



Forever Run

December 2021

From The President by Steve Viegas

Friends,

After two years of pandemic delay, we were able to hold our two signature events. They were highly successful and appreciated.

On November 6, we held Jerry's Run for All Ages. We had 303 registered and 247 ran. The race was well organized and managed by our two directors, Jan Holmquist and Bob Kennedy. We had many club members as volunteers and runners. The directors authorized donations of \$3,000 to the Wakefield Educational Foundation and \$1,500 to the Friends of Lake Quannapowitt, our two charity sponsors. The weather was beautiful and temperature was ideal for running. Thanks, and congratulations to all who helped and ran.

On November 8, we had our annual luncheon with around 100 paid members plus guests. We were able to give out club awards for 2020 and 2021. Our awardees were properly recognized in a concise and interesting program. Our speaker, John Mortimer, shared the back story on the founding of Millennium Running and how he and his crew kept road racing alive during the pandemic. We had a buffet style luncheon which seemed to be well received. It was a lot of fun. Thanks to everyone who helped to make this event so successful. (See articles below by Leslie Behan and Byron Petrakis.)

Your board met on November 16 online to review our two events and discuss other club business. We have received \$8,246 in donations to our annual fund. We are already thinking about the planning for the 2022 events.

I anticipate hearing from the BAA soon regarding the Boston Marathon waiver program. With the marathon going back to almost full size in 2022, I anticipate the club will receive more than the one waiver we received in 2021. We were fortunate to receive 6 waivers for the canceled 2020 race. If you are interested in applying to receive a waived application from the club, please consult our website and then email me explaining why the club should select you, following our guidelines. The link is <https://www.ne65plus.org/member-info/boston-marathon-lottery>

This time of year, the club usually receives an email from the BAA requesting a letter of intent. I have been careful to follow the BAA guidelines in completing the letter. I was frankly disappointed that we received only one waiver in 2021. In a prior *Forever Run* article, I requested that members write to me to tell me if they are BAA volunteers and what they do. Since most of us also belong to long-time clubs, our efforts may not be noticed by the BAA, since those efforts are linked to our other clubs. I want to make sure in this year's letter of intent that the BAA knows about our service to the BAA. If you have not already written to me about your volunteer history with the BAA, please email me. If you have already written, thanks, I have saved your emails.

I have one application in hand. When we know how many waivers we receive, I will call a meeting of the Boston Marathon waiver selection committee. I will keep the club informed.

This is my last message in 2021. I hope you all had a happy Thanksgiving. I wish you a

happy and enjoyable holiday season.

Stay safe and stay strong,

Steve Viegas

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2021 Annual Luncheon Awardees

(L-R): Carol Weeks, Hall of Fame; Faye Lowrey, HOF; Jerry LeVasseur, Rev. Joseph Shea Award; Bill Reilly, HOF; Tony Mayatt, Race Director of Year; Tom Abbott, Rev. Shea Award. Not pictured: Carrie Parsi, Rev. Shea Award.

photo courtesy of Jerry LeVasseur

Annual Luncheon at Spinelli's

by Leslie Behan

The 2021 edition of the NE65+ Runners Club luncheon was special for some "firsts":

- First club luncheon since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic
- First buffet-style meal
- First presentation of the Lou Peters Longevity Award

Running legend and longtime member, Lou Peters, passed away early last year at the age of 95. He was still competing in road races including the Run for All Ages well into his 90s. Jim Lynch, 91, of Plaistow, New Hampshire, counted himself as a friend of Lou and always sought him out at races. It seems fitting that Jim Lynch was the first recipient of the Lou Peters Longevity Award.

At the luncheon former president Tom Wylie highlighted Jim Lynch's running career, which began with a 10K in Revere at age 62. In the years since, he has run eight marathons, set three state records in the 5K and 10K at the New Hampshire Senior Games, and won scores of age-group awards, usually first place. Leslie Behan spoke of the great fun they would have training together.

Three days before his 90th birthday, Jim completed the Atkinson 5K COVID-19 run in 46:01. He was always looking to improve his times and remained fiercely competitive while being extremely warm and friendly to his competitors. Despite suffering a stroke in Florida last December, Jim continues to do laps around the facility in Haverhill where he now resides, having covered almost two miles the morning of the luncheon. After Jim was presented with the plaque and pictures were taken of him with his running friends and family, Jim quipped, "Don't I get to take it home?"

At the start of the luncheon, President Steve Viegas welcomed the 100+ attendees. After having to cancel last year's event because of the pandemic, he was pleased to see so many members in person. He then introduced the guest speaker, John Mortimer, founder of Millennium Running, New Hampshire's largest road race management company. An outstanding runner from Londonderry, NH, John continued to enjoy success at the University of Michigan where he was a seven-time NCAA All American. He ran professionally for Adidas and Reebok, and he coached college runners while employed by Harvard, Boston College and Univ of Kentucky. In 2010 he founded Millennium Running where his goal is to put on professionally managed events that are rewarding to athletes. Successful events yield greater proceeds to fund charities and the local community. As a testament to his company's success, over \$1 million has been given to local charities as of 2021.

Three members were inducted into the Hall of Fame:

- Faye Lowrey (2020)
- Carol Weeks (2021)
- Bill Reilly (2021)

Carol Weeks' daughter spoke on behalf of her mother, which was touching and evidence of a great role model.

The Reverend Shea award was presented to three recipients:

- Carrie Parsi (2019)
- Tom Abbott (2020)
- Jerry LeVasseur (2021)

Jerry urged members to become more involved in the club and to volunteer.

Tony Myatt was honored with the Race Director of the Year Award.

Jan Holmquist and Bob Kennedy recapped the successful Jerry's Run for All Ages 5K, held November 6 in beautiful running weather. The race had 247 finishers, up from the last two editions of the race. The latest fundraising appeal resulted in donations of over \$8,000. This will ensure club activities and races continue unimpeded. We are looking forward to next year's luncheon!



Jim Lynch, Lou Peters Longevity Award Recipient, with Family and Friends. (L-R) Carol Comeau, Rocky Lynch, Jim, Dot Ketchum, Leslie Behan, Tom Wylie.

Note: Here is the link to view more photos taken by Jerry LeVasseur at the annual luncheon: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/photosbyjerry/albums/72157720125697021/page1/>



Co-race director, Bob Kennedy (with bullhorn), gives instructions prior to the start as an unidentified runner demonstrates good flexibility. photo by Dave McGillivray

Jerry's Run For All Ages

by Byron Petrakis

Jerry Panarese would have been proud. Proud that the finishers in the race renamed to honor him, Jerry's Run for All Ages, ranged in age from 6 to 92. Proud that 32-year-old Antonio Wilson shattered his own previous course record of 15:19 (set in 2016) with a blistering time of 15:14 for a pace of 4:54 per mile. Proud that two age records were also set—New England 65+ Runners Club Board of Director Joan Tremberth from Scarborough, ME turned in a time of 31:15 to set a new female 76-year-old record that bettered the old record of 31:22 held by Charlene Francis in 2017. Another record that had been held for a long time was the age 70 record of 21:09 set by Lloyd Slocum in 2003. That mark was smashed by Richard Larson of Shelburne Falls, MA who was clocked this year in 19:35. Top female finisher was 56-year-old Jennifer Hegarty of Wakefield, MA who ran in 20:09.

But I think he would have been prouder still of his 16 family members who participated in the race, including his three daughters, their children and grandchildren, one of whom designed the race logo featured on the long-sleeve shirt given to participants.

Jerry and a few others founded the NE 65+ Runners Club 30 years ago. He also founded the club's major event, "The Run For All Ages" and was an active participant right through the 2019 event. Sadly, Jerry died in April, 2020 from complications due to COVID-19. His wife of 66 years also succumbed to the disease. In June 2020, the club's board of directors unanimously approved Jan Holmquist's recommendation that the Run For All Ages be renamed "Jerry's Run For All Ages" to honor his legacy and contributions to our sport.

After a two-year hiatus due to the COVID pandemic, the 19th annual JRFAA was held on Saturday, November 6 in Wakefield, MA. On a crisp and brilliant fall day that started with temperatures in the high 20's, the sun warmed the air to the mid 40's at race start.

Of the 303 registered runners, 247 completed the 5K race around Lake Quannapowitt. A bit of autumn color remained on some trees, while piles of maple and oak leaves lined the course. A thin layer of ice coated some of the pools of water adjoining the lake, a visual harbinger of the colder weather ahead.

Six year old Declan Paige of Wakefield, MA was the youngest finisher, while 92-year-old Ronald Sanville of Haverhill, MA was the oldest. Nine-year-old Emma Kening was the top female in the 9 and under division. The average age of the finishers was 49.

In addition to recruiting a solid number of runners across all ages and genders, a good road race succeeds because of organization, planning, and execution. Race directors Bob Kennedy and Jan Holmquist and their team of volunteers lived up to the event's mission to "provide a quality 5K Road Race for athletes of all ages from under 10 to over 100 years old. And to give back to the Wakefield Community providing support for education, for active lifestyles and for a healthy environment."

The large number of participants, the stunningly beautiful day and the excitement of participants and volunteers created an atmosphere that was electric. Jerry's Run For All Ages was more than a race. It was a celebration.

Jerry would have been proud indeed.

Note: Photos of Jerry's Run For All Ages taken by Roger Perham can be found at this link: <https://rogerperhampictures.shutterstock.com/running/43544>

JRFAA Race Directors With Oldest and Youngest



L-R: JRFAA co-race directors Bob Kennedy and Jan Holmquist with oldest race participant, Ronald Sanville, age 92 and the youngest, Declan Paige, age 6.

photo by Leslie Behan



A strong showing as 16 family members participated in the 2021 race named in honor of Jerry. Here, 9 family members gather at his grave site after the race.



Two good friends. The late Jerry Panarese and Dave McGillivray who worked together putting on many races including the 5K in Wakefield that is now named in honor of Jerry.

Jerry Remembered

by Dave McGillivray

I ran in the 19th Jerry's Run For All Ages 5K in Wakefield, MA this morning. I ran mainly to pay tribute to my good friend, Jerry Panarese. Jerry was an icon. He sadly passed away last year due to COVID. At 92 years old, he certainly lived a full life. We all loved Jerry. He was one of the kindest, thoughtful, giving, considerate individuals I have ever met. He was my best "oldest" friend. He was one of the greatest guys on the planet. Jerry and I together created the "Run For All Ages 5K" in Wakefield to help raise money for the New England 65+ Runners Club which I just became a member of! It was so much fun "teaching" Jerry all the tricks and tips to becoming a Race Director. He and I had such a great time doing this together. And, he couldn't get enough so he joined the DMSE team and helped us with many of our road races and charity walks whether in the blazing heat or the freezing cold rain. Imagine...putting out cones, setting up barricades and scaffolding and truss and he was in his 80's doing all of this! At our Hope Walk in Andover, I caught him and a few of the DMSE guys "slacking off" during the walk and had to give them all a reprimanding!! Ha. The club added Jerry's name to the race this year – now called, Jerry's Run For All Ages. It was fun to join many other members of the club to run this morning in honor and memory of such a dear friend. Many of his family members were there today, too, and I was able to have a nice chat with all of them.

Jerry was always thinking of others. He will never be forgotten.



photo courtesy of Sue Lynch

Maine Running News

by Jerry LeVasseur



Kick Out Mesothelioma 5-Miler in Memory of John W. Griffin, Portland, Maine. (L-R) Bob Payne, Rebecca Tracy, Bill Vickerson, Bob MacKinnon, Jerry LeVasseur. NE65+ won the club team award for the 12th time. Rebecca Tracy and Bill Vickerson won their age group while Bob Payne and Jerry LeVasseur tied for first in the 80 age group. Scoring for the club were: Bob MacKinnon (41:47), Bob Payne and Jerry



Correction

In the last month's *Forever Run*, Stephen Johnson was misidentified. Steve, who won the 70-79 age group in the Trumbull Great Pumpkin 5K, is interested in running for the club's 70's team. He is at the far right in the above photo.

Looking Back and Looking Ahead

by Jan Holmquist

Our club has had another interesting year as we closed out our 3rd decade of activity related to our founding in 1991! Thankfully, for those of us who like to race, in-person opportunities came back mid-year and we could catch up with our 65+ friends in-person... wonderful! On-screen conversations are useful, but limited in value (IMHO). As you read the articles in this e-news, note that the participation at both Jerry's Run For All Ages and the annual luncheon showed high attendance after having both events canceled in 2020.

In 2021, more new members joined than in the past several years...there are 56 so far and counting. In all three years prior, only 23 joined each year. This growth makes me optimistic that our club will continue to be a presence in the running community as we go into our 4th decade. Although several of our board members did recruit new members, special kudos go to Bob Kennedy. Besides being incredibly persuasive, it was also Bob's proposal to lower the one-time joining fee to \$25 and this helped increase our membership. Thanks, Bob!

I am hopeful that many of our members, especially the newer members, may want to get more involved in our current endeavors, but also propose new mission-related initiatives. One way to learn a lot about the club is to visit our website:

www.ne65plus.org. Especially interesting are past newsletters:

<https://www.ne65plus.org/news/newsletters>. To learn even more, please feel free to contact your leadership: <https://www.ne65plus.org/about/club-officers-and-directors>.

Carpe diem,

Jan

New Members

Paul Funch, Groton, MA.....Recommended by Bob Kennedy

Trail and long distance runner. Started running in 1967 and running seriously in 1986. Has run 46 marathons and 7 ultras (up to 55K.)

Melinda Hedding, Niantic, CT.....Recommended by Way Hedding and Janit Romayko

Like to run various distances.

Phillip Johnson, Durham, NH.....Recommended by Bob Kennedy

Has run two races over 5K. The last was in early October, 2021.

Ted Jones, Newburyport, MA.....Recommended by Tom Wylie and Bob Kennedy

Has been running for 65+ years.

Tom Lubas, Haverhill, MARecommended by Bob Kennedy

Ran four years in high school. Member of North Shore Striders. Now belongs to Wicked Running Club. Best marathon time was 2:49:03 in 1984. Runs races from 5K to marathon. Places in the 60+ age group most times. 11 years working hydration station in Hopkinton for the Boston Marathon.

Bob Mair, Durham, NH.....Recommended by Bob Kennedy

Says he is a "swimmer who runs." Did track in high school. Now runs road races from 5K to marathons.

Deb Merrill, Brunswick, ME.....Recommended by John Gibbons

Completed Hawaii Triathlon in 1986. Best marathon time, 3:15. Best half marathon, 1:28. Now running casual 5K and 10K races.

Ellen Sarson, Keene, NH.....Recommended by Bob Kennedy

Has been running since high school, always for fun. Has run a 1/2 marathon, 10Ks and 5Ks in four states. Mostly runs 5Ks now.

Charlie Zerbinopoulos, Dover, NH.....Recommended by Bob Kennedy

Ran road races 5K to marathon from 1986 to 2008. From 2008 to present, run 50Ks and 100 miles.



Boston 2021

by John Puleo

I've always thought that a good race is not entirely about your time or place in the race, but giving it all you have on that particular day. I was on track for my 3:54 goal at Boston this year when my calves started to cramp in the Newton Hills, so I slowed to a crawl and finished at 4:16:27. That was my slowest marathon ever, but I finished with a smile because I knew that I could not have finished a minute sooner. It was my 10th Boston, but I'm pretty sure that it was my first finish where I soaked up the crowd noise and smiled to the finish, knowing what a privilege it is just to be there. The above photo is to demonstrate to me how a good result may have nothing to do with my time.

Message to NE 65+ Runners Club

From Jan O'Meara

This is to inform you of the loss of one of your former members, Dr. William F. O'Meara, of Old Lyme, CT on October 18, 2021 who ran with your club for as many years as was possible. He made so many wonderful friends during this time and was so proud of his accomplishments – he really loved running each morning before he went to his dental practice. Thank you for giving him many wonderful fond memories.

Editor's note: Jan O'Meara is the wife of the late Dr. O'Meara. His obituary has been posted on the club's web site. After clicking on the below link to the club's web site, click on "News" and scroll down to the last item, "obituaries."

<https://www.ne65plus.org/>



Charlie Nelson with his friend, Sinthy Kounlasa, prior to boarding the bus to Hopkinton for the start of the 2021 Boston Marathon. Sinthy ran Boston in 4:11:48. To find out how Charlie did, you will have to read his story below.

After Over 220 Marathons, Boston Will Always Be Special by Charlie Nelson

I will be riding into Boston on Monday with my marathon friend Sinthy. Sinthy's husband, Bruce, will drive us to the Boston Commons where Sinthy and I will be bused out to Hopkinton. Thousands of other marathon participants will be joining us as the school buses bring us to the Hopkinton High School. Once we arrive at the school it is about a one mile walk to the starting line. There are 6 different starting times with the elite starting the race first. After these runners are safely spread out the next group will move to the starting line. I am seeded in the 5th group. I most likely won't begin my marathon for at least two more hours after the elite runners will be nearing the finish line. Due to Covid 19, Boston is doing all it can to keep the runners as safe as possible. Masks are required to be worn at all times until their marathon begins. Once a participant reaches the starting line, they may remove their mask for the duration of the race.

I chose to do my packet pick-up on Friday October 8, 2021. By completing the process in Boston on Friday, I will have Saturday and Sunday to stay home to rest and relax before the marathon on Monday.

My wife, Kathy, and I left our house before 8 a.m. Kathy drove her car to the Exeter train station where she leaves it. I followed her with my truck and she joins me for today's packet pick-up for Monday's Boston Marathon. I will be leaving my truck in the Boston Commons parking garage for the next four days. Today in Boston I will be screened and show proof that I have received my COVID-19 shots. I will next retrieve my race number and all the other packet pick-up little treasures. On race day after hopefully finishing the Boston Marathon, I will walk to my truck parked in the garage under the Boston Commons for my ride home. At least that is my plan.

After arriving in Boston, Kathy and I begin our pleasant one-mile walk to the packet pick-up and my Covid 19 screening. Each marathon participant needed to be tested for

COVID-19 or have proof that they have been vaccinated. At this point all was going extremely well. We enjoyed our walk to the screening with four adults in their 60's who will also be involved in Monday's marathon. They were from Texas and it was a pleasure meeting them. Today the weather is near 70 degrees, sunny and Boston is filled with people enjoying a perfect spring-like day in October.

After my successful screening a wrist band is put on my wrist. This band must remain on until after the Boston Marathon on Monday. Without this band you cannot be on the buses to Hopkinton plus other liberties. After I leave the screening area, I meet Kathy just outside where all the screeners are working. One screener is next to me and opening a bolt locked porta potty door. She tells me that Kathy and I may each use one of the bolted porta potties. Kathy and I have been driving and drinking water plus walking from the Boston Commons for the last few hours. She lets me in the first potty and as I am coming out Kathy is about to enter the other potty. Kathy hands me the lock to hold until she comes out and I now have 2 locks in my hand. Meanwhile the man in charge takes one of the locks from me and locks the potty I used. The next thing I realize is he locks the potty that my wife Kathy is still in. Inside the potty all you can hear is Kathy yelling "don't lock me in." Kathy is now stuck in the hot potty. The guy tries using combinations to open the lock but nothing works. The other girl tries and fails to open the lock. I now have my wife stuck in the potty and I can tell she isn't a happy camper. It's time to get some bolt cutters which the guy luckily had in his truck. When he returned and snapped the bolt his arm smashed into the door. Kathy still inside the box thought he was trying to rip the door open. When Kathy exited the potty, she did not look happy. Apparently when I grabbed the lock from Kathy before she entered the potty, I accidentally gave the wrong lock I had on my door to the guy. No wonder my running well over 220 marathons all around the country for the last 30 years has made my wife just a little upset. HONESTLY, Kathy, I am sorry and you are an awesome wife!!!!

It is now time for Kathy and me to walk another half mile to packet pick-up at the Hynes Convention Center at 10:00 a.m. I arrived at 10:15 a.m. and I am told to walk to the back of the line and wait until the doors open at 11:00 a.m. I've blown it again. I told the lady at the door I always entered at 10:00 a.m. the other years I ran the Boston Marathon. She told me it is in large print in all the packets that the doors open at 11:00 a.m. That is when I heard my wife tell her that my husband never reads directions. WOW! In the last 30 minutes I have managed to get my wife locked in a porta potty and then in a public setting I am embarrassed again for not reading directions. We now can happily lean against the Hynes Convention Center with hundreds of other runners and wait until 11:00 a.m. for the packet pick-up to begin.

At the packet pick-up I meet up with a very dear friend Cathy who I haven't seen in a few years. Cathy will be doing her 27th Boston Marathon and I will be doing my 13th. We both will be closing out our Boston Marathon careers at this 125th Boston Marathon. Cathy and I are both in our seventies and are no longer the marathon runners we once were. It is an honor knowing that Cathy and I will both be competing in our final Boston Marathon at this 2021 race. The pandemic forced the April date to now be run on October 11, 2021. Each Boston Marathon is historic! This 125th new October date will surely be remembered for perseverance and resilience. Countless people have worked and figured a way to safely organize this marathon. I feel blessed having earned my way to be on this year's starting line. There are no guarantees I will finish this race but I will do the best I can.

After Kathy and I complete the packet pick-up we decide to enjoy the day and we hop on the subway to Faneuil Hall for lunch. Eventually we walk to North Station where we will take the train back to Exeter, New Hampshire. During our walk we met and spoke to a number of different nice folks. Most of these people were strangers. I did however see my friend, Sinthy, as she was just arriving to the packet pick-up. I also enjoyed meeting up with my friend, Cathy, from New York who has always encouraged me to never give up. We walked over 5 miles today which is the most miles I have completed on my feet in a day during 2021. At 4:00 in the afternoon we take the train from North Station back to Exeter NH where we left Kathy's car. We arrived home at 6:00 pm. I now have 2 days to rest for the big race.

It is October 11, 2021 and the Boston Marathon is now only hours away.

Editor's note. This concludes Part One of Charlie's 2021 Boston story. Part Two will continue in the January edition of "Forever Run." In the meantime, Seasons

Quote of the Month

"I don't run to add days to my life, I run to add life to my days."

Donald Rook

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