

August 2020

splitimes

The Official Newsletter of the Utica Roadrunners



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August
2020
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[Club Handbook](#)

Summer Running Fun!



Harry Campbell and Karen Piccola
on a July running adventure!



President's Message by Jim Mott



“Restriction kindles creativity; and crisis the opportunity for growth.”

– RICH ROLL

July was certainly a month of reflection for me in many ways. I had yet another birthday and joined a new age group. My oldest kid graduated from high school and is getting to go onto what looks like Virtual College at the moment. It was also a time to reflect what running means to me and that all started with the Utica Boilermaker 15k. One of my best running friends, Anita Moller, knew of my streak since 1992 and wanted to make sure I didn't let COVID-19 stop the streak at 28. We ran at 2 pm with the heat and humidity making it feel like every other Boilermaker I have done. The difference obviously was that there were no fans or spectators, no competition, no post-race party-just a chance to reconnect with the course that has helped shape my life since 1992.

My kids ask me why I continue to put myself through the torture that running can sometimes be. Over the years, my answers have changed. Ultimately whether our streaks are 100 mile months, 1,000 mile years, consecutive days running or number of times doing your favorite race-the numbers are a gauge that shows us that we can go the distance and we can achieve our goals. Whatever your goals might be, I encourage you to not take anything for granted and make sure you have time to reflect on what this great sport means to you, your family, your friends, and our great club and community.

That being said, reflecting back on this past month I can truly say we had a great month as a club. Kicking off the month, we celebrated what would have been Boilermaker weekend by having a Utica Roadrunner Day at the Sneaker Store. At that event, we celebrated our Push URself event success. We promoted and kicked off our Stars, Stripes & Solidarity event. We also promoted our wonderful Run Against Racism and awarded scholarships to our four deserving high school seniors. So much went into that day and we had great coverage from our local media as well. A huge thank you to Josh, Morgan, Rich, Sharon Scala and the entire staff at the Sneaker Store. I would also like to recognize and thank Jen Bachelder, Andrew Rubino, Tim Kane, Anne Marie Latshaw, Alex Gonzalez, Rick Gloop, and Michelle Truett for their work and dedication to the events we have been holding. A special note to all those who did not get a chance to run the course and see all the work Alex and Michelle put into the Run Against Racism-the signs will stay up through the first week of August so try to get out there and experience it for yourself.

Again, taking time to reflect, the virtual events have given us a great opportunity to do many things. The April **Scavenger Hunt** kept us connected as we navigated our way through such a scary time. We were able to help our local business partners with your



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONT.)

donations. The **FIVE after FIVE** was a huge success and allowed us to recognize our essential workers, local and state police, and firefighters. **Push URself** gave us an opportunity to compete and chase our goals. Lastly, our **Stars, Stripes & Solidarity** and **Run Against Racism** has inspired a sense of patriotism, pride, and awareness that is so important. Years from now, we will look back on these times and remember how we came together during the toughest of times.

Looking ahead there is a lot to cover. In other articles in this issue you will learn about the cancellation of our Four Race Challenge and our decisions to make the Save Our Switchbacks and Falling Leaves Virtual and VirtuReal. Decisions on the Skeleton Run and Santa Sizzle will be made soon as we continue to monitor the news, our opportunities, and restrictions. 2020 has been quite a year so far and it is hard to believe it is already August. We will continue to try and keep you engaged and proud to be members of this great running club. Please know how much I appreciate your patience, support, and dedication.

Jim

Movie Review by Jim Mott



Back in April when the UR Board shared some of their favorite films and other running related treasures, I took the opportunity to watch, read, and listen to some of their great suggestions.

I love documentaries – especially ones that are running related. Recently, I came across this gem and felt compelled to share it with you. This is the

story of the underdog. It is a story that makes you laugh, cry, and think.

Once is Enough is part Rocky Balboa and part Jerry Seinfeld. The journey of Jeffrey James Binney is a journey worth watching. With a sense of new purpose and appreciation of life, he uses running as a way to express his grief and channel his emotions. I highly recommend this to anyone who loves the sport of running.

Please let me know your thoughts if you do watch it!

UR Happy Hour

UR Happy Hour kicked off again on July 17th at the newly opened Bagg's Square Brewery near Union Station in Utica.

It was a great outdoor space for club members to get together and enjoy each other's company!





Letter from the Editor by Michelle Truett

What a Month!

Running friends!

I want to send out a huge thank you for supporting the Run Against Racism in BIG ways – we have raised a good deal of money through donations, a lot of gear is out there being proudly worn and from the posts you are putting up (see page 15 for photos), I see that a lot of education and “aha moments” are happening, which is wonderful. I’m going to wait to share the full results until next month’s newsletter – the signs will be up through August 5 (we had a special request to keep them up for a few extra days), so take advantage of the route and the signage through then!

The Roadrunners – especially our board members – have REALLY stepped up during the pandemic to bring us FIVE great events in a mere four months, keeping us challenged and engaged with other runners. I’m so proud to be part of this crew.

See you out there! // Michelle

Roadrunners in the News

Thank you to the Observer-Dispatch and Spectrum News for covering our UR Day at The Sneaker Store in July, where we kicked off the Stars, Stripes & Solidarity and Run Against Racism runs and presented our student scholarships.

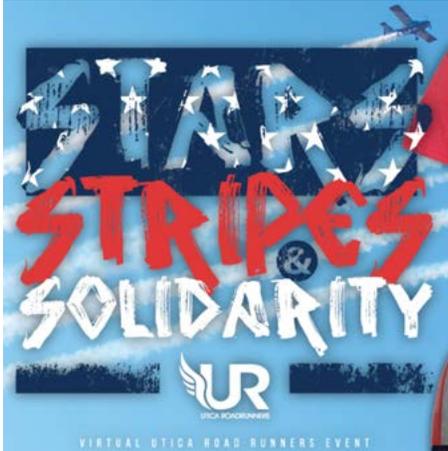


READ NOW



WATCH NOW

Stars, Stripes & Solidarity Wrap Up and Winners, by Rick Gloor



As with any great idea, the Stars, Stripes, & Solidarity virtual event came into being on the back of a napkin over drinks. In late May and early June, it was still unclear if the pandemic restrictions were going to be lifted to allow for non-virtual running events. Originally, it was just code-named the "4th of July Run" and we wanted to offer a month-long list of running challenges based on elements of the American flag.

3 mile (5K) for colors of flag, 13 miles for 13 stripes, or 50 miles in a day, week, or month for all the stars.

A big emphasis of our virtual events is to create inclusivity for all runners and walkers regardless of pace, etc. At the same time, the UR Run Against Racism was taking shape and we wanted to make sure the 4th of July event was named in a way that promoted a unified existence both for runners and for the co-launched events. The decision was made to include

the element of solidarity to reinforce the breadth of community cultivated through running events, emphasize our resilience even though separated by pandemic restrictions, and that we all exist as one under the spirit of the holiday and our great national flag.

Given that it was a national holiday, we wanted to take the time to support a local veterans group and solicited feedback from our participants. One of our URR members and event participants mentioned the Feed Our Vets organization as a group that was still able to execute their programs during the pandemic, which was critical as we wanted to ensure the donation provided maximum positive impact. While runners were starting to drift a little from virtual events given the nice weather, we still had a hardy crew and raised \$360 that will be donated to Feed Our Vets. It's noteworthy that the total donation amount of \$360 was made up of many relatively small donations, with the average donation being just over \$10.

It's a reminder that many small acts of solidarity are what continue to make the URR running community amazing. Special shout out to all the participants and to Jen Bachelder and Andrew Rubino for keeping the Stars, Stripes, & Solidarity crew motivated via Facebook and Strava groups.

**\$360
RAISED
FOR:**



Winners

Made in the USA

Biasillo, Laura
Campbell, Harry
Cooley, Jessica
Hanna, Sara
Knowles, Helen
Randall, Karen
Seigle, Tara
Spohn-Bates, Phyllis
Szatko, Jennifer

Flag Selfies

Callahan, Bill
Farrell, Shannon
Gilligan, John
Latshaw, Anne Marie
Macera, Jeannine
Neary, Scott
Ott, Jessica
Potocki, Chris
Seigle, John

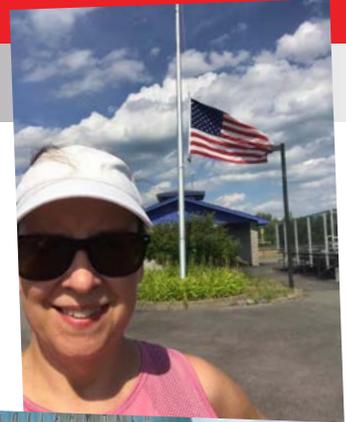
Boilermaker Weekend

Barlett, Melissa
Burmester, Cheryl
Lyga, Jami
Murray, Dodi
Piccola, Karen
Thurston, Myron

Crazy 50 Miler

Joslin, Tom

Thank you to all who participated!



What Shoe Are You Wearing?

by Terry Dwyer



It is confession time and I must admit to a strange little pastime I indulge in before the start of road races. I look at people's feet. In fact, I study them. Not in a weird way but to see what running shoes they are wearing. I am fascinated by the different types of runners that gather at races

and by looking at their running shoes there is a lot I can learn about each one.

After decades of running on the roads, trails, and tracks across a wide swath of this country I can say that I have seen people run in all kinds of footwear. There have been runners in basketball shoes, wrestling shoes, indoor soccer shoes, army boots, high heels, sandals, and black oxfords. There have also been the purists—that legion of barefoot runners who never waiver in their commitment to put skin to ground and run races in the scorching heat or bitter cold.

My own fascination with looking at people's running shoes has more to do with whether they are running in the right shoe. Each race I look for the mismatched runner and running shoe. Invariably I can identify several who made a bad shoe choice. It seems many runners are in shoes for the wrong reason. Studies have shown that choice of running shoe is based predominantly on the color or design. Fit and functionality sometimes give way to the great American obsession with looking good. While running stores have been leaders in getting the right shoe on a runner's foot, there are those who still

judge a shoe by its fit (admittedly an important factor) and look. But even if a shoe fits well it may not be the right running shoe. A runner who needs more support and correction for pronation should not be in a sleek racing flat better suited for entrants in the Olympic 10000 meters.

I also like to see what brands people run in. My observations have tallied Nike, Brooks, and Asics as the more popular with Hoka also building a loyal following. However, there are now so many brands to choose from it is no wonder runners can be lured to the wrong shoe. The engineering that goes into present day shoe design makes the Nike waffle trainers from my high school days a relic. Those readers who remember the light blue nylon flats with the yellow swoosh likely have similar fond recollections of Saturday cross-country meets running in those shoes.

The last thing I look for when I am conducting my pre-race observations is how a runner's shoe wear pattern provides evidence of mechanics. If I see a runner with worn-down heels or a wicked supination wear along their midsole to the ride liner, I will try to jog behind and aside them from afar as they warm up. I watch for things like foot strike and leg whip. Now I know this may sound a bit creepy, but it is done for the sake of my continuing education on running, and to pass the time until the gun goes off. So, if you see a tall guy at the next race looking a bit too intently at your feet just come over, say hello, and show me what shoe you are wearing.

Terry is a RRCA certified distance running coach, USATF Level I coach, and Lydiard Level 1&2 coach

Utica Roadrunners Day at The Sneaker Store



On Saturday, July 11th, the club set up at The Sneaker Store for a fun pandemic compliant get together to kick off the Stars, Stripes & Solidarity event and the UR Run Against Racism. Members picked up your Push URSelf prizes and joined us in a presentation to celebrate our Paul Ohlbaum, Howard Rubin, and Utica Roadrunners Scholarships winners. We also enjoyed The Sneaker Store's Christmas in July Sale and we thank them for hosting a great day!



Update on UR 2020 Races

After careful consideration over the months since the ongoing pandemic has impacted our lives, we have made the decision to cancel our Four Race Challenge and make our four races Virtual/VirtuReal events. It is with a heavy heart we do this but it is the best and truly only option we have at this point. Without the approval of the City of Utica, we cannot hold our events. The City of Utica's approval can only come when the State of New York and Governor Cuomo supplies their approval.

Therefore, all those who have registered for The Four Race Challenge, Save Our Switchbacks Race, and the Summer Sizzle have the following options available to them:

1. **Defer** your registration to 2021 and have your entry moved to next year.
2. **Donate** your registration fees to The Utica Roadrunners to contribute to the many things they do for the running community.
3. **Get a Refund**

For all of those currently registered, please contact us at jmott@cvalleycsd.org **by August 4** with your intentions. If we do not hear from registrants, they will automatically get deferred into the race(s) for 2021.

As many of you know, we have done our best to keep the club and area connected, inspired, and active. With our virtual challenges we have created wonderful new events that include The April Scavenger Hunt, The Five AFTER Five, Push URself, Stars, Stripes & Solidarity, and The Run Against Racism – **FIVE new events in just four months!** All the events have been led by members of our club. They have raised awareness and money for our local partners. We will continue these virtual events as we maintain the traditions of our four core races.



SAVE OUR SWITCHBACKS: Sun August 16 - Mon August 31, 2020

Therefore, we hope and encourage you to register for The Virtual and VirtuReal Save Our Switchbacks 5k or 8k. The cost is \$10 and the first 200 will get a commemorative medal that can be picked up at the Utica Zoo at a time announced at a later date. **REGISTER NOW – (ONLY \$10!)**



FALLING LEAVES: Sun September 27 - Sun October 11, 2020

Our most traditional race, The Falling Leaves 5k and 14k will also go Virtual/VirtuReal. Race Director Mike Brych has created two great courses that runners can run on their own and be able to report their times that will appear in a special results page. Runners may also choose to run a course of their own virtually. This marks our 45th year of the Falling Leaves and as usual the shirt is fantastic. **REGISTER NOW – (ONLY \$20!)**

ADDITIONAL 2020 RACES

As the crisis continues we will continue to monitor and await approval to hold our final events. Those events being The Skeleton Run in October, The Run for Hunger on Thanksgiving Day, and The Santa Sizzle that will replace our Summer Sizzle in December. If we cannot hold our races we will again give our runners Virtual and VirtuReal options. It has been truly a challenging year for all of us in every way. Running is our escape to life's problems and we have lost many of our chances to join each other for our group runs and races. We will continue to try to offer challenges and serve you in the future.

Your patience and understanding has been more than appreciated and if you have any questions, concerns or comments please do not hesitate to let us know.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



MEET ALYSSA FANELLI

She adores animals, loves live music, totally digs a great brewery and is passionate about plants. In the past few years, she has also fallen in love with running and a new community of friends. We caught up for a super caffeinated coffee with Roadrunner Alyssa Fanelli.

Alyssa grew up in Deerfield and went to Whitesboro High School. She has a degree from SUNY Cortland in Communications, worked in retail for a while and for the past five years she has worked at DFAS in Rome handling travel pay for civilians. She lives in Clinton which is perfect for the “Sunday Sermon” runs that take off from the Green almost every weekend.

She was never athletic in high school and only started running about four years ago when she was 28 years old. She was in that late-twenty-something place we’ve all been in of having gained a few pounds while working more on her career than on working out. She had a friend at work, who was in the army, helping her out with workouts at the company gym and wasn’t getting the results she wanted. She decided that she was going to do a 5K and in 2017 ran the Boilermaker 5K. At her housewarming party shortly after, Roadrunner Matt Zawisza pulled the old “if you can run



Member Spotlight (cont.)



a 5K, you can surely do a 15K!” challenge and Alyssa, after a few beers (it was a housewarming party after all!) agreed. In 2018, she joined the UR Boilermaker Training Program, which in her opinion is the best program to get you ready to run the Boilermaker –she never would have gotten through the 15K without the Roadrunners. The 15K was followed quickly by the Old Forge “Looney” run (a half marathon and a 10K) and the Syracuse Half in 2019.



Alyssa became a Roadrunner when she started the BTP as a result of simple math – instead of bringing \$2 each week, it was easier to become a member! What she found was worth so much more than that – it is a community to belong to, a few group of friends and a positive group of accountability buddies that bring on new challenges all the time. There’s a chance she might not still be running without the people she’s met through the Roadrunners and their friendship and support.

From not being able to even run a mile to running her furthest run of 14.5 miles to losing weight and keeping it off, she has also gained confidence. She attributes running as great for mental health, especially during quarantine, where working from home has kept her pretty isolated from coworkers and other groups of people. Running friends have become those she trusts.

In this challenging year, she has pivoted her goals of running multiple half marathons since most have canceled or postponed, and instead she is chasing her 1,000 miles. As of her interview on the 27th, she was just over 700 for the year, so well on her way to that red jacket! She looks at the pandemic as a bit of a blessing for her running this year – she may not have had the time to log 1,000 hours otherwise.

She has also been working a bit on getting speedier this year as well and has also been doing strength training and weight lifting with Erik Winberg, a physical therapist at SPI. Along with other Roadrunners, she has been going two times a week for eight months and learned a lot about how muscles affect your body and





performance. Things hurt that she never knew she had, but the results have been amazing. From not being able to run a mile, Alyssa is now in the best shape of her life!

She has a couple pieces of advice to newer runners – invest in some good quality gear, especially for the wintertime. It's worth it. Don't look at what other people do or compare yourself to others. Everyone is different - they run at various paces, at different times and sometimes further and faster than you. Don't get caught up on what you see posted on Facebook or Strava - do what YOUR body needs to do and hit YOUR goal.

Beyond running, Alyssa loves concerts and music – the wall decor in her house is full of concert posters, especially Dave Matthews. She's into indie rock, alt rock and jam bands mainly, but does like "a little bit of a lot of different things." She's also a fan of plants and gardening, likes hiking and visiting breweries

and she's a dog mom to Jax, a black lab golden retriever mix.

Hoping to get back to in person races soon, she has her eye on a few destination races including the Flying Pig in Ohio, The Old Port Half in Portland Maine put on by Shipyard Brewery (A brewery PLUS a race? Yes, please!) taking part in Race Raves' March Madness of Races and the Glacier Half Marathon in Montana.



Although her running autobiography at this point may be titled something like "WHY Did I Think This Would Be a Good Idea?!" (95 degree Dev Runs and Sunday Sermon HILLS!), running has been the start of a great new chapter in Alyssa's life and we're excited to see what's next for her!

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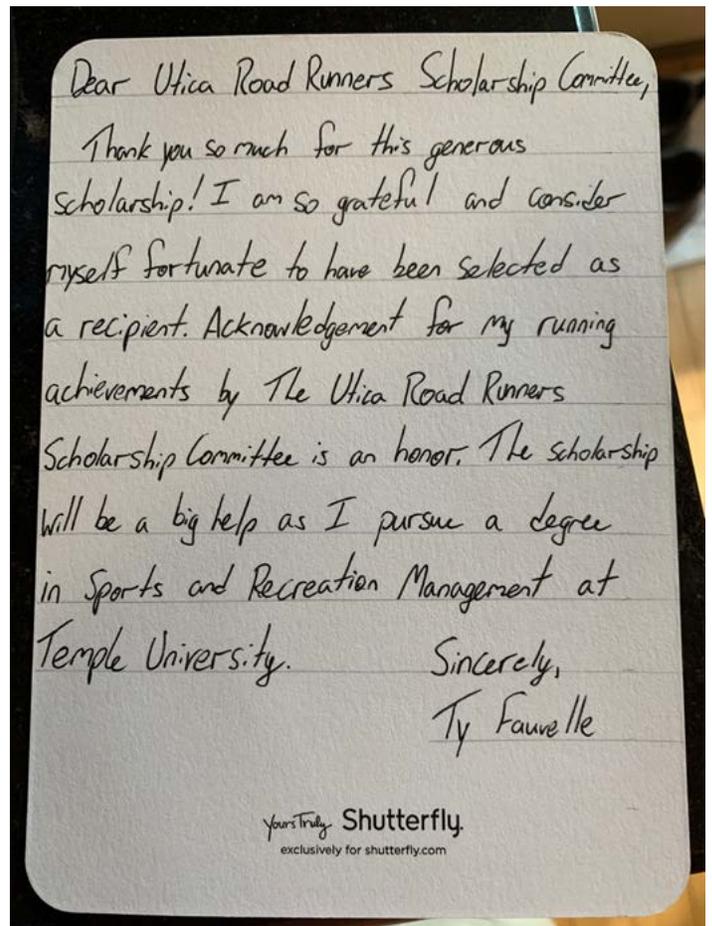
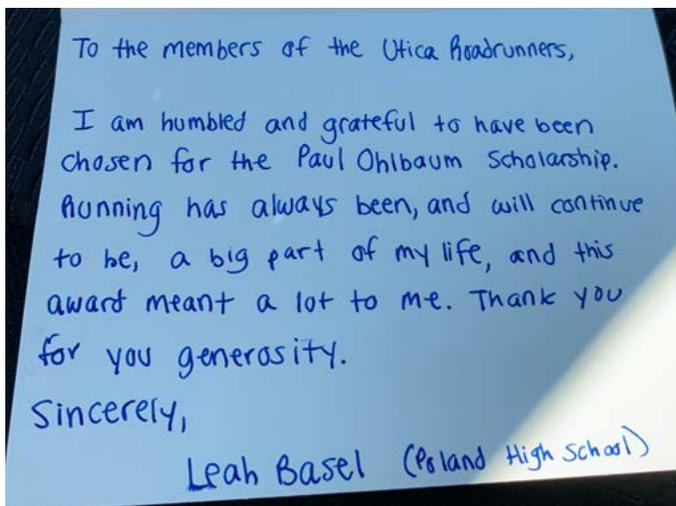


Congratulations to the Utica Roadrunners' Scholarship Recipients



This year, like every other, the field was packed with lots of tough competition and a very bright group of applicants. The following 2020 High School Seniors were each awarded a \$500 Scholarship this afternoon. We wish them the very best ahead.

- Paul Ohlbaum Scholarship
Tyler Fauvelle - Adirondack CSD
- Paul Ohlbaum Scholarship
Leah Basel - Poland CSD
- Howard Rubin Scholarship
Alexis LaFever - Morrisville-Eaton CSD
- Utica Roadrunners Scholarship
Bianca Durso - New Hartford CSD



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- October 2020
- November 2020

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- Yes No

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