

Mission: To represent and promote trail and mountain running.

Does your child feel running is like a four-letter word?

By Lisa Rainsberger

When I was a schoolgirl, the PE teacher used to make us run laps if we did something wrong. And yes, I did my fair share of running laps!

A few months ago, I observed my daughter's soccer coach make some of the players run laps when they kicked the ball wrong. Using running as a form of punishment may seem like a good idea, but for many children it is a sure way to turn them off to the joy of running. Running does not need to be perceived as work or a form of punishment, but rather a way to stay fit for life.

Having two school-age children, I marvel at their energy, especially when we are at the playground. Spend 30 minutes with a child at a playground and you will see a perpetual motion of kids running from one apparatus to another. In essence, they are doing a 30 minute Fartlek workout!

Why do kids love to run around non-stop at the playground, but when told to run a mile for the school PE fitness test many — if not most — reduce their efforts to a walk, or a jog? That same child will play tag on the playground perhaps running more than a mile, but when asked to simply “run” they feel they cannot?

The answer simply comes down to “fun.” Kids believe that playing soccer at recess, or tag, or *Monkey-in-the-Middle* is fun. So how do we make kids feel that running is fun?

A few years ago, my kids came along to a race that my husband and I were running. There was a kid's fun run with the event so we encouraged them to run. After seeing the adult race my children expected their race to be the same, only shorter. They expected to get a goodie bag full of surprises, a T-shirt, a finish time on a measured course and if they ran fast they would get an award!



The race they ran ended up not offering them the same things they expected and after the race both of my kids were somewhat disappointed. You want your kids to run for the love of it but something was missing for them. It was at that point I started to think about why so many kids may be turned off to running. This race was not fun for my kids because their expectations about how *fun* the race could be were not in line with what the race offered. Just like the game of “Tag,” we expect it to be fun.

So the question is, “How do we make running enjoyable for our youth?” You try to meet their expectations of running and racing. We keep

telling our kids that running is fun so we had better create an environment that lives up to their expectations.

Six years ago I launched a three-race kids'-only trail running series. Staged in a unique urban park and trail setting, kids receive a fun, colorful, youth-sized T-shirt, a finisher's ribbon, a measured and age-appropriate course for various age groups, a finishing time for each child after they run so children (and parents) can quantify and track their improvement, fun age-group awards and food — Old Chicago Pizza at the finish line. Having pizza at the finish line is incentive enough for me to want to run so why not offer the same for the kids? Kids who have gone to a race with their parents come to expect all the amenities adults receive so why not provide the same for them?

For hundreds of kids the trail running series has become their annual “*fun*” event. What is so rewarding for me is seeing some of these kids wearing their race shirts around town, or reading their names in the newspaper's high school cross country or track results.

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After much discussion and many revisions, the ATRA Board of Directors is pleased to introduce its new labeling program which is featured on pages 6, 7, and 8. Prior to rolling out this program, ATRA conducted a survey to get input from race directors and participants and came up with 15 areas that we feel encompass a well-organized event. The new program includes these 15 event standards and is meant to serve as a guide for race directors to help them through the planning and execution of their event. Additionally, race participants can use the standards as an educational tool. They will learn about the features they should expect from a well-organized trail race. We feel that the event standards are a good complement to our Rules on the Run publication which covers trail etiquette. Our goal with this new program is to educate and support events. We look forward to working with you to make this a worthwhile and successful program.



Happy Trails, Nancy

ATRA RACE & CLUB MEMBERS

Contributors to this issue of *Trail Times* include:

Peak Races

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ATRA Labeling Program

ATRA Board of Directors

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A Trail Runner's Blog

Andes Adventures

Aspen Backcountry Marathon

Bay Trail Runners

Bear Chase Trail Race

Black Hills 100

Dirt Devil Trail Race Series

Dolphin South End Runners/Double Dipsea

Estes Park Running Club

Fifty States HALF Marathon Club

Grand Teton Races

Green Lakes Endurance Runs

Lean Horse 100

Long Island Greenbelt Trail 50K

Loon Mountain Trail Race

Malibu Creek Trail Challenge (Xterra)

Mickelson Trail Marathon and Half

Mountain Divas

Northern Arizona Trail Runners Assoc.

Oklahoma Trail Runners Association

Palo Alto Run Club

Planet Adventures

Quadzilla 15K

River, Roots & Ruts Trail Half-Marathon

Run at the Rock

Runuphill Racing

San Clemente Trail Run

Silly Pig Mud Run

Snowmass Village Half and Half 10k

Mountain Challenge

SoCal Trail Headz

Spokane River Run

Squaw Valley Mountain Run

Taos Ski Valley Up and Over Run

The Endurables

Trail Runner Club, Brea, CA

Trail Runners Club, Pacific Palisades, CA

Trans Rockies

Tussey MOUnTaiNBACK

GOALS OF ATRA

- ◆ Compile & publish a comprehensive listing of nationwide trail running events
- ◆ Educate and provide information about our sport to the rest of the outdoor community, to the media and to non-running entities that have similar goals and objectives
- ◆ Organize ATRA sponsored & supported events
- ◆ Be sensitive to the environment
- ◆ Provide a forum whereby the business of the sport can be discussed and organized
- ◆ Create & nurture alliances with other associations
- ◆ Develop recreational participation and provide opportunities for families to enjoy our sport through events and clinics

Send your comments to:
American Trail Running Association

P.O. Box 9454
Colorado Springs, CO 80932
(719) 573-4133 phone
(719) 573-4408 fax

trlrunner@aol.com
www.trailrunner.com

Running can be a lifelong endeavor and many of us parents want to ensure our kids are healthy and active. How do we do this without losing the “fun?” There are many reasons and below I have spelled out a few that are a good place to start.

Make sure your child has appropriate fitting running shoes. There are specialty running shoe stores in most cities. Take your child to get their gait and feet analyzed to determine what type of shoe works best for them. Making sure our kids have comfortable fitting shoes is a great place to start.

If your child tells you that running “hurts” find out what they mean. Listen to their pain. If they tell you that their feet hurt find out why. Could they be wearing the wrong type of shoes? If your child tells you that their knee(s) hurt, find out if there is a bio-mechanic problem like Osgood–Schlatter syndrome, which is a painful condition that occurs in the patella growth plate at the tibial tuberosity of active boys and girls aged 9–16 coinciding with periods of growth spurts. The symptoms usually resolve with treatment but may recur for 12–24 months before complete skeletal maturity, when the tibial epiphysis fuses. This is often called “growing pains.” Listen to their pain and work to find a solution.

Make sure kids are training and racing age-appropriate distances. There seems to be a mentality that “more is better” when actually “less is more.” Coaching kids to train high mileage or race longer distances leads to potential injury and burnout. If our goals as parents and coaches are to have our children stay fit and active and to create a lifelong habit, we need to understand that training programs whose focus is on running high mileage is not a healthy long-term approach. Having a focus on form development, nurturing and preserving speed, and a slow and

steady increase to mileage will prevent injury, burnout and create a long-term running habit.

Be creative. Find unique and interesting locations to run. Having a sense of exploration will help keep it fun. A few weeks ago I took a group of my youth runners to the long footbridge overpass on I-25 where we did 100-meter sprints up one side, 100-meter sprints over the highway and 100-meter sprints down the backside of the bridge. All in all we did 12 times 100-meter sprints covering an uphill, a flat and a downhill segment. The kids loved it. Had I asked them to go to the track to do 12 times 100-meter sprints I am sure I would have been given some opposition. The thrill of running above cars, the noise, the honking of motorists added an element of fun and the strong effort the kids gave that day was clearly evident that they were enjoying the workout. So, be creative.



Have a goal. Most kids like to know why they are doing something. “Why?” This is the word kids use the most. Therefore establishing an age-appropriate goal helps to keep kids focused on why they are running. Once they achieve their goal, they learn a valuable work/reward lesson. Having a goal helps answer the question, “Why?”

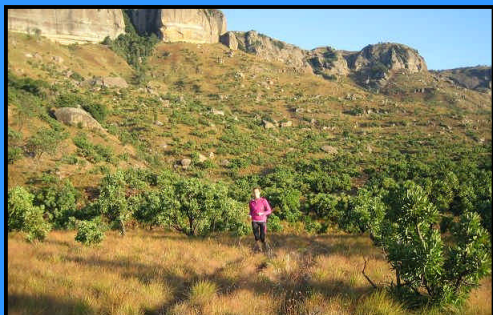
As we head into spring and summer let’s be sure we instill the elements of how to keep running *fun* for our young runners.



The 2012 Kokopelli Kids Trail Running Series will be held May 4, 11, 18, in Bear Creek Park in Colorado Springs, CO. For details visit: www.kokopellikids.com.



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or to renew your
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Derived from a shared passion for trail running, a blend of unique talents and too much caffeine, www.trailrunningclub.com launched February 24, 2012 and is off to a fast start.



Trail Running Club is the brainchild of founding partner John Vaupel, former VP at domain registrar Go Daddy. With over 12 years of internet marketing and website development experience, Vaupel originally built a website for running partner and eventual Trail Running Club founding partner, Jay Danek, called McDowell Mountain Man, www.mcdowellmountainman.com.

The response on the local level was overwhelming. Danek is a very popular local runner and the McDowell Mountain Man website allows readers to follow his running streak (which reached 730 days straight on March 14) as well as his growing resume of ultra races that include a fourth-place finish at Lean Horse in his very first 100-mile race. But McDowell Mountain Man was quickly crossing the line from being a simple runner's blog about Danek, to becoming a resource for all trail runners. This lack of focus led Vaupel to sit down and create a second website with a national focus on educating runners of all abilities in becoming better trail runners. That website eventually became known as Trail Running Club.

On the initial launch of Trail Running Club the website covers topics that include Training & Racing, Nutrition & Weight Loss, Shoes & Gear, Cross Training, Injuries & Prevention and Sports Psychology. "We realized we had good knowledge of trail running, but didn't have the expert training and certification or diplomas required to really educate readers correctly, but we knew who did," said Vaupel.

Out of that, grew the concept of utilizing guest bloggers. "We know a lot of incredibly talented people who have successful careers in all six of our core categories. Not only are they passionate about what they do, they also have running backgrounds, work with runners as part of their profession and are interested in sharing that knowledge with runners from across the country."

Two other areas of emphasis of Trail Running Club are trail running clubs and trail races. Jeremy Dougherty was the perfect choice to lead this area. Every week the trio would meet to run with the rest of the Wednesday Morning Running Club members in the Phoenix Mountain Preserve. Dougherty would always have a new race he would tell us about or would tell us about a running club he found somewhere online and things they are doing and the size of their membership.

There is a TRC Featured Running Club area where a running club representative will answer a predetermined list of questions and we feature them prominently on the home page for two weeks, then they are kept active in the featured running club area indefinitely. This has proven to be a very popular area of the website and has already led website readers to join local clubs they didn't know existed or were too intimidated to contact. We contact trail running clubs directly and invite them to be featured on the website free of charge, but also encourage clubs to contact us and request to be featured.

Being an avid racer and race director himself for the Mogollon Monster 100, (www.mogollonmonster100.com), Dougherty is well versed in what race directors want to highlight about

their races and what potential runners want to know before signing up for a particular race. The website has a race directory users can sort, as well as a TRC Featured Trail Race area. What Trail Running Club likes to feature are those other great races that don't get a lot of magazine coverage, but are put on by highly qualified race directors and are great events for runners to experience. TRC Featured Trail Races are prominently featured on the home page for two weeks like the TRC Featured Running Clubs, then remain in the database indefinitely for future reading.

What's in the future plans for Trail Running Club? "I have two legal-size notebook pages with ideas and functionality I'll be adding to the website over time," said Vaupel. "We want to be very good at what we're already doing before adding any new areas to the website. There have also been discussions of possible corporate sponsorship, which would allow me to focus 100% on the maintenance and future development of the Trail Running Club website. Although it's a different and smaller target market than what we had at Go Daddy, there are a lot of similarities between launching Trail Running Club and what I experienced during the start-up years at Go Daddy. I'm excited to use a lot of those same principles to grow Trail Running Club into a resource the whole trail running community can benefit from.

"Along with the Trail Running Club website there is a quickly growing community of members in our Facebook group. It's become an excellent resource to post questions and ask for advice from fellow trail runners from all 50 states, and as of this writing, 14 foreign countries."

Trail Running Club can be contacted through their website at www.trailrunningclub.com or email info@trailrunningclub.com.



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Race directors; please refer to the following standards for use in staging a safe and successful event. Should your event adhere to the majority of the below criteria, contact ATRA at trrunner@aol.com and you may include the ATRA label on your website and in printed materials.

What does an ATRA label mean?

The event in question adheres to ATRA standards outlined below. In summary, the event is safe, has an accurately measured and marked course, provides timely results and awards, abides by entry limits (either self imposed or externally imposed - such as U.S. National Parks or USDA National Forest, etc.), has obtained the necessary permits and insurance, is environmentally friendly to the land, and describes event details in an entry booklet / brochure and/or website and/or email blasts.

ATRA Event Standards

1) Safety - event will include a procedure to monitor runners - a check-in at race start; communication on course at either aid stations or other points along the course; there is medical support at start/finish line, and/or at various points along the course. The event must have a safety plan in place that considers any potential emergencies and how they will be dealt with. This would include the ability/plan to cancel the event as it is in progress and/or pull runners safely from the race course if conditions warrant such actions. The course and staging areas have been inspected and any abnormal/unusual hazards (remnants of

barbed wire, ice, dangerous road crossings, etc.) have either been removed or the participants have been made aware of the hazards. The event adequately warns and informs the general public of the race, and uses signage, the media, and traffic monitors (when necessary) to do this.

2) Course - The course will be accurately marked and/or it will be indicated that the course is on especially rugged and/or on sparsely marked terrain. There is a course map and/or profile online, in race packets, or at the start line (or any combination of the three); make sure runners know how the course is marked. Course will be marked with removable, non-permanently impacting markings. Refrain from using spray paint or other permanent markings. Removable, reusable wired nylon flags of a consistent visible color are highly effective. Mark significant turns or points of ambivalence with a directional arrow sign of visible color against a light background. Course markings should be installed as close to the start of the race as possible, and checked prior to the start of the race (or during the race for long events) to correct any possible vandalism. Ensure the nighttime markers are adequately visible either by reflective, glowing, or lighted material. Turn monitors – either designated signage, or knowledgeable and clearly designated (by uniform or vest) course marshals – should be used at confusing intersections. The course should be accurately measured using a calibrated bicycle or GPS unit, and the actual distance should be disclosed as such in all event materials.

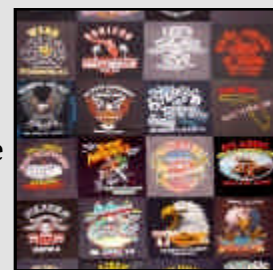
3) Terrain - The course must include at least 75% unpaved surface. Or the course must be an uphill-only route with a positive elevation gain of at least 9% average grade from start to

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finish, with no downhill section longer than 20% of the total course. It is useful if runners are provided with an elevation profile map and/or total climb and descent figures.

- 4) **Results** - The results will be timely and accurate either by hand, computerized, or with chip timing. There will be a designated person from the race committee to handle all timing and results issues. One person should be making the determination of the order of finish when multiple runners finish in close proximity to each other. The race should develop and publicly share its policy regarding determining the order of finish for intentional ties, especially when awards may be involved. Races that use chip timing should develop a set policy and publicly share this in advance regarding determining the order of finish when a disparity exists between the overall chip time to complete the course and actual order of finish crossing the finish line. A clear and effective way/procedure to handle final results disputes should be in place.
- 5) **Awards** - Awards will reflect what has been publicized. Awards can be of various types and levels to the race director's discretion.
- 6) **Logistics** - The event must obtain the necessary insurance and permits (for both public and private land use).
- 7) **Entry limits** – All events must have a set entry/participation limit and those limits must be publicly shared and adhered to in advance of the race. Reason for limits may include: safety, environmental impact, course logistics, often assessed by permit issuer or race committee, or other considerations that limit capacity. No event director can provide for a quality event that is sustainable and responsible if an infinite number of people are allowed to participate at one time. Events must consider their ability to provide a fair, safe, responsible and sustainable quality event to every participant first and foremost before considering the quantity (number) of participants. The entry procedures and requirements and the selection process for determining which entries are chosen to participate (when the number of entries exceeds the set limit) must be clear and publicly transparent, especially if the race has a history of reaching its entry capacity. It is suggested that popular races with entry limits that fill up well in advance of the race date keep ‘waiting lists’ to ensure that a full field participates. Events must develop a policy regarding the trading, selling or exchange of pre-registered race entries between runners, and publicly state and adhere to that policy.
- 8) **Entry Brochure** - The event provides some type of entry information prior to the event. Brochures or online entry information may vary in type and style and are up to the discretion of the race committee. Websites can provide additional and more detailed information, but crucial information (regarding safety issues, changes, etc) must also be made available in printed form and verbally shared with the runners at pre event at mandatory meetings or gatherings (like right before the race start). Consider the “greening” of our sport and minimize race packets filled with paper leaflets and other race brochures.
- 9) **Delivery** - The race must deliver everything it promises to runners. Some runners today have certain preconceived expectations regarding what race events will provide (regarding aid, course marking, awards, the course, etc.) It is acceptable not to meet these expectations but suggested that race information give accurate information about what it provides. For example, aid stations must be in advertised spots or if there are no aid

stations runners are informed in advance that the event is to be "self-supported." Or if there are no age group awards, information should clearly state who receives awards (if anyone). Late race logistical alterations and changes should be imparted to participants ASAP. The creation of some sort of race discussion board/website so that race management and participants can communicate and impart information freely and openly.

- 10) **Environment Awareness** - The event must be environmentally friendly. For instance, is there a trail building activity associated with the race, has the race instructed runners to stay on course and not create social pathways or cut switchbacks? Shortcutting or littering or degrading the environment must be grounds for disqualification. Encourage runners to carry their own water bottle or other similar hydration device that can simply be refilled at aid stations. This avoids the unsightly and irresponsible use and littering of paper cups. The course route, and corresponding number of racers allowed on it, should be sustainable. The event should have a contingency plan that includes an alternative route, postponement, and/or cancellation if unusual conditions (mud, snow, rain weather, etc.) might result in serious safety concerns/risks and/or permanent environmental or trail damage if the race was held. The event must have a plan in place to mitigate any unusual environmental/trail damage resulting from the event. The course route is “swept” within 36 hours after the event to remove any litter left by runners and fully remove any course markings. Event directors/committee should make an attempt to position recycling/garbage bins properly and/or limit the amount of disposable waste created by the event. For more information about making your event more “green,” contact Athletes for a Fit Planet, LLC, (afitplanet.com), the Council for Responsible Sport (CouncilForResponsibleSport.org), or Eco-Logistics (eco-logistics.biz/tag/greening-your-event).
- 11) **Time Limits** - For the safety of runners, the public and efficiency of aid/medical/race personnel, the race must have a time cutoff. This should be clearly stated on the information materials available to the runners. For some events, realistic intermediate time cutoffs should be set at various points along the course to keep runners moving toward the finish in a timely manner. A procedure for dealing with runners who do not make any time limits should be determined, and clearly shared with the runners.
- 12) **Financial Accountability** - The race should keep an accurate record of its finances. If the organizing body is a 501 (c) 3 not for profit corporation, they may (*by IRS) be required to share the financial information truthfully with individuals upon request. It is OK to compensate key event personnel for the hard work they put into a race to make it successful. It is OK to have races serve as charitable fundraisers, but participants should know how much of their entry fee is going to the chosen charitable recipient. Races should not deceive or misinform participants or others about where their entry fees go.
- 13) **Indirect/additional impacts and considerations** – races must view and consider the impacts and effects of their event from a more holistic perspective. This includes considering and minimizing negative impacts not only from the actual

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running participants, but also aid stations, race volunteers and personnel, crew members, pacers, spectators, media, etc. Impacts to local residents, businesses, communities and other trail users must also be considered. Races should conduct themselves so as not to place an unnecessary and undue burden on local resources, residents, communities, facilities or the environment. Races should operate in a manner which makes the presence of the race a positive “win-win” situation for everyone involved, both directly and indirectly and should work with those persons or entities to come up with solutions and compromise for any problems or concerns that should arise. *Example of this thinking would include events being responsible for providing/ensuring there are adequate sanitation facilities (trash receptacles and restrooms) at the start/finish, aid stations and other points along the course. Larger races should not overburden public facilities. Events should ensure that there is adequate vehicle parking for participants, race personnel, crews, pacers and spectators. Events should try to buy and hire locally whenever possible, and support local businesses.*

14) Rules, Fairness and penalties – What is and is not allowed should be clearly stated in race information. For example, if pacing, stashing or cacheing, outside assistance, course cutting, etc. is not allowed, it should be stated along with appropriate penalties (disqualification). Any event that records and/or rewards results (records place, time or order of finish) offers something of value, and sooner or later someone will attempt to cheat or bend assumed rules to obtain that something. Events should be proactive in publicly stating rules regarding what is and is not allowed in their race information, develop penalties for violating those rules, and fairly and equally enforce the rules and apply the penalties.

Some common rules:

Participants must travel forward under their own power without wheeled or mechanized support, must stay on the marked course, must only receive aid at designated aid stations, must obey race personnel and officials, must not litter, must conduct themselves in a civil and sportsperson-like manner, and must only use the speed of travel to prevent being passed by another competitor. An appropriate penalty would be disqualification.

15) Dogs and other animals/portable music players - Events should develop responsible safe policies regarding participating with dogs or portable music players, and clearly share these with the participants in race information. These policies should consider safety, insurance or permit limitations, unfair advantages, and the needs and desires of the participants.

FAQ Section:

Does the ATRA label include insurance?

No, the ATRA label does not provide insurance. However, the event should indemnify ATRA in their liability waiver should they use the ATRA logo on entry forms, event website, or other print materials.

Who can apply for an ATRA label?

Any trail or mountain race - ultra or sub ultra - may apply. The event organizer may apply, or a runner who has participated in the event and feels that an event is worthy of an ATRA label may apply on the event's behalf. ATRA members may also apply for a label on behalf of an event.

When can an event apply for an ATRA label?

At any time during the year either before or after the race has been

held. ATRA labeled events will be updated monthly, or as necessary, on the ATRA website.

If the event has a USATF sanction, does this mean it also has an ATRA label?

Although ATRA is a member of USATF, this does not mean that your event is automatically “labeled by ATRA.” A USATF-sanctioned event can certainly obtain an ATRA label, just be sure the event adheres to the criteria as outlined above.

Can a first-year event apply for an ATRA label?

Yes. If the event meets the criteria and the organizers have a proven track record of organizing a quality event, utilize the ATRA label.

Can an ATRA label be revoked?

If someone (typically this would be a race participant) contacts ATRA, or it is determined that a race should not be labeled, ATRA will review the complaint for discussion by its board. If it is determined that the label should be revoked, the race will be notified of this and given an opportunity to correct the reason for the revocation.

If our event is denied an ATRA label, can the event reapply?

Yes. Provided the criteria are met, an ATRA label will be granted.

What if an event meets some, but not all of the ATRA criteria?

In order to use the ATRA label, the event should adhere to the majority of the criteria listed above.

Is there a cost for the ATRA label?

There is not a fee for the ATRA label, but it is encouraged that an event become an ATRA race member for \$75 annually which will include, among other benefits, a bold highlight in our online race calendar.

To include the ATRA label for your event(s), follow these steps:



STEP 1:

Review the standards,

STEP 2:

If your event meets the majority of the criteria outlined (at least 12 of the 15 criteria), copy and paste the ATRA label/logo and place on your website and/or in your printed race materials with a hyperlink to the criteria on the ATRA website at this link,

STEP 3:

Let ATRA know (contact trrunner@aol.com) that your event is using the ATRA label so it can be included on the ATRA online calendar,

STEP 4:

Consider joining ATRA as a race member. Visit www.trailrunner.com or www.imathlete.com to become an ATRA race member. (Athletes may also request an ATRA label on behalf of an event).

ATRA's corporate partner, GoodPeopleRun.com, will be working with ATRA to promote the labeling program.

The Skelton Law Racing Series provides premiere trail and road races for runners in the East Tennessee region. In the various events in 2011, the series welcomed participants from over 24 states and three foreign countries.



MARK A. SKELTON
 ATTORNEY AT LAW

In 2012, trail races include the **Laurel Run Ascent 11 Mile Trail Race** on April 21, the **7 mile WOLF Run Trail Race** on July 17, and on September 22, the **15 mile Bays Mountain Trail Race**. All of these events are held on the great trails of Bays Mountain Park located in Kingsport, TN.

A nature preserve and the largest city-owned park in the state of Tennessee, Bays Mountain Park features on its 3,500 acres, a lake, Nature Center with a state-of-the-art Planetarium Theater, and animal habitats.



For additional details visit: www.MarkSkeltonLawOffice.com



BRAZEN RACING

Upcoming races include



www.brazenracing.com



Black Hills 100
 Sturgis, South Dakota
 100 mile, 100 km, 50 mile
 June 23, 2012
www.blackhills100.com

Lean Horse Hundred ~ Half Hundred ~ 50 K
 August 25 ~ 26, 2012
 Hot Springs, South Dakota
www.leanhorsehundred.com



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Google "Rochester NY trail running." No, really, go ahead, I'll wait for you. Disappointed? It was these search results (or lack thereof) that brought four local trail runners together on a Monday night in February where TrailsROC was born.

The four of us, Ben, Eric, Ron, and myself (Sean) had never met — face to face that is. We were connected through Twitter and a love of running. After a couple of short online meetings it was decided that Rochester, NY, needed not only a compendium of trails, but a forum for local runners who strayed from the paved surfaces on a more than occasional basis.

From the first meeting there was no doubt that we were kindred spirits. All of us are husbands, family men, and of course, runners. Greetings that first night moved seamlessly into discussions of training tactics and future races then quickly to the matter at hand. We wondered how a city that boasted a half dozen major running clubs, and numerous more local running groups could have so little information about trail running available. After all, we had barely talked for a half hour before finding numerous trails that each other had never even heard about before!

We all knew that Rochester was a city that grew quickly along the banks of the Genesee River, the shores of Lake Ontario, and later on the trade route of the Erie Canal. Social justice and diversity have strong roots in the city's history. Today those facts make Rochester a unique place to find historically significant and geographically beautiful trails.

As a group we want to open the world of trail running to



more runners in our area. We want them to run the glacial esker cutting through Mt. Hope Cemetery that today is the final resting place of social pioneers Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Doug-

lass. We want them to explore the diverse trails in Mendon Ponds Park that skirt Devil's Bathtub and circle Hundred Acre Pond. We are mapping out the trails that surround you with wildlife in Ellison Park and inspire runners to challenge the Finger Lakes trail (particularly the section that passes through "The Grand Canyon of the East," Letchworth State Park).

In fact, the more we spoke, the more work we realized was ahead of us. If you started at the center of Rochester and drew a circle that represented a 30-minute drive in any direction you'd encompass enough trails to

allow the strongest of endurance runners to run a unique trail every day for years.

It's not just about getting the veteran runners out on our wonderful trails though. It's introducing this world to novices as well that excites us. The only thing better than enjoying the deep tranquil woods on a long weekend run is sharing that feeling with someone who has never experienced that unique connection with the natural world. There is a wonderful community of runners that already inhabits our city and our website will provide a place for all of us to meet and discover new trails as well as a valuable resource for anyone who wants to know where to run in Rochester.

Visitors to the TrailsROC website will soon find trail maps, pictures from the trail, race reports, and forums for finding each other out in the woods. This is just the beginning of creating a culture in our city that encourages an active lifestyle that capitalizes on the beauty we have all around us in Western NY.



Trail Running Camp – April 26-29, 2012
Women's Running & Conditioning week-long
Camps in May, July, & September

Active at Altitude, Estes Park, CO

The Trail Running Camp in April will be led by Nancy Hobbs, Executive Director, ATRA, and Terry Chiplin, Director at Active at Altitude

Join us to learn about trail running in the majestic Rocky Mountains. This camp is for the novice, as well as the more experienced trail runner. Workshops include trail techniques, drills, gear, training, etc. Camp price includes accommodation, runs, workshops, and all meals. Each participant receives a signed copy of the Ultimate Guide to Trail Running and a year's membership to ATRA.

Visit www.activealtitude.com, or contact Terry by email: terry@activealtitude.com, or by phone: 303-304-9159.



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ATRA members receive *Running Times* as part of their annual membership
www.runningtimes.com



When you enter the PEAK website (www.peakraces.com) you are greeted by a jagged mountain which goes upward in stages only to plunge precipitously. PEAK is located in Pittsfield Vermont, a stone's throw from the Killington ski complex. Summer and winter PEAK weekend events, directed by ringmaster Andy Weinberg, typically include a short offering, a doable stretch and a ridiculously challenging event with a few extra sideshows for entertainment.

This year's winter version was typical, with a 100-mile snowshoe, a Death March, which included a wood chopping contest designed to stock the fireplaces of a local hotel in return for parking slots and 6.5, half and full marathon snowshoe competitions. The entrants in the first two events rather made the rest of us look like slackers, so soldier on we did...

Normally I wouldn't whine over this winter's abysmal conditions, figuring we would all hit the playing field overexcited and undertrained. Except that I was even more so, being semi-recovered from a knee-wrenching encounter with muddy terrain. So I took great comfort from *UltraRunning Magazine's* January/February 2012 survey, "Factors Related to Successful Completion of a 100-Mile Ultramarathon." Polling entrants in the 2009 Western States and Vermont 100, Marty Hoffman and Kevin Fogard concluded that, "...a high peak mileage week cannot guarantee success, nor can a low peak mileage week mean that one won't finish, but a high peak mileage week is necessary in order to produce a fast finish time." I reached my own conclusion: since I wasn't going to win the race, I had a decent chance at finish time success if I maintained the principle of relentless forward motion.

I was not kidding anybody, not even myself. Having survived three previous Peaks, I knew what I was in for and it would not be pretty. With roughly 1800 feet of elevation change for each of the four loops, I figured at the very least the tortuous climb would give me a free ride down, and thus subtract somewhat, at least mentally, from the total 26.2 miles.

Curiously, despite the fact that the friends who accompany me to this event are pretty much all 100-mile veterans, I haven't yet found anyone to buddy the mere 26.2-mile distance. I seem to be rather hard on my friends. This year, on the hunt once more, I conned fellow Saratoga Stryder Steve Mitchell to give it a go. Steve, an Ironman triathlete and 100-mile finisher, had completed the half last year and was so excited about his return engagement

that we had mapped out several hilly practice routes. But with the lack of snow and resulting icy trails, our plans stalled.

Not easily daunted, Steve is nothing if not old school inventive. To simulate the weight of heavy snowshoes he pulled galoshes over his sneakers whenever he was forced to run on the roads. He religiously hit the Stairmaster. He observed his grandkids' running form and decided that we should do trash runs, filling discarded cups with pebbles and trying to run smoothly without shaking the contents. At least we were entertained.

Our final moment of truth came when we journeyed to the Adirondacks to visit snow. At the conclusion of a delightful ten-mile jaunt, Steve was drenched. He was wearing his usual sweatpants/sweatshirt outfit. Frustrated at his unwillingness to enter the 21st Century, I appealed to his male pride: "Steve, by all means wear your sweatpants to the race, but know that you will gain twenty pounds in water equity and I will beat you." Steve showed up on race day clothed head to toe in wicking gear, except for the plastic bags covering his sneakers. But hey, I was proud of him.

While the course seems to be slightly different each year, this time damage from Hurricane Irene necessitated new levels of resourcefulness. Planked bridges were constructed to span newly spawned crevices and a shaky pontoon bridge led us up into the mountain. Tibet here we come! Steve and I got separated at the

(continued on page 13)

ATRA members at the \$40 level receive a one-year subscription to *Trail Runner* magazine.

www.trailrunnermag.com



TrailRunner
One Dirty Magazine

Explore Trail Running in Northeast Ohio



westernreserve.org



A national running club catered toward half marathon runners, also known for their 50 States Challenge and 100 Half Anywhere Challenge.

halfmarathonclub.com

start, but we were pretty evenly matched and knew we would eventually mesh together for the crucial third loop, the true decision point. For while a two-loop half is an acceptable punctuation mark on a day well spent, there is no such thing as a three-quarter marathon. Beyond the half is undiscovered, all-or-nothing territory.

At the end of the second loop, I recovered my race with a pause for a dry shirt and warmer jacket, allowing Steve to catch up. But he was done. One look at his face and I knew he was done. In fact, I recognized that look as I myself had worn it just a half hour ago. But this finish was important to me as validation that I can still run despite my knee woes, which will never totally heal. This summer I had come face to face with the shattering *Carnival* musical question posed by the crippled puppeteer —“Who can I be if I can't be me anymore?” I still wanted to be me in some form or other so I pressed on.

Before the third loop became nasty I met my friend Courtenay Guertin, who had basically not run at all since he got injured in September. He entered on whim, hope and habit, proving that there is something to be said for the sheer force of muscle memory. He also had two more loops to conquer, except that his would be the final 13 of his winning 100-miler. What else could I do but soldier on?

Since I was in survival mode now, I noticed a few interesting things about the course. The ups and downs got steeper and some sections decidedly more threadbare. In fact, on the sharpest downhill just before the pontoon bridge and home free territory, I took a hint from faster, but obviously tired runners, and slid down on a nicely defined butt trail rather than risk the exposed rocks. I learned how to elevate my snowshoes just so, letting them skim the surface and not dig in for

final landing. Definitely not something covered in the owner's manual.

The climb up PEAK follows a ziggurat pattern, terracing from one level to another. I noticed that occasionally tired souls had bypassed the extended experience in favor of a shortcut approach. While this would normally inspire cries of “Foul!” at this point in time I figured they probably had good reason and would ultimately disappoint only themselves. And as the supposed shortcuts were through deeper snow, the few who attempted these routes were essentially breaking trail over hidden hurricane-strewn blowdowns instead of following the straight and narrow path to redemption. Serves them right.

Faithful husband Jeff was there to greet me before my final lap bearing a headlamp offering. I declined, thinking I could barely hold my head on straight as it was, positive that I had a small flashlight in my pocket. Turned out it was in my discarded jacket. Needless to say, this provided me with sufficient motivation to step up the pace.

But really, the final lap was delightful. As I passed the two fallen trees marking my progress, I fulfilled my promise to myself to sit for a second and take in the view. The Labyrinth section, reminiscent of Germany's Black Forest, was now pierced by the brilliant light of the setting sun, highlighting each needle-straight pine. I expected to see Neuschwanstein Castle in the distance, but the hut at the top was good enough.

I crossed the finish line, keeping my promise to myself, treasuring the spirit of the PEAK. It was truly a “no regrets” Dr. George Sheehan experience. And I even remembered to tell Andy that Andrew, loyally ensconced in the hut, was still patiently waiting for his lunchtime pizza.



USATF Mountain and Trail Championships 2012

Open and Masters' Championship Competition

- USA 100km Trail — January 7, Bandera, TX—Champions: Timothy Olson and Cassie Scallon
- USA 50 Mile Trail — March 3, Rocksprings, TX—Champions: Jordan McDougal and Michele Suszek
- USA Half Marathon — June 10, Bend, OR
- USA Mountain — June 16, Gorham, NH * the 2012 U.S. Men's Mountain Running Team (the top six U.S. finishers with current USATF memberships) will be selected at this event
- USA Women's Team Selection Race — July 8, Loon Mountain, NH *the 2012 U.S. Women's Mountain Running Team (the top four U.S. finishes with current USATF memberships) will be selected at this event
- USA 100 Mile Trail — July 28, Burning River, OH
- USA 10km Trail — August 25, Laurel Springs, NC
- USA 50km Trail — September 22, Bend, OR
- USA Marathon Trail — November 3, Moab, UT

The 2012 USATF Trail Championship Sub-Ultra Series will include the Half Marathon, 10km, and Marathon, with points awarded at each event. The top male and female point getters will receive an award at year end.

GOOD PEOPLE RUN

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www.goodpeoplerun.com

Congratulations to ATRA Board Member Danelle Ballengee, who will be inducted into the Colorado Running Hall of Fame during a ceremony at the Denver Athletic Club on Thursday, April 19, 2012. For details visit:
www.coloradocolfaxmarathon.org



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