



Grizzly Half-Marathon

Sherrie Felton

Before we find our bearings in Choteau, MT, let us toss out the GPS because we do not need it if the mode and medium of travel is the imagination. We will first take a quick detour and soar up to the top of the dormant volcano Haleakela on the island Maui. Here one can walk among the clouds in a vast crater lined with dunes of red, black and tawny sand. Here, and perhaps nowhere else, the mist green spikes of Silversword plants thrive. Like certain desert succulents such as the Blue Agave, the Silversword takes

years to reach maturity and produces one, extravagant, long-stemmed blossom. When the blossom fades and wilts, so does the plant. All the life force is spent in the years leading up to the creation of one single and final flower.

Haleakela was it—number one on my list of most ineffable landscapes—until my husband Moshe and I drove from Jackson Hole, WY to Choteau, pronounced by the locals as “Show Toe,” MT to run the 3rd annual Grizzly Half-

Marathon on Saturday August 21.

We started out a week before race day in Teton Village, a ski resort that sits at the foot of Rendezvous Mountain and just outside of Grand Teton National Park. Teton Village offers a variety of accommodations. We stayed at the Hostel X, a very reasonable priced establishment that features private rooms and bath facilities. I did not recall during our visit 10 years ago, the incessant late

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Upcoming Events

- December 8: General Membership Meeting with food, board elections, guest speaker!
- December 11: Holiday Party! (See page 4)
- February 5, 2005: Annual Awards Banquet! (See page 7)

Keep up with club events at RVRR.ORG. Join our Yahoo! Group for email messages!

Please check www.rvrr.org or phone 732-839-2129 for the latest RVRR news and information about RVRR events!

My Sixth Mile in The President's Shoes

Bob Townley

Well here we are, a month from the official start of winter, and a lot of us are already running with tights, multiple shirts, and jackets. We look at a run with 50 degree temperatures, and wonder how we are going to handle the 20 degree temperatures (and the wind that goes along with it) that are just weeks away. Well, we get used to it.

One of the questions that

I am most often asked by non-runners is whether I train in cold weather. Well, of course I do. I remember when I first started running, I picked up a book for beginners. On the cover, there was a picture of the author running dressed for and running in cold weather (I think it was a Bob Glover book), which I had never done before. I just thought he looked really cool (but not in the literal sense). It really made me want to get out

and run in cold weather. Yes, there are some times when the weather is so cold, and the wind is so biting, I ask myself is this really healthy? But with the proper clothing, and with the proper safety precautions (more about that in a minute), there is really no reason that winter running can't be part of a healthy training plan. So I encourage anyone reading

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Grizzly Half-Marathon

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night thumping of footsteps or anime animals speaking or barking French and Japanese in the Chipmunk's favorite octave through the neighboring wall, or I might have put us in the Best Western this time.

During the first half of the week we revisited some of our favorite hiking trails and explored a few other trails for the first time in the Grand Teton, Yellowstone, Glacier and the Gallatin National Forest. Spending almost a week at 6,000 ft. above sea level with three excursions up to 8-10,000 feet turned out to be a good way to acclimate for the ½ marathon that was run at approximately 5,000 feet, give or take a couple hundred here and there.

We try to spend as little prime vacation time in a car as possible. Getting from Point A to Point C in the Great Plains is best done in a plane. On this trip however, chiefly because I miscalculated the time the drive would take, I decided that driving would be our best choice instead of flying to a spot close to the race. The Thursday before we set out for Helena I reviewed our route on the map. Helena was seven, not four hours

away from Jackson Hole. In addition, we came to a standstill for ½ hour in Yellowstone due to construction, until the flag waved us on. As a result, we had an opportunity to make up (a little) for all those times we flew over the Great Plains.

Much of the Plains country is altered. Enormous spreads of farmland and scrubland stand where the native grasses used to be. In fact, I do not think we saw a single field of tall grass during our travels, though we saw a few four-foot patches of grass along the highway. I remember fields of tall yellow grass during a trip to the Black-foot Indian reservation some ten years ago, but we did not go that far north on this trip.

The Montana Prairie—putting aside the scarcity of grass viewable from the highway for a moment—here the topography, the sky, the vast and distant horizons are probably much as they were before the Old and the “New” worlds met except for the occasional speck of a jet at 37,000 feet above our heads. The land is a rolling sea, a patchwork of green and ochre and yellow, a sleeping giant's cloak. We are Lilliputians motor-ing along a lonesome gray seam. Here and

there the cloak became coarse and scrubby. We see: a few pronghorns, gigantic irrigation rigs wheeling by increments across the field they have been assigned to, small scatters of horses, the occasional water pump, thousands of grazing steers, jackrabbits, a buffalo or two. This world is Old, New and Post-Modern, but the Old is bedrock and the rest is as fragile as topsoil.

It was along a desert-like stretch where we no sign of habitation except for the endless fences on either side of the highway, when Moshe first said: “We are at the end of the world.” This statement became his mantra by the time we made it to the race start at 5:30 a.m. Saturday morning. Of course there were variations, such as “This is the end of the world.” Moshe declarative. “What do people do in the end of the world?” Moshe rhetorical interrogative. “How can anybody live at the end of the world?” Interrogative again. I thought of where we were as a different world indeed, but one without an end in sight. I found this lonesome, rolling illusion of infinity to be comforting.

Helena seems nice enough but since we stopped there only to eat

and sleep, I cannot say much more about it. Friday morning we slept until we woke up. A good night's sleep is usually most critical two nights out rather than the night before a race. From Helena we set out for Choteau. Two hours later we arrived at the Stage Stop Inn, the race headquarters in Choteau, to pick up our packets. Packet pickup was easy and painless—except that Moshe complained about having to wear a chip and then there was the True Complainer.

The race director answered questions continuously during the hour or so we were there. She also responded with grace to the bitter complaints from a runner from New York who apparently had not been able to find the race start when he drove the 23 miles out from Choteau to check it out. True Complainer: “There's nothing out there—no indication or sign of the start. It's depressing. Is it where there are two poles?” Race Director: “Yes, it's where the two poles are. Yes it can be confusing. I think they are out there setting up the signs by now.” As the True Complainer carried on, I thought, rather smugly, to myself: “This is one of those troublemakers who

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RVRR Board—What Do You Guys Do?

Ray Petit

Every year at the 3rd quarter general membership meeting, we have nominations for the next year's RVRR Executive Board. Elections are held at the 4th quarter meeting. Many members are nominated without having knowledge of what is expected of each position. With that thought, I asked Bob if I could give a brief description of each position at the meeting in September. In my opinion, if the board members shared the responsibilities of running the club, club presidents would want to serve two or even three years.

According to our bylaws, the club president only has a couple of responsibilities: to preside over the ten or so monthly board meetings, and to preside over the four quarterly general membership meetings. In reality, the club president is the pulse of the club. The president is expected to attend most club functions, especially the Wednesday night runs. Without exception, every club president has recognized the importance of growing the club membership. This is done by retaining the existing members and attracting new members. It is impossible for any one person to do this. In general, the club president looks to the board to take the lead in any one of a num-

ber of areas, or find another club member willing to do it. Some of these areas are: maintain the website, edit the newsletter, direct the Summer/Youth Series, sell club clothing, greet new members, organize the Holiday Party and Awards Banquet, organize programs to attract and nurture beginning runners, and organize volunteers at any one of a number of club managed races. This is only a partial list, but the board doesn't have to do it alone. We are fortunate to have many club members who are willing to serve the club, and have been doing so for years.

At the monthly meeting, the board reviews issues that impact the club, and plans for future events. If you ask the club president and any former club president what his or her biggest concern is, they will tell you that it is the safety of the runners. The entire board needs to share in the awesome responsibility of making certain that each runner has a safe run. This includes hazards from cars, dogs, and weather, to name just a few.

The club's 1st and 2nd vice presidents, in that order, assumes the club presidency if the president vacates the office. These positions are usually filled

by seasoned club members that the president can usually count on doing even more that the other board members.

The club secretary has the responsibility of recording the minutes of the board and general membership meetings. The secretary might be called upon to write letters on behalf of the club, as directed by the club president.

The club treasurer has the official responsibility of chairing the membership committee, although we have been fortunate to have Janice do that job for years. The treasurer does administer all finances, by collecting all checks and paying all bills and preparing financial statements of club activities. The entire board has fiduciary responsibilities to make certain that the club remains solvent. Within the context of a social organization, RVRR is in the business of promoting running. Decisions are made every month, as to the best way to use the club's resources to accomplish this goal.

Rounding out the board are the four members at large, with three elected by the general member-

“The entire board needs to share in the awesome responsibility of making certain that each runner has a safe run. This includes hazards from cars, dogs, and weather, to name just a few.”



www.ssvawebs.com/kidscorner/jarrett/

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RVRR Holiday Party!

Sherrie and Moshe have graciously offered RVRR the use of their home for our Holiday Party. The party is scheduled for Saturday, December 11th, from 6 pm to approximately 10 pm. The next day is the USATF 10 mile championship, so those of you that are competing can still have a Holiday drink with us. The club will supply paper goods and all liquid refreshments. Members are encouraged to bring their favorite dish, or dessert item, but you don't have to bring anything. You can bring chips if you can't think of anything more creative. The most important thing is that you plan on attending and sharing the love and goodwill of the season.

We will be car pooling from the Highland Park High School, leaving at 5:45pm. However you are encouraged to arrange your own car pools if you so desire. Some parking is available next to their home, but their association has started giving out tickets for inappropriate parking, so no double parking or parking on grass. Additional parking is available a short walk from their place. Watch the RVRR web site and Yahoo! group for further information.

RVRR Board—What Do You Guys Do?

Ray Petit

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ship and one appointed by the club president. The members at large have the responsibilities of assuming any of the challenges I outlined earlier. They have the flexibility of taking on an area in which they are comfortable. For example, if a board member likes running on different trails in the area, they might lead the club Adventure Runs.

In summary, the RVRR Board is a working board. We don't have the luxury of reviewing issues impacting the club and giving the actual work to another group for execution. Typically, if a board member presents an idea to the board that the board likes, that board member probably owns it. They might have to do the work to implement the idea, usually with the

support of other club members. In exchange, board members get the satisfaction of growing the sport that we love. RVRR has an over twenty-year reputation of attracting the very serious runners, as well as the very casual joggers. To maintain this tradition, we need board members with more than just ideas, but also the willingness to put in a couple of hours of time each month working on RVRR activities.

The President's Shoes: Mile 6.2

Bob Townley

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this, especially the ones new to the sport, not to give up on winter running.

But for a lot of us, the daylight hours in winter coincide with working hours, and the only time to run is in the dark. There are a few things to remember, however, and these rules apply to our Wednesday night runs, and should be followed during any run. One is always wear a reflective vest. Reflective shoes and jacket are helpful also. Another thing to remember is just because you are wearing a reflective vest, don't as-

sume that cars will see you. If you are running on a road, you should run facing traffic, and always be fully aware of your surroundings. If you're running with 2-3 or more people, you should go single file as a car is approaching from either direction. And of course always watch out for ice. Just remember to think "safety".

At our September general membership meeting, we had Michael Slansky as our guest speaker. He gave an interesting and informative talk about sports massage related to running and stretching. Thanks to Michael to taking a break from his prac-

tice to come and speak to us. We also had nominations for the 2005 RVRR board. Remember, you may still nominate someone up until elections at our General Membership Meeting on December 8th. (See sidebar)

The East Brunswick Road Races were October 24th. We had nice weather for running, and once again, many thanks go to the volunteers who made this race happen. Please read the write up on the race in this month's newsletter.

East Brunswick Road Races

Bob Townley

October 24th was the day of the East Brunswick Road Races this year, and it turned out to be a great day. Leading up to the day, a lot of us on the race committee were a little leery about how many runners would show up, because we faced great competition from so many other races that were happening that day. But we ended up with 65 more finishers than last year, and although it was a very hectic day, we all were satisfied that we put on a very good race.

Earlier that week, there was a possibility of showers in the forecast, but they never materialized. Race day was mostly cloudy, in the mid 50's, and most importantly for the runners, no wind. In other words, we had perfect running weather. The day started with the kids dashes around the bases of the baseball field across the street. All the kids got ribbons and pumpkins, and many of them participated in the pumpkin painting we set up after the runs.

The 5k race went off at 1:00. John Ragone, who the race is named after, showed up at the start to say hello to everyone. The mayor of East Brunswick started the race with an on-your-mark, get set, go! RVRR members finished first through fourth,

among the men, with Sergio Cano winning, John Kane taking second, Gene Gugliotta finishing third, followed by Ken Vercammen. Julie Corbin won the woman's race.

The 10k started 5 minutes later. Mike Daigeaun won the men's race with Ken Ellis second. RVRR took one, two, and three in the woman's race with Jennifer Kirsch winning, followed by Kathy Rocker and Jill Knorr.

The fitness walk was brought back this year, with the walkers starting right after the 10k, and going 2 miles. All walkers received a certificate of accomplishment. There were plenty of bagels, bananas, and donuts at the finish line for everyone.

Once again, I want to mention that none of this could happen without all the RVRR club members. They handled all the extra runners at registration like a breeze, and they were on the course during the race working water tables, giving split times, and getting runners through the finish chute. I also want to mention the members of the race committee, who brought some great new ideas to the race. Ray Petit and Cathy Glamkowski helped with all of the pre-planning, including the new events, and designing of the shirt (nice

job Cathy). Peter Fama, as usual, served as our treasurer, and Jonathan Cruel once again did the job that requires the most nerves on race day, volunteer coordinator.

Next year's race will be directed by Cathy Glamkowski. She soon will be putting a race committee together, so if you are interested in helping with the 2005 race, please talk with her and read her introduction below.

“None of this could happen without all the RVRR club members. They handled all the extra runners at registration like a breeze, and they were on the course during the race working water tables, giving split times, and getting runners through the finish chute.”

2005 East Brunswick Road Races

Cathy Glamkowski

As most of you know, the East Brunswick Road Races took place on October 24th. The event was a huge success with participation up over 35% from last year! I would like to thank everyone who came out to either run or volunteered. We could not put on this race without your support. Unfortunately, Bob Townley has decided to step down as the race director. Bob, THANKS for all your support! I have been asked to step up to the plate and become the new race director. As my first order of business, I would like to solicit input from those who both ran the race and volunteered so I can get an idea of what things people like about the event and areas for improvement I should consider. I would love to hear what everyone has to say... the good, the bad and the ugly! I am also open to hearing new ideas that we can implement to make this event more popular. I have a bunch of ideas myself that I am excited to try out. My goal is to increase participation by 50% next year but I can't do it alone. Therefore, if you would like to be part of the race committee or just share your ideas, please contact me via e-mail at cglamkow@gmail.com. I am looking forward to putting on a great race in 2005!

Board Nominations

At the 3rd. quarter general membership meeting, RVRRR had the nominations for the 2005 Board. Elections will be held at the next general membership meeting, on December 8th. Below are the candidates that were nominated. Remember, the nomination process is open until December 8th. If you are interested in running for any board position, please email Ray Petit (raypetit@comcast.net)

2004 Executive Board Members

President: Bob Townley
rmtow27@aol.com

1st Vice-President: Gene Gugliotta
thinmann@gmail.com

2nd Vice-President: Jonathan Cruel
jonathan.cruel@emcore.com

Secretary: Ray Petit
raypetit@Comcast.net

Treasurer: Ken Ellis
kellis@mesocom.com

Directors at Large:
Erica Boling
eboling@yahoo.com
Cathy Glamkowski
cathyglam@hotmail.com
Steve Kornstein
stephenkornstein@aol.com
Bill Panayote
billp500@netzero.net

Nominees:

President - Bob Townley

1st. Vice President - Gene Gugliotta

2nd. Vice President - Jonathan Cruel and Cathy Glamkowski

Treasurer- Paul Krentar

Secretary - Ken Ellis

Directors at Large (3 candidates will be elected)- Cathy Glamkowski, Alberto Artasanchez, Jonathan Cruel, Ed Levy, Lois Brown, Cheryl Scher, Patrick McCaffrey and Peter Bilton.

Happy Birthday!

Sid Auerbach	11/9
Mark Strawn	11/11
Linda Byrne **	11/13
John Ahimovic	11/14
Dean Shonts	11/16
Jay Wallace	11/17
Pamela Huggins	11/20
Arthur S. Lefkowitz	11/21
Bill Pape	11/23
Louise Fama	11/24
Mary Foley	11/25
Cheryl Scher	11/27
Cindy G. Peterson **	11/28

** Means new age group!

Donations 2004

5K (\$1 – \$24)

Rich Britton
Scott Dedecker
Alex Dobrowolski
Peter & Louise Fama
Cindy Gadek
Charles Krowicki
John Nowatkowski
Bill Panayote
Sonya Slyman
John Taylor
Alice Tempel & Leigh Walker
Richard Weidman

10K (\$25 – \$49)

David Brown
Larry Kling
Paul Krentar
David Lazarus

½ Marathon (\$50 – \$99)

Frank Russo

Marathon (\$100 +)

Anonymous
Atlantic Spring

Raritan Valley Road Runners

PO Box 1197
Edison, NJ 08818-1197

732-839-2129

www.rvrr.org

USATF-NJ Club #0202

Newsletter/Web Site:
Gene Gugliotta
thinmann@gmail.com

Contributions to the newsletter from all members are encouraged and welcome!

Please email articles, photos, comments and suggestions. Word docs or text files attached preferred.

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**“DECEMBER
NEWSLETTER
DEADLINE: TUESDAY
NOVEMBER 30!”**

Lazarus on Boston

Dave Lazarus

And on the sixth day I slept. And slept and slept some more. Thankfully the series ended because I couldn't take much more. It was like running five marathons in five days but my legs weren't sore - just my eyes. Because of a rainout Friday night, the Yankees and Red Sox played five straight days of riveting baseball games that ran the whole gamut of emotions. I won't reveal which side I was rooting for, but like most of the Eastern Seaboard I was entranced by what transpired in the best rivalry in sports. There is no second best. There is nothing even close that approaches the history, the different cultures of the two cities, and the huge chasm between the unparalleled success on one side and the unmatched anguish and heartbreak on the other. And if New York and Boston aren't big enough rivals just consider this: Their marathons occur approximately a week after baseball ends in the fall and a week after baseball resumes in the spring. The Yankees and Boston even fought it out last spring during the Boston Marathon in the annual Patriot's Day game.

So why is this in a running newsletter?

Well for starters, there are probably no two ac-

tivities different than going out for a run and following a baseball game. Running is relentless, inexorably moving forward, usually with a finite goal of either time or distance. Baseball, on the other hand, takes its sweet time, delivering its story uncaring whether you need to be somewhere, or whether you should be asleep or whether things should be getting done. And for me, the game isn't enough. I have to hear the commentary and the fan reaction and see if I'm thinking the same way the experts are. And at work, everybody has an opinion and people take sides.

Some take it more seriously than others. Some don't realize their lives

won't change no matter who wins. I'm happy to see that I finally have that awareness although it took a long time.

So why is this in a running newsletter?

Well for starters, the weather for most of the series was pretty awful for spectators sitting in those ancient open air stadiums - cool and clammy, in the high 40's to low 50's. You saw them huddled in their winter clothes hoping they would eventually remember what their hands felt like. Beer and soda were disdained. Hot chocolate and coffee were hoarded just for hand warmers. By the end of a game a

spectator could have spent enough money keeping warm and well fed to afford a pair of good running shoes. And all I kept thinking was, could I please get weather like this for all my races especially my marathons?

Great! But why is this in a running newsletter?

When I figure that out, I'll let you know but right now I'm too drained and going through withdrawal. It's going to be five long months before the Yankees and Red Sox play again. Thankfully I'll have running to sustain me through the baseball-free winter.

RVRR Annual Awards Banquet: February 5, 2005

Cathy Glamkowski

With winter almost upon us, RVRR will soon be brimming with activity. With that said, the Awards Banquet has been set for February 5, 2005. If you would like to be on either the banquet or awards committee please let me know. I would love your help! I will be setting up our first meeting after the Thanksgiving holiday. In the interim, I would like to get your feedback regarding which RVRR member you feel deserves to win one of the following awards:

Comeback of the Year
Most Improved Runner
Most Outstanding Runner
Multi-Sport Athlete
Allen Paul Award
Club Spirit Award
Lew Gibb Award

To voice your opinion, just e-mail me at cglamkow@gmail.com. Also, if you have won any races in 2004 please e-mail me and let me know which ones!

Thanks and I look forward to hearing from you.

Book Review: Food for Fitness

Dagfin Fang

Chris Charmichael is Lance Armstrong's coach. He is pretty much credited with getting Lance back into shape after cancer and training him to win the Tour De France six times. Much of Lance's recovery and abilities has to do with his diet. So, if you want to improve your diet to perform in anything from recreational bowling to climbing Mt. Everest, Charmichael is a guy that you should probably at least consider listening to.

Charmichael is both down-to-earth and down to weighing every gram of food one consumes. These are opposites, he admits himself. He emphasizes that Lance Armstrong has to measure every morsel of food because of the level of commitment, focus, and demand he puts on his body. Most of us, even very good athletes, don't have to be so crazy about measuring everything. Charmichael says we don't normally live that way and as a matter of fact, we probably shouldn't.

The first point he makes in his book is that athletes should not listen to anything that comes from mass media about diet recommendations. The target audience for weight control and nutrition for the mass media is sedentary individuals, not athletes. He goes on to totally debunk the value

of low carb diets. He explains the physiology behind the weight loss on low carb, and it turns out that much of the weight loss is from the decrease of water stored with glycogen, since you are not storing it if you don't eat carbs. As for athletes, carb energy is the highest octane body fuel there is, and if a low carb diet is attempted, it is chemically impossible to operate above about 50% of your maximum physical capacity!

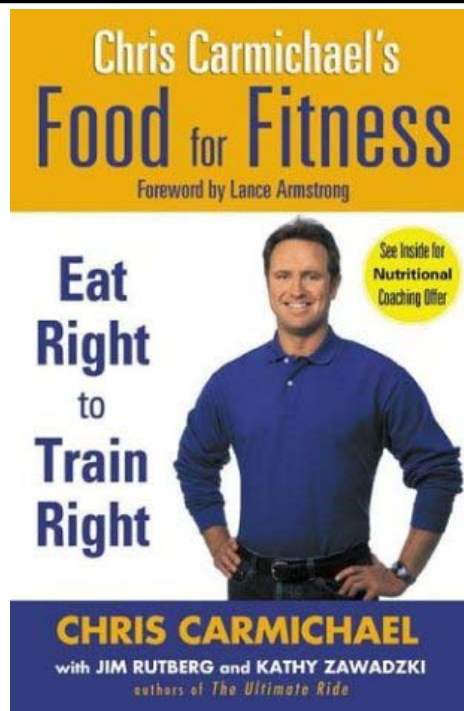
So there are two keys to his program. The first key is to periodize your diet to parallel the periodization in your training. Periodization is common for athletes, as they work through a base training phase, then strength, then speed, then race season. Each period puts different demands on our bodies, so the number of calories and the carb/fat/protein ratios need to match the differing demands.

The second key is to figure out the numbers for one's body weight and training period, then to enter your foods into a diet tracking computer program for a few weeks to analyze where you are so you can make necessary adjustments. I have been doing that, using a shareware diet application you can download from calorieking.com. At first I was surprised to discover the large amount of fat calories I

was consuming. That was messing up the desired carb/fat/protein ratio and causing me to eat too many calories to satisfy my body's craving for carbs. So I got control of that by re-educating myself about food labeling - like actually reading them and looking for fat calories at less than 30% of carb

calories. I am supposed to be eating a 2500-2900 calorie diet, with 65% of those calories from carbs. Believe it or not, it is difficult to hit that number. I try very hard, but am averaging about 58% carbs. Fat adds up very easily because it comes along with almost everything. I often have too much protein, which most people eat too much to use anyway, and along with that comes fat too.

Charmichael verifies what mom has always said - that you have to eat your vegetables, and you have to eat a wide variety to get what you need. The book has many valuable charts of the relative value of fruits and vegetables to make healthy choices. But the cool thing is he says that sometimes you have to consume some purely empty high-calorie foods to get enough fuel for your activities, or to get



home during a long ride, and that there is nothing wrong with that.

Charmichael also clarifies what supplements we need as athletes. There are some very important ones that require doses way over the RDA's. He also explains which claims from both supplements and energy drinks are truthful and bogus.

A significant number of pages are devoted to great recipes to eat well for athletic performance. And I must admit, the trade marking of common training techniques, like TempoRun (TM), by his "Charmichael Training System" at times got annoying.

The bottom line is that by concentrating on clean-burning carbs, an athlete may consume fewer calories and simultaneously improve performance and recovery tremendously!

Grizzly Half-Marathon

Sherrie Felton

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always has to complain about something—we probably will not have any trouble finding the start.”

The start was in fact our next stop. We planned to take a look at the terrain and test our feet and shoes with a warm-up run on the surface we would be running on, hard packed dirt and gravel. We also wanted to get an idea of what the driving time would be when we departed from the Super Eight in Conrad at 4:30 a.m. the next morning; the Choteau motels were all booked months in advance. During the last month leading up to race day, some Choteau families opened their homes to runners as an option for a place to stay. The suggested donation if staying with a Choteau family was \$25.00. We opted for an extra half-hour drive from Conrad and more privacy, but it felt good to have chosen a race where local residents were so open to and supportive of runners.

Our experience trying to find the race start was indeed foretold by the True Complainer, who, incidentally, Moshe spotted at the Liberty ½ Marathon this year. Where the two poles are? Which two poles on a seemingly

endless stretch of road that is heading straight for the Rocky Mountain front? We decided not to concern ourselves with finding the start since we did not really need to know the exact location until the following morning at 6 a.m. At that time, the starting line would surely be revealed to us. We ran three-four miles, stretched, admired the view for a few minutes and headed for Conrad.

One disturbing thing I noticed about the small towns in Montana that we visited was the ubiquitous presence of casinos. The dining room of the Conrad Supper Club where we ate our pre-race dinner was adjacent to the projection of bright gaming lights from an otherwise darkened room, accompanied by the usual assortment of ring-a-ling casino sounds and a bit too much smoke. The Super Eight where we were staying the night also housed a casino at the front of the first floor hall. On our way down the hall to our “non-smoking room,” we passed by a woman sitting on the hallway floor. She was drinking a glass of wine and catching a smoke. Taking a break between gambling bouts perhaps?

Sleep is precious when one does not have much time to enjoy it. We set

our alarms for, and managed to hear them go off at, 3:45 a.m. For the pre-race meal, we ate cheerios and washed them down with soymilk. The motel’s night attendant had a pot of coffee ready as requested. No contest there—that coffee was the worst coffee I had ever tasted up to that day. But nine out of ten morning zombies agree—Must...Have...That...Jumpstart!

We rolled out of Conrad to begin the dark drive where we could see nothing but the road and the beam of headlights and unfortunate nocturnal bugs slamming head-on into the windshield. We hit a jackrabbit that leapt out of night’s sheltering cloak into a last unnatural light. We could not undo this as much as we wished to. To bag the race would not help the rabbit nor would it absolve us of our accidentally obtained responsibility. We were shocked and then silent for a time. We continued through the now gloomy darkness looking for an exit from our distress. Such an exit did not exist. We gave up and considered the rabbit, accepted the full brunt of remorse and asked for forgiveness.

“The suggested donation if staying with a Choteau family was \$25.00. We opted for an extra half-hour drive from Conrad and more privacy, but it felt good to have chosen a race where local residents were so open to and supportive of runners.”



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Night Moves

Rolf Arands

I was driving in Highland Park last night (somewhat unusual because of my commute and work location in Jersey City) and encountered several RVRN runners doing the Wednesday night run. Based upon what happened last night, I am compelled to write about night-time running, running safely, and running responsibly.

First, let me state that I run, at night on roads with cars, and get aggravated with motorists who do stupid things. While I don't bicycle much anymore, I also had to share the road with motorists.

I have come to realize that the responsibility is upon ME to make myself visible and run where it is safe ... i.e., not running 3 across in

the middle of a dark road, making assumptions about right of way.

I run with a blinking belt on my waist, a flashlight in hand, and reflectors on my chest and ankles. I have had motorists thank me for making myself so visible, so I believe I am doing what is right. I run on the shoulder of the road, clear of the lanes of travel for the cars. That's where pedestrians belong, not in the middle of the road folks.

It is unwise to assume motorists can see you at night, and that a reflective vest some 4-5 feet above the ground makes you visible and safe ... it does not. In my opinion, the reflective vests are essentially worthless.

Low beam lights do NOT go that high, so despite the vest, the vests have

limited value unless a car's high beams are on and at a distance. Given heavy traffic, drivers in Highland Park generally have the low beams on.

Anyway, as I navigated a very dark street, I came upon 3 runners. I recognized two of them as long-time Wednesday night runners. The trio ran 3 abreast, right down the travel lane with the outermost runner being in the center of the road. I did not see them until they were about 5 feet in front of my car. Luckily, I was about stopped since I was parking, so I was able to stop and avoid hitting them. One of them was so far out in the travel lane that he went around my car in the opposing travel lane. Had I been traveling even 15 mph, things probably would have been different.

The surprising thing to me was that this trio was made up of 3 "seasoned" Wednesday night runners, not newbies, who, to be blunt, should know better.

It is arrogant and foolish to run like this. We don't own the road. We have to follow the rules, and make every effort to run safely, responsibly and defensively.

If this type of thing continues to occur, it's only a matter of time before Highland Park residents begin to complain and RVRN gets chased out of town, or far worse, a car-runner accident occurs.

It's about personal safety, so whatever happens, that's what my message is. A 3000-lb car or 4000-lb SUV is going to win the contest, folks.

Grizzly Half-Marathon

Sherrie Felton

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The trail of head- and taillights turning in the distance marked the beginning of the road we had explored the day before, looking for the starting line. We joined the caravan. About nine miles down the road, the start/finish banner, several large tents and a stage for the post-race entertainment had been raised miraculously overnight and there were plenty of volunteers to guide us to the correct parking spot in a field.

Our warm-up that morning was probably the shortest one either of us had ever had ever undertaken. Why? It was still pretty dark up to 10 minutes before the race start and it was not like either of us was planning to "go out fast" for a hilly ½ marathon run on dirt roads at 5,000 feet starting at 6:30 a.m. If we were going to go out at 8:45 and 9:45 paces respectively, why waste energy on warming up?

The best running-related warm-up I have ever experienced was watching the sun rise and light up sky and the hills around us during the first couple miles of the race.

We found the two poles and the start/finish banner overhead and lined up conservatively, several uneven rows back from the front. The new day was just edging out the previous night. The tawny land, scrub and trees, other runners' faces, the mountains be-

hind us had emerged. The announcements began. Brighter streams of light appeared on the eastern horizon. I had a modest plan—to run a few inches to the left of the edge where a comfortable hard effort ends until at least mile eight or nine and then decide how much closer I wanted to get to that edge. I would consider the splits but time was not a significant factor starting out. In a couple of miles I would be able to tell whether I could

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play around with time by attempting even and then negative splits.

The gun went off. Moshe and I ran together for about a quarter mile but then I started to pull away without really intending to. I looked back at him and his eyes told me that he was going to stay comfortable right where he was and I should go on and have a good race. In the ½ marathon during the first ½ of the race at least, effort should be minimal and focused relaxation is key. I observed my breathing and cadence, breath in two steps breath out two steps, opened my heart, dropped my shoulders, reminded myself not to forget the paw back I wanted to work on intermittently and then, let it all go. Before we reached the first mile I had found that state of flow where striving is put aside. The mind becomes quiet and allows the body do what it has been trained to do. I was amazed and delighted to reenter that state early in the morning at the beginning of the world.

Moshe has a nose for grizzly scat. If there is any grizzly scat within a ½ mile radius, Moshe will find it. Moshe found it, around mile three. According to one of the race

marshals I spoke with, there was probably a grizzly within ½ mile of where we were standing. Another local volunteer I spoke with spotted a grizzly mother with her cubs at mile nine on the marathon course when she was setting up an aid station earlier that morning. The Grizzly Bear is faring well in the area. Some residents feel that the species is no longer endangered in Montana and a controlled hunt must be considered since the population is becoming too large and the risk of violent encounters between bears and people is reaching an intolerable level. Other residents, such as the course marshal I spoke with, did not seem to be so concerned about the burgeoning population.

We on the East Coast, having eradicated most of our large natural predators and competitors early on, must be grateful that a few western states are at least attempting to act as responsible stewards and coexist with grizzlies, wolves and mountain lions.

From mile four, I started passing some of the “went out too fast” folks. “Good morning” I said. “Good job” they said. From mile five to the turnaround point we climbed. When my focus began to stray I reminded myself

how much fun it was going to be to fly back down that hill. And fun it was. About half way down I heard Moshe shout “Noel” my middle name and I gave him what felt like an ear-to-ear grin. At the bottom of the hill the rock and roll toward the finish line began. Numerous “went out too fast” targets at mile eight, or was I running negative splits or was it a bit of both? I spent a few minutes, thinking in slow motion about it. A bit of both it was. Miles eight and nine are usually the most difficult miles to manage from a psychological standpoint. My body was beginning to tire and discomfort was seeping in. I was treading right up against my edge. I had to decide whether to push that edge farther back so that I could run faster while successfully placing the discomfort on the periphery of my consciousness. If I kept pushing the edge back, I would regain a state of grace about two miles out from the finish when the finish line adrenaline started to kick in. I picked up my cadence and focused on pushing by as many other runners as possible. Twelve miles and only one to go because the 0.1 is fluff. 11 and 12 were my fastest miles. I was iron and the finish line was a magnet. The rest is euphoria.

Moshe came in looking strong. I could tell he was happy, first to be done with it and later on with the experience of running the race. I asked what the highlight of the race was for him. Moshe said, “My best experience is climbing that stupid hill—it almost killed me.”





Raritan Valley Road Runners
WWW.RVRR.ORG

Raritan Valley Road Runners
P.O. Box 1197
Edison, NJ 08818
Phone: 732-839-2129

Newsletter & Web Site: Gene Gugliotta
thinmann@gmail.com

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About RVRR

The Raritan Valley Road Runners is New Jersey's best running club! Though we are involved in many races and events, we are not only a group of racers. We strive to promote the sport of running and its healthy lifestyle. We also have fun at parties and other social events! We have won the overall USATF-NJ Club Grand Prix since the award's inception in 2001.

Our "**Wednesday Night Run**" in Highland Park is one of the nation's longest running regularly scheduled group runs. We have not missed a Wednesday Night Run since 1983! In June 2004 we celebrated a 21 year "streak" of organized club runs! Every Saturday at 9 A.M. we have a **Towpath Run** from Grove 2 in Johnson Park, Piscataway.