

**Upcoming Events**

*Vercammen's Freezing Cold Hash Run*

- Saturday, January 7, 2012, 10 am
- In Edison NJ

*Awards Banquet*

- Saturday, February 4, 2012
- Details and registration inside

*Miles for Music Inaugural 20K Race*

- Sunday, March 11, 2012
- Details inside
- <http://milesformusic.org>

*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 late April 2012
- <sup>a</sup> 8 am after late April 2012

*Always check website or email list for latest information*  
<http://rvrr.org>

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**President's Greeting**

*Laura Swift*

When new runners join the club, I want to know their story. I joined this club in March of 2007, and I think most of you know my story. I moved to New Jersey after graduate school to begin my career at Merck. I didn't know anyone here and found out quickly that work doesn't provide instant friends the way that school does.



You aren't forced to sit through hour-long lectures, work on the same assignments, pair up for presentations,

and study all hours of the night for exams with people you hardly know but quickly form friendships with. You don't live in residence buildings or grad housing together. At the end of the day you go your separate ways and have short conversations in the break room or before and after meetings.

My Mom urged me to join a running club as a way to make friends. I was reluctant for various reasons, but when I found myself alone on a Friday night working on a jigsaw puzzle and drinking a glass of wine, I decided it was time to find a running club.

I stumbled on RVRR and nervously made the drive to Johnson Park on a Saturday morning. Ray greeted me immediately and introduced me to a girl named Vanessa, who also happened to work at Merck. Vanessa was a graduate of Notre Dame so needless to say it was an instant friendship. Before the run started Ray, as he always does, introduced the new runners. I was too shy to correct him when he called me "Nora", but Vanessa was nice

enough to do it for me.

I have missed few Saturday runs since that day. I've met so many people and I have learned their stories of why they joined the club. The stories range from wanting to stay fit, not wanting to run alone, and having no friends, but almost all of stories end in "and I've been in this club ever since!"

My sister and my parents have now had the pleasure of meeting the people in this club. When they tell me how great the people are they don't say "Those people are great runners" or "He/She is so fast" (okay in some cases they do say that, but that's not the point!). They tell me how lucky I am to be friends with such an amazing group of people. People that leave the party to pick up pop (soda) because it was something I forgot about. People that stay after the GMM or the party is done to help make sure everything is cleaned up. People that spend an evening making signs and then drive/take the train to a race and cheer on club-mates at multiple locations along the course. People that open their homes to you in out of town locations and then cheer for 9 hours while you run a race. People that help you move, tow your car, and give you a lift home. People that drive cross country and across country borders to see you and your home town, and people that simply make you laugh when you're having a bad day.

You are the people that make this club awesome and you are the reason that we all have a story of why we joined and still belong to this club. Thank you for being awesome people and thank you for saving me from jigsaw puzzles and wine on a Friday night...alone that is, I still love jigsaw puzzles and wine any night of the week ☺

We are RVRR!

## Club Vitals

Raritan Valley Road Runners  
PO Box 1197  
Edison NJ 08818-1197

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

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### 2012 RVRR Board Members

President: Laura Swift  
1<sup>st</sup> VP: Dave Allara  
2<sup>nd</sup> VP: Lianne Price  
Treasurer: Tom O'Reilly  
Secretary: Shannon Sweeney  
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Director: Ray Petit  
Director: Angela Morgenthal  
Director: Eric Saurer

### Newsletter

Rolf Arands ([newsletter@rvrr.org](mailto:newsletter@rvrr.org))

### Past Presidents

Allen Paul	1983-1986
Doug Brown	1987-1989
John Macgillivray	1990-1992
John Pretzell	1993-1994
Mark Rogalski	1995-1996
Ray Petit	1997-1998
Trink Poynter	1999-2000
Pete Priolo	2001-2002
Dana Gross	2003
Bob Townley	2004-2005
Gene Gugliotta	2006-2008
Mark Strawn	2009-2010

### More Useful Info

'Train'ing Run:  
[http://rvrr.org/towpath\\_train](http://rvrr.org/towpath_train)  
Race Results:  
[http://rvrr.org/race\\_results](http://rvrr.org/race_results)  
Summer Series:  
<http://rvrr.org/summerseries>  
EB 5K and 10K:  
<http://ebrr.org>  
Miles for Music:  
<http://www.milesformusic.org>  
RVRR Forum (self-subscribe):  
<http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/rvrr>  
RVRR on Facebook:  
<http://facebook.com/group.php?gid=25090695712>  
Compuscore:  
<http://compuscore.com>  
Race Forum:  
<http://raceforum.com>

## Where Are You Running To?

Jose Manchola

In November 2010, I was 290 pounds, sitting on my couch playing video games and eating about three helpings of food. I remember people telling me things like "You're tall; you don't look heavy." For a time, I believed that until I saw a picture of my wife and me from that Christmas – more about this picture later on. It made me realize I was due for a lifestyle change.

I tried many times to lose weight and could never get below 250 pounds. My frustration was building and I needed motivation to keep trying.

A funny Peyton Manning commercial made me think: "Just buy bigger shirts." I wish I could say that the commercial inspired me to lose weight. It made me laugh and surrender to the fact that the man was probably right. In case you're interested, here's the link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJdCiV3EKTA>

Thanksgiving came around and I ate like I was in some kind of eating contest. Then Christmas arrived and I saw myself in that picture. My wife's hand was resting on top of my stomach like a coffee table!

That week, I heard about a weight loss contest at my job. It was January 2011 and I decided to join. I hoped that this would give me the motivation of getting past that 250 pound wall and it did. I changed my diet, exercised more, and it opened my eyes. I lost 14 pounds the first week and 60 by the end of the contest in March of 2011.

So here I was 60 pounds lighter and I craved more weight loss. One day on my way home on a very cold day, I saw a group of people running. I thought to myself, "Where are they running to?"

I always wanted to run but could never run more than five minutes. My knees would hurt, my asthma would kick in, and I would get tired quickly. Then one day on Facebook, a friend posted a run on <http://mapmyrun.com> and learned he ran five miles. The site piqued my interest so I decided to just give it a shot. I began reading about running and all the things involved with it: shoes, clothing, hydration, running techniques, etc.

So I woke up one morning and took off

running. I ran for 15 minutes straight and walked back home. On the way back I tried guessing the distance I ran and it felt like I ran at least 3 miles. I was so excited to get home and track my distance. Drum roll please ... the computer read 1.2 MILES! And after that, I caught the running bug. The next day I ran 1.5 miles and the day after that, 2 miles. I knew I was ready for my first 5K.

I came across a flyer that was promoting a 5K run called *Paulette Steps Toward Cancer Wellness 5km Run* and I signed up for it the next day. I had two weeks to get ready so I trained daily and finally reached my goal of 3.1 miles!

Race day arrived on March 27, 2011. Nerves and self-doubt were kicking in. What if I don't finish?

*10 am:* Picked up my first bib (496) and I proudly put it on.

*10:30 am:* Jumped up and down and stretching to stay warm. It was cold, about 30 degrees.

*10:45 am:* Paulette spoke about her fight against cancer and how she overcame it. Eyes started to get watery, nose got stuffy, not good before a race.

*10:59 am:* ONE MINUTE LEFT!

*11 am:* The horn sounded and we took off. I was running hard and fast ... too fast. I was getting tired; I wanted to stop. I finally reached the 1-mile marker. I could do this. Just push, just stop thinking and listen to the music. It wasn't working. I wanted to call it quits and start walking.

Just then I heard someone yell my name. "**Go Pa!** You are doing great." It was my beautiful wife standing outside in the freezing cold cheering me on. "**I love you, you can do it!**" She was heaven-sent and gave me the strength and energy to push through.

I crossed the finish line in 27:51. Although I didn't win a medal and it certainly wasn't my best time, I finished my first race and the best reward waiting for me at the end was my wife with open arms.

I run almost every day now. I have participated in lots of different races and I hope to do my first marathon in 2012. I've learned a lot, trained a lot, and met amazing people through RVRR. I'll always remember my first race because it's the reason I love running so much!

## My Running Rollercoaster

Lesley Wassef

*UP ...* After running my first marathon in 2007, I was on cloud nine. NYC marathon in 3:09:10. I thought I was invincible. I was wrong!

*DOWN ...* I didn't give myself time to recover. We are not all the same; some people can run a race the next week after a marathon, while some of us need a month off. I didn't know what type of runner I was. I just continued to run and run hard. I did more races and ran longer runs. Then my knee decided it was going to play up so that I would rest!

*STILL DOWN ...* In 2008, I couldn't run. My knee bothered me. It twinged every so often. It hurt going upstairs and downstairs. I went to the doc and he told me I had patellofemoral pain – basically knee pain due to the mistracking of my patella. I needed to strengthen my quads. So physiotherapy and the indoor bike trainer became my friends. It was strengthening time.

*SLOWLY UP ...* Go through physiotherapy for patellafemoral knee pain – 4 injections of hyaluronic acid into my knee. I start running again, slowly for 2009.

*UP ...* Decide to rerun NYC marathon in 2009. 16 weeks of training using the FIRST method (cross-training and running). I actually enjoyed the training.

*DOWN FAST ...* Got the flu the Wednesday before the marathon, lucky it wasn't pneumonia. Decided to run the marathon anyway. What doesn't kill ya makes ya stronger – right? It was hell! Dehydration, coughing and cramps are not fun, but I finished with one lung in 3:45. **Do not**, I repeat, **do not run a marathon with the flu**.

*UP ...* For 2010, I decided to stick with half marathons. Ask my new cute boyfriend (Nick) to help me break 1:30 for a half marathon. He decides to run the half marathons with me. I'm a lucky lady

*STILL RISING ...* Run the Manhattan half marathon in January. Confirm I don't like running in the cold, managed 1:32:01. Head to Virginia Beach with some good friends from RVR. We did the Shamrock half marathon – lots of fun and boys in

kilts! I get a PR 1:31:30.

*UP ...* Run my favorite half marathon – BROOKLYN half marathon – get another PR – 1:28:15! Nick ran the whole thing with me and I couldn't have done it without him.

*STILL UP BUT CLOSE TO THE EDGE ...* I have a pain in the butt, and no, it's not Nick. Go see doc. Its called Ischiotuberosity pain syndrome. Where the hamstring attaches to the bone (ischiotuberosity) is inflamed because of overtrained hamstrings. Do you think I should rest? Yes. Do I? **No!** I already signed up for the Wineglass Marathon in October. Training had started, no way could I stop. Stubborn/stupid runner! Continue with the half marathons. Queens half marathon – 92°F at 7am ... 1:33:21. Bronx half marathon 1:29:28.

*CRASHING DOWN ...* Newport half marathon, can't even finish the first mile. Hamstring strain - **OUCH!** One week from marathon!

*DOWN ...* Physiotherapist tapes me up. Decide to do Wineglass marathon, and stick to the 3:30 pace group. No need to run super fast, just need to finish and maybe qualify for Boston Marathon. This is Nick's first Marathon and I was trying to keep my spirits up, really trying. Run the marathon, but at Mile 17, the hamstring is strained again. You would think I would stop and get help to the finish. Oh no, not I, remember I was the stubborn/stupid runner who decided I could finish the last 9 miles by hobbling. And so I did in 3:46. No Boston, and a big bruise from a torn hamstring.

*DOWN ...* No running for all of October – it was the longest month in my life! Slowly start running again, 2 miles, then 3, then 4 etc.

*SLOWLY UP ...* 2011 begins with going back to physiotherapy. The doc and PTs all know me now! Do the strengthening and start running again. First race I do is Indian Trails – so so scared. Don't think I am ready to race, but with friends from RVR I manage to finish and help the women team to score!

*STILL GOING UP ...* Decide I would like to do another marathon – healthy for a change. I decide to do the Lehigh Valley Via Marathon. But I decided not to tell anyone. If I got injured again, I just didn't

want to have to deal with my disappointment as well as everybody's disappointment. I know I was probably being silly and that friends from RVR would always be supportive, but I needed to do this for me.

*STILL GOING UP ...* Do more races, Stomp the Monster, Run for Rachel, Eden 5k.

*DOWN AGAIN ...* Wear high-heels for a wedding, and injure my calf/ankle – can't run the training run. Rest for 2 weeks and I got better! **Yeah!**

*GOING UP SLOWLY ...* Start my 12-week training for the marathon. Run 3-4 days a week, ranging from 30-40 miles per week. One day of mile repeats, one day of a long run and a couple of days of easy runs. Nick ran some of the long runs with me, even when I complained. Go to physiotherapy once a week for 12 weeks too. Thanks Judit for the advice! Still have the ischiotuberosity (butt) pain, but managing.



*UP ...* Sept 11<sup>th</sup> 2011, run the Lehigh Valley Via Marathon from Allentown to Easton PA. Nick ran the whole thing with me. Was feeling ok until the last 4 miles with the hills – they hurt! 3:22:03! **FINISHED** and qualified for Boston!

*STILL UP ...* Recovery time and enjoying the runs with my friends!

## Pet Peeves

Dave Lazarus

The weather was nearly perfect for my run with temperatures in the high 50s and enough sunshine to warm me for the post-run cool down. It was reminder of why autumn is the best time of year to run, save the short days. But like most of my road runs this time of year, the enjoyment of this 5-mile jaunt was lessened by the existence of manmade dust storms otherwise known as leaf blowers.

Now truth be told, I do use an electric leaf blower for hard to reach places and gutters, but the misuse of these machines is making life miserable for anyone who enjoys the outdoors. Even though I wear glasses, I've had leaf particles and dust blown into my eyes and sometimes my mouth. A single leaf blower operating for an hour creates as much air pollution as 40 cars idling for the same amount of time.



And did I mention the noise? Now most leaf blower operators are not aware of the noise because they wear headphones and cannot even hear anything around them. Many of them are in danger of experiencing serious hearing loss. It is pretty clear that leaf blowers, at best, detract from the quality of life and, at worst, pose a serious health risk to anyone who ventures near these beasts. I am hoping local towns take measures to ban leaf blowers or limit their use because these machines accomplish little more than a rake and tarp.

During this run I also experienced my second pet peeve of running; people running the roads with headphones. On a recent run I passed a woman and said hello (I knew her) and she jumped high enough to win many track meets. It was lucky for her that I am a gentle soul who meant her no harm but I see way too many people who are oblivious to what's going on around them. Not to be a sexist,

but I think headphone wearing on the roads is even worse for women because they put themselves in more danger from molesters that they can't hear.

Now I like good music just as much as anyone and I own a myriad of iPods that has helped make millionaires of Apple shareholders. But when I am on the roads, I want to be able to hear everything, including birds, dogs, cars and anything else. Headphones are great when you are in the monotony of the track or treadmill, but I don't understand the point of blocking out the world. Running outdoors opens up the pores of my imagination and I greatly enjoy saying hello to people. But that becomes less and less of a possibility as more and more people are tuning the world out. I remember how hard it was to find a runner in the 2010 Rutgers Half Marathon who wasn't wearing headphones. When I finally found somebody who could actually talk to me, I had a couple of enjoyable miles meeting a new person and passing through some miles.

So call me a curmudgeon or out of touch with the times, but I wish people would smarten up and not run with head phones on the roads, I can already feel the opposition through the computer screen. I guess if I polled them they wouldn't object to leaf blowers either because they probably don't hear them.

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## Running with and for RVR

Michael Carr

The Big Chill in 2007 was my first race since high school, a hiatus of 42 years. I loved it and resolved to do more races. I found RVR on the web but was intimidated because I was old, fat and slow (61, 201 and 8:30). I resolved to join RVR as soon as I got thinner and faster. What a mistake, for the next two years I raced little (two 5Ks) and my weight crept up to 205. I finally dropped my pride, got up my courage and showed up on a cold January Saturday. Incredibly, I ran to the DeMott footbridge and back, 6.2 miles! Clueless about running and racing, but stubborn, I kept coming back. I watched the capable runners and tried to do what they were doing, though more slowly.

In my first year with RVR I ran 11 races, this year I am up to 22 races and consider

myself a competent runner. More importantly, I lost 30 pounds and am now at the upper end of "normal" on the BMI scale. I also got much faster with a pace of 6:58 for my fastest 5K. My age-graded performance level rose from a pre-RVR level of about 60% to 78.8% in the recent Ashenfelter 8K. Why do I mention these achievements? Well, I guess I like to brag but more importantly, I hope someone reading this is a lurker, like I was, wondering whether or not to show up and run with RVR. Well, don't wait!

Running and training is hard so finding and keeping motivation is very important. The act of running, the seasonally changing beauty of the towpath, and my increased agility and fitness are major factors keeping me coming back. The RVR people are remarkably friendly and helpful. I have enjoyed running with too many people to try to name them all, though Ray and Sonja got me through the initial icebreaking period. Another great motivator for me is belonging to the 60s team. If there is a gradient in motivation between accomplishment and fun, I am far too skewed toward accomplishment, so being on a team is really helpful. If all the best 60s runners show up, I am down around number 8 for RVR, a definite B-teamer. For many races, several of the faster guys haven't been able to make it and so, I actually scored for the A team (4 times this year). I also scored once the B team. Being on a team really works for me and I don't care if it is A, B, C or whatever. Even though I am Medicare eligible, on race day I often feel a little like I did in high school. Go RVR!

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## RVR Breakfast Program: January and February 2012

Come to all 4 Saturday runs in January and February and sign in to receive \$10 toward your breakfast on January 28<sup>th</sup> and February 25<sup>th</sup>. You must sign in **before** the run and you must be a member in good standing. This will be verified prior to breakfast. The award is non-transferable to other runners, but the more people at breakfast the merrier. Even if you don't earn the \$10 award you'll still have plenty of great company at breakfast so come join us and warm up after a (hopefully) cold run!

# My Ever Growing Love for Vermont, RVRR and Watching (very) Long Distance Running

Shannon Sweeney

As I do on so many weekends – and thus why I often miss Saturday runs – I found myself on the long drive up to spend time in central Vermont. I enjoy my time there, though I often complain about how cold and isolated it can be, with few activities and far away from my NJ friends and life. However, my drive up in late September was filled with excitement, as I knew I would be with RVRRers, taking part in an unbelievable activity and witnessing something spectacular: friends of mine running the VT-50.

Having spent several years living on the VT/NH border, I'd heard of the VT-50 (and VT-100), knew where parts of the course were, seen newspaper articles and chatted about it, but never had I personally known anyone who was crazy enough to participate, let alone FOUR people and people whom I called my friends. I researched the race for months, memorizing statistics, reviewing spectator station locations, and reading blogs in an attempt to be the best spectator for some of the best runners and people I knew, but regardless of what I read or learned, I couldn't fathom running fifty consecutive miles.

I arrived at the first spectator location about 12 miles in and parked next to a police officer as mountain bikers (many more of whom compete in the race) whizzed by. I looked at my watch and decided I should see Dixon soon. However, after a minute I thought that I might have missed him, so I asked the police officer, "Have you seen any runners yet?" and he replied, "Yet this morning? No, I've helped out with this race for many years and well, you might be waiting a while." About a minute later in the distance, I saw a shirtless runner and sure enough it was Dixon! I screamed and cheered as Dixon zipped by and the cop looked at Dixon and then me astonished.

Next Dave arrived with a big smile on his face and lots of mud on his legs. He described the steep climbs before taking off "to enjoy" more of the course. Laura came by shortly thereafter and proudly

proclaimed that she had only cried twice thus far. Jayson's 50k course wasn't stopping at this aid station, so I jumped in my car to head to the next spectator spot about a fifteen-minute drive away. As is common in Vermont, I was on a packed-dirt, narrow, winding steep road. As I moved my foot to step on the gas, I thought about how hard my car was trying to get up the hill, er, mountain and what the runners must be going through – I was in pain just stepping on the gas imagining their terrain.

At the next aid station Jayson was the first runner to come by and the crowd cheered. He looked strong and happy, but there was another runner on his tail so on he went. When Dixon came by, I ran over to him (as he stuffed several peanut butter and jelly sandwiches in his mouth) and asked him if there was anything he needed. "A ride to the finish?" he said and I laughed. He then asked if I knew what mile this was and I was hesitant to reply. "Thirty-one," I said and he smiled and said he was farther than he thought and took off. I knew he was on record pace, but didn't want to say anything else and told him I'd be at the finish looking for him.

Dave again came in cheerily, smiling as he grabbed water and Vaseline and asked how Dixon and Jayson were doing. I said it seemed like they had a good chance of both winning, his smile grew and with a (sweaty) hug on he went. Soon Laura came by crying. I was worried she had hurt herself, but her concern was simply that we all would be waiting for her "all day," that the "next twenty miles would be the slowest of her life." I don't know about most of you, but Laura's slowest twenty miles are likely faster than my fastest and I told her not to worry that we'd be there. I asked her if she needed anything and she exclaimed, "YES! You need to tell me what the boys are EATING...what are they eating?" I told her Dixon took down several PB&Js and she shook her head grabbed more Gu's (though they were making her gag) and headed off cry-free.

I then raced to the finish realizing I could miss Jayson if I didn't hurry because of his lightning fast pace. I arrived sweaty worried about how hot it had gotten for the runners (I actually ended up with a sun burn) and Jayson soon came down the switchbacks to win the 50k! I was so excited to see him and screamed and shouted with delight. We eagerly waited

for Dixon as we watched the clock. He too came barreling down the final decline to win the 50-mile race and set a new course record! I couldn't believe what talented friends I had (and neither could the crowds of people at the finish listening to me shout). Dave finished with a multi-hour PR and a huge grin and when we saw Laura our cheers were likely heard from atop the mountain. As we screamed, "You rock!" she shouted back, "I'm never ever doing this again," which just hours later over beers, she essentially recanted.



The race and more specifically, the finish, were an absolutely amazing thing to see: runners and bikers alike giving it all they had after a long, hilly, hot day while hundreds cheered them down the grassy path to the finish. I couldn't believe how much fun I was having watching people run and bike by!

Although the ending temperatures may not have been to Laura's liking, the sun highlighted all the beautiful mountaintops, trees and farmland that I so often overlook. Even if the allure of the scenery is often lost on me, Dave, Dixon, Laura and Jayson's enthusiasm ensured for at least that day that we all knew how lucky we were to get to enjoy something so lovely. The smiles on all the faces (particularly those on our RVRR friends) and the congratulatory remarks being shared after completing something so strenuous reminded me of the incredible athletes that came to this place and that Vermont may not be so activity-less and isolated after all. In fact, it might just be the perfect place for a race if it weren't for all those hills!

Despite spending my whole day watching and thinking about the race, I still can't understand how anyone runs fifty consecutive miles. RVRR and particularly these four runners really are incredible!

## Miles for Music Inaugural 20K Race: March 11, 2012

*Miles for Music*, a 501(c)(3) non-profit (pending) organization that raises money to help fund music education programs in public schools through running events, is pleased to announce that it has been awarded USATF-NJ Championship status for its inaugural 20K event.



The 20K race will be held on Sunday, March 11, 2012. The event will take place in Johnson Park, located in Highland Park, NJ, with the 20K race start time at 9 am.

In addition to the 20K race, there will be a 1 Mile Run/Walk for school-aged participants, along with their parents, teachers and school administrators. The 1 Miler race will begin at 12 noon, just after the 20K Award Ceremony completes.

Miles for Music is the brainchild of elementary school music education teacher, Anne McCarthy, who wanted to find a meaningful way to combine her love for running with her love for teaching music to her students. The mission for the organization is to get children and their families engaged in physical activity, music and learning the important lesson of contributing to their community. The goal is for the children to develop a love for and a habit of running, music, and community engagement.

According to Ms. McCarthy: "Miles for Music is a fantastic way for kids to get away from all their electronic gadgets and to get out and help raise some much needed funding for their schools' music education programs, which have experienced some belt-tightening due to the current state of the economy. Running a race with their classmates and peers will give the students something physical and fun to do, while giving something back to their education. We are excited about our inaugural race and what we anticipate will be an annual event that will draw growing numbers of participants every year."

Miles for Music 20K has been designated as a USATF New Jersey Long Distance Running Championship for all Divisions,

and will be kicking off the race season as the first race on the USATF New Jersey championship calendar. As such, Ms. McCarthy expects a larger attendance than would be typical for a first year race – especially with awards for each of the top three USATF New Jersey Male and Female Open Finishers and each of the top three USATF New Jersey Age-Graded Masters (40+) Male and Female Finishers in the 20K race receiving prize awards of \$150, \$100 and \$50, respectively.

The Miles for Music 1 Miler is a special race for participating New Jersey school teams with a minimum of 10 participants. Any New Jersey school that wants to participate in the 1 Miler Race is invited to sign up. Parents, students, teachers, administrators – anyone can be a member of the team.

Contributions to participating schools' music education programs will be based on the number of 1 Miler registrants on each school's team, so the more teachers, students, and parents registered for race day – the greater the contribution back to the school.

Every student participant in the 1 Miler race will receive a special prize to commemorate his or her participation at the Victory Recovery Area at the end of the 1 Miler race. Refreshments will also be available for both the 20K and the 1 Miler runners.

For more information about Miles for Music and to register for the 20K and 1 Miler races, please visit the Miles for Music website:

<http://www.milesformusic.org>

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## RVRR: Host Club for Miles for Music

*Ray Petit*

The Raritan Valley Road Runners are pleased to be associated with Miles for Music, Inc. Race Directors Anne McCarthy and Joel Simpson are active RVRR members and can be seen at most club functions. When they presented their vision of staging a quality 20K – a USATF-NJ certified race in our backyard and including the mission of getting kids and their families engaged in physical activity, music and learning the important lesson of

contributing to their community – the club was 100% behind them. They have a goal of attracting at least 500 runners between the 20K and 1-mile run/walk. With the 20K being a USATF Championship for all divisions, they should easily accomplish their goal, if the weather cooperates.

As the host club, we are looking forward to working with Miles for Music Race Committee and supplying volunteers, racing expertise and anything else that is needed to make this 1<sup>st</sup> year race an outstanding success. We hope to stage a series of practice runs throughout the winter to prepare runners for this distance and to familiarize them with Johnson Park. We would like all RVRR members and friends to put Sunday, March 11<sup>th</sup> on their calendars and to make themselves available either as a runner or volunteer, or both.

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## Mark Your Calendars

### **Saturday Breakfast Program**

January & February 2012

Sign up *before* each Saturday towpath run and then run at every Saturday towpath run in January 2012, and get \$10 towards your breakfast on 1/28. Adventurous? Same deal for February, with \$10 towards breakfast on 2/25. Details elsewhere in this newsletter.

### **Ken Vercammen's Freezing Cold Hash**

Saturday, January 7, 2012

3 & 5 mile group run brought to you by the Rumson Hash House Harriers.

The pre-lube starts at 2053 Woodbridge Ave., Edison, and registration. The Open Bar and last minute registration are at Ken's Law Office garage. Last minute registration ends at 9am. No registration or booze in the park.

### **RVRR Awards Banquet**

Saturday, February 4, 2012

Piscataway, NJ

Details elsewhere in this newsletter.

### **Miles for Music Inaugural 20K**

Sunday, March 11, 2012

Johnson Park

Details elsewhere in this newsletter.

<http://milesformusic.org>

# Lessons Learned in 2011

Mike Dixon

## 1. You do not need to train with a stopwatch (or a GPS device) to improve your times.

Most of you may have heard that, for most of the year, I have not used a watch. This includes each of my shorter road-races, marathons, and ultras. Sure, knowing exact splits is nice, but I find that learning to run “by feel” in an effort-based way can not only be more useful, but it can be quite freeing as well. You can cheat and look at mile clocks in some races (if you trust that they are correct, and if you can do the math) but I have learned that getting in touch with my own inner-thresholds is important. Besides, splits don’t really help on hilly courses anyways.

*Example:* If Geoffrey Mutai and Moses Mosop ever realized how fast they were going in this year’s Boston Marathon, they might never have “unofficially” broken the world record. If you watch the race’s amazing conclusion, note that neither of them ever looked down at their watches. They were racing pure and simple and looking down at their wrists would have only slowed them down.

*Tip:* There are still times when running with a watch is useful, but whenever I choose not to, I’ll run an estimated out-and-back route or a looped course for which I already know the approximate distance. Doing this, you can feel more comfortable and free knowing that the data can still be tracked in one way or the other. Or, if you are running with friends, just ask them for how long you were out ☺

## 2. Never underestimate the simple ability that you have to surprise yourself.

No matter what happens before or during a race, you can break through mental and physical barriers at any time. Trust this ability and never give up.

*Example:* In the 2010 Western States Endurance Run, Geoff Roes wasn’t having a good day. He wasn’t even at mile 40 before hitting an extremely bad rough patch. Think about that for a moment... you feel like you can’t even take one more step and you have over 60 miles to run! What did he do? He doubled his fuel intake and kept pushing through until

ultimately breaking free and eventually taking the lead in the last 12 miles. He not only won, he broke the course record by nearly a half-hour!

*Tip:* Whenever I am hitting a bad spot in a race of any distance, I simplify the task at hand and put one baby-step in front of the other. Do whatever it is that you can do to distract your mind and take it away from wanting to throw in the towel. Tell yourself “Look up, catch this person, make it to this turn, you will overcome this, etc.” and NEVER GIVE UP.

## 3. Elites don’t all run super-fast all of the time.

Trust me, you do not have to run fast all of the time to become faster. Let’s go back to the Kenyans...

*Example:* Most Kenyans run ridiculously easy for what they call “regenerative runs,” usually in the mornings. This can sometimes be as much as 3-4 minutes slower per mile than their normal steady runs! If they can run that slowly, so can you.

*Tip:* I try to wake up each morning for a shakeout run. I’ll start jogging at nearly walking pace on some days, and I’ll usually finish up at a steady pace once my body wakes up. It’s important to know the reasons for these easy runs, usually for recovery. Make sure to practice proper form at any pace because if you are running super slowly, you can easily sacrifice good running efficiency. Speaking of running efficiency, my last tidbit deals with just that...

## 4. Pure speed is important at all times of the year.

With all of this slow-talk, I must make a point that running fast is important. How fast? Really fast! But don’t worry; this is short, sweet and fun.

*Example:* Touching base with all gears during training is something I try to do at least once a week. There are two main muscle groups: slow twitch and fast switch, and most people work only one or the other at certain times of the season. Now, I’m not talking about hitting the track for grueling mile repeats or even half-mile reps. Sprinting is important even for distance runners. Yes, even if you are training for marathons I would include fast short intervals with plenty of recovery in

between reps. This type of training will help improve your running mechanics and you will be able to move faster with every stride.

*Tip:* Use short hills or slightly downhill grass areas for these. I like to try to make it over to the Rutgers Stadium Hill – the right side if you are coming from River Road. For those of you not familiar with the hill, it is super steep, yet, not too long. Practice explosiveness as you sprint to the top with good form and allow for plenty of walking recovery time in between so that you don’t dip into a different training system. Gradually sprinkle some of these sessions into your training and you will surely notice improvements in your racing at all times of the year.

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## RVRR Awards Banquet: February 4, 2012

Laura Swift

After such an incredible year for RVRR we have a lot to celebrate at the awards banquet on Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup>. For the new runners who haven’t been to a banquet, it is an event you don’t want to miss. We have an open bar with dinner, dessert, dancing, and of course the main event – celebrating the achievements of the club and its members. It’s also a rare opportunity to see club members in non-running attire!

This year, we will be honoring former club president, barefoot running enthusiast, and totally awesome guy **Gene Gugliotta** with the *Lew Gibb Award*. This award recognizes an individual who has made a significant and dedicated contribution to the sport of running in New Jersey in the spirit of Lew Gibb. Gene served a 3-year term as RVRR President, is now a member of the USATF-NJ board, has helped with numerous races as part of planning committees, and continues to help RVRR organize volunteers for our races. He has taught CPR classes, does some blogging, and on top of it all happens to be a kick ass runner, skier, cyclist, the list goes on, and if you want to hear more, you’re going to have to come to the banquet!

Tickets will go on sale soon so save the date, pick out a pretty outfit, and buy your tickets to honor Gene and the rest of this amazing club.

## **SAVE the 2012 DATES!**



- **Saturday June 2** – 14<sup>th</sup> Annual RVRR “Train”ing Run!

A non-competitive **Group Run** held on National Trails Day to benefit the **Cancer Institute of New Jersey**. Be part of the action by running as little as 2 miles or as many as 34 miles along the Delaware-Raritan Canal tow path at set paces with the goal of a group finish at 11:00 am in Johnson Park. Start training now!



- **Saturday June 2** – 2011 Summer Series Awards presentation at the Train Run picnic!

For the first time, we’ve combined the camaraderie of the Train Run with the fun of the Summer Series picnic! Series and age-group winners from the 2011 races will be presented with their awards, and we’ll bring the famous picnic games with us to add to the fun.

- **Tuesday June 12** – 2012 Summer Series begins!

We’re back at Buccleuch Park for our 29<sup>th</sup> year of summer racing! We know you can’t wait...so keep your ears open for word of the Tuesday night fartlek sessions on the summer series course that will start in early spring. And see if you can be 2012’s “Most Improved”!



*RVRR's Laura Swift runs the 2011 Summer Series*

# 1st Annual RVRR Silent Auction

*Gift Items, Vacations, Services, Special Events... and lots more – all donated by club members – will be auctioned off at the Banquet on Feb 4<sup>th</sup> to support our Teams!*

## Sample Confirmed Items:

- Table Tennis lessons!
- 1½ hour massage!
- An afternoon with Freeman Dyson!
- Spook Handy concert in your home!
- 4 bedroom rental in Florida!



We're still accepting donations!

If you have a service or talent to offer, an unused item, gift certificate, or other unique idea, email Doug Brown at [rvrrdoug@aol.com](mailto:rvrrdoug@aol.com)

*For a preview all the items, check the RVRR website. As additional donations are confirmed, we'll update the site, right up until noon on February 4.*

***Come to the Banquet prepared to bid!***

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*Gift Items, Vacations, Services, Special Events... and lots more – all donated by club members – will be auctioned off at the Banquet on Feb 4<sup>th</sup> to support our Teams!*

## Confirmed Items (so far...):

Item	Value	Minimum Bid
1 ½ hour massage at your home with Jennifer Kolarsick	\$150	\$70
4 bedroom 1-week rental in Palm Coast Florida (max 8)	\$1500	\$600
Wine tasting <u>and</u> Spook Handy concert at Freeman Dyson's Princeton home	\$200 per person	\$75 per person (Max 8)
Loreal Gift Basket (2 available)	\$250	\$50
Coastal Maine cottage 1 week rental in Boothbay Harbor area (max 4)	\$1200	\$400
Johnson & Johnson Gift Basket	\$250	\$50
2 – 1 hour table tennis lessons with Professional Chris Lehman	\$150	\$50
Spook Handy Concert at your home	\$250	\$150
1 hour legal consultation with Ken Vercammen	\$250	\$100
1 ½ hr nutritional session with body fat analysis by Julie Hadazy	\$175	\$75

# RVRR Winter Banquet & Awards Ceremony

*A celebration to recognize the members  
from the best running club in NJ*

Members & Guests Welcome

Dinner - Beverages - Great Company - Music - Dancing - Beer



**Date & Time:** Saturday February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012. 6:30 - 11:30 pm

**Place:** River Road Fire Company  
102 Netherwood Ave,  
Piscataway, NJ 08854

**Ticket Price** (*which includes dinner, beer and wine*)

**\$30** before January 31<sup>st</sup>

**\$40** after January 31<sup>st</sup> or at Door

Also listed on Active.com as RVRR Awards Banquet 2011 (fee waived)

Complete this form and mail payment so we can make sure there is enough food/drinks for you!!!

## RVRR Winter Banquet

C/O Lesley Wassef, 2 River Road, Apt #3, Highland Park, NJ 08904

RVRR Member Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed @ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ /person \_\_\_\_\_ (\$30 by Jan 31<sup>st</sup>; \$40 after 31<sup>st</sup> Jan)

Did you win any races this year (2011) in your age or overall? If YES please list

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(continue on back if especially gifted.....)

For additional information, contact: Lesley Wassef, [lesleywassef@hotmail.com](mailto:lesleywassef@hotmail.com) or 732 986 8430

***RVRR Awards Banquet***

*February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012*

Honoring long time RVRRer *Gene Gugliotta*  
with the Lew Gibb Award, RVRR's highest honor!

***Miles for Music Inaugural 20K***

*March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012*

<http://www.milesformusic.org>

Lots more inside and online!

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