injuries and are truly an inspiration.

**Personal Strengths:** Organization and time management. Despite working a lot, I've learned to make my mental health and hobbies a priority.

**Personal Philosophy:** You can do anything that you set your mind to.

**Non-running Achievement:** I recently passed a test to add a high school math endorsement to my teaching certificate.

**Favorite Non-Running Leisure Activity:** Bodypump & Yoga

**Years Running:** Over 10 years

**Number of Races Ran/ PRs:** Too many races to count and I have not really kept track of PRs over the years.

**Favorite Race:** Chicago Marathon or any of the Quad City races

**Favorite Training Run:** Any run with friends

**Typical Training Week:** I don't really have a schedule. I normally just try to run 4 or 5 times a week.

**Injuries/ Health problems:** Plantar Fasciitis. Lots of stretching and a cortisone shot has helped a ton.

**Why you run:** For my mental and physical health. It's a huge stress reliever for me.

**What you do to stay motivated:** Group chats with friends / running groups on social media. My running friends are my biggest motivators.

**Why did you start running:** I decided to try the Woman's Running Clinic over 10 years ago. I met a lot of amazing runners there and developed a passion for running.

**Advice you would give to beginning runners:** Just get out there and run. Try not to be concerned about distance or

## Kelly Arduzer

**Date/ place of birth:** March 9, 1974 / Moline, IL

**Current location:** Earlville, IL

**Educational background:** Bachelor's degree in business administration from St. Ambrose University

**Personal heroes:** Anyone who overcomes adversity

**Personal Strengths:** Resilience – I'm a slow runner, but I'm ok with that – I'm perfectly happy in the back of the pack – I'm a self-proclaimed turtle, and that's fine by me

**Personal Philosophy:** "Be afraid, and do it anyway!"

**Non-running achievement of which you are most proud:** Climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro in Africa

**Favorite non-running leisure activity:** Hiking

**Years running:** 5+

**Number of races ran: Running PR'S at various distances:** Not sure – lol! A lot of 5k's, a handful of trail races, 1 marathon and a handful of half marathons (I'm trying to do 1 half marathon each month this year, that will add 12 to my total!)

**Favorite race:** My one and only marathon!

**Favorite training run:** Anything outdoors! (still haven't made friends with the "dreadmill")

**Typical training week:** No typical week, just try to keep moving

**Injuries/health problems:** Nothing major

**Why you run:** I'm not the least bit competitive, but I enjoy being outdoors around like-minded people who are always kind and supportive, whether I finish 1st (never) or last (usually), lol!

**What do you do to stay motivated?** Push myself to start – that's always the hardest part for me

**Why did you start running?** After my late husband passed away, I needed an outlet to grieve and spend time reflecting – running gave me an opportunity to emotionally heal in many ways

**Advice you would give to beginning runners:** Regardless of your age, physical ability, experience or body type, you can do it . . . Just start (that's the hardest part!)



# RUNNER PROFILE

## Gary Westefer



**Date/Place of Birth:** Chicago, Illinois (Hyde Park community) November 9, 1955

**Current Location:** Chicago (Mount Greenwood community) since 2001.

**Educational Background:** Undergraduate Degree University of North Dakota, Masters Level, started at University of Tennessee, transferred to Mississippi State University receiving a fellowship.

**Personal Heroes:** People that make things happen without big financial backing or the need to excessively profit from it. On a running basis Forego (yes that's a horse) because like me he was a late bloomer that outlasted Secretariat (both were in the 1973 Kentucky Derby) and went on to be 3 time horse of the year and at the time, all time money winner. I improved significantly but not to that level. Wish I could run a sub 1:35 mile!

**Personal Strengths:** I usually finish what I start. I also volunteer in many activities including races, ALPCA, and the Evergreen Park Historical Commission.

**Personal Philosophy:** Although I told Lynn Lulay it was "He who dies with the most Cheerleaders wins", I have over 2500 in my collection), really it is: "The better you get at doing something, the more they will come to you for help. You are not being dumped on rather they respect you work more than the one who is responsible for the task.

**Non-Running achievement of which you are most proud:** On a work level it was being part of a team that wrote the hazardous waste pharmaceuticals regulations. On a leisure level it was completing the visit of every county and county like unit in the United States. (there are 3145 according to the Census Bureau)

**Favorite non-running leisure activity:** Some people visit baseball stadiums, I go to horse and dog racing tracks. I have logged 256 on five continents with live racing so far. I also visit craft breweries.

Years running: 53. I have raced at least 4 times in every year, starting in 1969.

**Favorite race:** Cheltenham Gold Cup –oops wrong type of racing. Actually I liked the Kentucky 50 Miler in odd years when it was run from Louisville to Frankfort. It was royal finishing at the State Capitol. I also like the Illinois River to River because of the great camaraderie with ones teammates.

**Favorite training run:** On the I&M canal path in Channahon, Sunday's it is the Breakfast Club and we also have Taco Tuesdays. You run what you want to run and then there is usually food and drink afterward. There are dual club members including myself (Starved rock and Prairie State) there.

**Typical Training Week:** Due to many miles and years on the legs, I now run 2-3 days/week. The Tuesday and Sunday runs, races on Saturday or Sunday, and the occasional run from home.

**Injuries/Health Problems:** Achilles Tendinitis back in 1982 at mile 6 during a six hour run in Columbus, OH. I continued on for 27 more miles. This sidelined me for 5 weeks. I also had a Patella tendon injury finishing the National Restaurant Race in the 1990's.

**Why you run:** I run for the social aspect, being with friends and encourage one another to race better.

**What do you do to stay motivated:** Group runs with others helps keep me going. It was tougher during COVID's peak, so I tried to see how many suburbs and Chicago communities I could run into. I got up to 14 miles at one point. Years ago it was breaking 40:00 for a 10K or a PR that motivated me.

**Why did you start running:** When I walked home from elementary school back in the mid 1960's I would see the Evergreen Park H.S. cross country team doing their workout. I thought this is something I can do. Entering high school at 73 pounds and 4'8, football and basketball certainly were out of the question. By the end of High School I discovered road races and that running, like bowling and golf, is a sport for life and I wasn't ready to stop running so I joined the University of North Dakota Cross Country and track teams and eventually lettered in Cross Country.

Advice you would give to beginning runners: Don't give up, I started dead last. Build a good distance base first, then add interval training and watch your times go down. Watching the PR's improve is the fun part.

# Why You Should Never Date A Runner

We runners are lovely people but you seriously should think twice before dating us.

Running is great, runners are awesome, dating runners is not. On the outside we may look physically fit and attractive. We run off our stress meaning we often have a positive attitude. But deep down, we are hiding many dirty secrets. If you're thinking of getting serious with a runner, think twice. If you proceed with your decision to date a runner, here's what will happen to you.

1. We will wear our sweaty gear out to dinner once we get comfortable.

At first we plan our outfits. Or we throw on some socially acceptable combination of clothing before going to meet you. Over time, that will fade. We will routinely show up in sweaty workout gear and you will get mad we can't go to nice places.

2. Running causes tons of aches and pains. We will ask for massages.

Especially the feet and calves. By dating a runner, you basically become a massage therapist.

3. Our homes smell like shoes.

Because there are so many of them. Yes we clean. We might even move the shoes into another room. No matter what we do, our homes always smell vaguely shoe-y.

4. We are in the habit of extending our runs when we're out. This means we will often be late.

Get used to the sheepish look on your runner lover's face when he/she comes in the door. You heard 5K run. That was the intention but somehow it ended up being 11K instead. Sorry.

5. Saturday night dates aren't a thing.

Unless your idea of a hot date consists of an early night, bland food and no alcohol. Hey, we gotta be up early on Sunday.

6. Every so often you will get an emergency call asking you to drive out to pick us up from a run gone wrong.

Your girlfriend/boyfriend/spouse sprained an ankle, got lost, had a stomach issue, etc. You'll hear every excuse in the book. It doesn't mean you'll ever enjoy stopping what you're doing, getting in the car and finding your significant other in the middle of nowhere to drive them home.

7. Our blisters and chafing might be somewhat unappealing.

This might be an understatement. And if you're dating a man, add bloody nipples to that.

8. Don't like the taste of sweat? Too bad.

You're going to taste our sweat. You will know exactly what it tastes like. Another gross part about loving a runner.

9. We will drag you out for a run with us even if you hate it. Somehow we convince you, you hate it. We stay hopeful that one day you will join us at the start line of a race.

1

0. Then we'll do it again.

Because we ignore your complaints.

11. If you want company in the morning, your best bet is a teddy bear or dog. Count us out.

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**August 6th**  
**8:00AM**  
**Start & finish at**  
**Centennial Park in Peru**

*This is a club race, you can  
earn a Circuit point for  
volunteering*

**Registration is open**

<https://runsignup.com/Race/IL/Peru/TASTE5K>

# *Racing Expectations*



**CHIP TIMING - START/FINISH LINE SERVICES**  
**DJ/ANNOUNCING - PHOTOGRAPHY - EQUIPMENT RENTAL**

**PHONE: 815-513-TIME**

**EMAIL: [info@racingexpectations.com](mailto:info@racingexpectations.com)**

**WEB: [racingexpectations.com](http://racingexpectations.com)**

*We can accommodate your social distancing needs with chip timing and wave starts*

# Canton Hall of Fame Marathon

by Kory Katkus

Finally, I got to run the Canton Ohio Hall of Fame race which was held at the end of April. After registering for the 100th Anniversary NFL Hall of Fame Marathon (Half Marathon distance) for 2020 I was going to get to run this race. It was finally held as an in-person event in 2022. They also changed the name to The Canton Hall of Fame Marathon since I registered in 2020. I have been fighting some funk since 2020 because so many races I pre-registered for were cancelled or went virtual. Some races did allow you to defer, but I never really got out of that funk until this year. Not saying I am completely out of it yet, but I seem to be going in the right direction for now. So let me tell you about it....

If you are a sports fan especially the football type, this was a great race to do. The swag is plentiful, and you get your own Super Bowl ring as a finisher's medal. But before we get there, here's the rest of the story. A couple of other SRRL members decided to make the journey to Ohio as well and do the race too. It was great to see some familiar faces. I am not sure if it was cause of Covid reasons or if this was typical of their race, but the expo was nothing to speak of. It was more packet pickup at the banquet room of a hotel sponsor with a few vendors but not the expo experience one would expect. However, it was easy to get your bib and shirt as the process was simplified. The shirts in my opinion were top quality. Funny thing was when I registered, I forgot you could customize your bib name. Slothrunner I was. That would be fitting for the upcoming day.

From the expo, my travel partner and I headed over to the Hall of Fame a few miles away where there is a souvenir shop. We played this part by ear to tour the Hall. Of course, it was super busy with the amount of people in town for the race and the hours of the hall would be close to their closing time to fully experience the Hall. So, another trip will be in-order to tour the Hall. If you go plan on touring the Hall, go early or stay an extra day to do so. At the souvenir shop we ran into a couple of ladies from Houston that saw my running tattoo and asked if we were there to run. Of course, as runners do, we start chatting. It doesn't matter where you are from or your speed... you just hit the jackpot by meeting another runner so of course you must talk to them. They asked if we knew what the course was like. Was it hilly? Difficult? Having not run it before, I could not answer that question, but we did discuss the temps for race day. It was noted by the race to be aware that temps were expected to be high with high humidity. So of course, the Houston ladies were not concerned with that since they trained in Houston. So, after some more chit chat, they took off and we finished getting some souvenirs and decided to get lunch. After we left the hall, we got lunch at a local place and low and behold our new friends were there as well. After we ate lunch, we decided to get situated in our hotel before we went to eat dinner. The one I travel with; we like



to eat early so we can be back to get well rested for race day.

The next day we had purchased VIP parking so we could park close to the start/finish line. Money well spent!! 7A.M. race start!! Right before the gun, I found our new friends from Houston. Spoke to them and wished them well. The race started with ideal temps and a shaded course. That didn't last long at all. While Illinois had storms and overcast that day, Ohio had clear blue skies with very few clouds and the temps quickly rose to the upper 80's and the heat index approached near the mid 90's. The course was a challenge. A few "hills" otherwise it was just constant rolling hills that zig zagged thru the city of Canton and even past the tomb of President William McKinley. I didn't think there would be that many twists and turns in a race. With every step I kept looking for the turn around point. Finally at mile 8 there it was. I then had to head back running those hills again. I knew it was getting harder at this point and it would be difficult. But the heat got to me, and I broke. I was determined to finish even though I was going to have to walk more. And I wasn't the only one. That was the breaking point, mile 8 as a lot of runners began to walk more and longer than they had the 1st 8 miles of the race. Marathoners were able to turn left to finish the half instead of going on for 13 more miles if they needed. Many took advantage of that too. The race director stated if you need to just do so

Canton Hall....continued

and just let them know at the finish you downgraded from the full. They had a few people asking the marathoners if they did the full or turned off to do just the half so appropriate credit could be given.

The reason this race is a race to run is that the last mile you see Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium where the Hall of Fame game is played each year and many NFL greats have stepped foot on, soon I was about too. I was told they were going to be changing the course in the next year, but the finish will still be on the NFL field. You get to enter the stadium and run on the field and finish on the 50-yard line. There you are greeted with a heavy ring as a finishers metal as well as a throw blanket to wrap yourself in and watch your team this fall. I opted for the finisher's jacket as well. I love the jacket, but my forearms fit tightly so we will see what I can do there. As I am gathering my swag for finishing, I see runners with chocolate milk in hand. OMG my favorite after a race. I need to get some!! Just as I come back to the finish line my new friends from Houston are coming in as well as my fellow SRRL friends. After talking with my new friends, it was obvious they were not ready for not only the heat but the hills that accompanied it. Guess Houston is a dry heat and Ohio is humid. But we all finished safely because we knew how our body reacts with the humidity and took the precautions to avoid injury and finish safely.



The Justice Law Firm, P.C has been operating in Starved Rock Country since 2009, representing buyers and sellers of residential and commercial real estate, corporation formation, and estate planning and administration.

# The Justice Law Firm

Go Kim!  
Go Cathy!

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### SO YOU WANNA BE A RACE DIRECTOR A Comprehensive Guide to Directing Road Races for Runners



## DICK FISLAR

### by Dick Fislar

So You Wanna Be a Race Director contains all information needed for a person to organize and direct road races for runners and bikers. Anyone wanting to organize a race needs this information, and they will find it interesting and relevant.

This book will be a great help for first time as well as veteran Race Directors. It is a road map to successful directing of road races and will help make you a successful race director, where you will benefit worthy causes for many years.

#### About the Author

Dick Fislar started running when he was twelve years old. His family lived on a farm just two miles from town and about two and a half miles from his school. In those days there were no school buses. He and his brother walked every day to school. When weather was good, they would run. They didn't have any other way into town, so it just came naturally.

As a freshman in high school, Dick made the track team, where he ran the quarter-mile, half-mile, and the mile. They ran on cinder tracks in sprinter spikes. In college Dick was part of a group of runners running a relay and carrying a torch from Macomb, Illinois, to Kansas City, Missouri, to support Western Illinois University's nationally ranked basketball team, a distance of 319 miles. He ran this two years before leaving college, ultimately with a degree in business from Bradley University.

Dick continued to run except for a few years where he was climbing the corporate ladder, making it to CEO and Chairman of the Board for three companies. When he was forty-five years of age, Dick started running again and he has run almost seven hundred races. Thirty years ago he began directing races and has consulted on countless races over those years.

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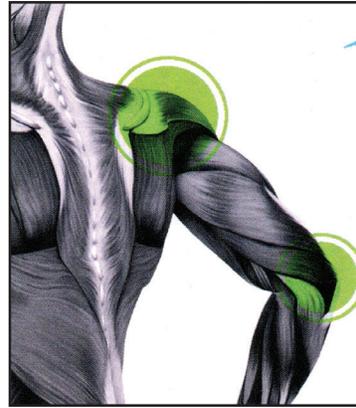
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# I'm A Runner?

One of the most surprising things I learned about running when I started was that you didn't need any validating identifier to make your membership official—you were allowed to call yourself a runner from the moment you began. You could make the ugliest attempt at a mile and call yourself a runner. You could call yourself a runner even as walkers passed you by. You could quit for a week or a month, and call yourself a runner on the day of your return. Distance, speed, and frequency didn't matter as long as the effort was hard-fought and true (some long time veterans may not be totally on board with this description).

For my first several years of getting back to running, I was reluctant to call myself a runner. The more people I met that were in "my eyes" true runners, the less I felt like I could call myself one. After all their "warm up" was longer than my long run. These people ran the 5K course as a warmup before the actual 5K started.

As time goes on reality starts to change your perception of the definition of a runner. It wasn't a matter of if I was a runner or not, because I was out there pounding the pavement with the best of them, just not as far and as fast. It was more of a question of, fi that guy or gal runs a 3 mile warm up, a 3.1 mile race, and then does a 2 mile cool down, does my struggling to run/walk a 5K really make me a runner?

Most sensible elders of the running tribe will say, "If you run, you are a runner," and move on to more important issues like what's for dinner and how far is tomorrow's run. I respect my elders, especially the sensible ones, and so I eventually gave in and began calling myself a runner, albeit with a kind of mechanical enthusiasm. Here I am. Woo-hoo. A runner, I'd think at the end of a two-mile run.

The problem with authenticating yourself as a "real runner" is that the distinction is a moving target. If a real runner is someone who goes long or fast, then almost any measure pales in comparison to the person who goes longer and faster. When I finally trained for and finished a half-marathon, I felt an undeniable sense of accomplishment, but even in that bright shining moment I thought, Man—those people who do full marathons are the runners.

Then one morning, a small pile of laundry spoke to me. Some people listen to the mysterious whisper of forest pines, the wordless echo of misty mountaintops; I listen to smaller things like laundry. I suddenly realized I had been a runner from the moment I began producing little mounds of sweaty clothes in the corner of the bedroom. Before I ran, there was no mound; now there was. Laundry is not a moving target. It stays right there until you deal with it.

Every runner is different, but every runner's little mound of laundry in the corner of the bedroom is the same. If you've got one, then call yourself a runner.

When you let go of conventional standards for what constitutes a runner, the floodgates swing wide open. Take the simple apple. Before I began running, apples on my counter were little more than a thin insurance against starvation. Once I started running, I actually wanted to eat them. Same for the bananas, oranges, grapes, and pears. Running changes everything about a fruit bowl, elevating it from kitchen ornament to a vessel of edible nutrition. If you occasionally crave fruit, eat it, and think it tastes good, you can probably call yourself a runner.

Some people grow skinny when they run, some stay the same, but all of them wear running shoes when they shouldn't. There is a good chance you can safely call yourself a runner if you wear brightly colored running shoes with a suit or a skirt and think it's okay. The bottom of my closet used to be cluttered with shoes for every occasion. That's still the case, only now they're all running shoes (or cousins)—ones for fast runs, slow runs, long and short runs, but also black and yellow sprinters for a night on the town, repurposed old smooth-bottoms for watching football, and a long-retired holey ones for lawn work.

As a new runner you may lie awake in bed and randomly think, "I just ran \_\_\_ miles"! As a more veteran runner, those random thoughts are more like "I need to run \_\_\_ miles this week to stay on my training plan".

I did a long run one morning because I was going out with friends that evening and I knew a long run would produce that lingering twinge of hunger—hunger for beer. If you've ever run to make beer taste better, you can probably call yourself a lot of things, but "runner" is certainly one of them.

The nonrunner's muscles ache and he gets cranky. The runner's muscles ache and his/her eyes spin in their head and they says, "That was a good workout!"

As a nonrunner, I distrusted anyone I saw running. Now, when I see runners, I not only trust them, I wonder who they are. I think they could be my friends. I think we would feel the same about everything. The runners who frown when I smile and wave just don't understand that yet. The ones who cross the road to avoid me are only being shy.

You can call yourself a runner when it's easier to jog short distances than to walk them. When your shoes wear out before they get dirty. When sweating becomes so familiar it's a nonissue. When quenching your thirst takes two

*I'm A Runner....continued*

glasses of water. When socks become a topic of discussion. When you get the bright yellow shirt so cars can see you. When people stop asking you about running. When they don't want to know how far you went, whether it was easy or hard, what you thought about on the road, what birds you saw, what falling leaves you caught, the animosities you resolved, the priorities you straightened, the dozens of ridiculous epiphanies you had. The assumption is that you've passed over to the other side, and you probably have. You're a real runner.

And then the line that you use to roll your eyes when you heard it, I only ran xx today. To a novice or a non-runner, t

the fact that you ran while not be chased by an animal or for your life is insane enough, but to go out and run 8-10,12 miles, you've got to be nuts.

Everyone has their limits, but another sign is the weather you will run in. The more veteran one becomes, the limitations seem to lessen. I use to think running below freezing was nuts. The longer we run (in years), the hardier we seem to get. My limit now is more like -10 (with wind chill factored in), and still other, run when it's colder yet.

# Run The Path *November 5th, 2022*

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Mark your calendar  
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# MEMBER PARTICIPATION NEEDED

The success of this publication is dependent on membership participation.

Since there is not much going on in the way of races right now, it doesn't mean you can't write about a race you did, a training method you've had success with or a diet that increased your energy. We'll take whatever you are willing to share.

It doesn't have to be a novel. A few paragraphs will do and will be greatly appreciated.

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Email pictures and articles to: [info@starvedrockrunners.org](mailto:info@starvedrockrunners.org)

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**Issues are January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, Sept/October and November/December,**

**Ads are due the 15th of the month preceding the issue.**

**Have additional question, please contact us at: [info@starvedrockrunners.org](mailto:info@starvedrockrunners.org)**

## HISTORY

The Starved Rock Runners, Ltd. was founded in 1982 as a non-profit voluntary organization for the purpose of promoting physical fitness and fun through running. Membership is open to any individual or family interested in running.

The Club is affiliated with USA Track & Field and the Road Runners Club of America. Other benefits are a bi-monthly newsletter, race calendar, weekly group fun runs, social events, monthly meetings, and website [www.starvedrockrunners.org](http://www.starvedrockrunners.org)

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