



Forever Run

January 2022
Happy New Year

From the President

by Steve Viegas

Friends,

Happy New Year!

Thanks to the vaccine, we saw many of our favorite races, including the Boston Marathon, return in 2021. Despite the constant presence of COVID, many more of our favorite races will return in 2022. The Boston Marathon will return to its traditional April date on Patriots Day.

Our club has received one waiver again this year. The recipient of the waiver will have until February 15 to enter on time. I appealed to a BAA board member about an increase in our allotment. I hadn't heard answer prior to receiving the waiver. So, we can count on one waiver and hope for more.

We will make our selection(s) of the recipient(s) this month. So, if you wish to be considered for a waiver, it is important that you apply for it right away. Time being of the essence, I will convene the selection committee as soon as I receive a decision on my appeal. If you wish to apply, please go to this link <https://www.ne65plus.org/member-info/boston-marathon-lottery>. Then prepare an email directed to me incorporating your reasons and detailing how you meet the guidelines. I will announce the winning recipient(s) in the February newsletter.

Moving on to other big races, USATF New England will field a full Road Running Grand Prix series in 2022. See <https://newengland.usatf.org/sports/road-running>. The first race will be February 13 - 4 Mile - Primary Bank, Super Sunday 4 Miler, Bedford NH. Our men's 70's and 80's teams regularly run this series and do very well. I would like to see our members form an M60, an F60, and an F70 team. To score as a team, we need at least 3 members in our age groups.

The championships are large intergenerational events. By participating, we show the running world that age is no barrier to competition. Runners notice us. When our club started, I was one of the masters runners who looked up to our founders. Watching NE65+RC athletes at events, made my decision to join very easy. I hope that my clubmates and I are setting examples for our future club members and leaders. Speaking of senior athletes competing, John Goldrosen requested that I mention an article by Roger Robinson on this very topic. The link to it in Outside magazine is [Why I Still Love Racing at Age 82 - Outside Online](#). Robinson is a well-known runner and writer who continues to enjoy the sport even after two total knee replacements. I have had occasion to chat with him. He is most knowledgeable about our sport. I think you will enjoy this article.

We continue to grow. New members have been mailing their applications into our treasurer pretty regularly. Many other clubs have suffered declines in membership due to the impact of COVID. If you know of a fellow runner who is at least 64-1/2 years of age,

talk to them about joining our club. You can find our application at <https://www.ne65plus.org/member-info/join>

Finally, I want to mention our October banner race, the Great Bay 5K Race for a Healthy Estuary. We were so well represented and we won the team competition. The top prize was a pizza and beer party, which was held at Tilton Brothers Brewery in Hampton, NH on December 15 and which was well attended by our members. I want to thank Bob Kennedy who recruited so many club members to run and who was the race director, just one week after co-directing our Jerry's Run for All Ages. Well done Bob and our fellow runners!

Stay safe,

Steve Viegas

stephenviegas@hotmail.com

617-240-3022

16 John Street

Reading, MA 01867



27th Annual WCRC Santa's Toy Trot, Merrimac, MA (2, 4 or 6 mile race.) Standing, L-R: Ted Jones, Charlie Farrington, Dan Dodson, Adam Nisson, Steve Malynn, Mary Tyler. Kneeling: Bob Kennedy with an arm around his wife, Anne Broussard, an accomplished race walker with 108 marathons and over 50 half marathons.

photo by Judy Graham-Garcia

Jerry's Run For All Ages - Feedback Requested

by Jan Holmquist and Bob Kennedy

We are pleased that so many of our 65+ members were at Jerry's Run For All Ages as runners, walkers, volunteers, and/or spectators. Thank you for being there along with 16 members of Jerry's family!

Please take a moment to share your thoughts on the race...what went well and what we can improve. We welcome your feedback!

For all members, whether you were at the race or not, please consider joining the planning

committee for the 20th Annual Jerry's Run For All Ages on Saturday, November 5, 2022.
Happy New Year!

Jan: j.holmquist@comcast.net

Bob: osprey02554@yahoo.com

Boston Will Always Be Special (Part Two)

by Charlie Nelson

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

I awoke at 5:30 am this morning and enjoyed a cup of coffee and a hot shower. Bruce will pick me up and drive his wife Sinthy and me to the Boston Commons. Sinthy and I will wait to be bussed to the marathon start in Hopkinton Massachusetts. I prepared a pancake breakfast for Sinthy and I to eat while Bruce drives us into Boston. A big thank you to Bruce!

The atmosphere in Boston at 8 in the morning is electric with spectators and thousands of marathon participants everywhere as we all begin lining up to catch a ride on school busses to Hopkinton. Before entering into the bus pick-up area on the Boston Commons we are checked to be sure we have official race numbers before being allowed onto the busses. The bus ride goes smoothly and Sinthy and I begin the one mile walk to the starting line in Hopkinton. Sinthy and I use the porta potty one last time at the starting area. Ten feet before crossing the starting mat Sinthy and I wish each other the very best and a final hug before our journey at the Boston Marathon begins once again. Today marks Sinthy's 10th consecutive Boston and I believe her 19th overall Boston Marathon. Today will be my 11th official Boston and 13th overall as I include my two bandit Boston Marathons back in 1981 and 1982 when I was 30 and 31 years old.

The weather today will be favorable. Some sun and clouds with temperatures in the mid 60's up to 70 degrees. The humidity is low and as far as I am concerned this is a good day to be running/walking.

My plan today is to mostly walk the entire 26.2 miles. My right leg issues over this past year have not allowed me to run and train properly. I have run a total of just over 15 miles since January 1 2021. I know it will be a long struggle and at 70 years old I most likely will never have another opportunity to line up and compete in the world's most historic worldwide marathon.

My plan to walk all 26.2 miles ended as soon as I reached the starting mat. Sinthy and I run the first 10 yards together. About 30 seconds later I see Sinthy turn around to see if I am still running. It made me smile as Sinthy looks wonderful as I see her effortlessly disappear into the crowd of other runners. I surprised myself running most of the first 3.1 miles at just under a 12 minute a mile pace. I continued to run most of the next 3.1 miles and I managed those 3.1 miles running just under a 13 minute a mile pace. I was happy my calf and leg are surviving. During the next 6.9 miles to the 13.1 mile half way point in the marathon it was basically back to all walking. At around mile 11 all of the college girls at Wellesley are screaming and encouraging the runners to run and not give up. I finally begin my slow running effort and after about one minute I feel something stuck to the heel of my left foot. Part of the sole on my racing flat has unglued and flaps as I land awkwardly each step. I stop and have to tear it off. The outside piece of hard rubber is 4 inches in length and 1 inch in width. I will now finish the last 15.2 miles of today's marathon landing each step with a hiccup. It felt weird but I quickly became use to the feeling. The next day after the marathon I did have a sore outer left knee but the mishap had nothing to do with my poor performance at the marathon.

The final 15.2 miles of today's race is a basic walk and social event. I met so many wonderful people during this part of the journey. As the field of marathon runners continued passing me many of them joined me for some walking and talking. One girl had just run the Chicago Marathon 24 hours ago and was here today to finish Boston. She said her only goal was to earn the unicorn finishing medal. I patted her on the shoulder

and told her you can do it. Her walking pace was way faster than mine and she was out of sight from me in just a few minutes. I had great talks with spectators for much of the last 15.2 miles. I also walked up the first of the big hills before Heartbreak Hill with a Mass General Hospital nurse who was doing her first ever marathon. I told her how Mass General helped save my father back in the late 1990's. I also told her my step-daughter, Kelly, is checked and treated as necessary every six months for skin cancer at Mass General Hospital. The nurse was very nice, but once we reached the top of the first hill, she was off and running again. I said good-bye and it was great sharing the climb with you! Not long after that I needed 3 minutes to rest on a wall. My left good leg where I lost part of my sneaker heel began cramping. Wow, just walking is turning into a battle. I drank more water and massaged the area. After this little blip I was on my feet again where I will be OK the rest of the marathon. I must have talked and shared a few moments with at least 25 different runners and spectators today. I was enjoying this Boston Marathon as best I could. At mile 22 I will experience the largest group of spectators who I will stop and spend a few minutes with. It is Mary Jo and her daughter, Julia, plus 3 of Julia's other friends. Mary Jo and I worked many years together at Beswick Engineering before I retired a few years ago. Mary Jo and I also competed in races together. All five of them were cheering for me like I was having a fantastic marathon when in fact I was only slowly meandering along.

Mary Jo missed seeing me in one Boston Marathon about 5 or 6 years ago at mile 16. In the 2018 Boston Marathon during the rainy and cold northeast storm I saw Mary Jo's daughter, Julia, who was a freshman at Boston College. Julia was tracking me and that was fun as I felt like a drowning rat at that point. Julia was on the phone with Mary Jo and I remember yelling out "Hi Mary Jo". Today Mary Jo still works at Beswick Engineering and Julia graduated from Boston College last year and now works in Washington DC. Today, Julia, Mary Jo and Julia's 3 friends were awesome and they took selfies with me hobbling along in the background. It was a fun moment and I high fived all of them. I only wish I could have stayed longer with the group. I could still hear them screaming my name when I was 200 yards past them. WHAT FUN! I even became a bit emotional at this moment realizing my Boston Marathon trips as a participant are nearing the end. I even felt a tear sneak out of one of my eyes.

I was also receiving texts of encouragement from Austin and Joe during the marathon. I have previously raced with both of them. There were many other friends who knew I would be struggling today. I received so many kind comments and support from each of them before and after finishing the 2021 Boston Marathon. People and friends are kind and I thank all of you for the support everyone gave to me. I'm not so sure I would have completed the 26.2 miles without everybody's encouragement. A special thanks to my 2 female running friends in Tampa, Laura and Dixie. At age 83 Dixie still laces them up and hits the road. Laura runs more miles in a week than I have ever run in a week.

Tom and Vicky are volunteers at an aid station around mile 21. They have both completed the Boston Marathon many times and we are fellow members of the Winners Circle Running Club. A big time thank you to Tom and Vicky for your support as I hobbled along. I walked the last 3 miles with a gentleman who is 62 years old. At the finish he out walked me by about 50 yards. I was also getting some text messages from an old fellow running buddy, Joe, who was tracking me and waiting to see me finish in the last mile. Joe has completed many Boston Marathons but injuries have sadly ended his marathon career after 250 completed marathons. He never spotted me during the final stretch to the finish. Yay! I cross the finish line in a very slow time of 7 hours 30 minutes and 11 seconds. Out of the over 200 road marathons I have completed this was more than 2 hours slower than my previous slowest marathon. I raised my arms on the finish line and looked up where I knew the cameras would snap my finish. Hopefully the picture will come out as this will probably be the last time I ever compete at the Boston Marathon. A great way to call it a career!

At the finish a volunteer puts the finisher medal around my neck. I immediately begin to seize up and the volunteers at the medical tent put me in a wheel chair. That was a new experience for me at the Boston Marathon. It is beginning to get dark out and I am cold. After 30 minutes I am helped to my feet by the medical staff. I tell them I am OK. They ask me if I can walk. I tell them my truck is parked in the garage under the Boston Commons and I am fine. As I begin to walk it is baby steps and this one volunteer who has just finished her shift quickly comes over to me. She insists on escorting me to my truck. I tell

her I am OK but she refuses and we begin the mile long journey.

She has to be one of the nicest people on planet Earth. She is beautiful, young and kind. I ask her if she is still in college and lives local. Her answer surprises me when she tells me that she lives in Canada and will fly home tomorrow. She told me she wanted to be a part of the most historic marathon worldwide. She applied to be a volunteer at this year's Boston Marathon and was accepted. I asked her if she came to Boston alone? The answer was no. Her boyfriend ran his 7th overall marathon today and his first Boston. She said he finished the marathon in 3 hours and 17 minutes. I told her he could have turned around and ran back to Hopkinton and he still would have beaten my time by 56 minutes. She was kind and told me I did great. I could not have asked for a nicer and more caring individual to help me back to my truck! To me, she was my angel.

Meanwhile this walk is taking a long time as I waddle along. I need to use one of the porta potties and she holds my water bottle and food. She even helps me opening the door and being sure I don't trip. With only a half mile left to my truck I ask her how far she has to go back to the hotel. Her response is only a mile or two. I told her I was OK but she was determined to get me to my truck. We finally arrive at the Boston Common Tremont entrance to the underground parking garage. She still doesn't leave me and won't let me walk down the 2 flights of stairs to my truck. She presses the elevator and will not leave me until the elevator door closes. I thanked her profusely for being so kind and caring. I wish I knew her name so I could let the Boston Marathon Committee know what a wonderful volunteer she was. I also wish I could have sent a thank you card to her in Canada! That one mile she spent with me was one very kind and caring moment in time. I will carry that memory with me for the rest of my life. This Boston Marathon may have been the weakest marathon in my lifetime but I will always cherish this day! In closing I have to thank the Boston Marathon and I have to thank Canada for the wonderful race volunteer who made sure I would make it home safely!

I want to thank so many wonderful friends and family plus all of the folks I have shared racing with and against over the last 40 years. A huge thank you for putting up with my marathon addiction for the last 40 years has to go out to my bride, Kathy. You have a heart of gold and more tolerance than any person I know. I Love and Thank You!

In closing, I began a consecutive streak of running at least one marathon every year beginning in 1993 through the 2021 Boston Marathon. Previous to that streak I ran my two Bandit Boston Marathons in 1981 and 1982. I completed 18 marathons in the year 2000 which was the most marathons I completed in a single year. These past 40 years seem to have flown by. I enjoyed the challenges and the competitions throughout it all. There were successes and there were failures. I could never put a price tag on all of the memories and wonderful people I have met during those 40 years. I was fortunate to be able to do what I really enjoyed doing. Being active and competing is something I have enjoyed my whole life. Work hard and do what you enjoy if you can. We all have struggles and we all have goals in life and isn't that really what life is all about.

Be well, be happy, be kind and do the best you can! TAKE CARE!!!



New Hampshire News

by Bob Kennedy

A pizza/beer party celebration was held in December at Tilton Brothers Brewing in Hampton, NH for the men's winning team at the Great Bay 5K / Race for a Healthy Estuary. Above are three of the five runners from the NE 65+ winning team (L-R): Phil Pierce (1st, 80-84), Ernst Linder (1st 65-69), David Ritchie (1st 70-74). Not pictured were Robert Murphy (2nd 75-79) and Phil Johnson (1st 85-89). photo by Nancy Eckerson

Holmquist and Riley USATF Runners of the Year

Congratulations to talented NE 65+ members, Jan Holmquist and Bill Riley, who have been named USATF Masters Long Distance Runners of the Year (ROY).

Jan, of Needham, MA (75-79) and Bill, from Centerville, MA (85-89), demonstrated why they were among the nation's top master runners for their age groups in 2021. To be considered for ROY honors, runners must participate in two or more races on certified courses. The following races led to the selection of Jan and Bill as Runners of the Year:

Jan

.. Race.....Time.....Age Graded Percentage

Barrel House Z 5K..... 24:33..... 95.04

Lone Gull 10K..... 51:26..... 94.36

Bobby Doyle 5 Mile..... 40:49..... 94.32

Bill

Finish For A Guinness 5K.....32:50.....72.69

Barrel House Z 5K.....33:28.....71:31

New Members

Dan Ciccarillo, New Britain, CT.....Recommended by Janit Romayko

Ran track and cross country in high school. Has run many road races.

Linda Davis, Portland, ME.....Recommended by friends

Been a member of Fleet Feet Running Club for 4 years. Runs in all kinds of races including the Bradbury Series. Volunteer coordinator for the Maine Marathon and helps out at other races.

Note: In last month's "Forever Run," Eileen Larson was introduced with the wrong first name. Eileen, we are sorry for the error and welcome you and all the other new members to the NE 65+ Runners Club.



(L-R): NE 65+ Connecticut Directors Janit Romayko and John Gibbons, Director at Large Way Hedding and Melinda Hedding at the Holiday for Kids 5K, Lordship, CT. Director Gibbons reports the race had a "fun course with some serious elites and lots of adult medal winners." Way and Melinda received an award for making the longest drive to the race.

Editor's note: Boston Marathon director and NE 65+ club member, Dave McGillivray, will tell runners, "Just because you are fit, doesn't mean you are healthy." Those words of wisdom apply to all of us and when we came across an article Dave had written, it became obvious why he feels that way. Dave gave us permission to share his article in this newsletter and it will be done so in two parts.

Staying Alive

by Dave McGillivray

The better part of my life, I thought I was as close to invincible as was humanly possible. Many other athletes probably feel the same way. With all my running, I thought no physical challenge was insurmountable. I ran my first marathon at age 18. Then I ran across America at age 23. My best marathon time was 2:29:58. I did my first Ironman Triathlon in 1980 at age 26 and finished 14th. Then I did a 24-hour run and a 24-hour bike and a 24-

hour swim. I ran up the East Coast of America. I started running my age on my birthday at age 12 and haven't missed a year since. I guess you could say that I was committed to being an endurance athlete. It took 59 years, but, that all changed in a "heartbeat."

For over a year, I was experiencing difficulty breathing as soon as I started my run workout. For the first 10-15 minutes, I had to run and then walk just to be able to catch my breath. This was embarrassing to say the least. It felt like I was running at altitude. It seemed like angina-type symptoms. After about one to two miles, the discomfort seemed to either go away or at least became less painful. I seldom ran with others, choosing rather to run alone because I didn't want anyone else to know "my little secret." Like most people, I know my own body very well and knew something wasn't right, that something was very wrong. I proceeded to have all the normal tests done – pulmonary, heart, EKG, inhalers, echo tests, stress tests, and on and on. The good news, nothing was detected. The bad news, nothing was detected. In fact, although my fitness level wasn't close to what it was when I was in my 20s and 30s, I was much fitter than most folks my age walking the planet or any age for that matter and the stress test showed nothing out of the ordinary. Then what was causing this nagging, non-stop breathing issue? Unfortunately, I come from a family that has a history of heart disease, in particular, a higher-than-normal cholesterol level. It is simply in the gene pool. I only realized this about 10 years ago and started taking a cholesterol-lowering statin for it. However, I had a bad reaction to the statin (mainly muscle cramping), and got frustrated and stopped taking it for quite some time. I eventually experimented with different ones until I came up with the one that worked best. Through a methodical process of elimination, I tried valiantly to determine what the cause of my condition was but I kept coming up with no answers. Was it hot weather or cold weather, running up hills, running after eating or drinking something? What was causing this?

I went on a run with my cardiologist, Dr. Aaron Baggish, but, of course, I could not replicate the problem right then for him to diagnose first hand. After a year and a half of this, I had had enough and Dr. Baggish ordered a CAT scan. The result, in his words, was "severe blockage and chronic ischemic heart disease." What?? The word that jumped out at me more than any other was "severe." Really? Severe? I was devastated and scared. How can this be? I've run across the darn country averaging 45-miles a day, run hundreds of marathons, run over 150,000 miles, done the Ironman in Hawaii numerous times, and run my age on my birthday since I was 12. Really, severe? Dr. Baggish immediately scheduled me for an angiogram at Mass General Hospital on October 9, 2013 (that was a bad year). I thought, okay, go in, maybe get one stent, leave, and start running again the next day...all fixed up. Problem solved. But not so fast. As I lay on the operating table, I nervously looked up at the monitor and saw the image of my arteries looking like the twisted branches of an oak tree. My jaw dropped as the doctor pointed out all the blockages and narrowing in many of the arteries...no, not just one. I started counting them on one hand and then stopped when I ran out of fingers. The doctors determined it would be more risky to operate than not to and wheeled me out of the operating room. As I was leaving, I was thinking to myself, how much more time do I have? Is this possibly... terminal? I usually don't get emotional but I broke down uncontrollably. So much for being Superman.

After some "heart-to-heart" discussions with my doctors, it was decided that since I probably put myself in this position, it would be up to me to get myself out of it. Have I followed the best nutrition plan all my life? Hardly. A few of my mottos have been, "anything and everything but in moderation" and "sleep is over rated." I realized for the first time in my life that these just might be flawed statements and that perhaps I was actually breaking all the rules. I always rationalized that whatever I ate, I burnt off. However, it's like putting a bad grade of gas in your car. The car will still run, but your engine will "gunk up" in no time. And I always thought I'd sleep enough when I'm gone. There is even a song that says so. I've been told that stress can be a factor, too. I can personally name a half dozen friends who were really good athletes who, in the past 10-15 years, went for out for a run from their home and never came back. I thought that could have happened to me but how lucky I was that I was now getting a second chance. I never believed that I would "drop you-know-what" on a run, but now I wonder if I actually could have. People often use the expression, "at least he died doing what he loved to do." Well, I'm sorry, but I do not want to die doing what I love to do and that is while out for a run. Dying in my sleep when I am 110 seems like a better option to me. I changed everything that very second and didn't put one bad thing in my mouth for the next five years. I immediately lost 27 lbs. and

lowered my cholesterol level by over 100 points. I became the fittest I've been in 20 years. I wanted to go back to Hawaii and do the Ironman again for the first time in 25 years. They accepted my entry but with one condition, that I get a note from my doctor! I've never been asked for a note from my doctor in my entire life. I asked my doctor for the note and he said, no, not until we did another angiogram. We did it and he surprisingly said I had reversed my illness by almost 40 percent. I was actually beating this on my own, or so I thought. I honestly felt I was almost out of the woods. I went back to Hawaii in October 2014 and completed my ninth Ironman Triathlon World Championship.

I've realized that there are many people out there just like me who are in the same boat as I, some who have caught this just in time and others who don't even have a clue that they are currently in big trouble. They deserve a second chance, too, but they need to take action right away. Maybe my story can help bring some awareness to this. Could this be you? That is the second lesson here: everyone should get checked, now, no matter how fit you think you are, before it is too late. Truth be told, we are not invincible. Even though I am no Superman, even Superman went down when he came up against his weakness—kryptonite. During the next five years, I had highs and lows, but mostly highs. For the entire 2014 year, I was experiencing my best competitive year in almost 20 years. I felt great. For 2015 and 2016, I just maintained. In 2017, I committed to doing the World Marathon Challenge, running seven marathons in seven days on seven continents. I started running a lot again, some weeks over 100 miles. I did the 777 in late January and early February 2018. All went well.

Editor's note: Unfortunately, not all went well. In Part Two of his story next month, Dave tells what led to his triple bypass surgery. We appreciate Dave sharing his experience with readers of "Forever Run."



NE 65+ Vice President Zeke Zucker, a bad ass ultra marathoner, showed that he is also a bad ass trail runner at the Maine Track Club Grand Prix.

Several NE 65 Plus members did well in the Maine Track Club Grand Prix. Races both virtual and live were carried over from 2020 with 6 races included for 2021,

For the virtual races, all runners received 15 points toward overall standings and 10 for age group. Race distances ran from 2.5K to 50 miles. Joan Tremberth, Pat Buckley, Mike Nixon and Jerry LeVasseur won their age groups.

There were 30 or more runners in the age groups except 80 + where there were 6 men and 2 women. Other club members or soon to be members placing in age groups were: Linda Davis 3rd, Carol Weeks 7th, Polly Kenniston 2nd, Vince Quintana 2nd, Phil Pierce 4th, Zeke Zucker 6th and Bill Reilly 7th. In the top 10 overall were Jerry LeVasseur 2nd, Mike Nixon, 6th and Vince Quintana 7th.

Trail Monster Running puts on a series of trail races at Bradbury Mountain of 6, 9 and 12 miles. Runners that complete all 3 get a "Bad Ass Hoodie." Several NE 65 Plus members earned the Hoodie: Margaritt McNulty, Linda Davis, Martin Donlon, Ron Peltion, Mike Nixon, Zeke Zucker and Jerry LeVasseur. Bob Dunfey missed the 1st race but did the more difficult ones. There was no snowshoe series this year.



Christmas Eve runners, 2019. Back row, R-L: Gayle Petrakis, 65+ members Byron Petrakis, Tom Wylie (in Santa hat), Sharon Yu. Center, Carol Comeau. Reclining in front, Leslie Behan. photo courtesy Leslie Behan

The Good Ole Days

by Leslie Behan

Despite the many negatives associated with Facebook, I still use the site mainly to post pictures of my granddaughters, vacations, and dogs. I love to reminisce as my Facebook memories appear each day. My nine-year-old granddaughter shows up in a video as a baby. My white-faced dog once was all brown. Yes, I did drive to Pennsylvania one December to see my newest grandchild.

A recent Facebook memory from Christmas Eve made me feel nostalgic. In the picture are many friends and their family members, all of whom I know through running. It highlighted

for me how much has changed because of the passage of time and the pandemic. In the early 80s, I first joined the weekly “fun runs” at Winnekenni Park in Haverhill, MA. NE65+ members **Charlie Farrington, Maureen Farren, Carol Comeau, and Vicki Bush** frequently attended. These runs were seldom “fun,” as the organizer, John Ottaviani (former coach and athletic director at Haverhill High), treated every run as a race and included results in the local paper. Even if it was stated “I’m just going to run easy today,” the pace inevitably picked up till one was running all out for the five-and-a-half-mile route. Over the years I wanted to share the joy of running so I advertised the free fun runs in the local paper. Often 15 to 20 runners would test themselves on the dirt trails and long hills around Kenoza Lake. I remember battling member **Bob Randall** on the castle hill. I first met former club president **Tom Wylie** at a fun run. Your age, pace, and profession didn’t matter as long as you loved to run.

Tuesday fun runs were not enough for me, so I collected email addresses and started notifying runners of upcoming Sunday runs. Typically, the group would run the roads of Haverhill: the llama farm route (10 miles) or the Jewish cemetery route (10 miles or a cutoff for 6 miles). Sometimes we’d meet in Merrimac or Newburyport for a change of scenery. We often had 10 to 12 people show up, some “regulars,” who appeared every week, and various “irregulars,” who would show up only occasionally. Among the “regulars” were club members **Dave Hall, Jim Lynch, Carol Comeau, Tom Wylie, Byron Petrakis, and Sharon Yu**. The only requirement was a love of running.

I fell into the role of official starter, obeying the five-minute rule (we’d wait only five minutes past the scheduled start time for tardy runners to show up, usually me). Member **Carol Comeau** would ensure no one ever got left behind on the run. She would adjust her pace to match that of the slowest runner. Having company made the runs go by quickly, especially when training for a marathon.

On special occasions a runner would “host” a Sunday run. For many years Tom Wylie would invite the Sunday runners for a Christmas run and brunch. The runners would explore the back roads of Bradford (and often get lost) while his wife, Lin, entertained those who just came to socialize. After the run we would all enjoy coffee and goodies by the fire.

Over the years the fun runs eventually ended, and the number of people showing up for Sunday runs was reduced because of bad knees, a bad hip, or back pain. Early in the pandemic we were not even sure if it was safe to run outdoors next to another person without a mask on. A “group” run consisted of only two or three. Because of the difference in paces, I often found it easier to run alone from my house rather than drive six miles to Winnekenni, only to run three-quarters of a mile with people before doing my own pace for training.

Seeing the picture made me miss “the good ole days,” which certainly makes me sound old enough to be a member of the New England 65 Plus Runners Club. Let’s hope some of my favorite pre-pandemic traditions, such as gathering for a Christmas Eve run, will resume in 2022.

Year in Review

by Jerry LeVasseur

Members of the New England 65 Plus RC had many outstanding performances. Congratulations to them. I can't list them all but I can for the 80's.

The 80's set national USATF records in the outdoor 4X400 and 4X800 to add to the same indoor records. They won the National 5K XC age group. Two members competed in the USATF National Distance Challenge being the only 80's doing it.

New England USATF has an indoor meet coming up in Providence on January 30 and the National 10k Championship in Dedham on April 24.

Quote of the Month

"Running is my private time, my therapy, my religion."

Gail W. Kislevitz

President: Steve Viegas
stephenviegas@hotmail.com

Vice President: Zeke Zucker
zekezucker@gmail.com

Treasurer: Gary Circosta
gary.circosta@yahoo.com

Secretary:

Newsletter Co-Editor: Rick Stetson
rickstetson@aol.com

Newsletter Co-Editor: Byron Petrakis
Byronpetrakis@yahoo.com

Results: Bill Cotter
savemyresults.com

Reporter: Leslie Behan
leslie.behan@gmail.com

