



W O R D f r o m = t h e B I R D

BCRR MONTHLY NEWS

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Running in Midland with Valentino Jay



So, it's been a full 5 months since I have started living in Midland. It's been a great transition for our family overall. Running-wise there are definitely some pros and cons to running in West Texas.

I'll start with the cons:

-There is no BCRR! There are running groups out here, but it doesn't seem like they meet as a group on Sundays and do the same loop. It's much more of a "post your plan on FB and see if someone wants to join you." No happy hour get-togethers, either. They do have a stroller run, where you run with your babies/kiddos in the stroller, so I guess that's close enough to BCRR Mellow Monday.

-Another con is that there are no garages that are 13 stories tall like the Med Center in Rice Village for great hill repeats. I found a public garage that is 6 stories tall, so that's not too bad.

There are some pros to running in Midland:

-Mornings and nights are amazing! Mid July the average temp before 8am is 70-75F and the humidity is practically non-existent, so summer training is not totally miserable! I've started doing most of my runs before work as a result.

-There is a nice high school track that is accessible 24/7 to the general public. Bathroom always has TP in it :)

-There is a park here where the perimeter is about 1.5 mi, but if you get creative with the loops on the inside and outline the soccer field as well, you can make each loop 2.8 miles. I've recreated Memorial Park with better scenery! And it's possible to be on grass for 90% of that loop (I'm a fan of running on grass/dirt). Part B pro of this park is there are 3 sets of bathrooms!

A personal benefit to not having an organized club is that I've looked in other areas for running buddies. The senior VP of my company is a marathon runner in his 50s who is pretty quick (sub-4 marathoner), so we've been running together on some mornings which has been really cool!

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Word from the Bird
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WORD FROM THE BIRD

From the President



Photo credit: Christina Jones

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The HARRA Fall Series kicks off this month with the XC Relay on Saturday, September 29th. Many members of BCRR have begun the race day preparations of speed work, long runs, and recovery runs, all with the goal of being perfectly trained for the Chevron Houston Marathon and Aramco Half Marathon. However, there is one race day preparation that the majority of us easily overlook.

The afternoon before each of the Fall HARRA races, John Phillips makes a trek to the Boat Shed to fill his trailer with a tent, tables, chairs, and a porta-potty. His hard work is the reason why before each race our club members are cooled by fans, warmed by heaters, and our pre race.....jitters... are addressed in a private bathroom. **Fun fact:** BCRR was the first club with our own tent - and it was brought by none other than John Phillips himself.

Behind-the-scenes volunteers are numerous in BCRR - and I think that is one of the secrets to our success. **Great support = Great races**

However, John Phillips can't accomplish all of this alone, nor should we expect him to. As always, throughout the season we will be reaching out to BCRR members to volunteer with boat shed duty, set up, and tear down. I encourage each member to volunteer for a HARRA race. With 300 members - I feel certain we can cover the volunteers needed!

Happy Running! - Christina

REPORT YOUR RACE RESULTS

We want to know what our members are doing on the roads and/or trails. Send all your results to us at thatsjoesmail@yahoo.com and we'll make sure they hit the next newsletter!

ADVERTISING INFO

How would you like to see your own ad in the Bayou City Road Runners Newsletter? For all personal or business advertising inquiries, please send an email to the Treasurer at p_griffiths@bellsouth.net.

Member Database

Has your contact info changed?
Send any updates to
mikemangan41@gmail.com

WORD FROM THE BIRD
Contd. From page 1: Running in Midland with Valentino Jay

I was essentially out of running for a solid 4 years before the BCRR group slowly turned my running fire back on and now I'm striving to complete my first marathon at the Chevron Houston 2019. So thank you to all of the BCRR members for reminding me about the joys of running. If the weather is decent I also plan on being there for the Houston Half in October, so looking forward to seeing y'all!!

Houstonian Hikers, The Annual BCRR Summer Excursion By Frank Dougherty



-BCRR Sherpas atop Mt. Bierstadt

But after some quick realizations, it was discovered that the Houston heat had hobbled many of the interested members, not to mention the fact that the Houston Marathon was 6-months away, far too down the road to keep us Houstonians in top racing shape. Thus, it was decided that a different type of challenge would be tackled: Hiking.

The mountains were calling. It was that time of the year again. It was time for a group of sea-level acclimated BCRR runners to escape the sweaty Houston summer heat and head somewhere cooler. In year's past, the annual BCRR summer excursion consists of a running race (half marathon, or other distance) in a location with a much more exotic backdrop and much cooler climate. This year the Colorado Rockies (the mountains, not the baseball team) were calling. At first, a half marathon in Estes Park was on the docket.



-Shenanigans when altitude gets to your head?

"Hiking sounds like fun," I reflected, as I heard the news of the new game plan. I pondered again, "how sweet would it be to rekindle my childhood boy-scouting memories of the great outdoors?" Finally, I thought, "I know how to handle running workouts at sea level, and a 7-mile Wednesday Valhalla-loop run is no problem...But hiking in Colorado, at altitude, how hard could that be?" Well, I'm here today to tell you, I underestimated the preparations. Before delving into the juicy details of the trip, I quickly want to reflect on five optimal behaviors of hiking in altitude and just to warn you, the previous boy-scout me would be disappointed in his future self.

WORD FROM THE BIRD



For those preparing to hike at altitude, you should do the following: (1) Moderate Your Physical Activity; (2) Get a Good Night's Sleep; (3) Watch Your Alcohol Intake; (4) Wear Sunscreen; and (5) Drink More Water. Well, I can profoundly say I only did one of those, and it wasn't watch my alcohol intake, or moderate my physical activity, in case you couldn't guess those already.

The group was lucky enough to have Christina Jones and Neeraj Rohilla, both former Colorado residents, help guide "us non-mountain locals" around the area and offer us tips along the way. Our group settled on a small mountain town, called Dillon, where we created the BCRR home base for the stay. Much to the disappointment of the ladies and to myself, Tim Riggins would not be making a cameo appearance, when we all realized the place where we were staying wasn't the home of the prolific Dillon Panthers from *Friday Night Lights*.

Oh well, such is life. Although I could have sworn I saw Coach Taylor catching some rays by the town lake, but I think that was the lack oxygen, and my obsession with that show messing with my mind. Three days of hiking then ensued. Early morning wake-ups, pre-5:00 AM breakfasts, coupled with lavish peanut butter and jelly sandwich demands, were the norm during these days. The group's initial task was to summit Mt. Bierstadt, which would prove to be a true test of our hiking muscles. For most of us, Mt. Bierstadt would be the first time hiking a "14-er," which is a mountain peak greater than 14,000 feet above sea level. For those that didn't know (myself included) Colorado has 53 documented 14-ers dotting their landscape. To successfully hike these beasts, it is recommended to arrive early and descend before 12:00PM to avoid the potentially hazardous and unpredictable afternoon thunderstorms that could roll in without a moment's notice. A lack of oxygen, cold temperatures, and dry air created a climate most of us Texas-travelers were not accustomed to. Nevertheless, the group held tough and adapted. We all used our running fitness to march onward and upward.



A scenic hike, a lost lake, and an almost lost-Neeraj were in store the following day, when the group hiked around Copper Mountain ski resort. Little bits of rain drops and billowing clouds did not stop our gang from completing the 13-mile roundtrip hike. This would mark our half marathon, our pièce de résistance, for the weekend. The weary travelers were excited to rest back in Dillon. Finally, to cap off the trip, a Grays/Torrey's combination peak hike was in store. Christina, Andrew, Caitlin, Neeraj and myself scurried up the mounds of rock to summit both peaks and mark the end of an fun-filled and exhausting BCRR hiking-excursion.



WORD FROM THE BIRD

Before I end, I would be remiss to not highlight some key awards of the trip. In no particular order: The "Ricky Bobby" most miles traveled award goes to Valentino Julien, for his dedication and not letting his moving to Midland, TX stop him from joining the fun. He dared to drive the 12 hours from Midland, TX to Dillon, CO.

The "Jurassic Park Jeep" award goes to David Gaskin for cruising around the mountains in our group's rented Jeep.

The "Danica Patrick" speedy hiker and endurance award goes to Christina, Andrew and Caitlin for their pursuit of greatness as we swiftly passed other hikers along the way to the summit.

Lastly, the "Sherpa" award goes to Neeraj, who hiked at least 7 separate peaks over 14,000ft that weekend and managed to not get struck by lightning in the process.

I wonder where next year's BCRR trip will be?

A Bib's perspective when your running PR days are behind you by Bibs 93 & 1082



Bib 1082: So, I will be blunt. Is it over for old farts like us?

Bib 93: Over what? Career development? Time to find love? Wait, are you again talking about your crazy imaginary girlfriends?

Bib 1082: No, and please watch your language. I meant running PR's in the races. It used to come so easy. Maybe not every time was PR, but you could consistently run your 5k/10k "PR minute mark" like 39:11, 39:33, 39:59, 19:57, 19:11, 19:30 etc. without much trouble.

Bib 93: Ah, now I get you. We aren't old. We just can't seem to run like we used to ... mojo not there, body feels bad, can't get the groove back. It will come back soon. Don't worry.

Bib 1082: Really? It's me you are talking to. Your PR partner, bib 1082. Remember?

Bib 93: Wow! That was a long time back, Bib 1082. How can I forget that warm and muggy half marathon in 2010 where we both raced to our respective PRs.

Bib 1082: It was a good race and a good point in our running life where we continued to improve for next 2 years without facing many hurdles. What happened after that? I will save my sob story for later.

Bib 93: Well, I've postulated at variable points in time that this was the fault of heat, humidity, cold, rain, wind, sun, pollen, terrain, lunar cycles, time zones, and time of day. I want to convince myself this present situation of relative running-mediocrity is actually better than the glory days of my early and mid 30's.

Bib 1082: Well, you try to find reason behind everything so there is that. But, that's a hard sell even for you. Tell me more.

WORD FROM THE BIRD

Saga of John Phillips as told to Mike Mangan

Mike Mangan (MM): Hey John, everyone in the club knows you as the man who makes things happen at the HARRA races with the tents and Porta-cans and all, but most of us really don't know that much about you. Our goal is to change that.

John Phillips (JP): Ok, fire away.

MM: Let's start at the beginning. How did you get into running?

JP: Well, I saw an advertisement in the paper for the Houston Marathon the Friday before the race and went and registered for it the following day. That was in 1986.

MM: Had you trained?

JP: If you count the annual 4 mile run around my neighborhood each year to confirm that I could still do it, I was well trained.

MM: It doesn't count for me; maybe you're different. How old were you then and how did it go?

JP: I was 37 and I didn't know you were allowed to walk during the race, so I ran the whole race and finished with a time of 4:03.

MM: Wow, that was excellent for doing no training!

JP: It wasn't so excellent for the next few days when I had to crawl up and down the stairs!

MM: Ouch! Did that get you into running regularly?

JP: Nope, but I got more warning the next year. I learned of the race two weeks out and trained by running 4 miles each morning and 4 each evening. My time was 3:42.

MM: Now you're into running?

JP: Not quite yet. I did learn that the race happened every year and began my training 6 weeks out. My time was 4 hours flat. I thought I had over trained!

MM: Did you become a regular runner then?

JP: I sure did. I ran 24 straight Houston Marathons. I qualified for Boston 8 times and ran it 6 times.

MM: What is your all-time best race?

JP: That's easy! There used to be a 15K race in Bear Creek Park. I ran that in less than an hour and set my PR in the 5K, 10K and 15K in that race!

MM: Do you have a worst experience?

JP: I don't know if this is a worst, but it is surely strange. I once ran a 5K, where I finished 4th in the race and 4th in my age group. Think about that!

MM: What was your best club experience?

JP: I've had lots of great experiences, but the best for me was the Vienna Marathon in 1997. It was great fun!

MM: When did you join BCRR and when did you serve as BCRR president?

JP: I joined in 1988 and served as president for 3 years beginning in 1996.

MM: Why did your tenure end?

JP: I refused to serve another term. I didn't want it to become the John Phillips running club!

MM: When did the porta-cans and tents come along?



WORD FROM THE BIRD

JP: I wanted BCRR to be the best running club in Houston and brought the first tent ever at a Houston road race to the Bellaire Trolley Run in 1996. They tried to kick me out (or at least my tent). I simply refused and they gave up. The rest is history!

MM: The porta-cans?

JP: Coincidentally, it was hatched as the result of a picnic at the Gulf shore, this time in Galveston. Lots of fun, no rest rooms! When we went the next year, I surprised them with our first porta-can!

MM: What would you like to see from today's BCRR?

JP: I would like to see a little more interest in the competitive club racing events. I want us to knock the socks off the other running clubs!

MM: What do you want your legacy to be?

JP: I want people to know that I did my best to make BCRR the best running club in Houston!

MM: I think they do! Thank you John.

Contd. from page 5: A Bib's Perspective

Bib 93: The deal for me is pretty simple. I'm 39 years old. I started running in my late 20's and have spent a decade pounding the pavement nonstop (pretty intensely at times). My age isn't exactly yet the death knell that says it's impossible to run PR's for another few years. I am conscientious that my body has a finite amount of tolerance to heavy training left in it. It is completely true for me that it keeps getting tougher and tougher to be in the running condition I was in 5 years ago, and in that context I've come to the realization that forcing myself to believe in something my body clearly does not believe in, is not the best use of my energy – either physically or mentally. So a few months ago, I decided to stop worrying about it so much. And as it turns out, I'm actually now in better mental and physical shape than I have been in at least a couple of years.

Bib 1082: You make it sound like it is okay not to be fast (relatively speaking of course, to each their own). I have wondered about it too. My current work/life situation doesn't leave me enough time to either join a hill group in the morning or pay particular attention to speed work. I do still like to run and my mind wants to run faster and my body gives up and I am not used to that. Earlier, there was that hidden gear that I could call upon when needed to speed up. Plus, my not running at all while living in Denver for 4 years (2012-2016) doesn't help either.

Bib 93: Seems counterintuitive to think that I'm not in PR condition right now and might not be ever again, but yet my mental and physical shape is top notch.

BIB 1082: How exactly does that work?

Bib 93: After a 5-year hiatus, I've started going to Yoga classes over the summer and have rediscovered some balance and flexibility I forgot I had. Equally, I've spent a decent amount of time at the pool early in the morning, swimming laps and trying to remember how to swim with good technique. I've had the opportunity to share this with my oldest step-daughter, as it's her primary go-to exercise, and although swimming isn't exactly a social sport, having someone to swim laps next to you is encouraging. I have also been on the bike more these days, something that I was already incorporating about once a week when I was running more mileage.

Bib 1082: So, now are you going to start doing those triathlons or even an Iron(wo)man?

Bib 93: No, no, no. Do I look crazy to you? No plans right now to do more triathlons – which I have also enjoyed in the past – but this is probably going to be something for me to think about as I get older and run less. The big point here is that my weeks are still full of workouts 6 or 7 days a week, but they are different, and it keeps it interesting. Trying to master other sports that I am not as established at makes me remember the passion for running I felt 10 years ago when I was just getting into it. It was great then and it's great now. You aren't buying this? Are you?

Bib 1082: It's a good sell. Almost too good like Whole Foods or that new running gadget in market that will make you fast. I struggle with it for couple of reasons. Running is the ONLY physical exercise I have ever done in life. I have never worked out in gym or any kind of cross training so when running isn't enjoyable, I tend to get disheartened a bit and look for inspiration/fun at other places like Netflix marathons. However, you will be proud to hear that since my last fiasco with calf muscle, for the first time I incorporated some stretching in my running. There is something else that bothers me these days about running.

Bib 93: What is it? Let me guess? Are you quoting Jack Daniels again?

Bib 1082: You are fairly close. Back when I was semi-serious about running, I used Jack Daniels philosophy to get fast on very small running mileage (never more than 25-30 miles/week during off marathon season and never more than 40-45 during marathon season that too when I was running those 18 /20 miler long runs). As I get older improving speed on small mileage is challenging. For example, I ran a sub 20 5k last summer but this year I haven't been able to run even a measly sub 20 5k.

Bib 93: Don't be that hard on yourself. I'm still running anywhere from 10 to 30 miles a week these days, but with few if any "quality" workouts. Jesman (my hubby for those of you that don't know him) joins me sometimes too. I don't plan what days I'm going to run, or how fast, or if it's going to be some kind of workout. I don't use my watch about half the time. I also no longer wake up earlier than 5:30am to run, ever.

Bib 1082: That's not the BIB 93 I knew.

Bib 93: Now that I've backed off the throttle, my body feels pretty good again. I've not experienced any hint of an injury, something that had been plaguing me on and off for the last couple of years, since the spring. And, I don't need 9 hours of sleep to feel human. Seven does me just fine now. One massage a month is sufficient. I've lost 5 pounds as well, probably because of the variance in exercise that I'm getting combined with the fact that I'm less likely to eat a mountain of food at one sitting as I did before.

Bib 1082: That's a good perspective on things and pretty balanced approach. I mostly run easy these days but the other day I just tried to stick with the quick folks on the Wednesday bayou run as they were running it easy (7 min/mile easy) and it felt good to push a bit to run 4 miles with them. It may not be the death sprint Rob Walters or Matt Nicol and I used to throw for 4th mile coming out of bayou at 6:10 or 6:20 but I enjoyed that 7 min/mile as it took that little effort. I am pretty happy running slow for the rest of my runs. I also have become very good at running alone as now I use this time for reflecting on bunch of things in my life. I have found several routes involving Herman Park and Rice loop that if I start from my home and back, I end up anything between 5-9 miles. I would like to get over my awkwardness about inflexibility and maybe try Yoga. Or, start going to gym and maybe work on building some core strength.

Bib 93: Over the last few years, as I have tried to squeeze in every workout that "going for the PR" requires, inevitably I have had to sacrifice time to dedicate to something else, or I have had to sacrifice sleep. In any scenario, I have felt guilty at times that I'm ignoring something more important, and this is never a good way to prioritize. The moment I stopped feeling like I needed to plan my weeks based around my workouts was the moment I de-stressed my life significantly.

Bib 1082: But, you must have your eyes on some running related goals. You aren't fooling me.

WORD FROM THE BIRD

Bib 93: I am still thinking about being a new Master's next year, especially in the context of feeling like I can still excel in competitions, even if that means I don't PR. For triathlon, this new category starts in January and for running in June, when my actual birthday is. Maybe I'll let many more months pass before I step into this new world of competition, but even if I do choose to enjoy again toeing the start line, the pressure to keep up with the 24 year old just out of college is not going to be there for me.

Bib 1082: That's a good plan. I know marathon racing or training is out for me but I would still like to run some quick 5k/10k. Maybe in fall I will finally run that measly sub 20 5k and sub 41 10k. You have keep that competitive spirit alive in you but adjust your goals.

Bib 93: In the end, we all run because we love the sport, and whatever each of us needs to do to continue to love this sport to the maximum ... that's what I'd recommend, because while your PR's can be a great source of pride in you, it should not define your past, present, or future.

Bib 1082: One last question.

Bib 93: Sure, shoot.

Bib 1082: I think our master runners must be on dope or something. For example, there is no logical explanation for Avi's splits on Strava.

Bib 93: Oh, they are definitely doping. I knew that when I couldn't chase down Avi in last quarter mile of Bayou bash relay. Definitely doping ;)



BCRR members in pictures

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

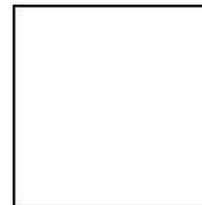
<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>ACTIVITY</u>
Mondays	Memorial Park	Every Monday evening a jog followed by a social gathering
Wednesdays	Rice University	Every Wednesday evening a jog then a social gathering
Fridays	Various Happy Hour haunts	Every Friday evening a happy hour. Info at www.bcurr.org
Sundays	Memorial Park	Every Sunday morning a long jog (with water breaks)
9/29	Stude Park	Tornados Cross Country Relay*
10/7	Clear Lake, TX	Space City 10 Miler*
10/28	Sam Houston Park	Houston Half Marathon*
11/3	MacGregor Park	Alex 5K** Run to defeat Autism

*Official HARRA race series event.

**BCRR club presenting/hosting



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THE BIRD IS THE WORD!
September 2018



Looking for an extra Reason2Race in 2018? Every mile you run or walk can get us a step closer to a world free from hunger and poverty when you run for Heifer International! Whether you are a triathlete, you want to get your whole family out on the course for fun, or you just want to make the world a better place, we NEED you! We have never been closer to finishing hunger for good than we are right now and you can help us reach the end. Join the team right here in Houston: <https://my.reason2race.com/cause/heiferinternational> or anywhere in the world at www.teamheifer.org