



# WORD from = the BIRD

BCRR MONTHLY NEWS

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## The Testosterone Challenge of 2003 A Battle of Egos and Sexes Unfolds in Luxembourg



By Lt Col Dexter R. Handy, United States Air Force (Ret.)

This is a story in Honor of Lynette Powell of Scotland, my marathon training partner from 2001 to 2004, as she celebrates her Diamond Jubilee of sixty rotations around the Sun. Happy

Birthday, Lynette!

The year was 2003. The month was August. The place was Luxemburg. The event was the Luxembourg Half Marathon, where they give you a bottle of champagne for finishing the race, which is quite different from the usual tee shirt and medal.

This was to be THE challenge of the new millennium. It was not originally meant to be that; it was simply a training run for two friends, Lynette and I. But it turned out to be the race of all races, a battle of egos and the sexes. Yes, a testosterone challenge!

It all started when the United Kingdom's NATO Air Forces Northern Europe charity team asked us to run with them in the Luxembourg Half Marathon. I was an Air Force officer assigned to the United States NATO element there at the time. Since Lynette and I had both been training together in and around Ramstein, Germany for the upcoming Frankfurt Marathon, we both agreed and saw this as an opportunity to get a great speed training session in before the big event. We had not counted on this particular race to be THE big event!

Well, it all started out as normal. Not wanting to be late (I usually got lost trying to find places in Europe, and this was back when a GPS unit could only get you within five blocks of a destination over there), Lynette and her husband Keith offered to pick me up at my residence. We would then drive together to Luxemburg, which was only about two hours away. Their fearless watchdog and all



PHOTO: KEITH POWELL

**Training Partners, Racing Rivals.** Dexter Handy (left) and Lynette Powell race on the cobblestones at the 2003 Bitburger Half Marathon.

around hero, Motley, joined us as well.

The drive was uneventful but we both agreed we would take it easy on this race as we both felt sluggish. Of course, that was before we both had some strong Belgian coffee to prime our egos. With two hours to go before race time and all of our gear in place, we all decided to do the

(continued on page 5)

### IN THIS ISSUE

From the Prez (2) || Notes from Dubai (3) || Member Profile (4) || Bird Dog (6)

Results (8) || HARRA Update (8) || Calendar (9)

**Word from the Bird**

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**Member Database**

Has your contact info changed recently? Send any updates to bayou\_city\_road\_runners@tabourne.com.

# From the President

Wait! We have had two mornings in a row with temperatures in the 60's? Fall must be here!

The weather has been just great this week, and Houston Marathon training has begun in earnest. We have been seeing a lot of new faces on Wednesdays and Sundays, and that is always a good thing. It is great to welcome prospective new members to BCRR and we are totally winning them over with our hospitality. I do not think I can remember the last Wednesday that there has not been a sponsored tab at Vallhalla. Whether it is for birthdays, anniversaries, goodbye parties, somebody's runner of the season prize money burning a hole in their pocket, or even for no reason at all, every week someone steps up to hydrate their teammates. Is this a great club or what? It is like having a party every Wednesday night, and sometimes that is just what we need to get us through a tough week. Thanks to all of you for doing this!

With so many new members who are running their first marathon or who are new to the city of Houston, we veterans are going to be serving double duty as tour guides through River Oaks and along the bayou trails. For new members, or for those of you just test driving us, let us know your pace and we will do our best to fix you up with a pace group. It is easy to get lost in River Oaks as a newbie, and I can honestly say I would have never made through the training for my first marathon were it not for the guidance and encouragement of our BCRR tour guides. Tim Murphy in particular shepherded many a new runner through River Oaks. He amazingly seemed to know something about almost every house along the route. He also knew the best short cuts on hot days (I can show you, since I still use them). For you overachievers looking to put in extra miles, we have people who know how to do that too! Welcome to BCRR!



PHOTO: ROSEMARIE SCHMANDT

**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 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.



# Living Large: The Dubai High Life



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

It is not cheap, but there are many ways to enjoy living large in Dubai, UAE. This country, especially Dubai, is known for its excesses. This is obvious when you consider that the world's tallest building, Burj Khalifa, a man made palm tree-shaped island, Palm Jumeirah, indoor skiing, and four of the top ten seven star hotels are here. I could go on and on. The Emiratis like to have the biggest and best of everything. On my salary it will take time but we are trying to fit visits to many of these into our schedule while we are living here. I have already mentioned that we lived on the Palm Jumeirah for our first year here. This article will cover two more of the must-see spots in Dubai.

The first is afternoon tea at the Burj Al Arab. We joined three friends who were leaving Dubaisoon and they wanted to meet here for High Tea. The cost was 425 AED per person (\$115) plus tips. This included one glass of champagne (refills were 150 AED/\$40 each), mixed berries and cream, Chef's carvery of the day (2 ounce roast beef), finger sandwiches (8 varieties), petit fours, scones, and of course tea and coffee (about 40 variations). The views were spectacular, the food was pretty good, and the service was unbelievable. All in all it was not worth the cost but it was a once in a lifetime experience, meaning I have no plans to repeat it. I am, however, glad I had the opportunity to experience it and am willing to suffer through the experience again with any of you willing to come over and pay my way. Just a thought!

Second are the amazing Friday brunches, for which Dubai is very well known. There have been numerous articles in the local papers discussing the excessive drinking that goes on at these affairs. The normal brunch lasts three to four hours starting and ending between noon and 4 PM. We have attended a few, with the most recent being at the Rixos Hotel located on one of the tips of the crescent around Palm Jumeirah. This normally costs 560 AED (\$150) per person, but we had used half price coupons. The food was fantastic, a true gluttons paradise. The alcohol was free flowing but was limited to one glass of bubbly, and then only beer and wine were available. Two in our group were planning to drink mixed drinks but could not. One of them forced himself to drink beer but the other does not drink beer or wine. It took quite a lot of persuasion but we were finally able to convince the staff to provide her with unlimited bubbly. At previous brunches we have had shots as well as mixed drinks and many were cheaper than this one. The

typical brunch here goes for about \$100 per person, but some can be closer to \$200 per person. We have experienced a few that got fairly rowdy by the end of the brunch.

This past Friday I joined a few friends for dinner and drinks at a sushi restaurant in the Armani Hotel in the Burj Khalifa. The food was great but the best part was the view of the Dubai Fountain outside the windows. The fountain show erupts every half hour to a different song which is truly an experience. I have seen a half dozen shows, never to the same song, but all worth wasting the time to see. YouTube has numerous recordings if you want to see the type of show I am writing about, but it is not the same as seeing or hearing it live.

There has not been much change in the running conditions here yet. Much like Houston there has been some improvement, just not much. It is still mostly low 90's in the morning but I have seen some high 80's and a couple of mid 80's mornings. I ran seven miles this past Friday morning which was my longest in Dubai since the spring. I guess training for the Dubai Marathon in January is officially underway!



PHOTOS: JOEL DUBOIS

**High Tea, High Price.** (clockwise from top) Joel DuBois (right) and wife Saron McNeill (second from right) enjoy brunch with friends at the Rixos Hotel, taking afternoon tea at the Burj Al Arab, finger sandwiches and petit fours make up the afternoon spread.

# Member Profile: Romuald Budiman

**Name:** Romuald Budiman

**Birthday:** 22 Demember, 1978

**Years running:** 0.5 seriously (way more after different shapes of balls)

**Occupation:** Therapeutic cells herder

**How many miles a week do you run?** Between 25 and 30.

**How did you come to join Bayou City?** It has been a while that my cousin Bob (Thompson) is insisting on me joining the club, one day I was tired of him preaching about running that I said, "Ok fine Bob I will join, but only when you become Vice-President of the club."

**My proudest running accomplishment is:** To have met the right group to train with, so happy and proud of them.

**My favorite training run is:** Maybe my Friday speed work because I need it.

**My favorite race is:** TBD (not Trans Baltimore-Detroit!)

**My best distance is:** I think it will be the half marathon which should be a great combination of speed and endurance. If not then the quarter-marathon.

**I run because:** I'm worth it!

**My life philosophy is:** To laugh often, respect and be curious about others and take the time to visit with friends and family.

**My next goal is:** To define what is my next goal.

**Favorite training food:** Banana to jumpstart the engine, salmon and quinoa to recover and all kind of different mushrooms to maintain.



PHOTO: ROMUALD BUDIMAN

**When I'm running I think about:** How natural, inner and ancestral running is. Some time ago I lost a close friend who was a triathlete, and sometimes I like to think that I am running for him.

**The best running advice I could give would be:** I am more in a position to receive advice from an experienced runner but I would say to take the time to build up your engine.

**People would be surprised if they knew:** That sometime I run my Sunday long run with only 2 hours of sleep.

**The top thing on my dream list is:** Learning how to surf or a trek with friends in Nepal.

**If I could have been anything, besides my current occupation it would be:** Chef.

**Other hobbies besides running:** I like to discover Houston, find small musical venues, good restaurants, and relaxing coffee places.

**I would love to spend the day with:** Someone, but she is too busy.

**The most embarrassing thing that has happened to me is:** I forgot, my memory has erased it anyway so that I can have a normal life again!

**The most profound thing that has happened in my life:** Joining the BCRR club. Ok, not true, but not wrong either. The most profound thing...? I guess it is too profound to extract it right now. But I am going to work on it.

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## The Testosterone Challenge of 2003

(continued from page 1)

coffee thing (good idea for the energy, bad idea for egos).

The race started off very well then all of a sudden after the first kilometer I felt a surge of energy and just could not hold back. Still wanting to run with my running partner of two years, I decided I would monitor our pace with my newest toy to keep us on track.

You see, my wonderful wife, Dr. Beverly Handy, who was still living in Houston and running with the Bayou City Road Runners, had fed my appetite for new and exotic electronic toys by giving me a Timex speed and distance GPS tracker for my birthday. This new toy, which attracted

over 500 of the runners from over 18 nations to me on this day alone, gave instantaneous distance, speed, pace, and ego levels to anyone who wore it. Passersby would just come up to me and ask all kinds of questions about the strategically placed gadget wrapped around my arm, and I would gladly give a dissertation on the features, benefits, all around great aspects, and performance parameters. It put me in control of the masses! As Gollum from The Lord of the Rings would say, "It is my precious!"

Of course, once you don this 'precious' toy, it controls you. We had agreed on a ten minute pace per mile, but after two miles at a 9:15 pace, I felt we could maintain it. 'The Precious' had me!

I kept providing instantaneous feedback to Lynette at each kilometer, at each mile, at each stride, and at each water stop. Lynette, for her part, affirmed she was 'aah, okay' every time I asked if we could keep that pace. After 56 minutes on the course we had already covered 6.5 miles. I felt great, and Lynette again said she was 'ohhh, okay (#\$%@, DEXTER!! Slow Down, won't you?!!)'. At mile 9, Lynette, my friend and running partner, suggested I run my pace instead of holding back. I protested weakly and then quickly took off like a dog after a prize bone. "My Precious" had me under its control! Without any constraints in speed, I commenced to pass over three dozen runners of mediocre ability, and garnish the cheers and hurrahs of the hundreds of spectators out there, all without thinking about my friend and fellow runner. With only a mile to go, I was on a roll!

With just one kilometer to go and on a world record pace, I felt a jab in my side. I glanced to my right to see none other than Lynette! She had this competitive look in her eyes, and as she evened my stride she stated, "so, you left me back there for fame and glory huh? You are going down, Buster!" I knew she was going all out, but I also knew that this time, I was going to win this one. I must! I had to!

I looked at her, and said, "You're on!" We then commenced to match each other stride for stride, sprint for sprint, and grunt for grunt. How would this end? Could a 215 pound runner weighed down with gadgets galore outrun a lithe 100 pound Scottish Princess? There was only one thing to do.

As we got to within fifty meters of the finish line the path narrowed with spectators and gates. The gadget took control and I elbowed her in the chest.

(continued on page 7)



PHOTO: DEXTER HANDY

**Motley Crew.** (from left) Lynette Powell, Keith Powell, and member Beverly Handy in queue for post race brats and beers with pooch Motley.



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# Word from the Bird Dog: Buster

**Name:** Buster.

**Breed:** I prefer 'mixed breed'.

**Owner:** My human is Rosie and although she always refers to herself as my boss, I know better.

**My favorite training run is:** From here to the nearest squirrel, possum or cat! I guess that makes me more of a sprinter. I do love long walks. You need to stop and smell the flowers (or posts, trees and fire hydrants) along the way.

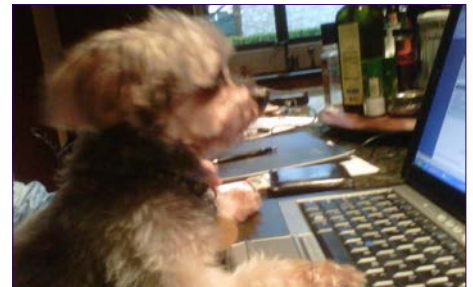
**Favorite training food:** Pupperonis are my Gu! Cheetos and goldfish will do in a pinch.

**The best running advice I could give would be:** Get lots of rest. Forget the distance running, speedwork is where it's at!

**People would be surprised if they knew:** I love baths.

**Other hobbies besides running:** Walking through slimy green puddles, hunting, chasing and eating bugs (the crunchier the better), napping.


**The most embarrassing thing that has happened to me is:** Jumping into an open hot tub. I thought the lid was still on! Thank goodness Auntie Gail has her bronze cross because I'm not much of a swimmer.



PHOTOS: CHERYL VERLANDER

**Furry Friend.** (clockwise from top) Gizmo launching an attack on the fountain, keeping up with his Facebook friends, and posing with his human, Cheryl Verlander.


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## The Testosterone Challenge of 2003

(continued from page 5)

I tripped her as I said, "B\*&#\$, you are the one who's going down!" She countered with a jab and a side kick as the crowd cheered! We ran, kicked, elbowed, gouged, panted, and struggled, all while sprinting. Ultimate Fighting Championship fans never saw such a spectacle! Finally, we both ended up falling over the finish line together.

So who won? How would we get it settled? It could not be a tie. One of us had to be declared the ultimate winner! We finally figured out a once in a lifetime solution.

It always comes down to fashion. Lynette, after 13.1 miles, still had her lipstick and her makeup in place, her hair was all in perfect condition, and her outfit matched. But it looked so 1999 (and it was a pale blue).

I, on the other hand, had also donned a matching outfit (it was a trendy silver). On top of that, my high tech gadget (a 21st century addition), together with my trendy Nike black bandana (versus her common baseball cap) wowed the judges. I WON! Men all over the world can once again feel vindicated! Bobby Rigg's loss to Bill Jean King has been avenged!

Addendum: The Race did occur in 2003. Lynette let me go on at mile 9. She did a fantastic job of catching both her breath and me at mile 12.5. We both pushed each other to the finish line, and we both finished in 2:07:12, and were exhausted, but elated. And we were both sore the rest of the evening. Keith and Motley (the judges) were gracious enough to bring

us our warmups, which kept us from getting hypothermia. And we all had another cup of coffee, some bratwursts, and some French fries.

The other details, save the assistance of my 'precious' GPS time and distance monitor, are fiction and the result of too much coffee after a race. Cheers and Happy Jubilee to Lynette Powell!



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PHOTOS: DEXTER HANDY

**Battle of the Sexes.** (from top) Dexter Handy (left) and Lynette Powell relax after dazzling the judges and spectators with a sprint to the finish line, Lynette Powell accepting hardware after a hard fought race.

# BCRR Results from the Road



By Roger Redding

## HARRA Update

Feel free to contribute with any interesting running material you want to see in the newsletter.

We're always on the lookout for entertaining run/race reports, how-to/technical articles, editorials and photos.

### DID YOU KNOW?

Just submit your story to [bcrr.news@gmail.com](mailto:bcrr.news@gmail.com).



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(\*HARRA event, \*\*BCRR-managed)

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	ACTIVITY
10/12	6:30 PM	Memorial Park	BCRR Scrabble Run
10/14	7 AM	Clear Lake, TX	USA 10-Miler*
10/20	8 AM	Galveston, TX	Toughest 10K Galveston
10/26	6:30 PM	Alabama Ice House	BCRR Happy Hour
10/28	7 AM	Houston, TX	Houston Half Marathon and Relay*
11/10	TBD	Houston, TX	Rockets Run**
11/18	7 AM	Houston, TX	HMSA Classical 25K & 5K*
12/2	8 AM	La Porte, TX	La Porte By the Bay Half Marathon
12/9	7 AM	Sugar Land, TX	Finish Line Sports 30K*
12/16	5:30 PM	Cadillac Bar	BCRR Holiday Party
1/13	6:30 AM	Houston, TX	Chevron Houston Marathon*



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