

First step out the door the hardest part



Getting that first step out the door can be the hardest part of running, the author points out, which seems to be the case with these smiling participants in the Vintage Run and Wine Festival half marathon in October. [PHOTO PROVIDED]

Then a love affair renews after just a few steps

One of the reasons I love running is that it's the only sport I haven't been terrible at. I was never athletic. Shy and uncoordinated was not a good combination growing up. I didn't even play sidewalk games. Mostly, I think, I was afraid of failing and embarrassing myself, but then in my 30s I discovered running



MYRIAM LOOR

and it welcomed clumsy me with open arms. I felt accepted. For once, it did not matter if I was good at it or not. All I needed was my willingness and a pair of sneakers. The road and I became inseparable. I swore I would never let go.

Until now.

Ever been on a diet? I have. I had an intense romance, however briefly, with just about every diet ever published. I

would be so committed to losing the several pounds that had attached themselves to my body. Oh, I would make progress, a lot of progress, until that slice of birthday cake in the office and the leftovers the next day and then ... well, you know the drill. It would be a long time before I would find my way back to another diet. The longer I went, the more difficult it was to get back.

It's kind of the same with running. For years, nothing would stand between me and my run. I would walk through knee-high snow in my driveway, sneakers in hand, to reach the road and change into them, then run my miles.

Rain, heat, nothing would stop me. There was always time - I made the time to run. Then I started taking more rest days, and I mean days. Some were needed as injuries became more frequent. Others were, well ... let's just say an extension of that needed rest. I became good at justifying "my recovery days" with reasons like the climate - "Today is too

cold," or "the wind is too strong so I'll go tomorrow." The more days that went by, the easier it was to find a reason not to lace up.

But during this apathy that sometimes festers, a little voice reminds me of my days on a diet (honestly, the taste of a celery stick still lingers) and how difficult it was each time to get back on track after falling off. Frankly, the thought of distancing myself from running scares me.

True, there have been many runs that have not been easy - some have been quite difficult - but every one of them has given me an enormous sense of well-being and solidified my existence.

Unlike a diet that left me hungry and deprived, running fulfills me in so many ways. It is that time in my busy day when it's just me and my thoughts, me and the road.

So I get past that sluggishness that settles in and head out the door.

Difficult at first, but after a few steps I'm there again, like

Classic holds community recognition reception

In February, the directors of The Classic 10K Road Race presented by Crystal Run Healthcare held a Community Recognition Reception to thank sponsors, volunteers and committee members, and recognize community honorees.

The Classic honored several community organizations in once again donating \$8,000 to recipients. "Crystal Run Healthcare remains deeply committed to supporting The Classic 10K, which is truly a world-class event and an overall amazing experience," said Michelle A. Koury,

MD, Crystal Run Healthcare's Chief Operating Officer and presenting sponsor of The Classic. "The continued success of this event allows for generous reinvestment in our community. The benefits of running, as part of a healthy lifestyle, include a healthy weight, excellent heart function, and mood elevation. This is why I run, and I hope others will join us for this year's Classic 10K Road Race Weekend."

The event will take place June 3-4 at the Middletown High School track. For online registration, downloadable applications and more information, visit www.classic10k.com.

Race calendar

APRIL

1: Washingtonville Scholarship Run 5K. Contact: Lindsay Maguire or Barbara Quinn - Imaguire@ws.k12.ny.us and 497-4000, ext. 22501 or 22502.

1: Orange County 4-H Alumni 5K Run/Walk and Kids 100 Yard Bunny Hop, Education Center and 4-H Park, Finchville Turnpike, Otisville. Register at www.cceorangecounty.org. Call Peggy Kral at 344-1234.

2: Run and Walk for Autism "Hustle for the Puzzle" 5K; 5K run and two-mile walk, Orange County Airport, Montgomery. Contact: Holly Borzacchiello at borzacchiello@yahoo.com or amoc@mhaorangeny.com or 342-2400, ext. 307.

30: 3rd Annual Chocolate 5K Run/Walk, New Windsor. Contact: James Roe at 541-2500 or email chocolate5krun@yahoo.com.

MAY

7: 24th annual Delaware River Run 5K, Port Jervis. Contact: Bobby Bell at 344-7761 or John Faggione at 858-4045. Register at www.delawareriver5krun.com

13: Allyson Whitney 5k Run/Walk, Firefighters Pavilion, Kauneonga Lake. Register at bit.ly/2017AWF5k or contact Katy for info: run@allysonwhitney.org

27: 23rd annual Chester Kiwanis

Hambletonian 5K Trot. Free post race full breakfast for all runners. Contact Richard at 469-7317 or at richiehr@msn.com. Online registration at www.racemenu.com/kiwanis.

JUNE

3: Junior Classic and Citizen's Classic Mile, Middletown High School. Contact: Frank Giannino at 551-8270 or go to www.classic10k.com

4: Crystal Run Healthcare Classic 10K and 12th annual Rowley 5K, Middletown High. Contact: Frank Giannino at 551-8270 or go to www.classic10k.com

11: 21st annual Ruthie Dino Marshall 5K Run/Walk, Middletown Y.M.C.A. Contact: Debbie Brain at 344-9622; register at middletownymca.org

17: Lap4Life 4 mile run/walk, Chadwick Lake, Newburgh. Contact: www.lap4life.org to register or contact Maddalena at 325-3685 with questions.

AUGUST

12: Forestburgh 5K Race/Walk. Contact: Information about participation or a pledge of support, email forestburgh5K@gmail.com.

To get your race in the calendar, email details to sports@th-record.com. For online running content, go to <http://www.recordonline.com/topics/Running-Column>

welcoming good old friends. Accepted, free, so alive.

— Myriam Loor, 55, of Monticello is a longtime runner and founder and race director of the Celebrate

Life Half Marathon in Rock Hill. Email her at myriamloor@hvc.rr.com. She shares her delightful insights into life in "Because It Is I," which can be purchased on Amazon.

Remembering The Classic's unsung hero

Race calendar

March

18: Run for the Gold 5K, Montgomery. Contact: email Amy at Acon0876@yahoo.com or Erin at erinsherry23@gmail.com.

19: Shamrock Scramble 5K, Wallkill Firehouse. Spaghetti dinner at 6 p.m. March 18 at the firehouse; cost is \$10. Information: Bob Garrison at 926-8055, Al Schmidt at 895-8350, JoAnne Warren at 895-8373, or register at www.wallkillshamrockscramble.com.

25: Wurtsboro Mountain 30K & Road Relay. Contact: Mac Thurston at mackie.thurston@gmail.com or C.Westerman at 235-3460 or cwest845@gmail.com.

26: 5K for Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, Stewart International Airport. Contact: independenthelicopters.com/pilots4lls

April

1: Washingtonville Scholarship Run 5K. Contact: Lindsay Maguire or Barbara Quinn — lmaguire@ws.k12.ny.us and 497-4000, ext. 22501 or 22502.

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June

17: Lap4Life 4 mile run/walk, Chadwick Lake, Newburgh. Contact: www.lap4life.org to register or contact Maddalena at 325-3685 with questions.

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Timer Bill Sherry a fixture at road races

Bill Sherry, 69, was a fixture at almost every Classic 10K in Middletown for the last 36 years. He was our race timer, consultant and a cherished friend. For me, he was that calming voice at the other end of the phone line whenever I needed it.

When it came to every detail of organizing an endurance event, he always had the answer to any question. Bill Sherry died on Dec. 15 after a seven-month battle with cancer.



FRANK GIANNINO

In 1978, Bill and his friend Steve Marek ran a 10K in Central Park. Being April Fool's Day, Steve, who is well over 6-feet, dressed as Superman. People loved it and asked what club they were from and where their next race would be. The next day the pair formed the Suburban Road Runner's Club in Westchester and started putting on races for the club. Soon after, Super Race Systems was formed. Bill and Steve were fixtures at many of the races around the region, so it wasn't long before our lifelong friendship began.

In July 1980, just before my second run across America, I got a call from the Times Herald-Record to help create a running event in Middletown to celebrate the paper's 25th anniversary in 1981. Bobby Bright suggested the 10K distance and to invite Frank Shorter. The newspaper hired me to be the first race director of the Orange Classic 10K. The first person I called for help was Bill Sherry. Bill and Steve were hired as timers and consultants for the inaugural race. Frank Shorter would go on to defeat Bill Rodgers in one of the most memorable running events in history. Around the world, to this day, the Crystal Run Healthcare Classic 10K in Middletown is known as Frank Shorter's hometown race. Bill Sherry helped make this happen



The 14th annual Celebrate Life Half Marathon on Sunday in Rock Hill had another superb showing, with 1,033 registrants and 780 starters in the 13.1-mile run and walk, and the relay. [PHOTO PROVIDED BY DAVID ISSAC]



As a race timer for almost four decades, Bill Sherry was a fixture on the local road racing scene. He timed every Classic and Orange Classic race in Middletown, starting with the inaugural race in 1981. Sherry passed away in December. [PHOTO PROVIDED]

from the very beginning and helped grow The Classic by timing the race year after year.

By 1981, the running boom was in full swing with Bill and Steve at the forefront of timing. Because there were few timers back then, Bill began traveling coast to coast working races. In

1984, he met his wife Gail while timing a race in Gail's hometown of Grand Rapids, Mich. Gail was a volunteer that day. She became an integral part of Super Race Systems and, in 1988, they were married.

Bill was a teacher in Westchester County, the perfect job for him. He took pride in working with students and loved anything to do with the English language — reading, word etymology and solving crossword puzzles. Teaching allowed him summers off to time races, and when he retired after 32 years of teaching, Bill began to focus on the race business full time. He started out the manual way with stopwatches and clipboards and finish chutes, then bar-code scanning the pull tags, then chips that had to be returned, and now the RFID disposable chips. He always invested in the latest technology to stay up to date.

The other part of the race-timing business that kept Bill interested was that he got to be part of helping raise money for so many different charities. Bill was always willing to do what he could to help out, whether it

involved sharing his resources or volunteering his time.

He loved being involved in a business that centered on physical activity. Bill completed 10 marathons and was an avid golfer.

There is a 5K race/3K walk at Graymoor in Garrison at 9 a.m. May 13 to benefit the Hope for Youth Foundation and the Bill Sherry Memorial Scholarship. I've always handled the passing of a friend by recalling my first impression of the person. "Superman" Steve Marek was running around with his bull-horn shouting instructions to everyone, and there was Bill keeping it all together — calm, collected, always on top of his game. To Bill, timing truly was everything. We will miss him dearly.

— Frank Giannino, owner of Frank's Custom Shoe-Fitting in Middletown, ran 3,000 miles across the country in both 1979 and '80, chronicled in the book "46 Days," by Times Herald-Record sports editor Kevin Gleason, available on Amazon and at Frank's store. Email Frank at frankg@shoe-fitter.com.