

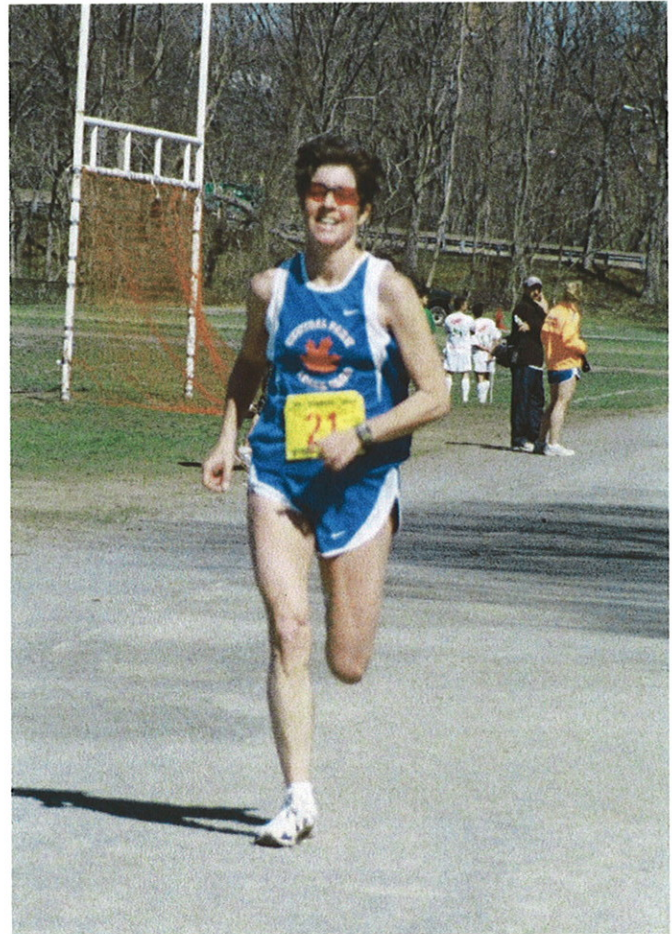
The Van Cortlandt Track Club

BRONX, NEW YORK

Volume # 39 Issue #3 www.vctc.org

May June 2006

Stacy Creamer winning the
women's race in the Urban
Environmental Challenge



**From the Challenge to the Ramble!
VCTC gets the royal treatment in Delaware
Dick Conley conquers the hills of Boston
Cherry Blossom Time in DC**

VAN CORTLANDT TRACK CLUB

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VCTC membership meetings are held on the second Saturday of every month at 10:30 am. Club workouts are Tuesdays at 7:00 pm (track), Thursdays at 7:00 pm (trails), and Saturdays at 8:00 am (roads/trails).

The VCTC newsletter is published bimonthly. For changes of address or missed copies, please notify us at 212 795-6460. We welcome all contributions.

Call race times to Jim Hudick:
201 816-8359 or e-mail:to
jhudick@optonline.net or use snail mail,
U. S. Postal Service. When submitting times,
please let us know the date, name, distance, and
location of the race; your time; age group award
(if any); and other club members who ran.
Articles and times for the next newsletter are
due **May 1**. E-mail to neshama44@msn.com.

IN THE LOOP

By Dennis Burns

It's so great to be seeing more and more of the sun these days. No more running around in the dark. Now it's sunny and we're in the park.

The Urban Environmental Challenge was a big success, though I'm not quite sure why so many people chose not to show. I forgot to put down the parking areas on the application. I'm sure that would have helped. Everyone was quite impressed by how well we could put on a race. I want to thank all volunteers again for helping to make it run so smoothly. Even the brief "removal" of some course markers couldn't slow us down.

Everyone had a great time. John Herrold, the Administrator of Van Cortlandt Park was thrilled to see the park being used this way. Runners came up to me to tell me how much fun they had, and how brutal the course was. The weather was beautiful (for a change) and everyone out there had a good time. That race is like a "rite of passage" for spring.

As spring is a period of "renewal", so now it is a time of renewal for me. It is time for me to step down as Race Director of the Challenge. It has been a wonderful experience, and very rewarding, but I cannot go on forever, and I feel it is time. I'd like the race to continue, it's just such a unique and fun race. We need someone to take over from here. I have all the information that you will need. If you are interested, please let me know as soon as you can. I will walk you through it. I'd like to keep the Challenge in the club.

In just a couple of weeks, we'll be starting the Summer 5K X-C Series. I'm sure Fred and his crew are ready to go. I couldn't think of a better way to spend a summer evening, than to be out there running the back hills. I'm looking forward to doing a few of those myself.

The Riverdale Ramble will be coming up shortly. We are now at a new location, and though the course is roughly the same, it will be run in the opposite direction, from North to South, as opposed to a South to North course of previous years. Some icing has been added onto the cake, the 254th St. hill will have to be run in the last $\frac{1}{2}$ mile. What a classy finish for a great course.

Yuen and her team has just sent out the applications, and we're expecting a large turnout. The facilities at the "Y" are much better for the runners, with showers, lockers etc. This is a "must-work" event, meaning we are expecting you. Please check for your name on the volunteer list when it comes out. We need your help.

Coaches' Corner, May 2006

By Ken Rolston

Hi all,

April proved to be an extraordinary month for US distance running:

- Adam Goucher who won the US Nationals 4K in February at our own Van Cortlandt Park, placed 6th in the World Champs, the best US finish in 20 years.
- Deena Kastor set 4 US records in one race in the Berlin $\frac{1}{2}$ marathon. She ran it in 1.07.34 and set records for 12K, 10 mile and 20K on the way.
- US men placed 3rd, 4th and 5th in the Boston marathon and had 2 more in the Top 10 and 11 of the top 20 runners.
- Kastor smashed the US Marathon record in London with a remarkable even-split race of 1.09.48 $\frac{1}{2}$ on the way to 2.19.36.
- Finally, 3 US men ran sub 27.40 on the track in Stanford as Alan Webb edged Dathan Ritzenhein and Anthony Famiglietti.
- Most important of all, my nephew ran a 50.8 400 meters on his team record 3.24.99 in The Penn Relays in front of 49,000 people!

So what's going on and why would this matter to VCTC? Success helps to create interest. And while our sport won't attain the interest level of baseball or football, it's nice to see that good things are happening with running in the US. I can't tell you how exciting it was to watch my nephew run and to hear the roar of the crowd as a high-school team from

Jamaica ran an incredible 3.11 in the mile relay.

Soon we'll be renewing the 5K summer series on the cross-country course. We're back on the track for Tuesday night workouts which are specifically geared to help you with these summer races. All workout ideas are welcome and occasionally acted upon! We will be doing some workouts in the hills this summer, too. Hill work seemed to be well-received this winter so why not add to the misery this summer?

It's a privilege to be coaching you. Every Tuesday brings a new group and a new dynamic. The combinations are always different and it's like putting a puzzle together, which is one of the reasons I never know which workout to employ until the last minute.

Plus it's so much fun to irritate Firdaus!

There are some neat races upcoming- Of course we start the summer series on May 25th.

The Bronxville Run for Fun 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ and 5 mile runs will be run on May 27. The Cook Your Buns 5K will be in Greenwich on June 9 and the Fairfield $\frac{1}{2}$ is on June 25th. And get ready for the 2nd annual 2 x 2 relay on July 6th.

For those of you who see a marathon in your near future, like this fall, now is the time to set the foundation for your race. I'll be happy to put together a plan for you.

REMEMBER!

We need all of you to show up to help on June 4th. Please plan to be at the Riverdale YH-YMCA between 7AM and 8AM. Find your name on the assignment list and call your coordinator to confirm your participation. If you are not listed and would like to help, please contact Gary Spalter or myself. Do your part to make this event happen. Volunteer attendance at this year's Ramble will be a major factor in deciding the success of the Ramble. Thank you,

Yuen Chun

19-Feb Sunday, am
A1A - Half Marathon
 13.1 Miles, 22.1 Kilometers 13.1 rs
 Fort Lauderdale, FL

1:44:00 Hector Santiago M68 2nd 65-69

5-Mar Sunday, 8:45 am
CAUSEMETTE 50K
 31.0 Miles, 50.0 Kilometers
 Cold Spring Harbor, LI

5:21:38 Lanny Levitt M55

5-Mar Sunday, am
Calle Ocho 8K
 5.0 Miles, 8.0 Kilometers
 Miami, FL

38:52 Hector Santiago M68

5-Mar Sunday, 9:00 am
Coogan's Salsa, Blues & Shamrock 5K
 3.1 Miles, 5.0 Kilometers
 168th Street & Broadway, NYC

16:30	Chris Malynowski	M29	
22:26	Danielle Ros.-Mullen	F25	
22:46	Blas Abadia Jr	M51	
24:21	Arnold L Gore	M65	1st 65-69
24:49	Ramon Ruiz	M66	2nd 65-69
26:02	Katherine Callan	F43	
27:47	Rozsa Gaston	F48	
28:18	Edith Jones	F66	3rd 65-69
27:02	Jill Staats	F54	
27:37	Carl Morrishow	M49	
27:41	Yuen Na Chun	F48	
28:58	Ira A. Weiner	M47	
29:41	Fernando Ruiz	M74	
30:29	Susan R Epstein	F62	

RACE RESULTS 2006

11-Mar Sunday, am
OCEAN DRIVE 5K
 3.1 Miles, 5.0 Kilometers
 Miami, FL

23:39 Hector Santiago M68 1st 65-69

12-Mar Sunday, 8:00 am
Pfizer Oncology Colon Cancer Challenge 4-Miler
 4.0 Miles
 Central Park, NYC

34:52	Louis Cruz	M43	
35:42	Edith Jones	F66	1st 65-
35:08	James Moloney Jr	M43	
38:16	John Arbucci	M48	
39:37	Gilda L Serrano	F57	
44:59	Lisa E Fleischmann	F42	

12-Mar Sunday, 9:15 am
Pfizer Oncology Colon Cancer Challenge 15K
 9.3 Miles, 15.0 Kilometers
 Central Park, NYC

1:07:30	Ivan S Mills	M50
1:12:21	Edward James	M59
1:13:20	Blas Abadia Jr	M51
1:26:06	Carl Morrishow	M49
1:30:55	Rozsa Gaston	F48
1:41:45	Ramon Minaya	M66

17-Mar Friday. Am
St. Pat's Lo-Tide Run
 6.2 Miles, 10 Kilometers
 Carolina Beach, NC

49:16 Annemarie Krothe F28 1st AG

8-Mar **Saturday, 8:00 am**
NYRR Half-Marathon Grand Prix:
Brooklyn
13.1 Miles, 21.1 Kilometers
Coney Island to Prospect Park ,NYC

1:38:52	Richard P Conley	M50	
1:47:54	Blas Abadia Jr	M51	
1:49:58	Firdaus Dotiwala	M37	
1:50:48	Ramon Ruiz	M66	3rd 65-69
1:58:42	Kathryn A Donovan	F47	
2:01:05	Jill Staats	F54	
2:03:40	Katherine Callan	F43	
2:09:36	Carl Morrishow	M49	
2:09:53	Ivan Ragoonanan	M60	
2:15:06	Edith Jones	F66	
2:19:35	Fernando Ruiz	M74	
2:21:27	Dennis J Brooks	M53	
2:29:31	Ramon Minaya	M66	
2:30:23	Edward James	M59	
2:15:23	Selma Seq. Raven	F40	
2:15:29	Ira A. Weiner	M47	

6-Mar **Sunday, 8:20 am**
More Marathon
26.2 Miles, 42.2 Kilometers
Central Park, NYC

22:03	Gilda L Serrano	F57	
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6-Mar **Sunday, 8:00 am**
More Two-Person Half-Marathon on
13.1 Miles, 21.1 Kilometers
Central Park, NYC

1:58:11	Kathryn A Donovan	F47	
2:06:25	Rozsa Gaston	F48	
2:06:33	Josephine King	F51	
2:12:13	Alta Dustin	F43	
2:14:07	Edith Jones	F66	
2:12:59	Susan R Epstein	F62	

1-Apr **Saturday, am**
Run for ASPIRE 10K
6.2 Miles, 10.0 Kilometers
Plainview LI

46:04	Blas Abadia Jr	M51	
1:00:28	Fernando Ruiz	M74	3rd AG

RACE

2-Apr **Sunday, 10:00 am**
Scotland Run 10K
6.2 Miles, 10.0 Kilometers
Central Park, NYC

44:19	Carlos E. Colonio	M51	
44:59	Blas Abadia Jr	M51	
55:58	Luis Cruz	M43	
56:41	Edith Jones	F66	2nd 65-69
56:42	Ramon Ruiz	M66	
1:03:27	Fernando Ruiz	M74	

2-Apr **Sunday, 10:00 am**
March Madness Biathlon
2.0 Miles (run);
12.0 Miles (bike)
Central Park, NYC

1:18:23	Richard P Conley	M50	2nd 50-55 9th Overall
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9-Apr **Sunday, am**
Azalea Fest 5k
3.1 Miles, 5.0 Kilometers
Wilmington, NC

22:13	Annemarie Krothe	F28	3rd AG
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9-Apr **Sunday, 9:00 am**
Thomas G. Labrecque Classic
4.0 Miles, 6.4 Kilometers
Central Park, NYC

26:36	Ivan S Mills	M50	
31:46	Ramon Ruiz	M66	
34:16	Edith Jones	F66	1st 65-69
36:56	Ivan Ragoonanan	M60	
37:44	Ira A. Weiner	M47	
40:36	Gilda L Serrano	F57	
43:06	Ramon Minaya	M66	

2006

17-Apr **Monday, 12:00 Noon**
BOSTON MARATHON
26.2 Miles, 42.2 Kilometers
Hopkinton to Boston, MA

3:33:56	Richard P Conley	M50	
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3-Apr Sunday, 10:00 am
adidas Run for the Parks 4M
4.0 Miles, 6.4 Kilometers
Central Park, NYC

31:06	Arnold L Gore	M65	1st 65-69
36:10	Edith Jones	F66	1st 65-69
40:18	Gilda L Serrano	F57	
39:34	Susan R Epstein	F62	
41:31	Ramon Minaya	M66	
39:52	Ira A. Weiner	M47	

9-Apr Saturday, 8:00 am
NYRR Half-Marathon Grand Prix:
Queens
13.1 Miles, 21.1 Kilometers
College Point, Queens, NYC **C**

:19:11	John Fenton	M30	
:35:26	Danielle Rosario-Mullen	F25	
:44:58	Blas Abadia Jr	M51	
:51:11	Zafar Shahbaz	M49	
:53:27	Ramon Ruiz	M66	
:57:39	Ivan Ragoonanan	M60	
:00:16	Michael J Yorio	M58	
:59:59	Carl Morrishow	M49	
:04:42	Rozsa Gaston	F48	
:06:13	Edith Jones	F66	2nd 65-69
:17:27	Fernando Ruiz	M74	
:21:25	Gilda L Serrano	F57	
:30:11	Ramon Minaya	M66	

0-Apr Sunday, am
Alley Pond 5 Miler
5.0 Miles, 8.0 Kilometers
College Point, Queens, NYC

32:04	Arthur Richards	M47	1st 40-49
34:20	Ivan Mills	M50	3rd 50-59

6-May Sunday, 8:00 am
RECKSON LONG ISLAND MARTHON
26.2 Miles, 42.2 Kilometers
Eisenhower Park, East Meadow, NY

3:23:41	Michael. P.Hudick	M61	1st 65-69
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6-May Sunday, 8:00 am
RECKSON LONG ISLAND
HALF-MARATHON
13.1 Miles, 21.1 Kilometers
Eisenhower Park, East Meadow, NY

1:38:56	Gabrielle Elissa Popoff	F29	
2:11:18	Tami Luhby	F35	PR

6-May Sunday, am
Bronx Community College 10K
6.2 Miles, 10.0 Kilometers
Bronx, NY

40:15	Arthur Richards	M47	2nd 40-49
42:30	Ivan Mills	M50	2nd 50-59
48:29	Hector Santiago	M68	
49:51	Arnold Gore	M65	
55:56	Edith Jones	F66	1st 60-69
1:00:24	Susan Epstein	F62	2nd 60-69

R A C E R E S U L T S 2 0 0 6

As I drove into Vannie, I had a mixture of feelings. In a way, it was like the sprint for the finish, when you're dead tired; you're almost there, but not quite. I had the usual case of nerves as a runner, yet, as a Race Director, I was winding down, because everything would be falling into place.

Everything always does fall into place, on the day of the race, and things flow smoothly. Few people know how much actual work goes into putting on a race. Everything must be planned, from the hats, to the food, tables, port-o-sans, and tents. All of these things must be there, to lay the foundation of the well-run race.

We had first scouted the course on a snowy day in February. A group of us VCTC runners ran the course in ankle-deep snow. It was a

ered to us the Friday before the race, and Paul had directed them to the perfect location - downwind from the rest of the race.

The soccer goals, which had been left at the start/finish by some private school, and could not be removed, became a sort of focusing point for the runners. I even tied our banner to one of the soccer goals, with help from Wanda and some "magic knots".

Registration was beginning to set up, while Gary drove up with some coffee & donuts for the crew. The guys could be seen struggling with the tents in the background, while everyone involved had their own excellent opinion of how it should be done.

Yuen was stuffing some bags with hats and TrailRunner magazines, along with some other people. Fred Daley was fidgeting with the

THE 8TH ANNUAL URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGE

beautiful experience, and gave me an idea of the trail condition. There were more blow-downs, thanks to the windy winter we had. I came out a few days later to saw down the dangerous sections, and the "eye-level" branches.

Paul Sawyer and I made another trip to the lower horse trails, and we removed beer bottles and cans, as well as other debris, including a bike frame, and we packed out a wheelbarrow full of stuff.

John Herrold and his Department of Parks Crew lent us 8 stanchions and some bike racks to form a secure baggage check. I was on the flats on Saturday to make sure they were put in the right location.

The trails were clear and the Start/Finish area was secure. We had 3 Port-o-sans deliv-

clock, while runners were beginning to line up at Registration. Did I say it was cold? Well, I saw some people running around in shorts, but it felt cold to me.

Everything seemed to go by in fast motion, just before the gun went off.

John Herrold, Administrator of Van Cortland Park, was amazed that not only could we put on a race like this, but a race, which exposes the runner to so many beautiful parts of the park. I spoke with him for a few minutes, and went over to the North Fork Bank Tent to speak with the representatives. They were all very friendly but they were freezing. Not only was North Fork Bank our sponsor, but their Vice President, David Isaac, was going to run the race along with his daughter, Rachel. What an exciting day.

I turned around to speak with my friend Joan Baldessari, whom I haven't seen for a while, when Willie Kaye came running up, shouting that some kids had ripped out some of the flags in the first section of trail. Since there was a fork at the top of the first hill, there was concern that someone might make a wrong turn, and so I took a few flags, and ran down the road about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile, and up the hill. After putting back some of the flags, I ran back to the Finish area, and took some mental notes. The Ambulance Guys were here, the Radio Guys were on the trails, and Dave and Ken had just come back from sending out the marshals. We were ready to go.

I don't remember too much about the race, other than feeling quite terrible from the beginning. I held a pretty good pace until we hit the first hill. Being towards the back forced me to run in available spots, rather than running my own line. The dust from the parched trails stayed in my throat, as I just tried to continue my momentum. Now I was not so crowded, so I



just tried to keep a steady rhythm. By the time I reached Caryl Ave, I was very hot and very thirsty. All I could think about was that I was going to carry a water bottle, but decided against it at the last minute. This was, after all only 6+ miles. What a dumb mistake, I said to myself.

By the time I passed the start/finish, heading out for my 2nd lap, I had removed my poly top and threw it to Fred as I passed by. I had run a respectable 25 minutes for the first lap, but I knew I would slow down in the 2nd lap. Over the hill again, and down the next, it was great to see the course so well marked and marshaled, but there were times out there that I didn't want anyone out there to see me. I felt as if I was going so slow!

Back through the horse trails, I seemed to glide (in slow motion) as I felt myself following the twists and turns of the course, my feet finding the right places. I negotiated the trail like automatic pilot. I had just one desire now. The finish was just ahead. I raced past someone just as I hit the flats and headed for the line, but I couldn't hold the speed, and 2 people passed me before the line.

I wobbled over to this young girl who was handing me water, and half deliriously took the glass from her hand, before I realized this was Alize, my grand daughter. I offered her a kiss, but she said I was too slimy. She was having a great time handing water to the runners.

What a relief, it was finally over. All of that work, and now it was over. Now I could savor the moment. It tasted so sweet. We made it work, once again. This whole menagerie of people, each one knowing what they had to do to make it work. And it was a huge success! Everyone was having fun.

Continued on next page

Challenge cont'd

I want to thank all the volunteers who helped at the Urban Environmental Challenge: those out early to pick up the tents, those erecting them, those at Registration, Those working the clock, those working the food, those out marking the trails, and those out marshalling them. Without you all, this would have never happened.

"What a great race, and so much fun", most people say. "I would never believe I was in the Bronx!" "I thought I knew Van Cortland Park". These are all frequent response by people from within VCTC and outside of it. It would be a shame to let this race go, this is such a special race.

And we need someone else to run this race. After so many years with the Urban Environmental Challenge, it is time for me to say farewell. I have had my fill of Race Directorship, and I need to let someone else take over

the reins. The energy in this club is really remarkable, but we need new direction and leadership. We need for you to take over the Urban Environmental Challenge.

Someone else with new ideas needs to take over. We need you. If you are interested in Race Directorship of the UEC, please contact me. I have all the information you will need; files, records, mailing lists, and I can guide you as you go through the process, of being a race director, but I am stepping back. My role will be in a guidance capacity only.

If you work well together with someone else, you can share the duties, but one person must be in charge, and take responsibility as Race Director. Decisions work better when there is one person in charge. Many of you out there have the necessary skills. Let's not say farewell to the Urban Environmental Challenge. Let's not let it go the way of the Passenger Pigeon, Dodo bird, Neanderthal, Heights Inwood 10k, Perrier 10k, Roberto Clemente 10k and many great races, which have become extinct.

There are other clubs that have expressed interest in the Challenge, but I'd rather it remain in the club. If no one in the club is willing, however, to continue with the Challenge. I will, in the interest of the continuation of the race, open it up to other clubs. This will happen in late July or the beginning of August.

Steve Marsalese wins again!



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DOWNHILL IN BOSTON

By Dick Conley

Bette Clarke asked that I write a small piece about this year's 110th Boston Marathon. We're counting on her writing a piece about the 111th next year, and I look forward to getting her perspective on the race.

In addition to this year, I've run the race a handful of times and have some familiarity with the history and the course.

The Boston Marathon dates back to 1897. In 1924 the start was moved to Hopkinton, a suburb west of Boston. In 1927 the course was lengthened from 24.5 to 26.2 miles, the Olympic certified distance.

The Amateur Athletic Union did not allow women to formally participate in long distance running events until 1971. Nina Kuscsik was the first woman champion in Boston in 1972.

The race has always been held on Patriots Day, a holiday celebrated only in Massachusetts and Maine, now on the third Monday in April. The holiday commemorates Paul Revere's ride from Lexington to Concord to announce the imminent arrival of hostile British troops. Having grown up in Portland, Maine, from a young age you had an awareness of the Marathon because it was the big event on this holiday. It dominated the news, and I remember always thinking about what great athletes these runners must have been to finish a race at that distance.

My memory of real life champions dates back to mid-1970. Beginning in 1975, Bill Rogers won the race four times. Rogers did a lot to heighten peoples' interest in road racing and the marathon. His colorful personality and ability to relate to people helped contribute to the running boom

that took place in the US in the 70's and 80's. Joan Benoit, who grew up in southern Maine, won the race in 1979 and 1983. She was a surprise winner in 1979, running her first marathon. While not as outspoken or flamboyant as Rogers, her quiet determination and toughness also inspired Americans to get into running.

Since Greg Mayer won in 1983, and Lisa Weidenbach in 1985, there have been no US winners.

In terms of field size and scope, the New York City Marathon is the only other race I have run that compares with Boston. Both are point-to-point races. New York, however, is run completely within the City and as a result I believe there are more spectators. In Hopkinton the crowds are light as most of the spectators are local residents. You do encounter large crowds as you enter and traverse the towns along the course: Ashland, Framingham, Natick and Wellesley. Between these towns there are quiet stretches with some scenic vistas. Of course it is not quiet in the race, as you are part of a herd of 22,000 runners!

Without examining demographics, it also appears that New York has a more diverse field of runners. The New York course also offers a much more diverse experience in neighborhoods and culture.

Boston is notorious for beating up a runner's quadriceps. Over the first 16.5 miles there is a 400-foot drop in elevation, which puts lots of strain on the quadriceps. From miles 17 through 20 you encounter the Newton Hills, of which two are sizable. Over this part of the course you climb about 250 feet in elevation. The most strenuous hill is Heartbreak Hill, the last, at 20.5 miles. If you are wavering at this point your

Continued on next page

Boston cont'd

last 5.5 miles are going to be tough. After cresting Heartbreak Hill, you begin another long downhill of about 300 feet in elevation to the finish---the quads begin to burn over this stretch. In fact, basic training for this race should be practicing down hills to condition the quads; up-hill repeats will also help.

From the hills to the finish the crowds of spectators become huge. They are a bit more rowdy than New York, as the crowds are younger, many coming from the various colleges along the course. As you go into Kenmore Square at mile 25, the roar is great, but can cause you to lose your concentration. This year I saw my father at 25, and other family members, and gave my dad a hug while

slapping five with my nephews.

The race conditions were good this year and I was feeling all right on Boylston Street, the last half-mile into the finish in Copley Square. I was thinking about the marathon my 77-year old father and late mother ran raising 12 kids, and how I was part of their steep uphill climbs! Also about how as you age time seems to pass by faster, but other things seem to slow---like race times. My quads were sore traveling up to the finish, but the pain eased as I noted the time and very small margin remaining that re-qualified me for next year's race, where I expect to see Bette Clarke! Have to start that downhill training again in a few months!

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The Gulf Coast After Katrina

By Johnetta Miner,

Editor's note: Johnetta (Sue) Miner, a longtime member of VCTC, is a Nurse Practitioner with a Masters in Public Health. This year, she volunteered to help out in Louisiana, where residents are still suffering after Hurricane Katrina.

Spring is here! My neighborhood is in full bloom with magnolias, tulips, hyacinths, forsythia, and cherry blossoms. What a beautiful palette. Today, I'm using this newsletter to write about a population's health. Specifically, the people in Cameron.



Cameron Parish, Louisiana

Over the past two months my life has been up and down and up again. Life has given me many challenges and I've learned lessons along the way. The most rewarding was my stay in Louisiana and caring for the people, residents and contractors, who are 'surviving' after Hurricane Rita. They were very warm, appreciative, so courteous, thankful to be alive, working long hours, labor intensive hours, to rebuild their homes, community and their lives.

On March 20, the Dept. of Health and Human Services telephoned and asked if I could leave on the 21st for Louisiana. It was about 10 AM. Well, before 5:30 PM I had an electronic round trip airline ticket, itinerary, ground transportation upon arrival, reservations at the inn (base camp tent 'housing' had been discontinued with this rotation), several welcoming emails from the doctor I was replacing and emails from the LCDR of the Public Health Service Corps Field Office at FEMA in Baton Rouge. I was expected, by FEMA, to be in Baton Rouge before 4:30 PM on March 22, in order to be sworn in and federalized. Once I was federalized, transportation would drive me to Sulfur, Louisiana, which was three hours from Baton Rouge.

It was a smooth transition, with a short layover in Atlanta, Georgia. I arrived in Sulfur around 9 PM, met the LCDR who was serving as the team leader and told to be ready to leave @ 6:45 AM. The drive would take an hour and fifteen minutes and the conference call with the field office and the other parishes' team leaders would take place during the drive. It was midnight by the time I got in bed! Other than stopping to eat dinner and going to Wal-Mart to buy food for lunch, that was our routine for two weeks. The emergency medical team who manned the ambulance was stationed on the far side of the parking lot in an open field. They were utilized for patient transport to the hospital, which was about a 45 minute drive. The security person was always on duty outside the clinic and the CMDR and LCDR were inside assisting me and carrying out their Public Health Service

Corps responsibilities.

It was a joy to provide healthcare to people who appreciated and needed it. In doing so, I also listened attentively. Many patients needed to talk and someone to truly listen and hear their stories. For example, the lady who had just reburied her mother and was looking for the body of her father. Both had been washed up with Rita. For the next two days her children came in with medical problems and I listened to the story anew, from their perspective. Or the man from Kentucky who had been there for 8 months, putting up utility lines and another man who had been hauling debris for the past eight months. Some of their experiences were heart wrenching. The children were also showing signs of stress and chronic health problems. I could only come away with a profound and renewed respect for the human character, integrity and man's humanity toward man. It is said that people forget, the media forget, out of sight is out of mind. Let us not forget because the long term after effects of the hurricanes are just beginning. There is a dire need for health care in Cameron, Louisiana, the parish that was 90% destroyed. I'm a witness. For more information send email with Cameron Parish in the Subject area. Take Care, Be Well,

Johnetta Miner, NP

VCTC Gets the Royal Treatment in Delaware

By Jill Staats

On April 28th, three adventurous members of VCTC loaded up in Yuen's vehicle for a road trip to Delaware where a trail race that was being held on Saturday the 29th. We met in the Village and began our trip. An hour and a quarter later, we had gone 5 blocks to get to the Holland tunnel. Not a great beginning. Once we were on the road, Kate, our chauffeur, made very good time. We arrived around 7:00, checked into our lovely room and had a wonderful dinner before retiring for the evening to rest up for the big day. It was reported to me in the morning that I snore -- something I find hard to believe.

I was signed up for the half-marathon. Yuen was signed up with Charles to do the Triple Crown and Kate was signed up to do the Triple Crown by herself.

For those of you who don't know what the Triple Crown is, let me enlighten you. The first part is a half-marathon, which has two stream crossings, lots of jumping over logs and uphill and over dale. You have 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours in

which to finish and then it is on to the 10k. No stream crossings and very beautiful. Once you have completed that, you then complete the 5k. That is the Triple Crown.

Yuen did the first part (the half-marathon) and Charles did the last (the 10k and 5k). Kate was magnificent -- completing all three of the races. She ran strong and had a smile on her face at the end (she looked like she expected the paparazzi to be there to take her picture). Yuen felt somewhat cheated at the end of her half marathon, as she went the wrong way at the end and possibly ran more than she needed to. I guess she has to go back next year and get it right. I ran strong and was enjoying myself and then unexpectedly I ran out of steam in the last two miles. Those wet running shoes must have gotten to me (have to blame it on something). My legs felt like they were dragging weights. I guess I too will have to go back next year and do it again, only this time, I would like to tackle the Triple Crown.

Delaware cont'd

Along the way, we ran into Tony, who did the half-marathon and Bill and Adrian who did the 5k. It was a good showing for VCTC and we came home with some medals. Yuen and Charles won for the open Triple Crown. Kate won in the masters division, 40 and older, for the Triple Crown. I won in my gender and age group for the half marathon (the fact that I was probably the only one is beside the point). Kate now goes by the title "Her Royal Highness." She wears her medal proudly and everywhere she goes, so everyone can share in her accomplishment.

Trail racing is a much different experience from road racing and I am enjoying it. For

those of us who are worried about our aging joints, this is a nice change of pace. I found that I was much less concerned about my race time and more concerned about not breaking my neck. Firdaus would be proud, I really lifted my knees. The scenery is distracting, and watching for hidden branches keeps you occupied. I can live without the bath in the streams at the beginning and end of the race, but even that adds to the fun. Yuen and I had considered holding hands to cross the last stream, but decided to be tough and go it alone.

I am ready for the next one. Until then, it is back to the track workouts.



Charles Brewster, Jill Staats, Kate Donovan, Yuen Chun, and Adrian Hunte Smith showing their medals in Delaware.

Running Among the Cherry Blossoms

By Susan Epstein

'Twas the night before Christmas, Dec. 24, 2004. I finally had settled down at the computer, ready to book a treat for spring -- the Washington D. C. Cherry Blossom 10 Miler. Entries were limited, and projected to close by mid-January. Lo and behold: they had closed already. Wait 'til next year. I do not get entry-closed twice.

September 2005: I checked the website. Online registration opened December 12. By the evening of December 12 we were registered. We heard that entries had closed the next day.

Years ago we were in Washington D.C. when the cherry blossoms were blooming. I am a romantic fool for flowers, and especially, spring blossoms. I like to encounter them in motion. Walking is good, running is better. What could beat running through cherry blossoms? Of course, one cannot predict exactly when they'll bloom, or if the weather will be decent. Neither happened for last year's race; runners said they nearly were blown off the bridge.

For us, this year, it all fell into place. In January we booked in one of the two race headquarter hotels in Crystal City. When we arrived after a really cheap and cramped trip on Greyhound on Friday night, March 31, we peeled off layers of clothing in the 80 degree heat. The next day was cooler, but sunny, windy, and beautiful. After a small breakfast in the underground maze near the hotel, we hit the expo. Arnie and I like to eat our way through expos, and we were not disappointed. Lots of energy bar samples and other goodies. Careful not to stay too long, we left a big block of time for the cherry blossoms. A Metro ride to Smithsonian, a short walk, and we were at the Tidal Basin.

The blossoms were out in full glory in a long path around the water. There were crowds of tourists from Asia and other parts of the world taking pictures under every tree and speaking a medley of languages. We took the long walk around the Tidal Basin, stopping for a country music concert. I thought, the best art exhibit in Washington is not in a Smithsonian museum, but here outdoors. And next day we were to see it on the run.

When in Wash D. C., museums still are necessary to see; they're free, and wonderful. At the National Gallery we quickly went through an exhibit on Dada art, which probably wasn't Arnie's favorite thing. On the way, however, we did get to see the F.D. Roosevelt memorial, which we both enjoyed.

In late afternoon, time to leave the museum, wait on long lines just to enter the Metro station, then find a way to carbo-load. No official race pasta party this time. We checked out the underground mall near the hotel, not wanting to go out and make a late night of it. It was a ghost town, with most stores closed, but a small, quiet Mexican restaurant beckoned. Plenty of carbs, and a margarita for chilling out. With food, drink, and the day's activities, we slept well, too tired to obsess about the race.

Very early morning brought a trek to the shuttle bus outside the main host hotel. Runners not as privileged as we had to take a Metro to a shuttle. We saw two buses, a large, luxurious-looking one, and a yellow school bus. We took the comfortable one. We noticed several small, slender, African men getting on, and now who is that blond guy - oh, that's Bill Rogers, sitting down next to John Bingham, the "Penguin." Were we on the right bus? No one was telling us to get off.

cont'd on next page

Cherry Blossoms cont'd

The school bus stopped a half a mile from the start. Our bus continued on a roundabout route, getting us right at the start. Getting into my slow corral, I was rested and prepared. This would be like a romp in a great big park, not a speed test.

It was exactly like that. There were bridges, country-like roads, with early spring greenery and cherry blossoms all over. We ran past where we had walked the day before. A little bit of the city, too. It was sunny, but not too hot. Crowds -- but plenty of room to run. In all, a perfect day.

My time, 1:43, wasn't my best of the year, but I'd run a decent More half marathon the week before. We took the shuttle bus back

to the hotel, where we had advantage of late checkout to shower and rest. There were a few hours before our Greyhound ride to New York, and lots of museums to see. What to do with the luggage? I found a solution. Arnie loves the sunshine and the life on the Mall, but doesn't actually like art or art museums. So while Arnie sat in the grass with the suitcases, eating ice cream, I went into the Sackler to see a Hokusai exhibit (again, very quickly for lack of time).

What a fun weekend, and inexpensive. In Washington D. C., the best art, indoors and outdoors, is free. Transportation is cheap. We will do this race again, and hopefully, the cherry blossoms and spring weather will on target for race time.

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