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# Van Cortlandt Track Club **newsletter**

## La Aventura De San Blas

*Two members report on the beauty and brutality of a favorite half-marathon in Puerto Rico*



*Danielle Rosario-Mullen takes on the hills of Coamo*

### **By Danielle Rosario-Mullen**

**O**n February 1<sup>st</sup>, Jill Staats, Kate Donovan and I escaped below-freezing NYC for the hot temperatures of Coamo, Puerto Rico. Kate and I went to run the San Blas Half Marathon and Jill came for team support. San Blas has a 45-year history which entails horror stories of running up a mountain under the hot afternoon sun while people try to hand you rum rather than water. So we all went to experience “La Aventura de San Blas” (the adventure of San Blas, in Spanish).

*(continued on next page)*

### **By Kate Donovan**

**We** knew San Blas would be a tough 13.1 miles. Several teammates had recounted their tales, rolled their eyes, waved their hands at the memory of the heat, the asphyxiating clouds of barbeque smoke, the daunting 7 miles of uphill, the quad-crushing 6 miles of downhill, the Dixie cups of rum handed out by renegade water stops in a gesture better suited to New Year’s Eve than a life-shortening athletic event.

So Margaret Nolan, Danielle Rosario-Mullen, Jill Staats and I had an idea of what lay ahead as we wedged our way into one room at the only hotel in Coamo, Los Baños. It is an old-fashioned hotel in a wooden hunting-lodge style renowned for its healing natural hot water springs. In the preparation for the race, Los Baños becomes the race headquarters, as well as the lodgings for the international elite runners, several Africans, a few Slavs, the odd European, who come with a special invitation. *(continued on page 3)*

We stayed at Los Banos, the only hotel in Coamo and home to a natural hot springs. Margaret Nolan joined us in Puerto Rico early the next day, and we decided to drive over the course. Although I prefer knowing where I'm running to strategize the race in my head, this time it was psychologically damaging to me. We found out that the course just keeps going up, then you get to a sharp turn and there's more up, then flat, then up again. Finally, at the 16<sup>th</sup> kilometer, there's a long, curvy and sharp downhill, that is, until it goes up again. None of us could figure out how there could possibly be more kilometers of uphill than down.

The day before the race there was a pasta dinner for the runners at our hotel. Kate and I had stocked up on Pedialyte, Gatorade, and bananas, which we began ingesting the night before the race, and on race day. My main concerns were that I would get severely dehydrated and that there wouldn't be enough water stations. There definitely were not enough water stations on the course and it was difficult to differentiate the legitimate water stops from those serving secret concoctions. At various points along the course there were tiny tables where two or three people would hand out water but if you reached them immediately following a few runners then you'd miss out.

The day of the race, big yellow school buses and a police motorcade escorted all runners from the hotel to the start. I felt like a celebrity while riding in that school bus. As we drove through Coamo, people in the streets screamed and waved while the police had their sirens and lights on and the bus driver honked the horn. There were, reportedly, 250,000 spectators in the streets. I stuck my head out the window and waved to people, as did Jill and Margaret. Kate sat, red-faced, repeating how embarrassed she was by our behavior. To our pleasant surprise, there were other VCTC and Ramble shirts in the crowd at the start. Fortunately, Jill was able to sneak into the start and run the first 4 miles of the race. Of the 800 runners, about a quarter were women. I don't remember much about the beginning of the race because I kept thinking about the mountain that was to come, but I clearly remember the angel\* that appeared around the 8<sup>th</sup> kilometer and handed me a frozen bottle of water. He was a VCTC supporter who yelled out, "Yeah, Van Cortland Track Club!" and proceeded to run with me for about 20 meters. I held on to that water "I bottle until the last kilometer, and I'm pretty sure it saved my life.

## **“I clearly remember the angel that appeared around the 8th kilometer and handed me a frozen bottle of water.”**

At our club awards dinner in January, Wanda Bills had told me that when I saw a big white church, I wasn't too far from the finish. When I saw that church, it was like seeing the gates of heaven opening for me; I knew I only had about 3 miles left. But it wasn't until I saw the stadium that I grasped the fact that I was really finishing. Upon entering the stadium, runners go three quarters of a lap on a grass track before crossing the finish line. A pretty girl places a medal on all finishers. I sprinted as soon as I got to the track and passed five people; that's when I knew I hadn't pushed myself nearly as much as I could have throughout the race. At the finish, I must have looked beet-red because three medics came up to me and carried me off to a stretcher in the medical tent. My temperature was 103, so I was kept there for 20 minutes as they rubbed my legs with IcyHot.

Following the race, we hitch-hiked back to our hotel for the awards ceremony. As we approached, we saw something that to this day brings me nightmares: a topless, enormous woman in a thong getting into her car after a visit to the hot springs...at least that's what I tell myself she was doing.

We attended the dinner and awards ceremony with our medals around our necks and afterward Margaret, Kate and I decided to find a place where we could dance. Jill stayed in to knit everyone a sweater. We found this lively place with a fantastic band and we each danced with the tallest Puerto Rican man alive... seriously my head was at his chest. In between dances we would vote which girl had the shortest skirt.

I am definitely running this race again next year and would recommend anyone who is looking for a challenging race and to escape the cold in February to run it as well. My only regret is having only one day left in Puerto Rico after the race. I would have liked to have had at least three days so that I could have done some sightseeing and visited some of the beautiful beaches.

\*Ed note: That angel was none other than Bob Velez.

*(Donovan, continued from page 1)*

We all had our own way of relating, or not, to these athletes whom we would see at mealtimes. Margaret chatted them up like they were neighbors; I considered them all the competition and scorned them; Jill knitted and stayed oblivious, and Danielle was busy fraternizing with her companeros and eating. Van Cordlandt is in the house.

Every morning, the elites went for a nice slow run, grouped, it seemed to me, according to nationality. The morning before the race, I soaked in the hot baths in my swimming suit.

Race day came, mild heat and humidity and we had all day to kill waiting for the busses to leave for the 4:30 p.m. start. We discussed our outfits, ate, drank, fidgeted, knit, slept, complained about the waiting, talked more about our outfits. I drank the biggest bottle of Pedialyte on the market, remorseful that I was still dehydrated from the flight, mindful of Dave King's warning to stay away from the hot springs before the race. Finally, we loaded ourselves on the yellow school bus to head to the start.

The elites took over the back of the bus, VCTC the front. We set out, led by a 24-strong motorcycle police escort, backwards through the course, cheered on by thousands of spectators, delirious with the thrill of seeing Jill, Danielle and Margaret screaming and waving out of the windows of the bus. Oh the joy. They really were. It was pretty bad. The elites were kinda' amused, but I just wanted to die. Did I mention Jill wasn't even running the race? Never mind, I am over it now, but it's not easy being a 16-year-old in the body of a mature woman.

I had really trained for this race, including the Visions of San Blas course through the urban hills of the Bronx with Arnie Gore and Susan Epstein the weekend before. I'd done hill work steadily over the past two months and run a strong Manhattan half two weeks be

fore. We had driven the course twice, but as my readers know, every race is a theory until you cross the finish line. At the start we ran into the another VCTC contingent, Peachy, Hector Santiago, Andrea (others???), mostly veterans of the race.

The starting gun fired one, maybe two minutes early (the race director later told me that he wanted to help out all those runners who would finish after sundown). The conditions were not bad, although it was very humid and the barbecue smoke thick. I ran, holding back a bit, unsure whether the elusive feeling in my stomach was a natural reaction to the 80-degree heat or a regurgitation time bomb that was going to leave me in a paroxysm of dry heaves in front of an 8-year-old girl who would resolve never ever to run, promise promise. At mile six, Bob Velez from the Club gave me a hug and a bottle of defrosting water and sent me off.

By mile 11, I could smell the finish and my stride opened. I started searching the crowd for someone else who had some gas left. I found him, and we took off together. I sprinted the end, gave it everything I had.

My final time, 2:00:47, 8th in my age group, was no reason to pout. But, somehow there were 47 seconds left hanging around the course somewhere. My travel mates had all survived. Danielle was in the hospital tent, but with a good time under her belt and a radiant smile. Margaret was up for dancing, and Jill was delighted that she had run the first four miles to keep her legs limber.

We hitchhiked back to the hotel. Somehow the elites beat us back, were showered and were eating. We wore our medals, ate, danced, knitted, shared our stories, thought about you all, and hoped we could be an even bigger group next year. It is a tough race, but that's what makes it fun.

### **VAN CORTLANDT TRACK CLUB 2007 Board of Directors**

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**Club workouts are held Tuesdays at 7 p.m.(track) and Saturdays at 8 a.m. (roads/trails).**

# On The Run

by *Bette Clark*

I just returned from running the Al Gordon Snowflake 4-miler—no fresh snowflakes today, but a real



winter day nonetheless (even by Canadian standards), with blustery winds whipping against us on the hills of Central Park. It was wonderful to see such a good VCTC turnout at NYRR's first club points race of the year: 10 women, 8 men, all sporting VCTC apparel and very noticeable on the course. In this very competitive race, run by the top runners of all the local clubs, our very own "Runner of the Year" for 2006 Arnie Gore, placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in his age group!! [Just before submitting this to our editors, I learned that Michael Arnstein, our Iron Man of the Year for 2006, just won the Hudson-Mohawk marathon in Albany in a PR of 2:34:19!! He also managed to have time to write his amazing story about training and running this race for our newsletter].

Winter is finally upon us with a vengeance, and even though a few of us managed to escape to run races in warmer climates (Puerto Rico, Florida), many of us braved the frigid weather to race in Central Park, Prospect Park, in the streets of the Bronx, and on many other local roads and trails. Last weekend, running on the back hills and across the ice-covered flats of Van Cortlandt, I imagined I was in the tundra of the far north, as I struggled for traction on the hard-crusted snow underfoot and watched birds basking in the pale rays of the

sun with chunks of ice whirling around them. Bursting color into this Arctic-like scene, a sea of purple-blue VCTCers ran by in their new jackets. Everywhere I have worn this jacket, people have come up to me to ask questions about VCTC, interested in joining us, some sharing memories of running with VCTC many years ago, others sending regards to members who used to be running partners.

Speaking of our special team, we had a chance to come together at the end of January for our annual Awards Dinner, a truly entertaining evening with good company, terrific food, and dancing, and outstanding runners to honor. This was one of the largest turnouts for an Awards Dinner, with 96 members and guests in attendance. Katherine and Sarah did an amazing job putting it all together, from the grand plan to the small details of tortoise and hare candles and quips about running at every place setting. Another big thanks to both of them, and to Linda for helping out with RSVPs and at the door.

As we come closer to the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VCTC (this fall), we hope to plan another great celebration. Please let us know if you have any ideas about how you would like to celebrate together, which we hope to do with a special run and a party. We will discuss this more and form a planning committee at our next Membership meetings on March 10 and April 7. Please note: **next month we will be meeting on April 7<sup>th</sup>, the first Saturday of the month (rather than the second)** since the Brooklyn Half-Marathon is scheduled on April 14 **This will be an important meeting as we finalize details for the Urban Environmental Challenge.**

In this newsletter, you will find information from Jill about the volunteer assignments for the **Urban Environ-**

**mental Challenge on April 15.** Race applications have already been mailed and distributed. Please support Jill as our new Challenge Race Director, by offering help where needed and by volunteering on race day. This year's race will have a special poignant meaning to us, as Lloyd Adams, of **Lloyd's Carrot Cakes**, long-time friend of VCTC and special supporter of our Urban Environmental Challenge, passed away on February 1<sup>st</sup>. On race day, we are inviting Mrs. Campbell-Adams to help us honor his memory in a special way.

This newsletter fits the inaugural issue from our new editors, Katherine Callan and Dave King. Katherine must feel she doesn't have enough to do now that the Awards Dinner is over, and Dave must not be busy enough with the Riverdale Ramble!! Like other VCTC members, they have been gracious and ambitious enough to take on more than one major task for VCTC— (continued on next page)

we thank them both so much for agreeing to do our newsletter. I hope that many of you will follow their example by finding more ways to contribute to our club this year!!

Running through the rest of our winter will make it go faster (and so will you). Hope to see many of you at our regular Saturday runs, on Tuesday evenings speed work-outs on the hills of Fieldston, on Thursday night runs, and of course, on race day(s)!!

Keep running!!!

Bette Clark

## Coach's Corner

by Ken Rolston

### Races of note in March and April:

March 11-  
Colon Cancer Challenge, 8 AM, 1.5K / 4 m - Central Park



March 17-  
Men's 8K  
champs /  
NYRR 8K  
club races 8  
Am- Central Park

March 18- St. Patrick's Day races 2m/10K, 10 AM, FDR Park, Yorktown Heights

March 25- More Marathon (women) 26.2/ 13.1, 8 AM, Central Park

**March 25- Mudders and Grunters 5 m, 10 AM, FDR Park\*\***

April 1- Scarsdale Races, 15K/4m 9 AM, Scarsdale High School

April 1- Scotland Run 10K, 9:30 AM, Central Park

April 1- Greater Danbury ½ marathon, 10 AM, Danbury, Ct

April 14- Brooklyn ½ marathon, 8 AM, Brooklyn

**April 15- Urban Environmental Challenge, 6.3 miles, 10 AM, Van Cortlandt Park**

April 16- Boston Marathon, 10:30 AM, Boston, MA

April 21- Sybil Ludington 50K, 8 AM, Carmel, NY

April 22- Lincoln Tunnel Challenge, 5K, 9 AM, Weehawken, NJ

April 22- Mt. Hook ½ marathon, 9 AM, Rockland State Park

April 22- Leatherman's Loop 10k, 9 AM, West Pound Ridge, NY

April 22- LIRRC ½ marathon, Eisenhower Park, East Meadow

April 22- Adidas run for the Parks 4m, 10 AM, Central Park

April 29- New Jersey Marathon, ½ marathon, 7:15 AM, Long Branch, NJ

April 29- Alley Pond 5M challenge, 9 AM, Alley Pond

April 29- MINT's 5K run/walk, 9 AM, Bronx Botanical Gardens

April 29- Rye Derby 5 mile, 1 PM, Rye, NY

### \*\*Mudders and Grunters 2007

**Sunday, March 25, 2007 10 a.m.**

**FDR Park, Lot #1. FDR Park exit off Taconic Pkwy. Yorktown, N.Y.**

**[Mudders and Grunters: All runners compete on the same approx. 5 mile single loop x-country course. Course difficulty is determined by weather. Wear old shoes and clothes. No diving(head first entry) is allowed into water hazards. Awards: Top 3 and male and female age-groups, Team awards.]**

**Wear old shoes and clothes. No diving(head first entry) is allowed into water hazards. Awards: Top 3 and male and female age-groups, Team awards.]**

Ah, March, an aptly named month as we move forward. We know for sure that there will be very few snow days, that the ice will disappear from the Putnam trail, that the bracing north winds will diminish. Five mile skating sessions will become sure-footed 9-12 mile runs throughout our treasured trails. And there are plenty of races to test our mettle. Just take a gander at the schedule above and you'll see tremendous variety in race types and lengths.

**“This month, we'll most likely begin with slightly longer repeats: miles, 1200's, 800's et. to acclimate to pace work.”**

With spring or the promise of it at hand, we will be attempting to move track workouts outdoors earlier than

normal. In fact, I'm hoping that we'll spend the entire month of March outdoors. We'll most likely begin with slightly longer repeats: miles, 1200's, 800's etc., to acclimate to pace work. I was reading the workout schedule of 5K phenom Matt Tegenkamp who ran 13:04 last summer. His approach makes a lot of sense; hill work, progressive runs, track work at less-than-insane pace. We don't have his gift but we can all get stronger and faster. He has some attractive workouts which I'm eager to share.

Finally we had the chance to attend the annual NYRR banquet on March 1. This year our male 60-64 runners were honored for 3<sup>rd</sup> place team overall. So congrats to Arnie Gore, Mike Hudick, Ed James and Ramon Ruiz for a fine year.

# Our favorite workouts

## My 7 Greatest Workouts of All Time

by David King

I chose this list based on what I considered to be the most beneficial workouts for me to reach my maximum potential in specific races. Pain was always involved in completing these runs, especially those that were done on the track. But sometimes pain is a good thing. The list is, of course, very subjective.

7). 12x440 yards with a 175 yd jog interval. As a freshman in college, I trained with the eventual NCAA 880 yard champion. On Wednesdays in the spring of 1969, we would run this killer workout. As I got into better shape each week, my times began to drop. I peaked running my "quarters" averaging 57 seconds each, taking a brisk jog in between.

6). A Pentathlon at Mahopac High School. 1980. This was actually an organized event, but I used it as a workout. The competition included (in this order): a 5-mile road race, followed by 30 minutes rest period. The next four events were run on the track: 880 yard run, 20 minutes rest, 2-mile run, 20 minutes rest, 440 yard dash, 10 minutes rest, finishing up with a mile. I ran 26:54, 2:21, 10:34, 55 seconds, and 5:02 respectively, winning the 30-39 age group.

5). I (and two training partners) ran 21 miles of speed-play (fast runs and recoveries mixed into a long distance run) in the summer of

1981. We covered the distance in under 2 hours. We did this run on the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail, stopping for water at the faucet on the Tibbetts Brook park drive.

4). 2-person 10-mile relay. VCP track 1967. As a senior in high school, I ran this with my A.A.U. team. My partner and I each ran 20x440 yard runs. My rest period was the time it took my partner to run one lap and my partner's rest was my tour of the track. I averaged 67 seconds per quarter, my partner a merciful 78.

3). A speed ladder at JFK H.S. track with Glen Shane in 1981. 220, 440, 660, 880, 660, 440, 220 with half the distance as a recovery (i.e. 220 run, 110 jog). We ran: :27, :58, 1:31, 2:15, 1:29, :57 and :26 respectively.

2). 5 x 1-mile with 440 yard jog interval. JFK track 1981. 4:54, 4:53, 4:54, 4:52 and 4:51. This was possibly my greatest workout because I HATE running miles.

1). This was run with Coach Ken Rolston. We did the workout on a measured, slightly inclined quarter mile on Fieldston Road in the winter of 1980. It went like this: Sprint a quarter down the hill, jog 35-45 seconds, sprint a quarter up the hill, jog 35-45 seconds, sprint a quarter down the hill, jog a quarter and start again. Three sets of this. Nine quarters in all. We peaked averaging 57 seconds down the hill, 62 seconds up the hill with a 55 second last kick down the course. Effort-wise, this equals or betters the miles above because of the insane rest period.

## Training for Boston: Two Perspectives

by Neil Leibowitz

I am currently in marathon training. As with everything in life, context is truly everything, and a workout is only useful if it helps you achieve a specified goal.



Running 200 meter repeats for marathon preparation, or running 20 milers in preparation for an 800 meter heat makes about as much sense as wearing a tank top to the February Bronx half. (Yet, believe it or not people still do it.) So without further ado:

Through the marathon cycle—the fabled midweek long run defined as a run of 12-16 miles done on a weekday evening is a staple of my training. If pressed, I would probably say that this is the main run that has allowed me to run 12 and 6 minute personal bests in my last 2 marathons. Sometimes I will throw in 4-5 miles of tempo into the run and other variations, but for me this is a major building block. Yes, it isn't easy to come home from work or wake up early and squeeze out 15 miles on a weekday, but it makes the (continued next page)

5-6 mile recovery runs seem like a walk in the park and your 20's seem much more manageable.

The second workout is 3 x 1600; the legendary mile repeats workout. I love to do this workout about 12 days before my goal marathon. Marathon training if done properly wears on the body, and I often find myself a little slower on the track, especially after a 20 miler. This workout is a confidence booster, because you are already into your taper and are finally feeling strong. It begins to give you an idea of how far you have come and gives you a real mental edge come race day.

Finally, what discussion of Neil's favorite workouts would be complete without a mention of quarters—a lot of them...but we will save that one for another time.

## Boston

*by Dick Conley*

**R**elative to race conditioning, the type of workout you choose would relate to what distance you are training for and your age. Since beginning road racing in 1982, my main focus has been the marathon. There are a variety of workouts you can follow for the marathon, including hills and shorter distances on the track like 400 and 800-meter repetitions. Shorter to medium distance races also help you build conditioning for the marathon.

What has worked best for me, however, has been one or two-mile repetitions on the track, or running the same measured distance on the road, usually on Tuesday mornings. In recent years it has been three one-mile repetitions, with a 600-meter

rest between, or two two-mile repetitions, with an 800-meter rest. In the 1980's we would just run four or five miles continuously on the track, or road, as the workout. Running these distances at 10k pace conditions your body to run faster for extended periods of time. After twelve weeks of these workouts, your body, after tapering, performs marathon pace at ease, totally relaxed. Of course it is important to get in a handful of long runs for endurance, so that last 10k doesn't become like swimming in boiling oil.

So I would call this routine "My Favorite Workout." It's not too stressful and generates a healthy dose of endorphins, sending you off into the day with a smile on your face!



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## MEMORIES OF LLOYD

By *Dennis Burns*

**I**t was the spring of 1999. Mike Freshman approached me and asked me if I would be willing to put together a "Trail Race" to showcase Van Cortlandt Park. Since we were the Van Cortlandt Track Club, why not have a race in our own backyard?

Trail races were becoming popular at the time, and this would be an excellent way to showcase the "single-track" trails of the back hills that some of us had used for training. **ConEdison** had offered us sponsorship, but we needed to come up with an environmental theme. Thus, the Urban Environmental Challenge was created.

I can't remember who approached Lloyd with my idea to have edible trophies, as they do in other trail races. I think it was Adrian who had made the first contact. On the day of that first race in July of 1999, Adrian was dragging a wagon loaded with cakes and muffins across the flats to the race start. I remember how we tried to keep them from melting in the hot, steamy conditions. We never had that problem again, since we switched the race date to early April.

**Lloyd's Carrot Cakes** is located directly across from the Tortoise & Hare statue on Broadway. Lloyd was a true neighborhood sponsor. I remember the first time I met him. He introduced himself, and his huge hands swallowed mine up as we greeted one another. Lloyd was a very generous man. He never said no when I asked him if he would sponsor us for the next race. "Sure I will, of course!" he would reply, and he meant it.

Every April, like clockwork, Lloyd's bakers would have 16 carrot cakes, and 28 muffins ready for Sunday morning's pickup. Lloyd also supplied muffins for our X-C Series every year, all 7 races.

Lloyd was a part of the park. I would stop by to say hello on a cold winter morning on the bike or after a run on the flats. Lloyd would usually be there, and we would talk for a few minutes. I would sometimes see him as I rode my bike back from Orchard Beach. We would call my name and I'd wave.

VCTC member Wanda Bills was also influenced by Lloyd. Wanda worked for Lloyd at one time, and he even put her through baking school. Those of you who have tasted Wanda's baking can appreciate Lloyd's influence

**"He never said no when I asked him if he would sponsor us for the next race. 'Sure I will, of course!' he would reply, and he meant it."**

I'd see Lloyd in our neighborhood as well. I live in a hilly area of Riverdale/Yonkers, and just behind my house is a series of roads that connects to form hilly circular loops. I train on these often. As I would round the corner of the second loop, I could usually spot Lloyd's van in the driveway. He had a beautiful white house on the corner. Occasionally I'd see him or his wife, and we would wave to each other, or he would ask me about the Urban Environmental Challenge.

I still look for Lloyd or his van even now, as I run behind my house. I will miss you Lloyd. We will all miss you, but your spirit is still with us.

### **Editor's note:**

Lloyd Adams of **Lloyd's Carrot Cakes**, long-time friend of the VCTC and special supporter of our Urban Environmental Challenge, passed away on February 1st.

## **We Need You**

The Urban Environmental Challenge will be held on Sunday April 15th this year. Please read the list on the following page to find individual assignments. If you don't find your name on the list please volunteer to help us out.



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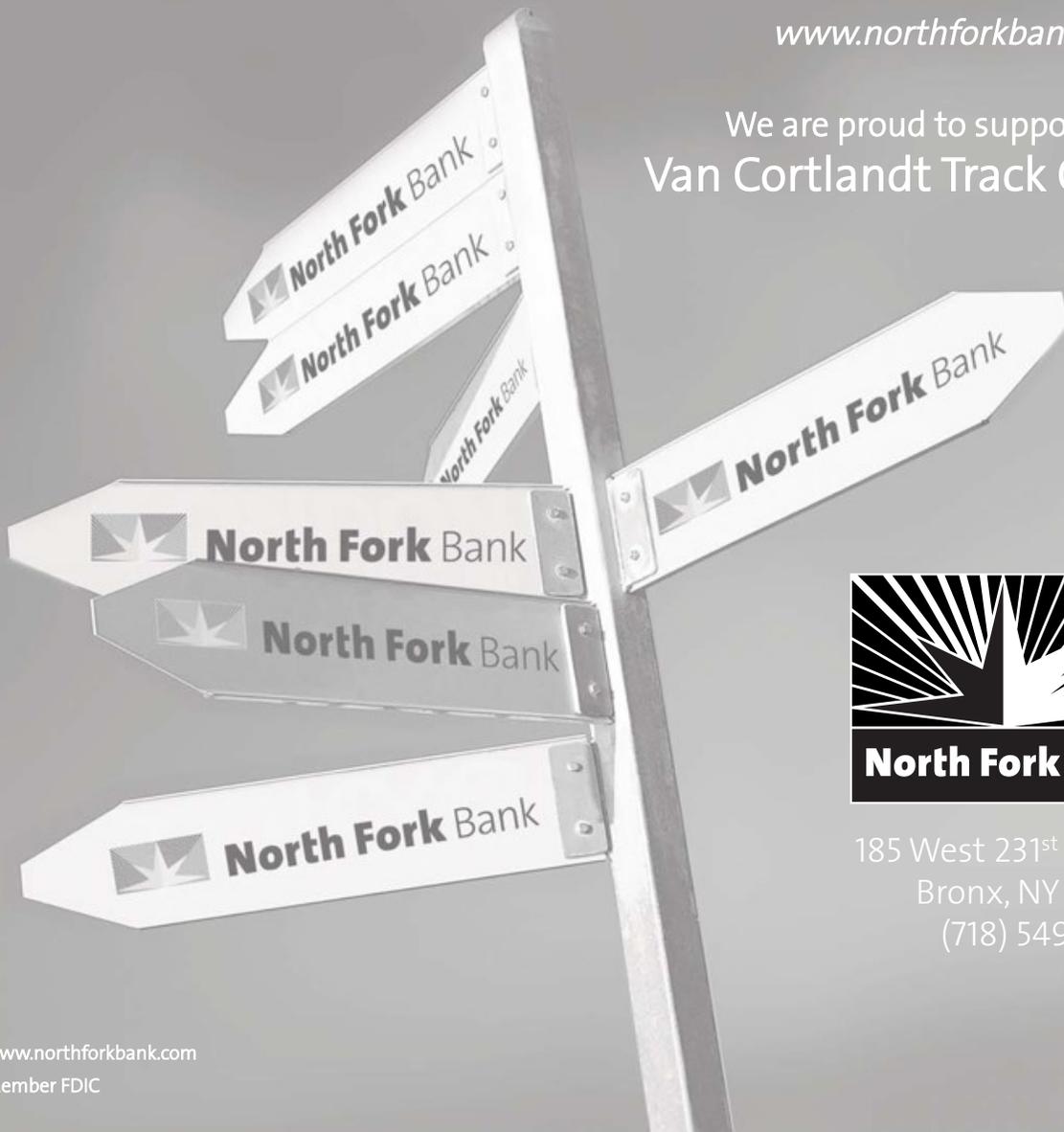
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## VCTC Annual Awards Dinner Mario's Restaurant, Arthur Avenue "Lets get the party started!"

This January, club members gathered at Mario's Restaurant on Arthur Avenue to celebrate their team and to show off their dance moves. (Clockwise from top left): Edith Jones and (next photo) Arnie Gore earned top honors as the VCTC Runners of the Year; Arnie's wife, Susan Epstein, added to the family victory by winning her age-group award; Bill Smith, Adrian Hunte-Smith and Gary Spalter seem to have tied for greatest fun-factor with (next photo) Blas Abadia(Peachy) and Kathy Nolan; Katherine Callan awards Sarah Baglio and Jo Ann Pate; Fernando Ruiz accepts his 70-79 age-group award; (center) Neil Leibowitz(pictured with wife and child) wins the 30-39 age-group, emboldened by his awesome performance at the Philadelphia Marathon. Many thanks to all who contributed and attended this wonderful evening.



## Friends of Van Cortlandt Park

*By Dennis Burns*

The Friends of Van Cortlandt Park is a very diverse group, with a common goal: the protection of the natural resources of the park, and the plants and animals, which live there.

As I trained more and more in Van Cortlandt Park, I began to develop a love for this wild place in the middle of the Bronx. As a former Earth Science Teacher, this park was my textbook, as I ran through the back hills. It has always been a very special place to me, and I wanted to find a way to pay it back for what it has given me. The best way to do that is to educate.

I took pride in the Urban Environmental Challenge, as a very serious and tough race, but its primary focus was to educate. To give people a taste of what we have in our "Environment", so they might appreciate its beauty, and think of Vannie in a different way, therefore hopefully fostering another positive bond between people and park.

When Adrian asked me if I wanted to replace her as a Board Member of FVCP, I jumped at the opportunity. I liked the "Friends" from the very beginning. I liked the idea that this group was here to protect our park. I went to a few Board Meetings and found everyone to be from a different background, but all with the same purpose.

Christina Taylor, formerly in charge of the Educational Programs at FVCP, is our current Interim Executive Director. Christina is busy at the new headquarters of the "Friends", located at 124 Gale Place, Apt. GrA, in the Amalgamated Houses.

Educational Courses for the coming year need to be planned to be

put into motion. "Lil' Explorers", "Junior Naturalists", "The Summer Teen Program", and "Environmental Internships", all give valuable experience to our youth, and the park reaps the rewards of their knowledge and hard work.

The Friends of Van Cortlandt Park also has programs for teachers too, as well as for the Community. In this way, people help, while they learn about this "Oasis" in the Bronx.

Margot Perron, the new Van Cortlandt Park Administrator, has been very helpful to the "Friends" also. She has brought with her a spirit of cooperation and understanding that has solidified the relationship with the NYC Dept. of Parks and the Friends. A former Administrator of Pelham Bay Park, Margot is definitely interested in maintaining the "wildness" of Vannie. (Margot, and Ray Acosta even walked the first loop of the UEC, in the dead of winter, and promised to have all the blow-downs removed).

Part of our Strategic Plan for the Friends is a "Trails Initiative" which will eventually allow the trails of Vannie to be cleared and maintained, as a way of connecting the many different communities, which border the park. Imagine being able to run to the other areas of the Park, long forgotten and overgrown.

The NYRRC is going to be donating \$10,000 to fix and/or maintain the running trails in Vannie. In addition, there is about 3 million dollars to be spent maintaining the Aqueduct trail in the Bronx. We need people to monitor this spending, and make sure the money is spent for the right purposes.

If you like Vannie as much as I do, and if you would like to see it remain wild, and not nibbled away at the edges by new construction, and buildings, consider helping the Park.

Consider joining the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park. We need people who love the park, and are willing to stand up and help keep it wild. Speak with me if you are interested in joining the "Friends". We need you....

## A Win In Albany

*by Mike Arnstein*



*Mike Arnstein winning Hudson-Mohawk Marathon.*

In preparation for the Hudson-Mohawk Marathon, I got 10 hours of sleep Friday night, a nap on Saturday and then on Saturday night I still only got 6.5 hours of sleep because of nerves, etc.

6 a.m. Sunday- in the car to Albany. Breakfast: Clif bar (Oh so good! 20 minutes eating this one!) 4 gels + lots of water for the last 42 hours.

The race started at 10am in Albany. I showed up after I got my black coffee at Starbucks (this stuff (continued on next page)



is like liquid nitrogen for me (caffeine)! \$25 entry (what a deal!) and got to the starting line my usual 2 minutes before the gun went off.

It was somewhere between 16 and 18 degrees F, little wind (5mph and variable), hazy high clouds with sun. Perfect temps for me, the colder the better!

The course is 5 loops but the 1st loop is about 3 miles and change and the other 4 loops are a different route and are about 5 1/2 miles. So getting lost was a big concern. Also almost no flat areas, all slight inclines and descents. And then the biggest major problem: mile markers were only every 5 miles...how to keep a steady pace!? Also each time you finished a loop you came to a cone in the middle of the road and you had to make almost a complete stop to turn around, I can't stand that.... going sub 6 pace I figure this was easily a 10 sec. loss in time.

Somehow, I missed the 5-mile markers, and all the others, for that matter. But I did



see the 10 mile marker and hit it at 59:20 and felt amazing, too easy actually. My heart rate was at or below 85%, I knew I was going 6 min or faster per mile, but not sure if I was at 5:46 or 5:56, it turns out on the ups I was probably at 5:56 and the downs at 5:46. I felt light as a feather (well damn it I should, I never eat anything)!

My body became so efficient in metabolizing carbs/sugars that when I took gels along with my legs

stuffed with glycogen from my loading process I had reserves to spare... I could easily go 30 miles at this pace I thought.

Another issue was that I was leading the race by so much, I was worried I was off course a lot of the time. This was a complete solo run from start to finish, I might as well have just marked out a course and done it completely alone. The guy who finished 2nd was over 20 min behind me.

But I did have some company...I decided to run the entire race with music (mp3 player). This was great. It made the run go by so fast and kept my mental attention in top gear. I knew the day was coming together when I got done with 3 loops and I felt like I hadn't even started the race yet. I kept picking up the pace, negative splits for certain, but still close so that my effort was consistent

I knew in my head from my training, that on a good day I could run a 2:37, but I must say I was really amazed at my performance. My carbo depletion/loading went perfectly, my legs never ever ever got tired. I'm not bragging, not exaggerating. It really felt like a regular training run, not even a hard tempo run. My heart rate was well below top effort. My legs were stocked with stored glycogen. I took some gels during the race and it was like instant turbo boost...I was shocked when I got to mile 25 and felt super awesome. I just thought to myself 'train hard, race easy' and it was so true! Before the race I was getting nervous about the 'battle' I was about to put myself through...but this was not the case, the battle was the training, diet, sacrifice day in and out ... the race finished up with the real results of my so-so effort: An average heart rate of 87%!, far below my usual 92-95% in a marathon. I was shocked at my average HR and the 2:34.19. This race changed the entire landscape of



my mind on what I can do with proper training. It's like studying for a test; you get down and learn, study the details and the test is the icing on the cake.

For me it comes down to this: How much do you want it? That is what it comes down to for each of us. The race was easy at an actual analysis of my effort by HR, but that doesn't make it any less of a personal achievement and sense of true satisfaction because the training was hell! For the spectators: No one remembers the details, they just see the results. For me it's about seeing what you're made of...no shortcuts, no easy way. None! You want it...how bad? The results will prove how much.

Oh, yes.... you can't guess what the 1st place prize was for this marathon. The performance of my life so far and I got a RASBERRY PIE! (not even a medal! no joke!) Oh, but holy cow I'm a complete nut case!... because I didn't even take a bite. Just gave it to my kids. Monday it's back to the pool!

# RACE RESULTS

## NYRR Manhattan Half-Marathon

"Distance: 13.1 Miles, 21.1 Kilometers"

Jan. 21, 2007

### Time Name Age Age-place

1:16:43	Michael Arnstein	M30	
1:27:56	Neil Leibowitz	M31	
1:38:41	Richard P Conley	M51	
1:41:03	Firdaus Dotiwala	M38	
1:47:12	Blas Abadia Jr	M51	
1:50:29	Bette Clark	F51	8th
1:54:22	Edward James	M60	
1:57:18	Zafar Shahbaz	M49	
1:57:28	Kathryn A Donovan	F48	
2:02:23	Arnold L Gore	M66	6th
2:04:03	Michael J Yorio	M59	
2:05:59	Margaret R Nolan	F46	
2:05:13	Jose D Cooper	M57	
2:11:45	Leoni Parker	F42	
2:10:23	Carl Morrishow	M50	
2:11:31	Edith Jones	F67	2nd
2:22:15	Gilda L Serrano	F58	
2:22:29	Susan R Epstein	F63	
2:24:03	Tami Luhby	F36	
2:26:47	Fernando Ruiz	M75	2nd
2:49:00	Ramon Minaya	M67	

## Key West Half-Marathon

Jan. 21

1:40:47	Dick Conley	M51	2nd
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## NYRR Gridiron Classic

Distance: 4 Miles

Feb. 4, 2007

27:31	Ivan S Mills	M51	9th
31:22	Arnold L Gore	M66	2nd
31:59	Bette Clark	F51	8th
33:06	Ramon Ruiz	M67	5th
34:49	Edward James	M60	
35:34	Louis Netter	M31	
36:02	Edith Jones	F67	1st
36:53	Dawn Netter	F36	
37:25	Carl Morrishow	M50	
39:34	Ira A. Weiner	M48	
47:13	Ann McKeague	M65	7th
53:26	Ramon Minaya	M67	

## TRRC Freezer 5k

February 4th, FDR Park

28:53	Adrian Hunte-Smith	F53	3rd age
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## Maraton San Blas, half-marathon

February 4th, Coamo, P.R.

1:44:00	Danielle Rosario-Mullen	F26	3rd age
1:50:36	Blas Abadia	M51	
2:00:47	Kate Donovan	F48	8th age
2:11:00	Margaret Nolan	F46	
2:36:18	Fernando Ruiz	M75	

## NYRR Bronx Half-marathon

February 11th

1:14:56	Mike Arnstein	M30	3rd age
1:29:53	Neil Leibowitz	M32	
1:39:28	Dick Conley	M51	
1:40:52	Firdaus Dotiwala	M38	
1:44:37	Tony Thoman	M44	
1:46:27	Dom Lombardo	M39	
1:50:32	Bette Clark	F51	5th age
1:54:53	Zafar Shahbaz	M50	
1:56:15	Ed James	M60	
1:57:46	Shirley Middleton	F52	
1:58:49	Kate Donovan	F48	
2:05:11	Margaret Nolan	F46	
2:06:04	Michael Yorio	M59	
2:06:19	Leoni Parker	F 42	
2:07:22	Rozsa Gaston	F49	
2:07:59	Jose Cooper	M57	
2:09:56	Alan Dorfman	M56	
2:13:07	Dennis Burns	M59	
2:14:03	Selma Sequeira Raven	F41	
2:15:14	Carl Morrishow	M50	
2:21:33	Tammy Luhby	F36	
2:24:11	Susan Epstein	F63	7th age
2:42:18	Ramon Minaya	M67	

## Cherry Tree 10-miler

February 17, Prospect Park

1:31:59	Arnie Gore	M67	2nd age
1:45:39	Susan Epstein	F 63	3rd age

## TRRC Freezer 5M

February 18th, FDR Park

40:39	Bette Clark	F51	1st age
46:37	Adrian Hunte-Smith	F53	

## AIA Half Marathon

February 18th, Ft Lauderdale, Fla

1:47:57	Hector Santiago	M69	
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**Armory NYRR 1500 meters**

February 22

6:32 Arnie Gore M67

**NYRR Al Gordon 4-M**

February 24, Central Park

26:45	Ivan S Mills	M51	
27:02	Firdaus Dotiwala	M38	
27:41	Anthony C Thoman	M44	
28:58	Ken Rolston	M55	
31:19	Arnold L Gore	M66	3rd
32:13	Bette Clark	F51	
33:17	Kathryn A Donovan	F48	
33:42	Margaret R Nolan	F46	
35:05	Adrian Smith	F53	
36:50	Jill Staats	F55	
39:41	Ira A. Weiner	M48	
40:01	Jo Ann Pate	F32	
40:21	Susan R Epstein	F63	
41:05	Sarah Baglio	F34	
43:24	Fernando Ruiz	M75	4th
46:36	Ramon Minaya	M67	
46:40	Ann McKeague	F65	

**Coogan's Salsa, Blues & Shamrocks 5k**

March 4, 168th St, Manhattan

20:05	Louis Csak	M40	
20:57	David C King	M56	2nd
21:58	Ken Rolston	M55	5th
23:31	Paulino Santana	M46	
24:07	Arnold L Gore	M66	2nd
24:33	Edward James	M60	
25:08	Ramon Ruiz	M67	4th
25:40	Katherine Callan	F44	
26:37	Margaret R Nolan	F46	
27:02	Dennis J Brooks	M54	
28:20	Jill Staats	F55	7th
29:52	Edith Jones	F67	2nd
30:10	Jo Ann Pate	F32	
30:12	Sarah Baglio	F34	
30:35	Gilda L Serrano	F58	
31:20	Susan R Epstein	F63	
32:32	Ramon Minaya	M67	
36:16	Ann McKeague	F65	6th
36:20	Charles Ludgate	M40	

**RUNNERS:IMPORTANT INFORMATION  
ABOUT SUBMITTING RACE TIMES**

I quickly found out after taking over this job from Jim Huddick that the hardest part is compiling the non-NYRRC re-

sults. The problem is that they tend to arrive in irregular bits and pieces. I need your cooperation to make them easier to compile, complete, and accurate.

First, please send your results to Peter at [pcoy@optonline.net](mailto:pcoy@optonline.net). Put VCTC Race Results in the subject field. **If you don't use email, please mail your results to 52 Stelfox St., Demarest, N.J., 07627. No phoned-in results, please.**

If you run an NYRRC race whose results are posted on the website, you do NOT need to report your results. I will pick up all results that are posted on the website.

If you run a non-NYRRC race, or an NYRRC race such as Thursday Night at the Races where the results are not posted on the website, please use the following new format. (This is for an imaginary race, but we can dream, can't we?)

St. Kitts 4-Miler  
St. Kitts and Nevis  
Feb. 11

Time: 20:05

Name: Ivan Mills

Sex/Age: M51

Age Place: 1

Overall Place: 2

Age-Graded Performance: 94%

The biggest change here is that instead of reporting "1st place, 50-54," you should now give your sex and race-day age, M51 in this case, followed by your age place, 1 in this case. That will make the format of the non-NYRRC races compatible with the format of the NYRRC races.

Obviously you should feel free to leave out Age Place, Overall Place, and Age-Graded Performance if you don't have the information or don't feel they're worth reporting. If you happen to use Excel, and you can send in your results that way, even better.

Please use exactly this format. It makes compiling the results much faster and less prone to error.

Write to me with any suggestions, complaints, corrections, etc., concerning race results. Meanwhile, thanks very much in advance for following this new reporting format, and have a good year on the roads!

Peter Coy

**REMEMBER: Please e-mail all race results to:**  
[pcoy@optonline.net](mailto:pcoy@optonline.net)

## CLUB NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

### Membership

- Membership dues for 2007 must be paid by April 30, 2007 for members to be eligible for 2007 awards and discounted prices for the Awards Dinner which will be held in January, 2008. (i.e. if the club decides to subsidize the dinner again). Rates are - Single - \$35 ; Family - \$40. PLEASE SEND CHECKS MADE OUT TO VCTC P.O. Box 341, Bronx, N.Y. 10471. Applications are available at [www.vctc.org](http://www.vctc.org)
- Please e-mail Firdaus Dotiwala at [thinrunner@gmail.com](mailto:thinrunner@gmail.com) with any changes of address, phone number, e-mail, etc. and whether you would like to be added to our group e-mail.

### Clothing

- PLEASE wear club apparel before, during and after races as this is the best way to publicize our club. Members of our club get many benefits for the dues paid (discounted apparel, etc.) and the club STRONGLY REQUESTS you to show off its colors. While we are reluctant to make this a club “rule,” we are asking you to represent the club.
- New singlets are available for the discounted price of \$15/- for all paid members. Also there are only 5 jackets left (in unisex sizes small, medium and large). Please contact Firdaus if you would like to buy one.

### Thursday Night Runs

Thursday Night runs are held at 7.00 pm and most of the runs are planned to incorporate running in the park with head-lamps. If it is not possible to run in the park due to snow/ice alternate routes are planned in and around Riverdale.

### VCTC 30th Anniversary

Anybody who knows the names and contact information of former VCTC members, please send the information to our social directors, Katherine Callan([kccallan@rcn.com](mailto:kccallan@rcn.com)) or Sarah Baglio([sarahbaglio@gmail.com](mailto:sarahbaglio@gmail.com)). We are looking for volunteers to join a committee to plan this event; e-mail Katherine or Sarah if you are interested.

### Newest Member

Tal Jacob Reuven Zada (7 lb 7 oz) was born February 28 to Rachel Gissinger and Guy Reuven Zada. Mom, dad and son are doing well!

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VCTC membership meetings are held on the second Saturday each month at 10:00 a.m. Club workouts are Tuesdays at 7p.m.(meet at the track at Van Cortlandt Park), Thursdays at 7p.m.(meet at the handball courts at 242nd St. and Broadway) and Saturdays at 8a.m (meet at the handball courts at 242nd St. and Broadway).

The Newsletter is published bi-monthly. We welcome all contributions. Deadline for articles for the May/June issue is April 16th; maximum length is 600 words. Please e-mail to: [kingkvd@optonline.net](mailto:kingkvd@optonline.net)

Please send all race times to: [pcoy@optonline.net](mailto:pcoy@optonline.net) or mail to: Peter Coy 52 Stelfox St., Demarest, N.J. 07627. **Please do not phone in results.**