

# WORDfrom = the BIRD

**BCRR MONTHLY NEWS** 

WWW.BCRR.ORG

ISSUE 60 - January 2017

# The Big Day is Coming January 15!

For many sports fans the upcoming Super Bowl on February 5 represents the biggest day of the year for Houston, but to die-hard members of the Houston running community the



Super Bowl takes a backseat to January 15 and

the Houston marathon. On January 15 at the *Chevron Houston Marathon* 27,000 runners will be competing (equally split between the half and the full marathon) and more than 200,000 supporters will line the streets to cheer on the runners. It's a BIG deal!

To ensure you're ready for this big event, here's an overview of what BCRR has planned:

- GRB RUN—The weekend before the marathon, the club's "Sunday Long Run" will run from Memorial Park down to the GRB Convention Center (and back) to simulate the last stages of the marathon. The fun starts 6:30 am on January 8.
- CARBO LOADING—For fun, friends, and food, join us Friday, January 13 for a Pasta Party. Details pending RSVP count.
- CLUB PICTURE—Before the race starts BCRR members will gather for pictures and camaraderie inside GRB. Look for the BCRR flag/banner.
- SUPPLIES RELAY—Early on race day personal gear will be collected at GRB by Lynn & Chris McGrew and then delivered to the Hoopla station of your



choice. Place your GU, gel packs, sun glasses, etc, in a bag and they will relay it to your Hoopla Station to be ready later when you arrive.

- addition to thousands of spectators lining the streets, runners will find BCRR's Hoopla Station volunteers. These good sports forego their chance to enter the races and instead serve smiles and refreshments as the runners pass Hoopla Stations at mile markers 13 and 20. Although **Katie Decker** and **Susan Cita** have never been officially canonized, they are truly saints; and every runner in the club will recognize them as such come race day. Katie and Susan invite you to help at their respective Hoopla Stations. If you're not running, please consider joining them as a volunteer! (Details on page 8.)
- POST-RACE PARTY—The club continues a tradition of outstanding parties with the post-race festivities at the home of **Sue Leone** and **Alan Svoboda**. See calendar on website for details.

Visit our Marathon Info page at <a href="www.bcrr.org/houston-marathon.html">www.bcrr.org/houston-marathon.html</a> for complete details of all these items and more. It's the biggest day of the year. Be ready!



WORD FROM THE BIRD

#### **Word from the Bird**

January 2017 Issue 60 **FREE** 

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#### **Member Database**

Has your contact info changed? Send any updates to booch82@gmail.com.

# From the President



Photo credit: Milan Jamrich

#### **Happy New Year, BCRR!**

Looking back on 2016, it was a busy and exciting year. We tried some new things, taking club trips to Boulder and Austin. We won the HARRA Spring Series club competition, and we're leading the Fall Series so far. Our club's races were a bit of a mixed bag; although this edition of Alex's 5K went off the smoothest yet, the Bayou Bash Relay had some

issues with divine intervention. We had some successful non-running activities too, like two popular family picnics and the well-attended Christmas party. Our membership continues to be strong, with a good number of new runners and relatively stable total membership.

One thing that didn't go as well this past year was fundraising. As you probably noticed, we did not

provide race management for either the Rockets Run or the Jingle Bell Run. The Rockets scheduled their run for the same day as Alex's 5K, and we had no choice but to focus on Alex's. We hope and expect to be back to normal next year. The Jingle Bell Run was cancelled by the YMCA due to decreasing participation and organizational issues (on their end). We don't know if it will resume in the future. Together the revenue from these races represented about a third of our budget last year, so

(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 that sioes mail@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.

# My Fav Run—Surly Trail Loppet

My favorite race is the Surly Trail Loppet. It's a trail half marathon held in



Andrew Young

Minneapolis. The course takes advantage of the awesome trails of Theodore Wirth Park, a huge park right in the middle of the city. It's urban trail running at its best. The course always kicks my butt with relentless hills and lots of twists and turns. One thing that I have to get used to is how hard it is to pass--the large majority of the course is single track, so you have to pick your spots. I don't do much trail running, but this race certainly motivates me to do more. The race is

organized by the *Loppet Foundation*, a group that works to promote outdoor activities and a healthy lifestyle in the Minneapolis public schools, where I was a student. It's always well-executed and efficient. I would love to get together a BCRR field trip to run this event some year.

More info at www.loppet.org/events/trailloppet

NOTE: We invite YOU to share your favorite run/race story. Send your article to ThatsJoesMail@Yahoo.com; and we will feature your story in an upcoming newsletter!



#### **BCRR Shirts**



Coming SOON the club will have singlets, T-shirts, and long sleeve BCRR tech shirts available for sale at **Valhalla**. Just in time to represent BCRR in the marathon! These groovy grape shirts will keep you looking good and feeling cool while you show you're part of the best running team in town!

Prices are just \$10 for singlets and T-shirts, and the long sleeve version (shown here) is just \$15. Multiple sizes are available to choose from, but no telling how fast any given size might sell out. Move quick for best bet of getting your shirt in time for the marathon. See any board member for details.

Word from the Prez (Continued from page 2)

although we can absorb the loss for one year we obviously don't want to lose this income permanently. You can help by contributing to other fundraising efforts like our garage sale; and if you have ideas or opportunities the board is always interested in input from members!

Looking forward, the marathon is looming large! Good luck to all the BCRR people competing in the full or the half. Keep an eye on the weekly email and the website for details about race weekend, we are working on a full lineup of events including a revamped pasta party, and of course **Sue Leone** and **Alan Svoboda's** post race party juggernaut. Thanks in advance to everyone who will spend their weekend volunteering rather than running, we rely on your support.

Thanks for a great 2016, and I'm looking forward to running and partying with all of you in 2017 too!

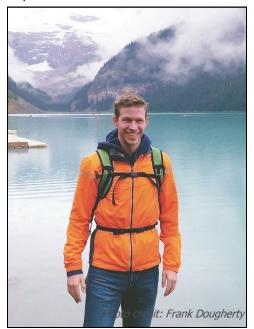


# **Get to Know Frank Dougherty**

In an ongoing effort designed to help you get to know (or get to know better) others in the club, we offer this runner profile of a new member on the BCRR team.

#### Name: Frank Dougherty

- Age: ¼ of a century (i.e., 25 years), Fun Fact: I share a birthday with Zayn Malik, NBD.
- Hometown: Cherry Hill, New Jersey (aka, C.Hill, Southern New Jersey)
- Years in Houston: Almost 1.5 years now
- Occupation: Environmental Engineer (Air Quality Consultant)
- Years Running: 15 years (My 8th grade mile PR was 5:30)
- How many miles per week do you run? I try to average about 50 miles when I'm training for a marathon. I'm also a huge fan of cross training (gym, swimming, biking, basketball).
- How did you come to join BCRR?: My girlfriend, Caitlin Powers, convinced me to join. She's a very persuasive and convincing person.
- My proudest running accomplishment is: Breaking 1 hour in a 10-mile run.
  My proudest "watching track" moment happened when I witnessed my alma mater, Villanova University, win the 4x1mile relay at the Penn Relays in 2015 (when Jordy Williamsz beat out Oregon's Edward Cheserek in the last home stretch, look it up on youtube it's pretty epic if you ask me)
- My favorite training run is: A long run along the rolling hills of Valley Forge National Park (Truly an unsung national park, located in Pennsylvania). As for Houston: Tempo runs in Memorial Park are my bread and butter.
- My favorite race is: Honestly, I enjoy point-to-point races, like the Boston Marathon (MA), Broad Street 10 Mile Run (PA), and the Ocean Drive Marathon (NJ). I also enjoy very hilly Spartan Races.



Frank Dougherty at Lake Louise, Banff National Park, Canada

- My best distance is: Right now, it's probably the 5K or the 8K. I'd say I have more speed than endurance.
- I run because: I enjoy setting new PRs. I also love the competition and comradery running has to offer.
- My life philosophy is: When I was younger I was a boy scout and attended a Jesuit high school, so I'd say I have two philosophies: Always be prepared, and be a man/woman for and with others.
- My next goal is: Right now my goal is to break 2:55 in the Houston Marathon. After that: I'd like to break my high school PR in the 1 mile run (4:40).
- Favorite training food: homemade smoothies that I'll make in my magic bullet. Anything with frozen berries, vanilla yogurt and spinach. I also eat wayyyy too many Famous Amos cookies (Don't tell Caitlin).
- When I'm running I think about: Being an explorer: and by that I mean on my long runs when I'm by myself, I'll just take in the scenery of the roads, buildings, homes that are around me. It passes the time rather quickly because there are so many unique buildings in Houston to be observed.
- The best running advice I could give would be: Don't burn yourself out running, but rather enjoy it. I've had so many friends in high school and college that don't run anymore because they ran too much in school and have gotten tired of the sport. Also: find a running buddy, this is critical to help you train. Finally, always wear reflective/bright gear at night (I'm starting to sound like my mom).
- People would be surprised if they knew: I know all the words to Aaron Carter's song: How I Beat Shaq
- The top thing on my dream list is: This one's a toughie, but if I ever had enough time, I think it'd be neat to run an ironman.
- Other hobbies beside running: I play semi-competitive ultimate Frisbee, I'm an avid table tennis player. My sport of the winter is skiing, and my sport of the summer is golfing. While I haven't done it in a while, I love to go camping and play board games.

#### How we doin'?

What do YOU say? Does this newsletter meet your expectations? The club would <u>love</u> to hear from you. *Bayou City Road Runners* is always interested in learning more about how club resources (like this newsletter) can serve you better. Nothing's perfect, and periodically it's important to ask "How are we

#### This newsletter...

- A) Rocks
- B) Sucks
- C) We have a newsletter?!

doing?" Let us know. If you have suggestions, ideas, criticisms, or thoughts you'd like to share, please contact any board member (names and



Joe Lengfellnei

contact info listed on page 2) or write to the newsletter *editor* **Joe Lengfellner** at ThatsJoesMail@yahoo.com.

Is the newsletter missing something? Perhaps you can help! What's your favorite running story? Do you have a great experience to share? Advice, or a lesson to

offer? Help us improve! Send us your story.

In addition to this newsletter, the club has several online info sources to help you stay connected and "in the know." Check out our various online resources designed to reach out to you on a variety of platforms. Now all we need is YOU! Join in the conversation at these links.



www.facebook.com/groups/bcrrhouston/



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https://twitter.com/bcrr rocks



www.bcrr.org



BCRR members' Weekly Update email managed by Christina Jones

#### Get to know Frank

(Continued from page 4)

- I would love to spend the day with: In a Houston context, it would definitely be former mayor, Annise Parker: because she just seems like an insanely fascinating person. In a BCRR context, it would have to be Neeraj, because he also seems like an insanely fascinating person.
- The most embarrassing thing that has happened to me is: I was a senior in high school running at a small track meet. I thought I had finished all my races, so I started to run my cool down, when out of nowhere I heard my coach say, "Frank, you're running the 4x400m." This was the last race of the meet and it just so happened that the race had already started. I quickly realized that I had to take off my sweats and hurry to the starting line to grab the baton (because I was apparently the leg 3). In my frenzy however, I accidently grabbed both my running shorts along with my warmup swishy pants. Oops, when I pulled down both my pants and shorts, I accidently gave my coach a glimpse at a very white "full moon" that day.
- The most profound thing that has happened in my life: Mustering up enough courage to visit a girl that I've always had a secret crush on, who happened to live in New York City at the time and convincing her two years later to move to Houston with me.

NOTE: Runner profiles are always welcome. We encourage you to send in a profile to ThatsJoesMail@Yahoo.com, and we will feature YOU in an upcoming newsletter!

### **Road Runners' Report**

# **Austin Trip**



Andrew Young

BCRR is a constantly changing club, we regularly have new members move to Houston and old ones move away. Recently, the club took advantage of the BCRR diaspora when we visited longtime members **Susan** and **Steve Davis** in their new home, Austin. On the weekend before Thanksgiving, a motley crew of runners headed west for an out of town adventure.

Sian Evans and Kern Hankins and I met the Ship of Fools, Susan and Steve's running club, for a morning jaunt around Town Lake and brunch. Ron Morgan and Theresa Pearsall ran the Shiner 5k and joined us later in the day. Lynn and Chris McGrew didn't run at all, but that never has (and never will) keep a BCRR Member from a good party--they joined us so Chris could race cyclo cross at the state championships. Susan and Steve hosted an elegant cocktail hour at their condo, with stunning views of the sunset over the lake. We also enjoyed Austin's excellent restaurant scene and the wealth of available outdoor activities.

The *Ship of Fools* was a fun group to hang out with, and in many ways they reminded us of BCRR. It would be great to keep this relationship alive--having a sister club in Austin sounds like a good idea. We've invited anyone who is coming to Houston for the marathon to join us at our post race party, so if you meet any visitors make sure to give them a warm welcome!



Traveling BCRR members enjoyed an amazing view of Austin from the home of host Susan and Steve Davis.

# Seven Races, Five Cities, Nine Weeks - A Mostly True Story



David Piper

I don't know how it happened. I think my email account was hacked. Somehow, along with my girlfriend **Allyson Serrao** ("Ally"), we registered to run seven races in five cities in nine weeks. Crazy, I know.

Portland, Maine - *Beach to Beacon 10K*. Four weeks later, New York City - *5th Avenue Mile*. Two weeks after that, back in H town for the *HARRA Cross Country Relay*. The next weekend, a trifecta in Chicago – *World Airline Road Race (WARR) 10K* followed by the *WARR 5K* later that Saturday, followed by the O'Hare Run the *Runway 5K* on Sunday! Finally, two weeks after that, the *Army Ten Miler* in Washington, DC.



We traveled by plane, boat, train, subway, bus, taxi, car, bicycle, and, of course, foot. We ate "lobstah" rolls every day in Portland, a classic reuben at Eisenberg's Sandwich in the Flatiron District ("Raising New York's Cholesterol Since 1929"), made two visits to The Purple Pig in Chicago (yummy, do go there), and had our first Laotian meal at Thip Khao in Washington, DC (unfortunately, they were out of snakehead fish).

In Portland one of the highlights was climbing the Portland Observatory. Built in 1807, it is the only known surviving maritime signal tower in the United States. From the top you can see up to 38 miles (with a telescope) out to sea. The observatory was built by a ship captain who knew how to build ships, but didn't know nothing about no observatories. There is no foundation to speak of, but rock ballast in the bottom floor and octagonal design to keep the structure steady during storms.

#### 7 Races, 5 Cities, 9 Weeks

(Continued from page 6)

Our race there, Beach to Beacon 10K, was founded by **Joan Benoit Samuelson**, an icon in Maine, who won the first-ever women's Marathon at the 1984 Olympics. The course of rolling hills begins near Crescent Beach State Park in Cape Elizabeth and winds along tree-lined roads and past dramatic ocean vistas before ending next to Portland Head Light, the nation's first commissioned lighthouse and, according to the locals, the most photographed lighthouse in America. There were approximately 6,500 runners, and the race was won on a warm and humid day by **Ben True**, who is the first runner from Maine and the first American ever to win the race.

After the race Ally bumped into an old teammate from her track team in White Plains, **Joe Ekuom**. Joe won the masters division in 33:47, edging out the second place finisher by half a second. I managed to finish ahead of Ally by 22 seconds (which would give me bragging rights for only a few short weeks) but she finished 2<sup>nd</sup> out of 320 runners in her age group.



Ally and David representing Alex's 5K at New York's 5th Ave Mile.

Next up was the *5th Avenue Mile* in New York City. One mile right down 5th Avenue from 80th street to 60th street alongside Central Park. The competition regularly attracts world-class runners, who compete in special heats after the regular age division heats. By the time they work their way up to the "experienced" runners, it is a ten year age group (50 – 59) and the men and women race together. So Ally and I got to go toe-to-toe. It was an incredible feeling racing down the heart of The Museum Mile on 5th Avenue. The race was over in what seemed like a heartbeat, only for Ally it was one tenth of a second faster heartbeat than mine. I got "Mark Frasered" and she scored a third place finish in her division.

After our heat, and a celebratory shot of Bushmills at a local Irish pub (OK, maybe two shots) we went back to the finish to watch the elites. **Jenny Simpson** won her fifth consecutive 5th Avenue Mile title, while Olympic 1,500 meter champion **Matt Centrowitz** was upset by **Eric Jenkins**. The elites go by so fast it boggles the mind.

Back in H town two weeks later things slowed down considerably for the HARRA *Cross Country Relay*. Hot, humid, hilly and hellish (did I mention hot?) were the words of the day. Both Ally and I drew the short straws and anchored our relay teams. Fortunately there was still some Saint Arnolds left to help us rehydrate after the race. Ally and her teammates **Anna Helm, Leslie May,** and **June Harris** won their division, and my teammates, **Andrew Kenworthy, Matt Nicol,** and **Avi Moss,** and I were victorious over very tough competition. Special kudos to **Andrew Kenworthy** for running on a bum hamstring and to Avi for competing a mere one week after Boston Qualifying!

We recuperated for one short week before heading to Chi town. Once a year all of the world airlines get together for a corporate competition called the *World Airline Road Race*. I don't know why they call it that because actually it is two races, a 10K followed by a 5K a mere 45 minutes after the 10K. You can run either race, or, if you are crazy enough, both. So of course we ran both. Ally



Ally Serrao and David Piper at Chicago's O-Hare airport for the World Airline Road Race select questionable locations to rest.

#### Volunteer to Cheer!



If you are not running in the *Chevron Houston Marathon*, or *Aramco Half Marathon*, you can still enjoy a real up-close and personal experience at the event. As is our beloved tradition, BCRR will staff two Hoopla Stations along the course: One near the 13-mile point managed by **Katie Decker**,

and one near the 20-mile point managed by **Susan Cita**. These Hoopla Stations provide volunteers an insider's look at the race AND serve a critical function—

cheering on weary runners! Join the excitement that is a BCRR cheering team! Email either lady ASAP and say "Count me in! I want to support BCRR runners!"

- Mile 13 Team Leader: Katie Decker katie.h.decker@gmail.com
- Mile 20 Team Leader: Susan Cita susancita.bcrr@gmail.com



# 7 Races, 5 Cities, 9 Weeks (Continued from page 7)

kicked my ass in both races and garnered a second place overall in the 10K and a third place overall in the 5K. I think I got lost circling The Bean in Millennium Park. The Bean is one of the few outdoor sculptures I have seen that actually not only lived up to its billing, but exceeded it. Did you know that the actual name for The Bean is "Cloud Gate," and it is made up of 168 stainless steel plates welded together, but it has no visible seams? Go see it to believe it.

A not so well known not-to-be-missed landmark in Chicago is the Chicago Tribune Tower located on the Magnificent Mile on North Michigan Avenue. The design of the building is spectacular, the result of an international contest in 1922 to design the "most beautiful and distinctive office building in the world." Indeed, it is beautiful and distinctive. But what makes the building fun and most interesting is the fact that prior to the building of the Tribune Tower, correspondents for the Chicago Tribune brought back rocks and bricks from a variety of historically important sites throughout the world. Many of these reliefs have been incorporated into the lowest levels of the building and are labeled with their location of origin. Stones included in the wall are from such sites as the Taj Mahal, the Parthenon, the Great Pyramid, The Alamo, the Great Wall of China, and Angkor Wat.

A piece of steel recovered from the World Trade Center has been added to the wall, and in all there are 149 fragments in the building. Chicago thievery takes a back seat to no one.

The next day, feeling no worse for the wear and tear (Houston lying takes a back seat to no one), we headed to O'Hare airport for a *Run the Runway 5K*. It was an awesome experience, but I will let the pictures (on page 7) tell the tale. Once again, Ally kicked my ass and, in so doing, took third overall out of over 3,000 runners. I did manage to ease the pain of yet another loss to Ally by winning my division.



Ally Serrao wins 2<sup>nd</sup> Place at the Army Ten Miler in Washington D.C.

Two weeks later we traveled to Washington, DC for the last stop on our nine week odyssey. The *Army Ten Miler* has almost 35,000 runners, and is the third largest ten mile race in the world. The race usually starts with a flyover by helicopters and vintage war planes, and a demonstration jump by the Golden Knights, the Army's crack parachute team. Unfortunately, due to the very windy conditions, we only enjoyed the Black Hawk Helicopter flyover. The race began with a cannon (artillery) shot, and we departed the Pentagon, ran by Arlington Cemetery (hi Mom!), crossed Memorial Bridge, circled the Lincoln Memorial, ran past the Watergate complex and the Kennedy Center along the Potomac, back around the Lincoln Memorial and up the Mall past the Korean War Memorial and the World War II Memorial, circled around to the 14th Street Bridge and returned up one final cruel hill into the wind (how/why do they always do that?) to the finish line.

My favorite part of this race (it is the third time I have run it) is seeing all the Wounded Warriors on the course. And my favorite memory is running up on a blind runner and listening in to this exchange. Random runner to blind runner – "Hey Joe, its Mike, how are you doing?" Blind Mike to Joe – "Good to see you, Joe. Are you buying the beer after the race?" Smiles and laughs all around.

And I did manage to reclaim some token bragging rights by besting Ally in the Ten Miler, although once again she took home the hardware, second place in her division. And that's my story and I am sticking to it.

## **Faces & Places**

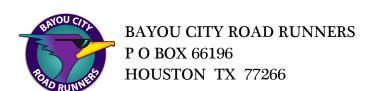


November 5 was the Alex's 5K. The event—designed to raise awareness and support for Autism charities—is pure fun. CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Race Director Lara Allen shares a smile with volunteer Hope Sellers, cupcake decorating was a big hit, start of the Kid's K is pure excitement and NOT to be missed, speedy runners win hand-painted ceramic tiles. Learn more at <a href="https://www.Alex5k.com">www.Alex5k.com</a>.

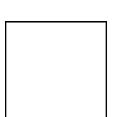
# **Faces & Places**



CALENDAR OF EVENTS		
<u>DATE</u>	LOCATION	<u>ACTIVITY</u>
1/13-14	Houston, GRB Convention Center	Runner's EXPO (Open to public)
1/15	Houston, GRB Convention Center	Chevron Houston Marathon* **
3/4	The Woodlands, TX	The Woodlands Marathon
3/11	Houston, TX (Sam Houston Park)	Law Week Fun Run 8K*
3/18	Houston, TX (City Hall)	Bayou City Classic 10K* **
3/25-26	Gonzales, TX	Texas Independence Relay
4/8	Bellaire, TX	Trolley Run 5K*
4/29	Houston, TX (Rice University)	LP Run (33 1/3 Minutes)*



\*Official HARRA race series event.



\*\*BCRR seeking volunteers