

Upcoming Events

- 2011 East Brunswick Road Races*
- October 16, 2011
 - Race app inside
 - See <http://ebrr.org> for details.
- Post Philly 1/2 & Marathon Party*
- November 20, 2011, 1-4 pm in Philadelphia
 - Details forthcoming.
- Vercammen's Freezing Cold Hash Run*
- January 7, 2012, 10 am, Edison NJ
- Wednesday Night Club Runs*
- Every week at the Reformed Church of Highland Park @ 6:30 pm
- Saturday Morning Club Towpath Runs*
- Every week typically at either Grove 2 or 5 in Johnson Park
 - 9 am until April 23, 2011
 - 8 am on/after April 23, 2011
- Lots more stuff too ... see inside!*
- Always check website or email list for latest information*
<http://rvrr.org>

Inside This Issue

President's Greeting	1
Club Vitals	2
A Story of Trains	2
Safaricom Marathon	3
Bradley Beach Swim	4
2011 "Train"ing Run	4
Turtle Hero	5
Swim Around Key West	5
Confections of An Addict	6
Wendy & Rohini Training Run	7
2011 "Train"ing Run Recap	8
Mark Your Calendars	8
2011 EBRR Application	9

President's Greeting

Laura Swift

I was 4 years old when I played my first soccer game. I still remember my Dad telling me from the sidelines to stop doing cartwheels or picking dandelions when the coach would ask me to play defense. I loved the game and I continued to play for another 20 years after that day.

Each summer brought a new group of girls, and a new coloured shirt to wear. I would sit in the backseat of the car with my fingers tightly crossed, hoping that it would finally be the year my coach handed me a pretty pink uniform. It never happened.



There were a couple of summers that I was lucky enough to play with my sisters. I also played for my high school, and spent 3 summers playing

competitively as a Corunna Wildcat. With the Wildcats I had the opportunity to travel around the country and play a game I loved. I would never be able to count the number of cities I saw, the number of games I played, or practices we had during those years (soccer players aren't obsessive stat trackers the way runners are with daily mileage), but that's not important.

With the exception of some memorable games, League or Provincial Championships, it's the people I remember the most. The girls with whom I shed blood, sweat (obviously!), and tears (more obviously!) made those summers some of the greatest childhood memories I have. We would put on the same uniform, tie the same ribbon in each other's hair,

gather together and chant our team name before running out onto the field. Maybe we won the game, maybe we didn't. But we played the game as a team and, at the end of the season, the score(s) didn't really matter.

When I joined RVRR, I was apprehensive about racing for the team. The sport and racing in general was somewhat new to me and I didn't want to feel any pressure. With reluctance, I signed up for the Run for Rachel 5K and ran my first race as a Raritan Valley Road Runner. By the end of my first racing season, all the apprehension was gone. I realized that running was just the same as my soccer experiences. It was about the members of the team and the blood, sweat, and tears (only sometimes!!) we'd shed together before, after, and during the races.

I've met some of the most inspiring people on this team, and I've made incredible friends. It's not about where we stand at the end of the season, or how we do at a given race. It's about being a member of RVRR, putting on the same uniform, tying the same ribbons in our hair, and having fun together.

Our fall season begins on Labour Day Weekend. By the time this is published, our Master's Women will have already represented us well at The Jimmy D 5K, their Championship race for that distance. The Men's 60s team will have competed in the 15K road race in Buffalo as part of the USATF Master's National Grand-Prix. All of our teams will be preparing for the Liberty 1/2 Marathon on September 25th. As I've done throughout the year, I encourage all of you to run for the team. Not because I care if RVRR wins these events, but because you'll make memories and friends that will last a lifetime. And you may just have some fun doing it!

We are RVRR!

Club Vitals

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USATF-NJ Club #0202 (<http://usatfnj.org>)
RRCA Club #664 (<http://rrca.org>)

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More Useful Info

'Train'ing Run:
http://rvrr.org/towpath_train
Race Results:
http://rvrr.org/race_results
Summer Series:
<http://rvrr.org/summerseries>
EB 5K and 10K:
<http://ebrr.org>
RVRR Forum (self-subscribe):
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<http://compuscore.com>
Race Forum:
<http://raceforum.com>

A Story of Trains

Pierre Delore

Not really a competition, the towpath training run would instead be a group run allowing runners of all levels to run together at a known speed in advance for a long distance. It makes one think a little of "Le Off" in Marseille last month. But this is happening in the USA in New Jersey for 55 km. Watch out, the train is going to leave!

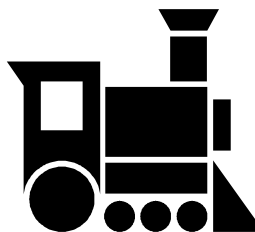
Well, isn't it strange that for once a running magazine is going to propose taking the train? But a train of runners, okay, that's

acceptable. It was during a professional trip in the USA in NJ that I discovered a type of organization: the runners' train. In the beginning I was looking for a source to see how this happens across the Atlantic. It wasn't necessary to write a long story but simply to discover with my own eyes and to share these experiences with other runners.

During my research I came across the Towpath "Train"ing run": a clever name for the event. I got in touch with the site of the club organizer and learned that it isn't a race but an organized event on the national day of walking paths.

The idea: four trains of runners run a towpath of 34.2 miles between Trenton and Piscataway. Each train runs at a given speed with the objective to arrive at 11 am at a final destination. The speeds go from 7:30 to 10:30 per mile, which is 4:39 to 6:31 per km. This year the theme was "Run with a Girl." There were therefore 4 women who had the role of conductor of each train. No problem recognizing them as they wore pink bathers' tops inscribed with the name of their train. The runners passed 10 "stations" which permitted them to refuel and where the new runners could continue on the path or route.

Rocky Hill! Two minutes stop: just enough time to restock before an old steam train could give the departure signal. The paces and departure times were calculated so that in the last miles, all the trains would join together and that no one would arrive before the other and all would end



together.

I had chosen the calm train 9:30 per mile. In Trenton, the start of all trains, we had 5 runners in this train without a conductor because the female leader didn't join us until the last 20 miles. We respected our schedule at the first two stations.

Our rhythm was calm and we took the opportunity to exchange our experiences. We arrived at the 3rd station and learned that we were 8 minutes late and that the conductor left on time rather than penalize the other runners. We accelerated our speed and made up our lateness at the next station (3 miles to make up for the lost 8 minutes). From then the 9:30 train remained together and grew at each new station.

But this change of rhythm used up my reserves and my speed; my tempo began to weaken after the 26th mile. The brick wall of the 30th mile was fatal.

This beautiful tranquil train for me became a real TGV (a very high speed train



in France) and I decided to let it slip away from me very quietly. No shame in stopping...I was right. Moreover I wasn't alone and like a grazing cow in the country, I profited from watching the 8:30 and 7:30 trains pass by guided by their conductors.

Last Stop: everyone off: In the end my lateness was around 8 minutes and my arrival was welcomed warmly anyway. As in certain French villages, this story ended with a barbecue. In the end, some 150 runners participated in this event.

The necessary logistics to bring all the runners to different stations was perfect (RVRR has been organizing this event for several years). And the path conditions are wonderful.

This type of organization is very friendly and you feel the ambiance that goes on as the train picks up the new runners. It allows the runners of different levels to intermingle without a need for competition. You choose your rhythm but it is not necessary to overexert yourself otherwise you risk passing the head locomotive.

Safaricom Marathon, Kenya

Cindy Peterson

June 25, 2011: Arriving in Kenya was exciting, reaching the equator was amazing and, after settling down in the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, I did a few fantastic safari game drives. Finally came race day!

Seeing warning signs all over stating "Run at your own risk" (lions, hippos, elephants, etc.) was a little disturbing and dangerous. However, any running has a little risk and is the nature of the sport. I was more concerned about my grandson Matt, 23 years old, who was running his first half marathon on terrain that looked more like a tough trail run.

The gun went off for 926 half marathoners and 165 full marathoners.



There was no sight seeing for me since I needed to keep my head down, watching out for all the embedded rocks as well as the deep ruts and gullies. About 6 miles into the race, I took a fall on my knees.

A little embarrassed, I picked myself up and continued running with skinned knees. Around the 9th mile, I took another fall, and this time had to have medical attention on my knees and elbows. This took time, but the medics insisted that the dust and dirt in the wind on my open wounds was not good, and had to be cleaned and bandaged up. The bandages would not stay up, but I kept running anyway. Since I didn't see Matt along the way, I knew he was doing OK.

At that point I became anxious, because I had to cross the halfway point by 3 hours and 20 minutes, or they would take me off the course.

I was approaching the 12th mile when I tripped again for a 3rd time. I was

devastated to say the least and didn't have time to stop for medical assistance until after the halfway point, because the clock was ticking and I had a little over a mile to go.

I needed to give myself a blast of encouragement when I remembered a great quote from Confucius: "Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in getting up every time you do."

I did not come all this way to quit now!

I had about 25 minutes to reach the halfway point, and, with a rush of adrenaline, I started running and reached the half way mark at 3 hours and 10 minutes, and was able to continue the full marathon. They did not care how long it took you to finish after that.

At the 14th mile, I stopped for medical attention on my knees because by now they were pretty banged up and painful. However, I was really motivated now because I could walk the rest of the way and finish my 7th continent, until I heard the motorcycle driver announce that I was the last runner.

OMG! How am I going to face my friends and family as the last runner when I trained to finish in 5 and a half hours? I could see the next to the last runner way in front of me, and decided to catch up and pass him so I wouldn't be last.

All of a sudden I saw zebras crossing in front of me, and giraffes and gazelles on either side of the road. The animals sensed that there were no more runners and could come back to their territory. This was frightening and was not the same feeling as watching them from a jeep.

Wow! I looked up to see the spotter plane and the helicopter coming down to chase the animals away. Then came 3 motorcycles, 2 jeeps, and 2 game wardens with rifles to guide my way.

It sure was comforting to have all this attention, and the thought of passing the runner in front suddenly left me. I felt like a rock star!

The motorcycle guys assured me that they would stay in front of me all the way to the finish, and the jeeps would be close behind, as well as the 2 game wardens with rifles. I knew at that point that I could enjoy the rest of the marathon, and

another quote of Confucius came to mind for encouragement: "It does not matter how slowly you go so long as you do not stop."

My knees were well bandaged now, and I was so excited stopping at all the water stops, taking pictures with the volunteers, the Masai, and the locals.

I was approaching the last 400 meters when I saw my directors Kelly and Jacquie running towards me to guide me to the finish. It was so great to see them that it brought me to tears!

There at the finish were all my teammates, and then some, cheering me on as though I were the first runner. I slowly ran into the arms of my grandson Matt. It was exhilarating, especially to learn that Matt finished his first half marathon in 2 hrs and 29 minutes.

The award ceremony was later that night and after Matt roasted me, he put the 7 Continents Medal around my neck. How exciting is that!

It was a very moving experience for me to finish my 7th Continent in Kenya!

Out of 41 marathons, this was the most challenging and difficult marathon I have ever run, but the most memorable and most rewarding!

I would like to finish with this last thought.

"If you are not fast enough to finish first, enjoy the glory of coming in last like a rock star!"



Love to all,
Cindy Peterson

1st Place, Age 70 and over

Time: 7:17:39

7 Continents Medal Award

Bradley Beach One-Mile Swim Provides Challenge

Kenneth A. Vercammen

In the many years that I have been a competitive runner, I trained mainly to run 5k races and then sit in my beach chair and read the sports page. I have entered numerous sprint and Olympic triathlons, and managed to avoid drowning in a short swim. In September 2010, I had serious knee surgery and did not run for 7 months. The orthopedic doctor at University Orthopedics recommended more swimming and no running.

The Metro Race Forum listed one-mile swims and I decided to enter the Bradley Beach One-Mile Ocean Swim.

These were my initial goals:

1. To not drown or die.
2. To finish the event and not drop out to the shame of my family and ancestors.
3. To not finish last.
4. To beat all the men & women over than 60.

To train I swam with groups on Monday and Friday nights in Long Branch and Belmar. I also swim laps at the Edison Elks Community Pool.



The Bradley Beach swim itself was very organized. The price was right: \$25 day of race included a cool looking T-shirt plus all the seawater you could drink.

The Bradley Beach swim started at 8 am. From the shore, the course, passing three jetties, did not look very far. However, once I was in the water I could barely see the first jetty, let alone the third jetty.

I swam with my buoyant yet non-flexible wet suit. The wetsuit was too tight. I think it could have stopped bullets. Despite the equipment issue, the swim itself was a good time and I managed to achieve three out of my four goals. I got out of the water and sprinted to the finish line in a time of

36 minutes, 50 seconds. I was not last and I now have additional goals for future events. After I finished the swim, I drove to Belmar just in time to run in the McCormack 5k at Bar A.

If you follow Metro Race Form, there are many swims and triathlons held in the tri-state area. While I hope to someday be a competitive runner again, I will look forward to participating in these swimming events in the future.

2011 RVR "Train"ing Run

Dave Lazarus

Had it not been for "the plane", the 13th Annual D & R Towpath "Train"ing Run would have just been remembered for the record amount of runners and money collected for Cancer Research, the beautiful pacing girls and the additional buses that were added this year, facilitating taking runners out to the towpath. Just as club members and event participants were settling into their first picnic refreshments, the plane from "The Miracle on the Hudson" became visible on River Road, almost directly across the street from the Rutgers Football stadium. Pretty soon, nearly everyone at the picnic took the 600-yard walk over to the side of the road to take pictures of the iconic plane and get a closer look.

The plane was resting at that spot on its way to the Aviation Hall of Fame in North Carolina. Even without that historic diversion, my second train run would have been a far better experience than my initial foray in 2010. Temperatures that were at least 20 degrees cooler than 2010 were agreeable with just about everyone, but nearly caused me to mistakenly change my original running plan. As I drove over to Grove 5 early that morning, I almost had to put the heat on as the thermometer at 6:45 said 59 degrees. I had stated that I was running 11.3 miles, but as I got on the bus with nearly everyone doing 13.5, I nearly opted for the longer distance.

That would have been a mistake, because I had not trained that long since early April leading up the Rutgers Unite Half Marathon. As the bus unloaded the 13.5 milers, my common sense got the best of me and I decided to go with the four remaining people who were going for the shorter distance. Waiting at the Amwell stop on the Franklin-Hillsborough border

was an interesting experience, showing how you don't have to go very far in New Jersey to get a rural setting. Before long the runners further down the line arrived and we were ready to embark. I decided to run with the 9:30 pace group, which would be a touch faster than I was training at but 10:30 seemed a little slow. It was nice to run and stay with the large group near the front. The first run to Weston Causeway finished quickly and I shortened my refreshment break so I could restart quicker and not stiffen up. Halfway through the run to South Bound Brook, I began to fall behind the group but I was close enough to meet up again as we stopped for the second time.

This was in stark contrast to a year ago when I was running with just one other person and was in a no man's land between the different groups. I again restarted quickly and was again left behind by all the 9:30 people. Still, we were so close to the finish that the knowledge I would soon be done enabled me to maintain my focus. It also helped to catch some of the 10:30 runners. The final 2.2 miles felt like a triumph as a large amount of people were there. I arrived back at the park much more refreshed than a year ago. It was a testament to running the proper distance at the proper pace.



The two major enhancements to the race worked to perfection. The pace girls kept a continuity to the groups of runners and the extra buses in the morning made for a much more relaxed drop off. The marking of the miles on the towpath were also helpful for those last few Garmin holdouts. The picnic and post-run ceremonies were a tremendous finish to the day. This event could explode in future years as more and more people extol its virtues. Like last year, my major regret was that I didn't start this sooner. I am a quarter of the way to my 100 mile mug. Hopefully, one year I will be in shape to try a longer distance.

Turtle Hero

Trink Poynter

All of us experienced runners know that adventure doesn't happen every time we run. And we can't always be a hero.

Today, however, was just such a run for me. OK, jog. As I made my way down the main road of Society Hill, a condominium community near our home, I found several people circling an oval, brown lump in the center of the road.

Yes, a turtle. Two young men, twenty-something, stood next to their stopped pick-up truck, and several children gathered around a large, dull, mud-colored turtle. The shell alone was over a foot long.

I asked the guys if it was a snapping turtle and they informed me that it was, as it had snapped a stick in half that they had used to prod it in an attempt to get the turtle out of the way. I told the children (who thought it was so cute) to get back because it could snap their fingers off.



The guys found a small board, which I commandeered, determined to scoop the turtle off the road. The turtle surveyed the board, then me. As I raised the board, the turtle suddenly rose up on a single hind leg, its front legs bent at forty-five degree angles, much like the Karate Kid in the final scene of that movie. Ha-YEE!

OK, that's not what happened. But it did assume a defensive stance and craned its thick, fat, leathery neck far out, cracking open its jaws. It shot me a Look.

I know that Look. I'm a teacher and I'm usually the one who delivers that Look. I took a step backwards and lowered the board.

By now, several cars had parked and people had gotten out and gathered on both sides of the road to look. Cameras came out. People OOEd and AWEed. And suddenly I became the Turtle Authority: Everyone, get back from the turtle. "Where did it come from?" The brook. "Where is it going?" The pond. "Why is it so slow?" It's

a turtle. That's what they do. "How old is the turtle?" OK, no. You didn't just ask me how old the turtle was. Even the turtle rolled its eyes at that one.

Cars were now approaching on both sides of the road. The turtle had planted itself squarely in the center of one lane. I told the young men to move their truck from the other lane and deftly began directing traffic, widely sweeping my board through the air, using all my RVR Summer Series traffic control expertise.

The turtle gave me an exasperated look. I finally got it. It's the people, stupid. The people were a barrier between the turtle and the pond. Now I assumed crowd control, corralling them to the other side of the road. I really didn't know how the turtle would negotiate the curb, but when it finally arrived there, it just rose up on its hind legs and scaled it.

At that point, I felt my job was done. I told the kids to stay back and assured one youngster that, yes, when the turtle got into the pond, she could play on that side of the road again.

As I jogged off, some of the people cheered and clapped. "Wow," I thought. "Turtle Hero. I'm a Turtle Hero."

Editor's Note: Trink is still recovering from her knee surgeries.

Swim Around Key West

Paul Grassie

The strong winds in the Florida Keys on June 4, 2011 once again made conditions difficult for swimmers and kayakers alike. I had my slowest time of my 5 finishes of the annual 12.5 mile Swim Around Key West: 7 hours, 41 minutes. (Best time was last year: 6 hours, 20 minutes.)

Never doubted that I would finish – at my usual unhurried pace – but a couple of



factors conspired against me this year. Despite all my training at the Deerpath Y in the weeks leading up to the event, I started to get some cramping in my legs within the first couple of miles of the start.



I was able to continue despite the occasional twinge afterwards, but I remained cautious for the rest of the day to

try to avoid having the calf muscles seize up again.

Also, the wave action made it harder to take on food and drink from my accompanying kayaker, and I must have inadvertently swallowed some seawater, which led to some nausea towards the end and after the finish.

Despite somewhat unpredictable conditions from one year to the next, this is a great event for anyone who is interested in open water swimming and is able to push their distance in their pool training beyond a couple of miles. Train with a goal of increasing your time in the pool, without worrying so much about counting laps or miles. If you can build up to the point where you can swim laps for 4 or 5 hours (with short bathroom and feeding breaks), you can probably be



successful in the Swim Around Key West.

Alternatively, there are 2-person and 3-person relays as an option if you're not ready to swim the entire 12.5 miles. The water temps are very warm down in Key West, so there's no chance of hypothermia as there often is with other long-distance open water swims. That's one of the main reasons I entered this event back in 2005 as my first open water swim.

<http://www.swimaroundkeywest.com>

Part 2: Confections of An "Addict"

Rolf Arands

Disclaimer: None of this is intended as medical or nutritional advice. None of this is meant to steer anyone towards any particular diagnosis, medical approach or nutrition plan. When in doubt, consult a medical or nutrition professional.

In 2007, I worked in Liberty Corner on the second floor of a 3-story building. It always felt like the building was swaying in the wind, especially after lunch in the afternoon. That feeling was just wrong, so I went to the doctor. After babbling on and on, my doctor sent me for a glucose tolerance test.

Fasting from 9 pm the night before, a pretest blood draw, a slug of god awful sugar, and then blood draws at 30, 60 and 120 minutes early in the morning was not my idea of fun. I didn't pass out. Just felt sick. That sugar knocked me for a loop and then hit me on its way back.

Diagnosis: "You have reactive hypoglycemia, time to see a nutritionist."

I went to a nutrition center over on Centennial Avenue (since closed, it seems). The first guy was awesome, but he disappeared to California after two visits. I then got plunked with someone I didn't like. Not that it mattered, I wouldn't have listened anyway. I bailed out on this nutritional advice. That was September 2007 or so.

Old habits die hard.

In October 2010, unrelated to any of this, I went to a dermatologist and noticed something disturbing in the mirror: I was getting fat. The scale did not lie: mid 180s. On 11/30/10, a customer of the company for which I worked sent us holiday cupcakes, and I had one. The next 3 hours were a flashback to my blackout and nausea days as I nearly passed out at work. Dizzy, spinning, unable to think of the number after 1... it felt just like that sugar drink, only it lasted for hours.

On December 1, 2010, I woke up around 6 am. There wasn't any fanfare or voices from the sky. No visions. No dreams.

Before my mother died in July 2010, she talked often about the bad choices she made (smoking), and how her fate (lung cancer) came as a result. It was all about choice. Three words entered my mind when I awoke and I made that right choice.

"I am done."

Anyone who knows me knows I have been on similar paths before. The difference was the compelling life lesson from mom. I had to make this right. For good. For life.

The notes from 2007 were a good start: eat 5x a day, every 3 hours, avoiding high glycemic index foods, always balancing carbs with fats and proteins. Veggies were always good. Snacking in between the 3-hour cycles was not allowed. The body has to de-rev the insulin response and the 3-hour "no eat" cycle allowed this. The 3-hour meals also kept the blood sugar stable. I made it 600 calories, 5x a day, every 3 hours, for simplicity.

The first phase was just a removal of junk from my diet, replacing them with more of the few healthy (or less bad) things already in my diet. Gone were the endless Clif bars, bowls of cereal morning, noon and night, and other things like that. That was December 2010. December came and went. I didn't watch my weight because I didn't expect anything.

Phase 2 was the hardest, January 2011. Addictive withdrawal sucks, even from sugar. The metabolic circuitry of my body was dependent on the constant sugar intake. Each sugar low would trigger me to eat sugar, triggering more insulin and driving sugar lower, a self tightening cycle. Cut the sugar, watch Rolf crash. The cycle had to be broken.

As I broke the dependency I had on sugar, I was miserable. A body addicted does not like to be unaddicted. I went through withdrawal crashes. Headaches, hitting the wall after 1 mile of running, spins, grouchiness (and a temper which should have gotten me fired at one point), and other maladies with addictive withdrawal.

This past winter was icy and snowy, so I didn't run as much, mostly indoor rowing or some XC skiing when time allowed, but a much lower workout load than normal.

But, coming into February, I noticed something: I had dropped from the mid 180s to the mid 170s. Ooooo-K. I didn't expect that.

I wasn't looking to lose weight or run faster. Just end my stupidity. My running showed something: I was getting fitter.

OK, now this was getting interesting.

Sometime in February or March, a chance Saturday run with Doug Brown and Chris Lehman steered me to phase 3 and Julie Hadazy, a runner and nutritionist. She tolerated (and still does) my long rambles and began guiding me to new ground. New ideas rolled in ... chia seed, more veggies, ricotta cheese and fruit and nuts for breakfast, on and on. The weight continued to come off, breaking into the 160s, and I had to wonder if I would break 160 and go lower. Julie brought me to ways of thinking about food and diet that are totally new for me.

Another thing happened. Clothing no longer fit. My 34" waist pants, which were snug at one point, were now falling down. I ended up donating 6 pairs of **new** pants, shorts and other items. My new size was now 32" waist, and loose at that.

I was preparing for the Seattle Marathon, all indicators pointing towards a really good run. I was consuming 1/3 the amount of energy during long runs than before, and finishing 3+ hour runs well. In May, I took an unfortunate detour through the surgeon's office: hernia surgery. Along with that, and a rough allergy & cold season, I couldn't hold it together and ran (not raced) the 1/2 marathon, playing it safe as I was not fully recovered from the surgery.

Anyway, as that post-surgery recovery has continued, I am now in phase 4. I dipped down to near 160, but crept back up a little. My bodyweight is holding around 165, and the bodyfat is holding around 4% (was 14% when I started). My 32" waist pants are almost as loose as the 34" were, and it may soon be time to try on 31".

As Doug correctly said, the risk is regressing. I am almost neurotic now, and realize I have to be this way. My old habits are lurking, ready to again return.

Make good choices.

Wendy and Rohini Train Run

Wendy Reed

Several geography websites claim that New Jersey is about 70 miles wide. I ran almost half that distance (34.2 miles) on June 4th, 2011. "Why would you want to do this?" and "What was it like?" are the two most common questions that I encountered concerning this run. I'll try to explain.

Background

Raritan Valley Road Runners host the "Train"ing run to correspond with National Trails Day. Participants walk, jog, or run along the D&R towpath northeast from Trenton to New Brunswick, starting at various stations along the path. The official distances range from 0.2 to 34.2 miles. Official paces range from 7:30 to 10:30 minutes per mile. There are groups to run with, and wonderful volunteers at most of the stations, offering drinks and snacks to keep the runners going. An awesome picnic is held at the end in Johnson Park. And if this fun day isn't enough of an enticement to come out and run, there is a charitable aspect to this event: \$0.50 per mile is donated to the Cancer Institute of NJ.

Well, my employer is the Cancer Institute and my running club is RVRN, so it was inevitable that I run in this event. Last year I chose to run 20 miles, because I had never run that many miles before. I promised myself that in 2011 I would go the total distance (the "Full Monty" as I call it), because if there is a maximum or an ultimate goal out there, I will try to do it.

The Run

The official paces for the 34.2 mile run were 8:30 and 9:30. I asked if it was possible to run a less ambitious 10:30 pace, and Ray Petit calculated the start time for me to finish with the rest of the trains: 4:50 am. I was joined by an RVRN member named Rohini, who is a very experienced marathoner. We were accompanied by her husband and my fiancé, who quite generously rode an excruciatingly slow pace on bicycles as we

ran.

Golden rays of sun were just beginning to appear as we got off to an uneventful start at approximately 4:54 am. The towpath in the Trenton area was ungroomed compared to the more northern sections, but still passable, up to a point. We hit a snag about three miles into the run, at Carnegie Road. Apparently 98.2% of the towpath trail is on the west side of the canal water. 1.8% of the trail from Carnegie to Baker's Basin Road is on the east side. We didn't know this. We traveled about a quarter of a mile along the path on the west side of the water, and watched as the trail got narrower. Eventually we hit jungle, and both of the gentlemen risked life and limb and took



their bikes into dense picker bushes and poison ivy to see if there was any way through. I called Ray and said, "Help, we're stuck!" Ray calmly replied, "You have to go to the right side of the trail." Who knew? So we doubled back and went along the right side of the trail for 0.61 miles, only to go back to the left side of the trail at Baker's Basin Road. A sign posted by the Canal Commission would have been helpful to us - and other bikers, runners, walkers, etc. who were unfamiliar with this part of the path, but let me not digress about NJ and their public departments.

Now officially off pace, we pressed on. The run was peaceful as we passed over Rt. 1 and under 95 in Lawrence, NJ. We passed through Princeton and watched early morning golfers. Right around Kingston, my partner and I parted paces, and I went

on ahead. The 9:30 pace group from Trenton passed me here, and although I was disappointed that I would not finish at 11 am with the rest of the group, I was undeterred.

At Griggstown, the approximate halfway point, I met volunteers for much needed snacks and drinks. Twizzlers never tasted so good! At Blackwells Mills, I was greeted by a smiling Ray, and was passed by a pack of gazelles (the graceful but purposeful 8:30 pace group). Between Weston Causeway and South Bound Brook, my Garmin told me that I hit 26.2 miles - marathon distance. The rest of the run would be untested waters for me since I have only run one marathon and never further. At the South Bound Brook station, I announced, "The rest is cake!" For some reason, mentally, 5.5 miles left to go seemed incredibly doable. However, the cake was not as soft as I wished for, since my legs began to get progressively heavier and more tired after this point, and the hardest part of the trip was starting to run again after stopping for a drink or a street crossing.

The longest part of the run was the last 5 miles - all I could picture was the food and beer that would be waiting for me at the finish. Seeing Landing Lane Bridge was the most exciting (and relief inspiring) moment of the day. I wobbled over the stones on the final spillway and picked up the pace one more time to enter Johnson Park. I finished between 11:30 am and noon, and my Garmin showed a total of 5:53 total running time.

The Aftermath

Thanks to the pleasant weather and the non-demanding pace, the run was actually much easier for me than the stressful NYC marathon. Recovery was quicker - just a few days for my muscles to get over the soreness. Am I glad I did it? Yes. Will I do it again next year? Yes, hopefully at a 9:30 pace. Will I go the distance if Ray decides to increase the mileage to 50 and have me start at 3 am? Yes---but that wasn't really a suggestion ;)

2011 "Train"ing Run Recap

Ray Petit

This event gets bigger and better every year. This year, we ran almost 2,000 total collective miles with a \$1500.00 donation to the Cancer Institute of New Jersey (CINJ). RVRP volunteers were scattered throughout the 34.2 miles of the towpath supporting the runners with water and refreshments. The donation was funded by RVRP and very generous club members.



The feedback I received was that using Judit Ward, Jody Stevens, Laura Swift and Lianne Price as pacers was the best improvement this event ever made. Bigger than when we added school buses to the event, so that runners don't have to worry about arranging their own transportation. Bigger than linking it to the CINJ, our neighbor in New Brunswick, so that we add a community focus to what we do. Bigger than keeping a running total of Towpath "Train"ing Run mileage, so that runners can take a hiatus from this event and come back years later and work toward their 100 mile mug. This year, for the first time, we attracted international visitors, Pierre Delore from France and Kelly Swift from Canada. The overnight parking of the "Miracle on the Hudson" plane on River Road near the post-event picnic was just icing on the cake.

As my brother Ron said, an aerial view of this event from previous years would show small groups of runners spread out through much of the towpath. This year, it would show distinct large groups of runners converging as they reached Landing Lane. The "hot girls in hot pink" was just marketing 101. It will be tough to improve upon this theme for next year. The damage caused by Hurricane Irene should make us appreciate the towpath and the hope is that the path can be repaired in time for next year's event. We also shouldn't lose sight of the fact of the money and awareness we raised for the

Cancer Institute of New Jersey.

2011 "Train"ing Run Statistics

Total runners/walkers – 138

Total miles – 1,953

Average miles – 14.15 miles

Donation to Cancer Institute of New Jersey - \$1,500.00

Volunteer Recognition

Transportation Director – Janice Reid

Asst Transportation Director – John Evans

Drivers to Trenton – Michael Carr, Sonya Slyman, John Grieco, Ray Petit

Water Stops – John Grieco, Ray Petit, Lesley Wassef, Bob Hopkins, Annette Johnson

Bike Support – Barney Ward

"Run with a Girl" Pacers – Laura Swift, Jody Stevens, Lianne Price and Judit Ward

Food Contributors – Susan Joy Grieco, Laura Swift, Bob Tona

Chef – Bob Hopkins

Picnic set-up – Sonya Slyman

Donors

Express Donors (\$250+) – Bill Hulbert, Stephen Kornstein

Local Donors (\$100+) – Kelly DiGian, Rolf Arands, Leigh Walker

Freight Donors (\$50+) – Ray Petit, Erin Varga

Caboose Donors – David Lazarus, Shannon Sweeney, Eric Saurer, Robyn Piccinic, Ron Russo, Rossana Ybasco, Laura Swift, Oleg Shpak, Sonya Slyman, Nick Birocik, Bob Jorissen, Lesley Wassef, Robert Tona, Imme Dyson, Lianne Price, Dennis McGale, Kevin Frost, Ed DiJoseph, Tom O'Reilly, Tim Semenoff, John Nowatkowski, Annette Johnson

Mark Your Calendars

2011 East Brunswick Road Races

Sunday, October 16, 2011

The East Brunswick Road Races provide a day of fun for the entire family! Come out and participate in the John Ragone 5K, East Brunswick 10K, 1 Mile Fun Run/Walk, and Pumpkin Dashes for Kids. Visit the EBRR website at <http://www.ebrr.org> to register today!

Race Application - Page 9

Post Philadelphia Marathon and Half Marathon Race Party

Philadelphia, PA

Sunday, November 20, 2011, 1 - 4 pm

Join us for a post-race celebration in the heart of Philadelphia. From 1-4 we will rent out a room at the top of an apartment complex. We ask everyone to chip in for food and drinks. Friends and family are welcome! More details coming soon, register for the race today! It will sell out soon!

Ken Vercammen's Freezing Cold Hash Run

Edison, NJ

Saturday, January 7, 2012, 10 am

Save the date for Ken's annual freezing cold hash run! This will be a 3 & 5 mile group run. For details, email VercammenLaw@Njlaws.com.

Wednesday Night Runs

Highland Park, NJ

Every Wednesday, 6:30 pm

The group meets at the Reformed Church of Highland Park (19-21 South 2nd Ave., Highland Park, NJ). There is a large parking lot behind the church. You can park on South 2nd Street, or enter the parking lot from Raritan Ave/Rt. 27 (between South 2nd Ave. and South 3rd Ave.) and enter the building from there.

Saturday Morning Runs

Johnson Park

Long daylight months: Grove 5 @ 8 am

Short daylight months: Grove 2 @ 9 am

Check <http://rvrr.org>, the Yahoo email list, or Facebook for latest location

Due to 2011's flooding damage to the towpath, the towpath is currently closed. Running there is at your own risk. RVRP courses through the park and Rutgers campuses have been created in the meantime until the towpath is again runnable.

2011 East Brunswick Road Races

October 16th, 2011
Crystal Springs Aquatic Center
Info inside!

As always...
Lots more inside!
Info inside and online!

RVRR
P.O. Box 1197
Edison, NJ 08818-1197