



WORD from = the BIRD

BCRR MONTHLY NEWS

WWW.BCRR.ORG

ISSUE 72 - December 2018

The 8th Annual Alex's 5K Run/Walk & Kids' 1K by Kathleen Mahon

The annual running of Alex's 5K, BCRR's own race, took place on Saturday, November 3rd at MacGregor Park. Once again it was a spectacular success thanks to the organizational skills of Race Director Lara Allen and her crack BCRR race crew. As always, 100% of the race proceeds go to autism charity in memory of our son, Alex Jamrich. We were honored to have KPRC Channel 2 Meteorologist Britta Merwin as our official emcee this year. Britta has a young son with autism, so her participation was especially meaningful. (We also credit Britta for ensuring the beautiful weather on race day!) Britta revved up the young Kids' K participants with an active warmup before the race and then they were off! All kids received a participation medal and special awards were given to the fastest boy and girl, Askel Lai and Bella Leggatt.

William Gray, a young musician on the autism spectrum, sang the national anthem before the 5K race. The 5K course was "slightly" updated this year, with addition of a short out-and-back on Cullen that eliminated the final section on the trail of the park, which allowed positioning of the start and finish at the same spot. This new course was freshly USATF certified (thank you Jay Hendrickson, official USATF Course Certifier) and just as flat and fast as the previous course. The new configuration is also push-rim/handcycle friendly to make our race accessible to all.

Flora Lai was a repeat winner of the Open Female division (18:52.3) and Oscar Garcia took Open Male (16:01.2). The Masters awards were swept by two world record holders (age-group), Sabra Harvey (20:52.6) and Peter Mullin (20:09.6). Pretty fast times for anyone, but blistering for someone aged 69 and 67, respectively! These winners each received \$100 in addition to the custom award tiles designed by autistic students.



Kids winners 2018: Britta Merwin congratulates Kids'K winners Bella Leggatt and Askel Lai (photo: M Jamrich)

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Word from the Bird

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Bayou City Road Runners
P. O. Box 66196
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November Issue Editors
Neeraj Rohilla & Sarah Cusack

From the President



Photo credit: Christina Jones

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Hey BCRR

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As training comes to a close for the 2019 Houston Marathon & Half-Marathon, I hope we can all feel a sense of accomplishment. We have recovered from injury, motivated our fellow members, stuck it out through pouring rain, and celebrated with happy hours along the way. This club is always an inspiring display of dedication, determination, and above all - friendship.

As you make your 26 mile journey through Houston on January 20th, be on the look out for several notable BCRR members. Chuck and Cheryl will be stationed around mile 8 with mimosas and cheers! Katie Decker will be your "more than halfway" marker at mile 14. Finally, after hitting "The Wall" - look for Susan Cita at the mile 20 Hoopla Station. Don't be surprised if you spot several other purple wearing members cheering along the rest of the course! This marathon brings out all of Houston to support.

Pasta Loading Party – Friday, January 18th: The Carb-loading Pasta Party will be at Buca Di Beppo (5192 Buffalo Speedway) at 7:30 PM on Friday.

BCRR will have 2 sponsored Hoopla Stations. Please email the host below to help cheer on your fellow runners:

Mile 13: Hosted by Katie Decker - katie.h.decker@gmail.com

Mile 20: Hosted by Susan Cita - susancita.bcrr@gmail.com

Gear will be collected by Christina Jones at the following times:

- **Sunday, January 13th @ the GRB Run**

- **Wednesday, January 16th @ Valhalla following the run**

- **Friday, January 18th @ the Pasta Loading Party**

Please place items in a bag, labeled with your name, preferred aid station drop, and pace.

BCRR Post Marathon Party: The post-race party will be hosted by Sue & Allen at their Terrace home. Menu and details to follow.

BCRR Member Cost: \$10 & Guest Cost: \$15

Member Database

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

Happy Running! - Christina

Contd. From page 1: The 8th Annual Alex's 5K Run/Walk & Kids' 1K

As expected, the post-race party was epic! We're BCRR after all! Rocio Rizzo and her crew provided the home-cooked Colombian-style rice and beans, Saint Arnold Brewing Co. supplied a selection of ice-cold beer. Susan Cita produced her legendary over-the-top Kids' Zone activities with signature EGGstravaganza Egg Hunt. This year we welcomed the Cosplay for Kids, costumed super heroes from the University of Houston, who entertained the children in tight spandex outfits!



Kids k start 2018: "...And they're off!" (photo M. Jamrich)



Milan Jamrich, emcee Britta Merwin, and Kathi Mahon (photo M. Jamrich)



Egg Hunt 2018: EGGstravaganza 2018: every kid for his or herself! (photo: M. Jamrich)

Most importantly, the success of Alex's 5K has allowed us to donate approximately \$95,000 to autism charities over the last 7 years through race proceeds, direct donations and partnerships. Last year alone our charities received \$16,000: Avondale House (\$10,500), The Westview School (\$3,000), Autism Speaks of Houston (\$2,150), and Texas Autism Society Harvey Fund (\$350). We haven't finished tallying the finances for this year's race yet, but we are on track to have a record contribution thanks to your collective generosity! We thank everyone - runners, donors, sponsors, volunteers, and race partners (especially Mike Mangan and the Houston Masters Sports Association) - for supporting our race and helping us raise money for our causes. Lastly, I would like to thank Lara Allen and the race committee for all their efforts in making this a great event year after year. It means so much to us to remember Alex in this way!

Priya & Nirav's wedding report: By Scott Moore

In my classic "Scott" style, I arrived little late and the food had just been served and in time for the dance party, Raas Garba. This was not an ordinary dance party, there wasn't any top 40 being played. This night was reserved for circular group dancing, and it started slow but was easy enough to follow that it was inclusive all night. From what I understand, the rotation of the dancing is meant to represent time, which is cyclical in Hinduism.

The wedding venue was beautifully decorated, and was totally transformed several times throughout the weekend.

On Saturday morning we got up to witness a ceremony reserved for Nirav, the "Varghodo". Traditionally the groom is meant to depart at the end on a horse, but Nirav being Nirav of course chose to have a big street dance party with singing and music followed by taking all the small children for a spin in a Ferrari. Not a bad way to roll into his "Jan Swagat".

Next came the good part, the "Hasta Melap and Kanya Vidaai", which is the actual wedding ceremony. Both Nirav and Priya wore dress of red and gold, but Priya's entrance with a cloth being carried her head by a full entourage definitely stole the show. This was broken into 13 parts, which included some interesting traditions like hopping lamps, tying hands together, and being showered with powder and later flowers. The room was beautifully decorated with a huge canopy and stage built for the ceremony.

In evening a newly decorated room for cocktails and a reception greeted us. Again, not a standard Western reception, this included all kinds of fun choreographed dances and touching speeches. The newlyweds came out dancing in full force, and even had a choreographed bit with Eastern dance moves. The groomsmen poked a little fun at Nirav, describing his ex's by coming out in drag and even a sumo suit which was hilarious.



After dinner it was more of a Western reception, which lasted until late. What was really great here is how much time the couple had to come around and talk to everyone. Most Western weddings feel so rushed and half the party gets ignored, but spanning over 3 or 4 days everyone really got to feel included. I was amazed to see them still hosting Sunday morning – it's no surprise they kept the hotel room and just slept after everyone left!



WORD FROM THE BIRD

Getting to know more about Allyson & David

Name - Dave Piper

Age - 60

Hometown - Houston. I was born in Albuquerque. My dad was a pilot in the Navy so I grew up all over including four wonderful years in Canberra, Australia.

Years in Houston - 36 - I moved here after graduating from UVA law school in 1982.

Occupation - Business attorney. I am like a family doctor for small to medium sized businesses.

Years running - 36. I began running in 1982 when four people working at my law firm were training for the Houston marathon. I thought running 26 miles for fun was stupid, but I decided to do their training runs with them to keep in shape. After running 15 miles one Saturday I changed my mind and decided to run the marathon which I did in 1983. I have been running ever since.

How many miles per week do you run? Varies. Most I ever did was 70ish training for Boston. 25 - 35 most weeks.

How did you come to join BCRR? Lana Moody Brown was my banker. She convinced me to come run on Wednesday and drink afterwards at Valhalla. I never looked back. Thanks Lana!

My proudest running accomplishment is a tie. Four consecutive PR's in the Houston marathon - 1983 (first marathon), 1984 ... and 26 years later ... 2010, and 2016, or running a 1:27:01 half marathon at age 52.

My favorite training run is running Buffalo Bayou. I love watching the sunrise over the downtown skyscrapers.

My favorite race is Aramco Half Marathon.

My best distance is whatever I am running that day.

I run because I am either running towards something or I am running away from something.



My life philosophy is living in the moment.

My next goal race will be sometime after I get healthy.

Favorite training food - is this a trick question? Beer.

When I'm running I think about trying to keep up with Ally.

The best running advice I could give is to be kind to your legs - run on soft surfaces as much as possible. And in races, run the tangents (credit to Scott Bounds).

People would be surprised if they knew I cry when I watch chick flicks.

The top thing on my dream list is learning to play guitar.

Other hobbies besides running - cooking. Usually wine is involved.

I would love to spend the day with my maternal grandmother - she was born in the 1890's, had her master's degree, taught school in Cuba, and marched for women's rights as a suffragette. Unfortunately she died when I was 7.

The most embarrassing thing that has happened to me is going to remain a secret.

The most profound thing that has happened in my life (after joining BCRR, of course) is becoming a parent.

Name - Allyson Serrao

Age - 53

Hometown -Georgetown, Guyana and White Plains, NY

Years in Houston - 5

Occupation - Flight Attendant

Years Running - 14

How many miles per week do you run? 20-30

How did you come to join BCRR? I met Lisa Thompson, Loris Fusi, Dave Piper and Peter Griffiths on a long run. Lisa and Loris wanted to know how to get arms like mine and the conversation continued. They invited me to a game day at The Modern B&B and the rest is history. Who knew that after several more long runs with David I would marry my favorite running partner.



My proudest running accomplishment is...winning 2 silvers and a bronze medal at the Indoor National Track and Field Masters Competition.

My favorite training run is...track workouts

My favorite race is...5k or shorter.

My best distance is...I haven't a clue still trying to figure that out.

I run because...it keeps me fit, relieves stress, and it is social.

My life philosophy is...treat others as you would like to be treated.

My next goal is...getting a PR in the half Marathon.

Favorite training food is sweet potatoes.

When I'm running I think about everything from what I'm most thankful for to life's little obstacles. And when the run seems too long I think of just finishing.

The best running advice I could give would be listen to your body and adjust your training accordingly.

People would be surprised if they knew how much I eat.

The top thing on my dream list is to

Other hobbies beside running are doing cross word puzzles, sudoku, travel, hiking, people watching at outdoor cafés while sipping coffee or wine, playing tennis, volleyball or ping pong.

I would love to spend the day with my maternal grandmother with whom I spent some of my formative year in South America.

The most embarrassing thing that has happened to me I wouldn't want to relive by answering the question.

The most profound thing that has happened in my life is truly thinking that I was going to die and survived.

Oh Time, how Thou fly away by Neeraj Rohilla

The other day I was running a solo run along the Bayou and the easy pace took me down the memory lane. Some of my fondest memories of me living in US are from either my student days at Rice University or running/socializing with BCRR. I joined BCRR in fall of 2007 while going through a not so fun period during my doctoral studies at Rice. It was a phase during PhD when I believed that all of my fellow friends/classmates were doing better than me in their lives and may be I needed a distraction to figure few things out. One Wednesday in July of 2007, I happened to bump into Chris Harris at Valhalla who kept buying me beer and we kept talking about Physics and Engineering. Having always been physically active but never having run I reluctantly joined Chris for a Wednesday Bayou run.

In 2007, the club had its majority population around 45-60 age group and had handful of regular/active members on Wednesday/Sunday runs under 30 years of age. It didn't bother me very much because I didn't like running that much but I found talking to BCRR members interesting. Maybe I was missing interacting with my relatives/family members back in India and BCRR filled that gap. In my rational mind, running was just the price you pay for that. I remember Kathy Mahon asked me to come for a X-country relay and I felt the entry fee and HARRA membership made a dent in my limited graduate student stipend but I chose to stick with the experiment. BCRR must be making an impression on me because I signed up for half marathon in October (yes, you could those days) and ran it on weekly mileage of 6.6 miles (Wednesday run). I remember running most of my first road race as half marathon with Tim McGuirk and liked the experience. On someone's ill advice I signed up for marathon in 2009 and ran it on 25-30 miles/week training with a 4 week long taper as suggested by some website.

Unlike Half-marathon, the full marathon was a painful experience post mile 18 and I limped to finish line at 3:38:43. I miss many people (Hardeep, Sam Pace, Clayton Smith, Jay Byers) from that era that I used to run/train/interact with a lot and now don't get to see them often.



After finishing my first road race, Aramco Half Marathon in January 2008 (Picture from a flip phone camera)



WORD FROM THE BIRD

I believe things went downhill after that because I must have started talking to wrong people in the club because that spring words like "Track work, Wills Hills, Sub 20 5k and Spring series" entered my vocabulary. However, it wasn't until June 2010 that I degraded enough to purchase a GPS Garmin watch. Looking back I find it remarkable how people used to train in the era of non-Strava/Facebook that I trained and ran both sub 40 10k (March, 2010) and sub 19 5k (April, 2010) without a GPS watch. Geez, I sound like an old slob....Running/Training first sub 19 5k with David Piper was really good experience. We both put in good speed work and nailed it in Earth Day 5k with me edging him by 2 seconds in last 0.1 miles. David must have taken it very hard because 2 weeks later while I was away at a conference in Austin, he hammered a 18:30 at Bellaire Trolley 5k run.



Around the same time I started talking to this guy in his 50's who used to work for HP and wasn't the most friendly guy in the club and would yap many words like "Jack Daniels", "Vdot", "Threshold" and other blah blah. On his advice I purchased and tried "Jack Daniels" and actually liked it but then he got really upset that he meant the book and not the bottle. You can see how that can be quite confusing. As an engineer, I thought if I have to deal with these obnoxious speedy (relatively speaking) runners then at least I can figure out the science behind getting speedy. It turns out that science isn't that tough/complicated but running and training is the actual hard part.

This article won't be complete without mentioning Simon Brabo. I wouldn't have started training for Boston Marathon had he not told me that he thinks I can do it and do it rather easily. The guy was from A&M so I didn't think much of his conclusion but he could drink a lot of beer and was tough as a nail during races. Some of my tough as nail training partners of those time that I miss running with were Anna Helm, Jay Hendrickson, Mark Conran, Ed Fry and Scott Bounds. I followed a program from Jay Hendrickson's website and ran a very successful fall 2010 season and qualified for Boston Marathon in a very warm marathon in January 2011 (3:08:33, needed 3:10:59 as of January 2011 rules). I consider myself incredibly lucky because in summer of 2011, Boston marathon changed the rules and started rolling registration. My time of 3:08:33 qualified me with 13 seconds to spare so I ran two more marathons in 2012. Houston Marathon in 2012 which is my PR to date (3:07:14) and a really really warm Boston Marathon (3:34:24) and declared that I am ready for a break from running.

2012-2016 was a time of tremendous personal change and turmoil for me. I finished graduate school in August 2012 and started working and moved to Colorado in September of 2012.

WORD FROM THE BIRD

I lived in Denver from September 2012 to August 2016 and ran less than 200 total miles. So, when I moved back to Houston in August of 2016 my mind was still thinking about running fast but my legs had forgotten how to run fast. I remember feeling like I am running 8 min/mile and looking at 9:30 min/mile on my watch.

But, I was not a youngster from 2008 who was immature enough to get swayed by those fast runners. My life experiences had taught me that if you drink beer with right set of people, run only when you feel like it and make fun of fast people about their regimented training, they retreat to one corner and leave you alone (Let's take a hypothetical example and call that person Avi ;)). Or, if someone bothers me even more I call into my past days of glory when I was stupid enough to run a mile challenge (at noon in August of 2010) after consuming at least 8-9 beers during a pub crawl for a \$60 bet and winning it by running at 5:43 mile without throwing up. And, it helps to have credible witnesses to that insanity.

BCRR is a very unique club. Many things remain the same since I joined in 2007 while there seem to be a ton of new people and new activities these days. The enthusiasm of younger people (<30) is contagious and they remind me of myself from 10-12 years back. The camaraderie and friendships between our members is exceptional. We have maintained BCRR as a well oiled efficient machine where things get done and the conflicts are minimal. In my mind the secret/reason for this is that our club has never been a person centered club and we have a robust structure in the form of the board that take care of things and new blood is brought into the board every year.

Having seen and been part of both front end and back end of the club operations, I want to emphasize on the value of recognizing efforts of others and volunteering (no matter how small). Things like Water/Gatorade on our club runs which we take for granted is placed by someone there who mostly remains behind the scene. If you see those selfless people, convey your thanks. Same goes about race day setup/tear down and managing activities that bring revenue to the club such a race management and Lisa's garage sales. On running front, the depth of talent of Houston running community and our own runners amazes me.

I would also like to see some mechanism by which we can get more engagement of our members who are still due paying members but are less frequent in attending various activities of the club. I believe I can say this on behalf of our board that we value each and everyone of our members. If you have a feedback that would help us gain back the participation of other members I would personally do anything I can to make it happen.

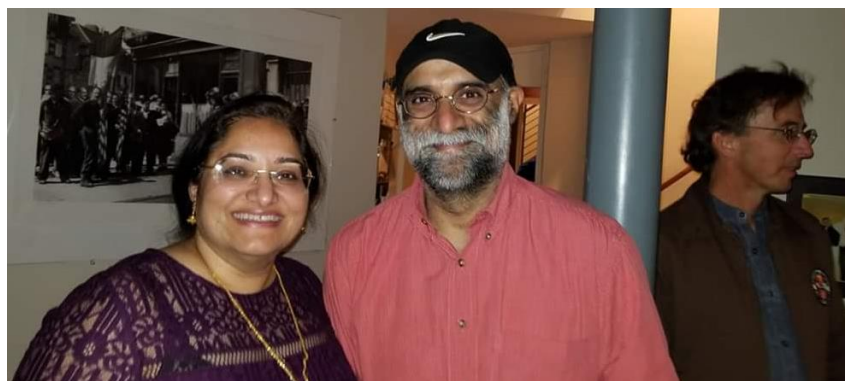


Taken during
Houston
Marathon 2012
(my PR
marathon)

BCRR in Pictures (Races/Parties and Other Misc. Events)



WORD FROM THE BIRD

BCRR in Pictures (Races/Parties and Other Misc. Events)

BCRR in Pictures (Races/Parties and Other Misc. Events)



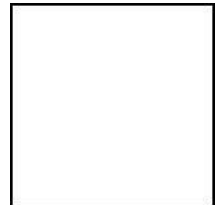
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<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)
1/20	GRB Conventional Center, Houston TX	Chevron Houston Marathon/Aramco Half Marathon
2/16	Sam Houston Park, Houston, TX	Law Week 8k

*Official HARRA race series event.



BAYOU CITY ROAD RUNNERS
P O BOX 66196



THE BIRD IS THE WORD!
December 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