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## Montgomery County Road Runners Club

### Ins & Outs - September 4, 2020

*"We Are Running in Montgomery County"*



Dear Members -

Welcome to September! After this weekend, we can officially say that summer is over. I hope that everyone had a great back-to-school week and this year, I include both parents and teachers as we all continue to adapt to a new way of doing things.

On Tuesday, Governor Hogan announced that Maryland will enter Phase 3 of its Roadmap to Recovery Plan starting at 5 PM today. This means that movie theaters and live entertainment venues will be able to open at partial capacity. All retail stores, as well as places of worship, will be able to increase capacity to 75 percent.

Individual counties, however, are still empowered to make their own decisions as to whether or not they will move to Phase 3. As of now, MoCo remains in Phase 2. In order to continue to move forward, it's important to remember that the virus is still out there and we must remain cautious and safe heading into the holiday weekend.

Participation continues to grow in our Virtual Race Series, and it's so great to see such a positive response! Don't forget that we are also offering our [Virtual Race Series, Version Student 2.0](#) just for MoCo students who have otherwise found no place to apply their training. The series is free to them and membership is not required. If you have a high school student, encourage them to tell their friends & track/ XC coach about this free offering from MCRRC!

We wish you all a safe & wonderful Labor Day weekend and hope you can find a safe way to enjoy the break.

Stay well,

Ashley Zuraf, Director

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## Staying Motivated, Giving Back, and Finding Inspiration During a Pandemic

As runners, we are inherently driven by personal running goals and a sense of purpose. With

races cancelled, we have all felt the disappointment and found different ways to cope. We love to hear about and share the ways that club members have set new goals and found a different purpose while supporting an important cause that will, ultimately, help MoCo and beyond heal after the pandemic is over. How are you staying motivated to run?

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*If you would like to share how you are staying motivated in both running and non-running ways, please feel free to share your story with Yvette Murphy at [ygatimurph@gmail.com](mailto:ygatimurph@gmail.com) or Ashley Zurf at [office@mcrc.org](mailto:office@mcrc.org).*

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## Coaches' Corner

*Featuring: Grace Shen, Summer Half Marathon Program Pace Coach*

Whether in the middle of a pandemic or something else that breaks you away from the support of a group run (vacation, work schedules, severe weather conditions, etc.), you may have to find a way to complete a long-run by yourself. What mental and physical tricks can you employ to keep yourself moving forward?

- **Be familiar with your route.** When selecting a route to run alone, prioritize safety first. It is helpful to carry your phone for its GPS, but it is also important to know the streets and major cross-streets in case your technology fails you. It is also helpful to know key landmarks that may mentally help you to break-up your miles into pieces and may be an oasis for a bathroom break and/or water refill.
- **Break-up your miles.** Breaking up your miles into manageable chunks is something you can do ahead of time while familiarizing yourself with your route, but you may find the need to play mental motivation games by breaking up miles during the run. For example, your last three miles may be the hardest. Focus on completing one mile at a time and count down: 3, 2, 1... Or it may be helpful to think of quantifying your mileage in terms of time, so if you run 10 min/mile, you may tell yourself, "I can do anything for 30 more minutes!"
- **Self-support creatively.** Many runners self-support their long runs by carrying all of their hydration and fuel needs with them. However, by putting in a little more planning, you can make your solo run more enjoyable. If you are doing multiple loops or an out-and-back, park your car where you may pass it in the middle of your run or more than once. Have a cooler available with cold water or energy drink or maybe an ice-pop! If you are staying close to home, plan your route where you make one or more passes by your house. Be careful, though. You run the risk of driving home early or taking a nap, respectively, with these two examples!
- **Be kind to yourself.** Runners can often be rigid and commit themselves to a particular pace, constantly monitoring their watch. Without the energy drawn from other runners in a group, this can be exhausting and may make you feel defeated if you fall short of your intended pace. To get through a long-run alone, sometimes it helps to release yourself from the shackles of technology and run by feel. (Yes, your run did still happen even if it is not uploaded to Strava!) Or if things are getting really hard, give yourself permission to walk or vary your pace to keep things fun and interesting.

### **How Coach Grace Shen gets through long-runs alone:**

I had a 14-mile long-run on my schedule. First, I would pick an out-and-back route like the Capital Crescent Trail or the C&O Towpath. My motto is "speed no matter - finishes matter." For an out and back, I focus on the first 7 miles out. I am happy when I hit 3.5 miles, half the distance out. After 4 miles, I tell myself that it would only take another 5K to finish the outbound run. When I reach the halfway point at 7 miles, I take a water break and save my run at that point on my Garmin. From there, I proceed to run a GPS-free return trip. Getting back to my car motivates me to complete my 14-mile run as quickly as possible. I like to change things up by varying my pace from an easy run to slow jogging or walking. At times, I pick a target ahead and

sprint to the target, run fast for 2 minutes, and then walk. So even though it is hard to run by myself, I manage to complete the distance by breaking up my miles, stopping my watch, and giving myself permission to change my pace.

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## Member Spotlight:

*By: Ashley Zuraf*

We were saddened to learn of the passing of longtime club member, Robert Smith on August 4th. His daughter, Cara, shared how much her father loved running races with MCRRC. She tells us, "For the past several decades it seems like every weekend he was heading out early and coming back beaming, with a medal for placing somewhere in his age group. Over the last few years, his age group shrank to just him, but he was still out there running until about a couple of years ago when he developed balance problems. Running was a huge part of his life."



If you didn't know Bob personally, I'm certain you've seen his name on practically every Championship Series and XC Series age group

winner's list for several years. A fixture at many club races, Patti Rich shared he was "a wonderful man" and that he had grown quite friendly with many of the club's "back of the pack" runners. Julie Trapp said, "When Robert, Patti (Rich) and I ran at the back of the pack in club races, he was always so encouraging. As he usually finished before we did, he was an inspiration. Most of us hope we can be on the start line with a huge smile on our faces when we are well into senior citizenry." She remembers running the Needwood XC race with him and adds, "Robert hung with me throughout the whole race. When I needed to walk, he walked with me. When I needed to run slower, he stayed back with me. I was ahead of him at the end, but only because he told me to sprint the last 50 steps. He will be missed by all who knew him." Rich agrees. "He was very protective of Julie (Trapp) and I - he would fill us in on what we were likely to encounter on the trail before each XC race and would be on the lookout for us at the finish line to make sure we made it back safely. The back of the packers have suffered a major loss," she says.

Even the timing team knew him. Danny Talmage tells us, "It was always a pleasure to see him at a race. He was so appreciative of the timing team for waiting for him and would joke with us if he was not the last one crossing the finish line. We will miss his happy and joyful smile when he completed another race!"

Cara thanks everyone in the club, especially "those who helped to prop my dad up at his last few races so that he could finish." Lyman Jordan was one such member and remembers last summer's Little Bennett 10K where Robert was still on the course after most had finished. "Another member and I went out on the trails to see if he was OK. He was struggling a bit with the uneven terrain. As we helped steady him over the roots and rocks of the last 2 miles, he regaled us with his hair-raising story of getting temporarily lost over Europe as he piloted a

military plane in the years well before GPS or electronic navigation systems. Always cheerful, his self-deprecating humor always at the ready and it was a delight and a privilege to accompany Robert on one of his last forays for a club race," Lyman says.



Pal Mike Leonard will cherish fond racing memories. He tells us, "for the past 20 years at MCRRC series races, I was privileged to know Robert. I will sorely miss his friendship and chats together after the finish line of many of those races." The photo on the left shows Leonard and Robert running side by side at MCRRC's Cross Country on the Farm a few years ago.

Club member Marc Wolfson remembers meeting Bob at an MCRRC Awards Banquet many years ago when seated at the same table. He tell us that "as a result of that evening's chat, we became friends and I always looked forward to seeing him at club races where we would catch up."

In addition to running MCRRC races, Bob loved volunteering at them just as much. Race Director Christina Caravoulis shared, "Robert was such a great guy, consistent racer, and a wonderful volunteer. For at least the last 10 years he selflessly helped at the Run for Roses 5K race, always requesting 'his spot' as course marshal so he could ensure runners navigate the gravelly trail safely. I know he will continue to be there in spirit as he watches future racers from a special place in heaven." Trapp echoes, "You could always count on him to be at the entrance to Wheaton Regional Park at Run for Roses, cheering on each and every runner as they passed him."

Running brought much enjoyment to Robert's life and the club is so happy to have been a part of that. Rich will remember him as "a true gentleman" who will be missed greatly.

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*Robert elected to donate himself to the Anatomy Gifts Registry in contribution to medical science. If anyone would like to make a donation to AGR, you can contact them through [their website](#).*

***MCRRC Would Like to Spotlight Our Members!*** All of our members have a story about their running journey and what motivates them to run. We would like to spotlight your story or the story of another great member you know using MCRRC's various communications platforms. Our vision is to celebrate the diverse stories and voices of our membership (race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability, etc.).

To submit your story, go to the form [MCRRC Member Spotlight](#).

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## Tangents

By: Kristen Serafin

As I alluded to in the last Tangents article, I'm having a sort of identity crisis around running. Racing has left a huge void in my training and a surplus of extra energy. One of the things that has been and continues to be immensely calming to me are the trails. "But wait!" you say, "This is Montgomery County ROAD Runners!". It may surprise you to learn that the Road Runners has a strong, if fairly quiet, trail and ultra running community. If you love being outside, want to learn more about yourself, or just want to go on an adventure, I highly recommend giving trail running a try. The community, the spirit, the self-actualization, and the adventure make it a worthwhile endeavor. I'd like to dedicate this issue of Tangents to the MCRRC trail and ultra

runners out there. You guys rock!

1. Were you one of those crazy runners that used your pandemic time to go really, really long? Are you looking at [Stone Mill 2020](#) on November 14th and thinking "What have I done"? Are you sick of the track and looking for new challenges? Trails and ultras are amazing adventures that teach you so much about yourself and what you are capable of. To figure out where to start, check out this great [Ultra-Marathon Training Guide](#) from McMillan Running. Disclaimer: I've never used a McMillan plan, but the advice in here is awesome.
2. If you're looking for a new TV series to binge, my household just finished watching [Eco-Challenge: Fiji](#) on Amazon Prime. Hosted by Bear Grylls, [Eco-Challenge](#) highlights all levels of athletes as they try to run, hike, mountain bike, paddle board, rock climb, you name it, across Fiji. I love the series because it highlights so many diverse athletes in terms of skill, age, culture, and ability. From ultra-runner [Coree Woltering](#), to Team Khukuri Warriors (featuring twin Indian women looking to shatter stereotypes), to Mark Macy (a runner and triathlete with early onset Alzheimers), to Team Stray Dogs (whose average age is 66!), I thoroughly enjoyed watching, and hope you do too! Shout out and crazy kudos to [Team US Military](#), which includes Laurel, MD, resident Jesse Tubb.
3. Last issue I highlighted Mirna Valerio, whose attitude towards acceptance in ultra running is inspiring and truly special. Another strong, amazing woman in Ultra-Running that you need to know is Magda Boulet. Hoka One One captured this amazing athlete's attempt at the FKT in 2019 in the short film "[The Sky Project](#)". Magda, a former Olympic Marathoner, is already an incredible athlete, but the thing that stuck in my mind about this video is her approach to the sport. This film premiered at the 2020 Virtual Trail Running Film Festival.
4. This one is for the Back of the Packers. I don't cry during movies but even I shed a few tears watching this 15-minute documentary: [The Golden Hour: The Best Hour in Ultrarunning](#). The Golden Hour is the last hour before the cutoff in an ultra. This sport is beautiful because, for most of us, it's not about the finish time on the clock. It's about challenging yourself to do something you never thought you were capable of, and experiencing nature in a way that you've never even dreamed of. This documentary highlights hopeful Golden-Hour athletes, and the grit that comes with pushing yourself to the limit. *Warning: there are two uses of curse words that are un-beeped in this video.*

I sincerely hope this article inspires you to go out and give trotting on the trails a try. I hope you love walk breaks, eating solid foods (like Swedish Fish!) mid-run, running into baby deer, and the sound of leaves blowing and trees swaying in the wind as much as I do. If you're looking for good trails to ease into trail running with, check out the courses for MCRRC's [Seneca Greenway 50K](#) and [Stone Mill 50 Miler](#).

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*Have an article, book, video, or other medium that you would like to be highlighted in the next issue of *Ins and Outs*? Please email it to Kristen Serafin at [kristennserafin@gmail.com](mailto:kristennserafin@gmail.com). Thanks in advance for your contributions.*

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## Celebrating Labor Day

Do you get weekends off work? Lunch breaks? Paid vacation? An eight-hour work day? Social security? If you said "yes" to any of these questions, you can thank labor unions and the U.S. labor movement for it. Years of hard-fought battles (and the ensuing legislation they inspired) resulted in many of the most basic benefits we enjoy at our jobs today. On the first Monday in

September, we take the day off to celebrate Labor Day and reflect on the American worker's contributions to our country.

There is disagreement over how the holiday became. One version takes place in September 1882 with the Knights of Labor, the largest and one of the most important American labor organizations at the time. The Knights in New York City held a public parade featuring various labor organizations on Sept. 5th, with the assistance of the Central Labor Union (CLU) of New York. Subsequently, CLU Secretary Matthew Maguire proposed that a national Labor Day holiday be held on the first Monday of each September to mark this successful public demonstration.

In another version, Labor Day in September was proposed by Peter J. McGuire, a vice president of the American Federation of Labor. In spring 1882, McGuire reportedly proposed a "general holiday for the laboring classes to the CLU, which would begin with a street parade of organized labor solidarity and end with a picnic fundraiser for local unions. McGuire suggested the first Monday in September as an ideal date for Labor Day because the weather is great at that time of year, and it falls in between July 4th and Thanksgiving. Oregon became the first U.S. state to make it an official public holiday. Twenty-nine other states had joined by the time the federal government declared in a federal holiday in 1894.

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*Team Maguire or McGuire? Read more [here](#), as well as a rundown of some other traditions associated with Labor Day. Also check out [Wikipedia's page](#) on the history of Labor Day, if you're interested.*

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## Montgomery Parks Labor Day Activities

[Montgomery Parks](#), part of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, has announced programming and operating hours for Labor Day weekend.



In recognition of the holiday, the parks department will extend the hours for its open parkways beginning on Friday, September 4, at 9 a.m. through Tuesday, September 8, at 7 a.m. Every weekend portions of Sligo Creek Parkway, Beach

Drive and Little Falls Parkway are open for pedestrians and bicyclists for recreation and exercise. The announcement showcases activities such as miniature golf in Germantown, free children's programming, nature activities, kayak/ canoe rentals, picnics, hiking and more! For more information on these Labor Day weekend activities, check out the link below!

[M-NCPPC Labor Day](#)

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## Stay Informed!

1,000+ members on our social media and growing! Be sure to "like us" on [Facebook](#) & follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) to keep up on all the latest club news!

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Montgomery County Road Runners Club  
P.O. Box 1703  
Rockville, Maryland 20849  
US

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