



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

BCRR MONTHLY NEWS

WWW.BCRR.ORG

February 2020

## Road Warriors

BCRR members are everywhere on marathon weekend, running, volunteering and spectating. Here are some of their race weekend stories.

**Susan Cita:** Great Hoopla was had by all this year at Mile 20 with BCRR supporting all the marathon runners, no matter what their pace. Special thanks to volunteers **John Phillips, Sharon McNeill, Lara Allen, Rosie Schmandt, Samantha McMurtrey,** and **Don and Clair Daum.** Gummy Bears, Twislers, Cookies, Oranges, Bananas, Chili Dogs, good Beer, and Bloody Mary's, Oh My!

**Caitlin Dougherty:** I love Marathon Sunday because it is a showcase of the very best of humanity. We all give our best, dig deep and cheer on each other. Thank you to BCRR for inspiring me to do my first marathon and supporting me through the several after that. I am grateful for the support and friendships of the running community as well as the individual opportunity to put my best self out there on marathon day and prove to myself that I am stronger than the marathon.

**Frank Dougherty:** Words, not sentences best describe my Houston Marathon experience. The crowd. The paces. The places. The training. The PR Hunting. The cold front. The early morning wake up. The GU's. The bloody Mary cheering squad at mile 7. The Next %'s. The trust in the taper. The carbo loading.

*(Continued on page 4)*



*Marathon morning is always full of smiles and positive energy as club members make their final preparations for the big event.*

### IN THIS ISSUE

Mirka's First 3, Voices from the Road 4, Rosie 7, John's Long Run 9, April's Studio 10, Calendar 11

**Word from the Bird**

February 2020  
FREE

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Has your contact info changed?  
Send any updates to  
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# From the President

**Dear BCRR,**

The hustle and bustle of the holiday season is over and the madness of marathon weekend has passed - WOW - what a lot of fun events with the members of BCRR! From the Christmas Lights Run, to a joyous Christmas Party, followed quickly by John's Loooooong Run, and a marathon - we have celebrated, ran, and eaten a lot together. This host of events reminds me of how thankful I am to have such a unique and FUN group of people around me. From the old guard to the newest of members, each character adds a memory and funny story to BCRR. I encourage you to take the opportunity at the next club event to meet



Photo credit: Hardeep Thind

*The annual Christmas Lights Run is one of the club's most popular events.*

*(Continued on page 3)*

**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](mailto: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](mailto:p_griffiths@bellsouth.net).



# Mirka's First Marathon



Mirka Jalovcová

If someone told me five years ago that I would run the 2020 Houston Marathon, I would have told them they were "blázen!" Only a fool would think I could run 26.2 miles. But I did — and I'm even thinking of doing it again.

I began my preparation in September 2019. My efforts didn't look anything like formal "training" the way that serious runners understand the word. Being a 51-year-old mother of a seven-year-old didn't leave much time for such luxuries. Nevertheless, as the length of my runs increased, the depth of my commitment was tested. Four hours of precious "me time" was spent rubbing blisters, chaffing thighs, searching for bathrooms, and thinking. But after a while the blisters became callouses, the thighs became thinner, and the thoughts became positive. I realized that I could do it.

I began tracking the weather forecast two weeks before the race. January in Houston can be hot, and hot can be miserable. But a high pressure zone began forming and race-day dawned clear and cool.

I arrived at the starting line carrying a pocketful of good advice received from more experienced runners. I found my pacer group, chatted up the strangers, and then we were off!

And then it started. I ran in morning crisp through cheering crowds. They have my high admiration. Cold people lining the streets shouting encouragement and envying our dedication. I passed some people and some people passed me. The most memorable were those with physical disabilities who ran with joy and audacity.

The miles surrendered to our steady pace. We ran down familiar streets that looked different when you weren't in a car. At mile seventeen many of my fellow runners became walkers and many of those walkers stopped to stretch. But I continued, because I had trained for this. At Mile 20 I saw the Alex Tent, its crop of familiar smiling faces, and what appeared to be



Mirka shows her medal.

(Continued on page 5)

## Prez letter

(Continued from page 2)

someone new and find out how they came to join BCRR.

Now that the marathon is over, it's time to set some spring goals. Thankfully the HARRA Spring Series boasts shorter (but speedier) distances. Whether you're looking for a 5K PR at the Trolley Run, getting dizzy at the LP run, or looking to run with buddies at the Bayou Bash Relay - there is a race for you! Remember - BCRR has a reputation to maintain as the HARRA Club Champions three years running.



The Spring also gives the club a chance to step back from running and look towards our family events - stay tuned for Family Picnic & Biking Brewery Tour dates. Be sure to Save the Date for the best event of the year - the Spring Awards Banquet on Thursday, May 21, at St. Arnold's Brewery. Enjoy the cooler spring weather - it will Houston summer soon enough!

Happy Running!  
Christina

## Road Warriors (Continued from page 1)

The last minute porta can visits. The friends of BCRR-past (**Valentino, John C, Gabe**). The Houston rivalries. The race nutrition. The OTQ storylines. 2020 brought me my fourth consecutive Houston Marathon and it did not disappoint. Doing 4 consecutive marathons has allowed me to experiment with my training, which has given me insight to what my body is capable of. Pushing the boundaries of what was done in previous years is what drives me. Time to rest and relax a little and explore some different obsessions over the next few months other than hitting a Houston Marathon PR.



**Christina Jones:** My 2020 Houston Marathon taught me about grit. When my legs were dead at mile 8 - I spent the next 5 miles thinking about how to quit. Then I thought... why am I quitting? Because I'll have a slow time? Because my fiancé will have to wait for me at the finish? My body - although done - was uninjured. And fully capable of making it the 26.2 miles. So I finished. Thanks to a lot of "just keep going" self talk and a snack break at **Susan Cita's** Mile 20 Hoopla. Not every marathon will be pretty - but it will always be 26.2 miles that I accomplished.

**Valentino Julien:** Second marathon is now in the books with a 14+min PR! But funny thing is I almost didn't start the race... my hip was hurting quite a bit the day before (probably from the drive from Midland)... and the further into the day it got the more it hurt. Walking would even aggravate it. I didn't think I could start the race. The morning of, I prayed to God that he and caffeine and adrenaline from the race will make it feel better. God came through and I was able to cash in on five months of training along with my BCRR teammates!

**Joe Lengfeller:** This was "big number 10" - my tenth time across the marathon finish line. And I feel lucky to have reached it. Due to a variety of unlucky coincidences, I only trained about half my usual (which I don't recommend!). My secret ingredient that got me to the finish line was the support from my great running partners and the club (which I do recommend!).

**Bob & Maggie Kirkpatrick:** The runners enjoyed spectacular marathon weather, (after sweating it out for the previous 5 warm days), and as usual the Houston Marathon organization and volunteers did not disappoint. It was a great day to run the Houston Marathon and our BCRR Club posted some awesome finishing times!

**Stephanie Kuzdym:** Race day was perfect. For someone who no longer runs in Houston daily, race day was the atmosphere you hope to come home to - with support and spectators the whole way through, one less hill with the new route and can we talk about the weather? It was perfect - even the wind - I just take that as all the breezes we hope for on those hot, humid August training days!

**Hope Sellers:** Set up a small hoopla station for the half-marathon with music, juice and M&M's. A lot of the runners will sort of dance and sing with the music when they run by, especially when they hear "Respect" by Aretha Franklin or "Love Shack" by the B52's! More women than men will do that, but everyone seems to have a good time when they round the corner at the MFA building. I enjoy interacting with everyone immensely.

**Allyson Serrao:** I look forward to this time of year, because I find volunteering in the Elite Hospitality Suite very rewarding. I like representing the city of Houston to athletes from around the world. Also, I enjoy the benefits of being a local elite. All of the local elites are bused to the start line with the invited elite athletes - we warm up on Congress and we toe the line together (figuratively speaking) when the gun goes off. After the race we all share the ups and downs of the day.

**Lisa Thompson:** Marathon weekend is one of my favorites. This year was no exception. We had our first BCRR pasta party and approximately 40 people attended. To make the weekend even better we



*Photo credit: June Harris*  
Stephanie Kuzdym and June Harris show their medals at the marathon after party



## Road Warriors

(Continued from page 4)

decided to only host runners at the Modern B&B. I had 5 friends of **Scott Moore**. They dress like him which is fabulous. My visually impaired friend **Paul Shields** stayed with us and ran his first half marathon. Mellow Monday runner **Meagan O'Leary** and her husband and 3 friends also stayed, plus **Sarah** and **Stephen Milford**, **Andrew Littlefield**, **Gabe Gomez** and **Miriam Werner** with 4 year old **Milo**. We also hosted **John Colarchik** from California who was only in BCRR for 1 year, but is a friend we hope to keep for a long time.

And, I love the BCRR after-party at **Sue** and **Alan's** house. I overheard a little conversation our youngest BCRR members were having. Daniel wanted a drink of his dad Andrew's Gatorade. Andrew said Daniel could have a little bit. Then Milo asked if he could have some. Daniel said, "We have to ask my Dad." They did ask Andrew and he agreed. It was sweet to see them sharing and also following the rules.

**Tom Wille**: The Houston Marathon is my favorite of all races and this year was personally the best Marathon I've ever had with a PR of 11 minutes and reaching my long time goal of Boston qualifying. I couldn't have done it without the help of my beautiful wife **Sheila** who allowed me to run all the miles while sacrificing her training. I also owe a lot to the club for the encouragement and especially **Christina** for another willing partner to get up for all the 5AM runs!



Photo credit: Milan Jamrich

Tom Wille earned a PR at the Chevron Houston Marathon.



Photo credit: Milan Jamrich

Loris Fusi and Lisa Thompson relax after the marathon at Sue & Alan's house.

*Mimosas and Bloody Marys along the way  
Are a nice way to start Houston Marathon Day.  
For though as racers we no longer try  
We yell cheers as BCRR runs by!  
Cheryl Verlander*

## Mirka

(Continued from page 3)

Gatorade. As I recall this drink a week later I still wonder, "Why pickle juice?"

We turned toward downtown and I saw the city skyline. Allen Parkway was a rollercoaster of underpasses and overpasses. Runners were weaving through walkers, determination was muting conversation, the end was in sight. And that's when I panicked. The crowd, the blue gate, the finish — a flood of endorphins surged through me, and I couldn't breathe. "What if I don't finish?" I wondered. I centered myself, forced my lungs to exhale, focused my vision on the goal, and refused to stop.

As we were driving home I stopped thinking about what I'd just done and began thinking about what I might do. Houston marathon was really good beginning.

# The Great Prognosticator



Andrew Young

Each year, our very own philosopher-scientist **Neeraj Rohilla** uses a proprietary algorithm to predict the results of BCRR members in the marathon and the half. His predictions were delivered to Andrew via encrypted email at 6:36 am the morning of the race. They were not divulged to the subjects in advance so as not to taint the results.

This year, Neeraj was uncharacteristically inaccurate in his prognostications. By his own metrics of a 2 minute margin for marathoners and a 1 minute margin for the half, he failed to correctly predict a single time. After the fact he asserted that he accidentally swapped Avi and Tom's times, and indeed this would provide two very accurate predictions. However this cannot be independently verified. Neeraj also states that he failed to account for weather conditions resulting in a 2.78% standard error, which luckily favored the runners.

Without further ado:

Half is +/- 1 min while the full results are +/- 2 minutes. Some may not be BCRR members as they responded on FB.

Runner, prediction, and actual results in **bold**:

**Avi Moss**: 3:08:31 **3:14:13**

**Tom Wille**: 3:14:11 **3:07:20**

**Allyson Serrao** (+/- 1 min): 1:29:11 **1:30:44**

**Lauren Smith Stroud**: 2:48 **2:44:29**

**May Shek** (not enough data, gut feeling): 3:18 **3:11:29**

**Frank Dougherty**: 2:36 **2:33:22**

**Valentino Jay**: 2:37 **2:42:33**

**Clare Chandler Bensch**: 3:33 **3:26:33**

**Christina Jones/Caitlin Powers Dougherty**: Enjoy wedding/Wedding Planning, No predictions

**Jacqueline Flaherty**: 3:33 **3:38:15**

**Craig Weiland** (Not enough data, new runner to me; +/- 1 min): 1:40 for half **1:35:49**

**Subbu Venkat**: 3:13:00 **1:37:44**



Photo credit: Neeraj Rohilla

*Neeraj the nearly great.*





# A Rose from the North



Mike Mangan

*Long time BCRR member Mike Mangan interviewed long time BCRR member Rosie Schmandt.*

**Mike Mangan (MM)** - You are from the frozen tundra of northerns Ontario; how did you make it to no-snow Houston?

**Rosie Schmandt (RS)** - After my post-doc at the University of Toronto, which was already south for me – I grew up in Sudbury, Ontario, I was recruited to a research position at MD Anderson.

MM - For those of you considering a visit to Sudbury, it's a short 25-hour drive from Houston!

RS - I was recruited by my PhD mentor who had moved to MD Anderson 5 years earlier. Owing to a family history of cancer, I always wanted a job in applied cancer research, and it was in a field I liked – Gynecologic Oncology (ovarian, uterine and cervical cancer).

MM - How did you get into running?



Photo credit: Susan Cita

RS - I started running with friends during my post doc in Toronto. Just 5k and 10k distances. When I moved to Houston, I didn't know many people. The friends I did have were mostly married with kids and went home to their families at night. I wanted to meet new friends outside of work, and to do something active, and found BCRR on the web.

MM - When was that?

RS - I found the club via the internet. I think **April Murphy's** BCRR website was the first of its kind! It was bright and newsy and was great advertising for the club. I joined BCRR in the spring of 2000.

MM - What drew you to BCRR?

RS - It looked like a fun group that socialized in addition to running. Also, they met at Rice, which was close to

work!

MM - I first met you when I became part of **Bonnie Jo Barron's** "5K group." How long were you part of that? Were 5K's your favorite race? How many did you run?

RS - LOL! Bonnie was our Saturday morning 5K social director. We ran a 5K almost every weekend for several years. I never counted how many races we ran, but that was a fun group (**Bonnie, Bonnie's mom, John Phillips, Kathy Mahon, Mike Mangan, Kim Rose**, and many other regulars).

RS - 10 miles is actually my favorite distance, but one of my favorite 5K's was Maribelle's!! It's so sad that the bar was washed out to sea post Hurricane Ike.



Photo credit: Rosie Schmandt



Photo credit: Rosie Schmandt

## Rosie

(Continued from page 7)

MM - I also liked Maribelle's! That race drew a large crowd from Houston. Unfortunately, they were the fastest Houston runners, so I didn't do so well in that race! Any other 5Ks you liked?

RS - I also really liked the Independence Day Run in Pasadena. It finished with a pool party, and, fast or slow, just about everyone went home with an award or door prize of some sort (trophy, oil change, electric screwdriver, blender...).

MM - In fact, one year I won implements for an outdoor grill!

MM - You went on several BCRR road trips. Which was your favorite and what was special about it?

RS - The Rome marathon was pretty amazing and started at the Coliseum. How many sporting events have started there!?

MM - But, no lions?

RS - No lions. But we started like lions and finished like lambs!

MM - You have always been very active in the club. I remember you as club president and as the Rose Garden water person.

RS - BCRR was very much my Houston family.

MM - How long did you do the Sunday water effort?

RS - 15 years or so.

MM - What was your favorite contribution as club president? Was the first Sunday of the month Sabine run something you initiated?

RS - No, that wasn't me. I think that started during Lisa's tenure.

RS - We had a great board, and everyone contributed. We revived some of the classic BCRR events that were started by prior boards (Volleyball, Bowling, and Scrabble Run Happy Hours). Some of these had spectacular trophies that were passed along the next time the event was held. Maybe that's something the board can start again? Someone out there has the "Why I Run and Don't Bowl" trophy and is just dying to get rid of it. **Bob Thompson** made a fantastic "Athletic Supporter" award for non-running, but socially active members of BCRR. That's another award that needs to be reinstituted. It's a beaut!!

MM - What was your favorite race and why?

RS - Of the HARRA races, the 10-miler was my favorite distance. It was my best time.

MM - What race would you just as soon forget if you were able? And why?

RS - My last very last Houston marathon – I was already having knee issues and I had to drop out. That's always disappointing.

MM - You quit running because of an injury. What was the injury and why were you unable to come back?

RS - Two failed knee surgeries. Next stop is apparently a knee replacement. No more running for me. I miss it.

MM - You keep active and involved Rosie. You are an important part of the team!



Photo credit: Rosie Schmandt



## John's Long Run



Andrew Young

John's Looong Run was held this year on December 29. It was the 19th annual edition of the run, and the fourth year it was hosted by **Sue Leone** and **Alan Svoboda**. A hardy group of nearly 80 runners gathered in the driveway at 6:30 am for some last minute instructions from **John Phillips**. Then they hit the road to complete the last long run before the marathon.

Awaiting them was a 21 mile single loop marked course, with 6 water and Gatorade stations along the way. The run started out in warm, humid weather but mercifully after an hour the "air conditioning" kicked on as a cool front arrived and the temperature dropped about 10 degrees. Runners broke into pairs and small groups according to pace. For those planning a shorter distance, the course afforded many opportunities to shorten the route.

Meanwhile at base camp a small group of volunteers including **John, Sue, Alan, Susan Cita** and **Ed Fras** was hard at work on a sumptuous breakfast of eggs, bacon, biscuits, pancakes, tacos, and of course adult beverages. As runners trickled in the party gained steam and memories of the grueling run preceding it started to fade.

John has always opened his run to other clubs, part of his commitment to support the Houston running community. For the first time this year we took it a step further and collaborated with the Striders to put on a joint event. **Chad Holmes** helped coordinate the Striders efforts and **Lee Greb** was indispensable for course support, setting out water stations, driving the sag wagon and collecting discarded clothes. Many Striders joined the run and some new friendships may have blossomed as a result. Lee said he was inspired by the last group to finish, more than 4 hours later, which consisted of 3 Striders and 2 BCRR who encouraged each other through the long miles.



Photo credit: Christina Jones



Photo credit: June Harris

John's Looong Run is one of the many traditions that make BCRR a unique and supportive running community. Running John's Looong Run might not guarantee you a faster marathon, but it certainly livens up the training!

Events like this couldn't happen without John's leadership and the support of our dedicated volunteers, so be sure to thank them the next time you cross paths with one!



# Sunday with April



June Harris

On Sunday, January 5, **April Murphy** opened up her Winter Street Art Studio for a BCCR Happy Hour. April, BCCR member and past president, is the artist for Houston Marathon's 2020 poster and BCCR members had the opportunity to have their photo taken with the original painting. Wine, beer, pizza and assorted snacks were nibbled upon while everyone enjoyed conversation, reminiscing about BCCR history and talking about the upcoming marathon. If you were not able to make it, you should visit April's studio,



AEM Gallery, 2101 Winter Street, Studio #B3, Houston, TX. 77007, to see her "Feel-Good" designs.



# Houston Marathon Legacy Runners



Joel DuBois

The current rolls for BCRR include 57 Houston Marathon Legacy runners. A Legacy runner is an individual that has completed 10 or more Houston Marathons, or 10 or more Houston Half Marathons. This article focuses specifically on Marathon runners. For those of you that are interested, Legacy status allows sign up until the end of October, even if the Marathon sells out (can also be used to sign up for the Half Marathon). This came in very handy a few years back when the Half was selling out in days and the Full would sell out shortly thereafter. There are also designated restrooms (not port-a-potties) in GRB for Legacy runners.

The lists below have been split into two lists. The first for runners that finished the Full last month. The second contains Legacy runners that did not run the Full in January 2020. I started with a download from the CHM website and compared that to a listing of current BCRR members (if I missed anyone, please let me know) and added the 2020 finishes (download was extracted prior to race day). I did not see any 9-year finishers that qualified for Legacy in January. In a future newsletter, we will look at Half Marathon Legacy runners.

## RAN FULL MARATHON IN 2020

Finishes	Name	Sex	Last
31	Fred Steves	M	2020
29	Bob Kirkpatrick	M	2020
28	Larry Lindeen	M	2020
26	Steve Hasson	M	2020
25	Carol Schmidt	F	2020
23	Gloria Mahoney	F	2020
22	Fred Ward	M	2020
21	June Harris	F	2020
21	Caryn Honig	F	2020
20	Rhonda Emerson	F	2020
18	Lenord Burns	M	2020
18	Brad Godwin	M	2020
17	Ben Harvie	M	2020
16	Brenda Hilton	F	2020
16	Alan Tillotson	M	2020
16	Roy Camberg	M	2020
15	Avi Moss	M	2020
15	John P Anderson	M	2020
14	Joel DuBois	M	2020
13	Stephen Kallus	M	2020

## DID NOT RUN FULL MARATHON IN 2020

Finishes	Name	Sex	Last
26	J R Wacasey	M	2013
25	Suzy Seeley	F	2019
25	Phillip Smith	M	2006
24	John Phillips	M	2010
23	John Fredrickson	M	2015
21	Paul Schulz	M	2019
21	Claire Greenberg	F	2018
20	Jeff Eisele	M	2018
20	Freddy Queen	M	2016
20	Kathryn Vidal	F	2016
20	Yolanda Farias	F	2012
20	April Murphy	F	2012
18	William Henderson	M	2017
18	Joe Sellers	M	2009
18	Raymond Ruiz	M	2007

*Continued on next page.*

# Legacy Runners cont.

## DID NOT RUN FULL MARATHON IN 2020

17	Joe Melanson	M	2017
17	Robert Brown	M	2014
14	Camille Fitzsimmons	F	2016
14	Richard Vega	M	2002
13	Brook McClain	M	2019
13	Thomas Radosevich	M	2012
13	Michelle Wolpert	F	2011
13	Richard Verm	M	2003
12	Robert Thompson	M	2015
12	Jay Hendrickson	M	2013
12	Robert Walters	M	2013
11	Mark Conran	M	2014
11	Anna Helm	F	2012
11	Ivy Martino	F	2005
11	Ron Morgan	M	1997
10	Thomas Hebert	M	2019
10	Susan Elias	F	2014
10	Lana Moody	F	2014
10	Kathleen Mahon	F	2012
10	Rosemarie Schmandt	F	2010
10	Thomas Helm	M	2010
10	Ralph Feniello	M	1995

For more information on the Legacy program and runners, please click on <https://www.chevronhoustonmarathon.com/participants/legacy/>.





## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>ACTIVITY</u>
<b>Mondays</b>	Memorial Park	Every Monday evening a jog followed by a social gathering
<b>Wednesdays</b>	Rice University	Every Wednesday evening a jog then a social gathering
<b>Fridays</b>	Various Happy Hour haunts	Every Friday evening a happy hour. Info at <a href="http://www.bcurr.org">www.bcurr.org</a>
<b>2/15</b>	Sam Houston Park	HBA Fun Run 8K*
<b>3/14</b>	Hermann Square	Bayou City Classic 10K*
<b>4/4</b>	Bellaire, TX	Bellaire Trolley Run 5K*
<b>4/TBD</b>	Rice University	LP Run*
<b>5/2</b>	TC Jester Park	Bayou Bash Relay*

\*Official HARRA race series event.



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