



# WORD from = the BIRD

BCRR MONTHLY NEWS

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## Big Sur Marathon

*By Bob Thompson*

In April, 12 BCRR members made the trip to California to participate in the 28<sup>th</sup> Big Sur Marathon. The race is a rural point to point course starting in the redwood forest near Big Sur Creek and winds over rolling hills on State Highway 1 along the rugged Pacific coast finishing in the beautiful sea-side village of Carmel. We drove the course the day before the race and were amazed by the breathtaking rugged beauty of the area. We concluded however that no matter how many times we stopped and walked down to the beach it was no substitute for actually running the course.

This is not your normal marathon for many reasons. Instead of feeding off the energy of the spectators along the course you feed off the scenic beauty of this rugged coastline and other runners around you who share your experience. In place of the spectators are birds, bewildered cows, barking sea lions and an occasional whale just off the coastline. The mile markers are huge and were commissioned to a local artist who put humorous and motivational messages on them. Mile marker 9 has a runner asking Pinocchio (with an unusually long nose) to tell her there aren't any more hills ahead and Pinocchio answers, "It's all downhill from here." Then the next mile marker at the base of the 550 foot high 2 mile long hill at Hurricane Point features an old fashioned elevator operator saying "Going up:... if it only worked."

The large group of Japanese drummers at the base of the hill actually seems to help make the climb easier. Reaching the top of the hill you soon hear the grand piano at the Bixby Bridge even though it is over one mile



One of MANY scenic overlooks along the race route.

*Photo Credit: Joe Lengfeller*

away at the 13.1 mile marker. Near the end of the race the Strawberry Lady gives away the most fragrant and tasty strawberries you will ever have. The warm bowl of soup served at the post race party, along with a refreshing beer, was a special touch.

The climate and soil in this part of California produce some really great grapes and so naturally we recovered the next couple of days by sampling some really great wines as we toured the numerous vineyards in the area. We also visited some great restaurants at Fisherman's Warf in Monterey and in Carmel. Two BCRR members also managed to get in a round of golf at Pebble Beach.

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**Word from the Bird**

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FREE

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# From the President



Photo Credit: Rosie Schmandt

## *Second verse, same as first...*

Welcome to the 2013-2014 running season, BCRR! I want to welcome our new BCRR at large members this year; **Andrew Kenworthy, Andrew Young, Heidi Zimmerman** and **Patrick Flaherty**, as well as our returning board members, who include **Bob Thompson, Susan Cita** and **Sam McMurtrey**, and our ad hoc member extraordinaire, **Lisa Thompson**. Thanks so much to our outgoing board members; **Susan Davis, Kate Philbrick, Eric Pace** and **Jim Wiedemer** for all of your hard work last year, and for your continued involvement with BCRR!! We'll miss you all!

For those who attended the HARRA year-end banquet, BCRR cleaned up in last season's HARRA interclub competitions (see **Mike Mangan** and **Heather Hofstetter's** column in the most recent issue of *Footprints*). We are really looking forward to another successful season for the best running club in Houston. We had good BCRR representation at the Chevron Houston "Run for a Reason" Marathon Kickoff party, held at the picnic loop at Memorial Park on Saturday, June 29th, 2013. I still miss the Thursday night event of old, but we've obviously made an impression on the Marathon committee, as this year we obtained prime tent location, next to the food, beer and marathon "in-training" T-shirt booths. Our next opportunity to represent BCRR to our local running community will be on Saturday, September 7, 2013, when HARRA hosts their annual Party in the Park! We hope to see you there. Look for our big purple tent!!

We have a lot of club events, parties and races planned for the 2013-14 season. One thing we all need to mark on our calendars is Alex's 5K, our club run to support autism research and services for children with autism. This year's race is scheduled for Saturday, November 16, 2013 and will be held at Tom Bass Park rather than the former location at Bear Creek Park. This year it is also the Power in Motion (PIM) graduation 5K, so we are really hoping to grow our little race. If you are a Saturday runner, please pencil this date in, and run long on Sunday. This is truly a worthwhile cause, and we would love to have you attend as either a BCRR runner or as a volunteer at this race. If you have any potential sponsorship ideas, please let us know. Details for Alex's 5K can

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## 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 [bcrr.results@gmail.com](mailto:bcrr.results@gmail.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 [jiwiedemer@aol.com](mailto:jiwiedemer@aol.com).

## Word from the Bird Dog: Bones



Photo Credit: Andrew Kenworthy

**Name:** Bones

**Age:** 14 ¾ years old

**Breed:** Dalmatian

**Owners:** Tina Reynolds and Andrew Kenworthy

**Years running:** 14 + years

**How many miles a week do you run?** I struggle to run now as my hip dysplasia and arthritis are getting bad now that I am old, but when I was young I ran 15-20 miles a week

**How did you come to join Bayou City?** Andrew & Tina first brought me to Valhalla in 2010

**My proudest running accomplishment is:** Winning the "Hair of the Dog" 2 mile Race to benefit the New Orleans SPCA with Andrew on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2004 in 11:02

**My favorite training run is:** Audubon Park Dirt Loop in New Orleans where I used to run every day when I was young with Tina and my Dalmatian sister Pearl (I still miss Pearl).

**My best distance is:** In New Orleans the 2.25 mile dirt loop of Audubon Park although I once ran 5 miles in 27:35 with Andrew. In Houston, I really love the Ho Chi Minh trails!

**I run because:** I get to be outside, sniff stuff and pee on things and be with my brother Oliver, and with Tina & Andrew.

**My life philosophy is:** Wag my tail, go for a walk, pee on stuff and sniff my friends' butts.

**My next goal is:** I don't know, I am a dog so I live in the moment!

**Favorite training food:** Mangos and Central Market Roast Beef.

**When I'm running I think about:** Chasing cats, squirrels, rats or any other critters. I also remember getting chased once by one of those 150 pound rodents (Capybaras) in Brazil (good thing I could run fast then!)

**When I'm not running I think about:** Being as close to my family as possible

**The best running advice I could give would be:** Every now and then when you chase squirrels you catch one (but I never did work out what to do with them when I caught one!)

**People would be surprised if they knew:** I have paraded in Mardi Gras in New Orleans in the Krewe of Barkus and also in Carnival in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in the Bloco de Bola Preto. (Bola Preto means black spots so everyone was dressed like me that day!) I don't think many dogs have done this!!! The black spots on my coat go all the way through the skin if you look in my mouth I have black spots inside. I am a rescue and was found in a ditch in LaPlace, Louisiana, I was malnourished and looked like a "bag of bones" which is where I got my name from.

**The top thing on my dream list is:** Hanging out at Valhalla with my BCRR buddies on Wednesday night while they feed me peanuts, (Hint, Hint !!!)

**If I could have be any other breed it would be:** I love being a Dalmatian as children love us. I can't think of any other breed I would rather be!!!

**Other hobbies besides running:** Crapping in front of my parents on the sidewalk when they meet people and embarrassing them!!! Going to the dog park and hanging with my buddies.

**I would love to spend the day with:** All 16 of the Foster brothers and sisters I have had over the years through Dalmatian rescue! (well, maybe not Chase I didn't really like him much as he was a bully and chewed on my ears).

**The most embarrassing thing that has happened to me is:** I got so excited I peed on the leg of one of my party guests at a house party in New Orleans.

**The most profound thing that has happened in my life:** I lived through Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in my house and back garden and was there for 11 days before Andrew and Tina snuck into New Orleans and rescued me on September 11<sup>th</sup> 2005 (Our story was featured in an article in Bark Magazine—Hurricane Katrina edition Winter 2005)

### Big Sur Marathon

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Big Sur has been voted the "Best Destination Marathon" by the readers of Runner's World magazine twice and for good reasons. In two years the race will be celebrating its 30th anniversary and it will be a great candidate for another BCRR destination race.

Attendees included: **April Murphy, Debra Touchy, Scott Johnson, Shelly Grahmann, Brenda Gonzales,**

**Robin Lowenkron, Sharon Lovadahl, Susan Elias, June Harris, Cathy McGlohn, Joe Lengfellner and Bob Thompson.**





## BCRR Results from the Road



*By Roger Redding*

**Law Week Run—April 23:** Lisa Fletcher 34:02 (1st AG), Eric Pace 44:25, Joe Oviedo 28:14 (1st AG), Warren Prella 31:35 (4th AG), Lisa Foronda 39:58 (4th AG), Jeff Eisele 30:26 (2nd AG), Leno Rios 30:45 (3rd AG), Suzy Seeley 35:41 (2nd AG),

Robert Walters 31:26 (2nd AG), Matthew Nicol 31:44 (3rd AG), Mark Conran 32:23 (4th AG), Paul Schulz 36:49, Jonathan Miller 41:03, Rhonda Emerson 38:48 (4th AG), June Harris 50:37, Kathleen Mahon 51:15, Don Hilber 39:40, Dewey Guthrie 41:11, Dennis Dwulet 45:28, Nancy Greig 42:50 (3rd AG), Scott Bounds 32:48 (2nd AG), Victor Aguirre 35:31 (4th AG), Terence Fanning 47:47, Richard Vega 35:37 (1st AG), Rich Siemens 39:56 (2nd AG), Gary Wood 42:01 (3rd AG), Mike Mangan 46:11.

**Bellaire Trolley Run—April 13:** Joe Oviedo 16:58 (2nd AG), Leno Rios 17:35 (3rd AG), Romuald Budiman 18:46, Edward Fry 19:03 (1st AG), Mark Conran 19:06 (4th AG), Robert Walters 19:14, Joe Landry 19:19, Anna Sumrall Helm 20:50 (1st AG), Ben Harvie 20:56 (1st AG), Richard Verm 20:57, Victor Aguirre 21:01 (2nd AG), Rich Vega 21:06 (2nd AG), Karien Goodwin 21:20 (3rd AG), Peter Griffiths 21:45, Bernard Castro 22:51, Rich Siemens 23:35 (2nd AG), Alfonso Torres 23:48, Dewey Guthrie 24:01, Robert Moser 24:10, Lisa Foronda 24:28 (3rd AG), Gary Wood 25:21 (3rd AG), Kellie Stilley 25:38, Gloria Mahoney 27:27 (4th AG), Kate Philbrick 27:41, Don Brenner 27:56, Robin Lowenkron 28:01, Iman Moussa 28:49, June Harris 29:13, Samantha McMurtrey 30:58, Larry Culen 37:56, Jo Ann Luco 38:02 (2nd AG).

**Blue Bell Fun Run 10K—April 13:** John Anderson 43:38, Brad Godwin 49:59, Al Salinas 59:30, Doug Becker 1:01:05.

**Davy Crockett Bear Chase Marathon—April 13:** Jacqueline Blanck 4:09:45 (2nd AG).

**Austin 10/20 (10 miles, 20 bands)—April 14:** Christoph Eick 1:22:41.

**Boston Marathon—April 15:** Andrew Young 2:52:38, David Nemoto 2:59:12, Avi Moss 3:16:03, Lauren Wilder 3:18:53, Jeff Eisele 3:18:58, Jacob Tonge 3:20:49, Lisa Thompson 3:21:46, Steve Davis 3:25:06, Lori Fusi Goldberg 3:25:39, Jesman Devia 3:28:28, Thomas Hebert 4:03:36, Susan Davis 4:08:03.

**Green 6.2—April 27:** Jill Priesmeyer 52:28, Jamie Varughese 54:47, Calvin Upton 1:02:35, Blanca Avery 1:24:58, Monica Kervandjian 1:02:13, Ines Nemoto 1:01:58, David Nemoto 39:53 (2nd AG), James Castellanos 51:36, Vivian Dunlop 49:16 (3rd AG), Andrea Milbourne 59:15.

**Big Sur Marathon—April 28:** Brenda Gonzalez 4:16:43, Scott Johnson 4:19:39, Susan Elias 4:33:40, Deborah

Touchy 4:38:44, Cathy McGlohn 4:51:35, Robert Thompson 4:54:26, Joe Lengfellner 5:00:04. **Big Sur 21 Miller:** April Murphy 3:52:53.

**Eugene Marathon—April 28:** Suzy Seeley 3:24:51 (3rd AG).

**Sprint for Life 5K—May 4:** Warren Prella 18:54 (2nd AG), Trey Beeman 27:45, Sam Pace 27:41, Tom Stilwell 19:34 (1st AG), Caryn Honig 23:10 (1st AG), Jonathan Miller 23:51, Al Salinas 26:39, Gary Wood 25:53 (1st AG).

**Orange County Marathon—May 5:** Christoph Eick 3:52:32.

**Tacoma City Marathon—May 5:** Suzy Seeley 3:34:36 (1st AG).

**Pittsburgh Marathon—May 5:** John Fredrickson 5:49:24.

**Beach to Bay Relay—May 18:** "Sporty 40's" Lisa Thompson, Will Henderson, Karien Goodwin, Lila Vasquez, Michael Pena 3:00:55 (1st Mixed Masters), "Swift Sixties" Nancy Greig, Vicki Jones, Gloria Mahoney, Kathi Mahon, Michelle Wolpert, Brenda Hilton 4:25:31 (2nd Senior Master Women), "BCRR International Empire" Alonso Vargas, Nicole Desai, Chinton Desai, Peter Griffiths, Tina Reynolds, Loris Goldberg 3:06:47 (4th Mixed Open), "Girl Toys" Tom Stilwell, Scott Wonderly, Bill Cincanelli, Avi Moss, et al 3:11:32 (4th Master Men), "BCRR Distance Make the Heart Grow" Chris McGrew, Lynn McGrew, Jeff Tabourne, Tom Wille, Sheila Ramamurthy, Bridget Kaminski 3:37:37, "The Hangovers" Robin Lowenkron, Sam Pace, Shelley Grahmann, Lara Allen, Trey Beeman, Robert Kaping 3:59:54.

**Impact a Hero 5K—May 18:** David Nemoto 20:07.5 (3rd Masters), Rene Munoz 21:45 (2nd AG), Caryn Honig 23:34 (1st AG), Jonathan Miller 24:46, Don Brenner 27:04 (1st AG).

**Project Graduation Diploma Dash 5K—May 18:** Leno Rios 18:24 (1st Overall).

**Combat Triathlon—May 25:** Sarah Schaft 1:22:35 (4th AG), Karien Goodwin 1:23:56.

**Heroes and Hope 5K—May 25:** Leno Rios 18:54 (2nd AG), David Nemoto 19:48 (3rd AG).

**The Patriot Half Marathon—May 27:** Christoph Eick 1:54:42 (2nd AG).

**Heights Fun Run 5K—June 1:** David Nemoto Jr 25:17 (2nd AG), Camille Boon 22:55, Joe Oviedo 16:43 (2nd AG), Karien Goodwin 21:30 (4th AG), Lisa Foronda 24:40, Leno Rios 18:53, Tom Stilwell 19:56, Caryn Honig 22:58 (4th AG), Ines Nemoto 28:47, David Nemoto 19:34 (3rd AG), Suzy Seeley 21:25 (1st AG), Joe Landry 19:40 (3rd AG), Susan Davis 25:02 (4th AG), Kathleen Mahon 30:04, Steve Davis 20:54 (2nd AG), Dewey Guthrie 24:34, Kathryn Vidal 34:11 (4th AG), Al Salinas 27:41, Terence Fanning 28:47, Gary Wood 25:58 (1st AG), Don Brenner 27:41 (2nd AG).

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**Tejas Triathlon—June 2:** Edward Aviles 58:04 (1st Open), Warren Prella 1:05:21 (4th AG), Tina Reynolds 1:15:50, Eric Braate 1:15:5, Leslie Medley Russell 1:15:37 (3rd AG), Brad Godwin 1:24:08, Sandy Parker 1:26:33 (1st AG), Bill Tommaney 1:1:31 (2nd Clydesdale).

**Funfest Run By The Bay 10K—June 8:** Suzy Seeley 44:48 (1st Master), Gloria Mahoney 57:32 (1st AG).

**Funfest Run by the Bay 5K—June 8:** David Nemoto 19:43 (2nd AG), Victor Aguirre 22:18 (1st AG).

**Dad's Day 5K—June 15:** Warren Prella 18:32 (2nd AG), Surena Matin 21:04, Kim Gray 22:25, Richard Siemens 24:49 (1st AG), Don Brenner 27:42 (1st AG), Ricardo Campos 29:11, Andrea Milbourne 29:56, Larry Baum 1:01:43.

**Polish Pickle Run 5K—June 22:** Abby White 38:43, Joe Oviedo 16:37 (1st AG), John Anderson 20:50 (2nd AG), Edward Fry 19:35 (1st AG), Ben Harvie 21:06 (1st AG).

**Memorial Hermann Sugar Land Triathlon—June 23:** Edward Aviles 46:27 (1st AG), Jeremy Rowe 57:37, Dinh Pham 1:02:33.

**Baytown Bud Heat Wave—July 4:** Alfonso Torres 41:35, Tim Coughlin 48:11, Victor Aguirre 36:24 (3rd AG), John Fredrickson 59:17 (1st AG), Priscilla Schneider 43:45, June Harris 50:03, Vicki Jones 42:56 (1st AG).

**Freedom 5K—July 4:** Bonnie Jo Barron 23:11 (2nd AG).

**Run Wild 5K—July 4:** Ryan Smith 16:15 (1st AG), Camille Boon 23:05, Jeremy Rowe 19:18, Brenda Gonzalez 25:22, Ricardo Campos 28:10, Steve Hasson 33:30, Andrea Milbourne 28:43, Karen Finkelman-Hasson 31:10, Becky Spaulding 45:04, Mike Walker 23:14, Jonathan Miller 25:24, Rhonda Emerson 22:15 (1st AG), Robert Brown 22:31 (4th AG), Patrick Flaherty 24:49, Dewey Guthrie 25:19, Nancy Greig 26:14 (1st AG), Terry Fanning 29:26, Timothy Howard 32:59, Don Brenner 28:04 (3rd AG).



Photo Credit: Rosie Schmandt



# Membership Reminder

If you like hanging out with all the cool kids (like this group getting ready for the Sunday long run on July 14) be sure to renew your BCRR membership. Club membership can be renewed online at [www.bcurr.org/join.html](http://www.bcurr.org/join.html). The link serves both new members joining and current members renewing.

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From the President's Desk

be found at <http://alex5k.com/> and updates will also be posted on the Alex's 5K facebook site.

You may notice a new look/spin to our newsletter this year. Our new editor is **Joe Lengfeller**!! He wants to hear from you!! Have you run any out of state races? Participated in any new sporting events in Houston? Have a new favorite beer? Do you have any good running advice for your friends? Have you taken some interesting race photos? Consider submitting an article for our newsletter! We'd like to introduce some new columns to the newsletter this year, including submissions from outside of BCRR. We have so many social member from other clubs so please, Hashers, BARC, Tornados, Striders, Masters, et al... submit your club events and articles for publication!!



## WORD FROM THE BIRD

## Two Oceans Marathon—South Africa



*By Joel DuBois, Foreign Correspondent  
Dubai, UAE (Houston +9 hours)*

The trip to South Africa came about when Holly, my Dubai running partner, mentioned she was running Two Oceans Marathon (TOM) and asked me if I wanted to join her. This was in October, when the weather in Dubai was finally starting to become bearable for running. I looked on-line, seeing that it is billed as the most beautiful marathon in the world, but is actually a 56k (~34.8 miles) ultra-marathon road race. I have run many ultras, but the last one was in 2006, so I would need to train a bit harder for this one, especially given the number and size of the hills. I signed up, and sent a note asking if any other crazies wanted to attempt this silly feat of endurance, to be followed by a nice vacation. Only Carol, my long-time Houston running partner, accepted this challenge. I had never set foot in Africa, nor had I ever been south of the equator. Both were about to change...

### **Traveling to Cape Town**

We arrive at the airport and are told that the flight was oversold and there was no seat for Carol. After being told to wait an hour to see if people show up, we speak to an agent that handles premium classes (Sharon & I are both Gold on Emirates) and are told we have been bumped up to Business Class and Carol is given a seat in Economy. We will all be able to fly to Cape Town, YEA!!

After a 10 hour flight, we arrive and get to Passport Control. This time Carol & I get right through, while Sharon & Holly are held up. They are not in compliance with South African law because they do not have two completely free visas pages in their passports. The lady chastises them for not knowing HER country's (said with total ownership) passport requirements (we had asked our travel agent if we needed visas and she said no, but mentioned nothing about the empty pages). She finally let them through and later we found out several of Holly's friends from Doha made it thought with no problem without having the required empty pages. Our passport control agent had apparently been having a bad day and was baring her teeth and beating her chest in a show of power. We are now in Cape Town, South Africa. Let the good times roll!!

### **Cape Town**

An uneventful ride to our hotel took us to the V&A Waterfront, a beautiful area with shopping, restaurants & pubs, somewhat similar to the wharfs in San Francisco, but newer/nicer (from my recollections of SF). The hotel was transformed from a prison, so within hours of stepping foot on African soil for my first time, I was in a prison. It was not nearly as bad as I had imagined African prisons could be, but was probably a bit nicer than when it was a functioning prison. We walked to the wharf area and looked around, then headed to the CTICC (Cape Town Int'l Convention Center) for packet pick-up, about a 15 minute walk. Picking up packets was relatively easy. We were able to get shirts and numbers for the Int'l Fun Run and for the 56k Ultra at the same spot, reserved only for international runners. The longer lines for the South Africans were avoided. We were

told that due to a traffic issue and a potential stoppage on the course, all runners slower than a 4 hour finish would be given an extra 5 minutes, so now we could take 7:05 to finish the run, a much more manageable time limit :).

After getting our numbers and confirming our chips worked, we walked into the Adidas sponsor area, which was huge. After leaving this area, we entered the regular expo area. I'm guessing it was a bit smaller than Houston's, but certainly close in size and similar in make-up. We tried to help out the SA economy a bit, but knew it was not our job alone.

After a beer and a nice relaxing dinner back at the V&A Waterfront, it was time to head back for a good night's sleep in our prison cells, my first time ever (that is my story and I am sticking to it!!).

Up the next morning for a light breakfast and off to the Int'l Fun Run 5k at the V&A Waterfront. This was actually a very neat idea. It was open to all non-South Africans, about 1000 had signed up. Before the run they had a bit of a pep rally talking about the different countries represented (74 in all), and thanked the sponsors and town for putting on the event. The run itself was not timed, so was an easy paced run that ended up being 6k+ per our Garmins.

The remainder of the day was resting, walking only to/from lunch & dinner. Early to bed, early to rise as the shuttle was picking us up at 4:45 am for the ride to the start. The race was planned to start at 6:30 am, but road congestion was expected. At least we didn't need to worry about parking.

### **Two Oceans Marathon**

Temps were cool that morning, but definitely not Joel cool... Forecasts called for 59-68F, overcast and windy. That last word was the most important. I don't know exact numbers, but I think the overnight low was pretty close, winds were 20-25 mph with gusts to 35 mph+. There were separate port-a-loos and bag drops for the 56k and the 21k races.

The race started a couple of minutes late, but this had been announced, and shortly after 6:30 we were off. The race basically heads south from the start towards False Bay (Indian Ocean), runs along the water through several small towns (Muizenberg, St James and Kalk Bay), then turns inland in Fish Hoek. Holly had dropped a water bottle about 5k into the race, so Carol & I pulled to the side and waited for about 2-1/2 minutes and finally went on, thinking she may have run by us and we had just missed each other (hoping she wasn't still behind us). As we entered one of the small towns at about 15k, we found Holly (or she found us) and we ran together again until we turned away from the water in Fish Hoek at about 21k. We started up hill with the wind at our backs and I decided to drive up the hill letting the wind help push me, leaving the girls behind. This uphill turned into a downhill, and I continued to drive with the wind at my back, hoping Carol & Holly weren't too far behind as I passed the 25k mark. Holly caught me on the uphill to Chapman's Peak somewhere near the 30k mark, telling me

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that Carol decided to drop at the 25k mark (a decision she was happy with after the race).

The grueling uphill to Chapman's Peak (225 meters net rise from ~28k to ~33k) included **multiple** ups & downs (see elevation/profile), but was absolutely beautiful with the Indian Ocean to our left!!! Luckily, the wind was still at our back most of this uphill, helping to make it a little bit easier. I definitely used my size to allow it to push me uphill as much as possible, but was surprised at how much of this uphill I ran and how little I walked. Holly & I passed each other multiple times, never getting too far apart, but running/walking our own pace. We stopped a few times and took pictures for/of each other. I was amazed at how many people I saw fall, considering this is a road race not a trail run.

As we got to the top at Chapman's Peak (at ~33k), the road curved to the right around the mountain and the wind gust came at us **SO** strong I actually saw a few people pushed backwards before getting their balance. This is totally a guess, but I think the winds may have hit 50 mph at this one spot. I was soooo glad to be at the peak, but also knew the downhill portion included multiple up hills. On this side of the mountain we were often running into the wind, which again helped as we didn't need to brake as much, saving our quads. I ran the entire downhill section (with stops only for pics), a remarkable feat (in my mind) given my minimal training and the size of the uphill just completed. At the bottom was Hout Bay (a beautiful location we visited the next day).

A short fairly flat section followed the downhill and the sun came out making it warm up more than I liked, then we started on our second big climb, the largest of the course. Up we went, to Constantia Nek, a low pass between Hout Bay and Cape Town. Shortly after starting this uphill we passed the 42k mark, meaning a marathon had been run, and we only had 14k (9 miles) to go. WOO HOO!!! Surprisingly, my chip time for the marathon distance was faster than my last three marathons, all of which were on flat courses (Houston & Dubai). This uphill was a more consistent climb, a rise of about 250 meters over a distance of about 6k. This climb was absolute agony, the only saving grace was that the clouds covered the sun during some of this incline keeping me from being completely roasted.

From the top of Constantia Nek it was mostly downhill the last ~9k to the finish. I had been in front of Holly since the top of Chapman's Peak, hoping she would catch up near the finish. She caught up to me with ~5-6k to go. By this time, we knew without a doubt that we would finish under the 7 hour time limit. We talked about it and decided we would stay together and finish together. I was originally hoping that all three of us would be able to finish together, but two out of three ain't bad. We continued to walk/run as we were able, pushing forward with as much as we had left, seeing as how the tanks were close to empty. In the last mile, we were congratulated by several other runners on our first TOM Ultra finish, which felt very good. The bibs we wore provided your name and the number of TOM Ultras and Half Marathons you had completed (double zeros for us). We were required to wear bibs on the front and

back of our shirts, not on shorts (the rules were very clear about this and I did not see a single exception to this on the course).

We finished together in 6:12:47 (official gun time). Even though they use chips, the chip time is not used for anything other than to track you on the course, as far as I can tell. The time limit is very strictly enforced. Volunteers at the finish chute had a rope to stop runners from crossing the finish line after the time limit had passed. I watched them as the time was running down, the crowd counted down the last 10 seconds and the volunteers closed the course right in front of the first official non-finisher. Immediately after the finish, were given our choice of a coke or a water and a bag with a banana. We retrieved our drop bags and went to the Ultra tent for a burger and beer that were provided for the international runners after the race. The beer may have just been a normal lager, but was one of the tastiest beers I've had in a long time. :) Note to our Hashers: I saw a HHH sign on the course, but did not see any beer...

I have run further than this multiple times, but I think this was as tough a run as I have ever completed. I can also say it was the most beautiful marathon/ultra I have run. Given the low mileage I have run in the two years I have now lived in Dubai, I was VERY pleased with this accomplishment. I had run 65-70 miles in each of the first two months of 2013 (including the Dubai Marathon in Jan) and out-distanced that total with 160 miles in March, including my first race south of the equator.

### The Day After

As could be expected, I awoke the next morning feeling very sore & very stiff. We had breakfast and headed out for a guided tour of the Cape. It wasn't nearly as windy as the prior day. We saw many of the beach areas around Cape Town, went up Table Mountain and Signal Hill, then headed to the Cape of Good Hope, drove by baboons on the road, saw penguins, dipped our feet in the water at Hout Bay and drove up to the top of Chapman's Peak (still very windy, but not 50 mph). Then we headed to the oldest winery in SA, Groot Constantia for a wine tasting. I'm not a big wine drinker, but 5 glasses of wine for ~\$4 was a deal I couldn't turn down.

All in all, our stay in Cape Town was fantastic!! The rest of our trip couldn't possibly compare, could it??? That will be the subject of my next article...

Temps in Dubai are warming up, lows have been in the lower 80s most days since our return, with highs in the mid-90s, and it's just mid-April. I hope Houston has a nice cool spring and your running is going very well!!!



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>ACTIVITY</u>
9/28	5:00 PM	Spotts Park	HARRA Cross Country Relay*
10/12	9:00 AM	Childress, TX	Texas Mud Run 5K
10/13	7:00 AM	Clear Lake, TX	USA Space City 10 Miler*
10/27	7:00 AM	Sam Houston Park, Downtown	Houston Half Marathon*
11/16	8:00 AM	Tom Bass Regional Park	3rd Annual Alex's 5K & Kid's K
11/24	7:00 AM	Wortham Center Plaza, Downtown	HMSA Classical 25K Race & 5K Fun Run*
12/15	6:30 AM	Sugar Land, TX	Finish Line Sports Sugarland 30K Race*
1/19	7:00 AM	GRB Convention Center, Downtown	Chevron Houston Marathon*

\*Official HARRA fall race series event



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