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Montgomery County Road Runners Club

Ins & Outs - January 8, 2021

"We Are Running in Montgomery County"



Dear Members -

Happy New Year!

I know this is *very* redundant at this point, but I'm going to say it anyways - let's hope that 2021 brings change for the better and just... peace. Peace within ourselves, in our community, and in the world. We have a long way to go, but I choose to remain hopeful for a better tomorrow. After the events of this week, we could all use a break.

Moving on - I am pleased to let you know that the 2021 budget has passed. Being involved in the budget process is an important part of being a club member and we are thankful to all who participated in the process.

We remain in the midst of this pandemic, but the club is **moving forward**. Registration is now open for our winter training programs. As a reminder, there is no Advanced Marathon Training Program this year. The **Winter HMP** and **Winter 5K** will remain virtual. **Speed Development** and **Winter Trails** are open to a hybrid format (virtual, with limited in-person components) when acceptable county metrics are achieved. Please check out the program web pages on our [website](#) under "Training" for more details & information.

You may notice that we have taken the initial steps to publish a race calendar through June. A few things on this effort: The pages are current raw and likely contain 2020 information - we will be working to update those pages one race at a time. As you can imagine, there is a lot of planning to do. As much as we want things to return to "normal" in 2021, that is not going to be the case when it comes to group running and racing, at least not for now. Please be patient with us as we work through these necessary and important protocol.

No matter how much thought & planning we put into a race, without permits we have no race. Permitting will continue to be tricky this year, which means all races are subject to last minute changes or cancellation. Be on the lookout for an e-mail in the next few weeks, explaining some changes to how we'll be doing things. Safety remains our top priority.

Finally, I would like to share with you the December issue of the **Road Race Management Newsletter**. When I was approached by Editor/ Publisher Phil Stewart (who you likely know as the fearless leader of the Cherry Blossom 10 Miler) to submit a personal testimony for his 2020 COVID-19 Retrospective, I had no idea I would be in the company of such individuals as Boston Marathon director Dave McGillivray and other "heroes within our sport" -- of which I do not consider myself. Nonetheless, whether I deserved to be or not, I am honored to be asked and humbled to be in the company of these running rockstars. You can read the newsletter [here](#) if it's something that interests you.

To end with a quote from one of my family's favorite "kid movies," *Meet the Robinsons* (if you've never seen it, it's wonderful), as I think it's appropriate and something I often remind myself:

"You just focused on the bad stuff when all you had to do was... let go of the past and **keep moving forward.**"

Ashley Zuraf, Director

Member Spotlight: GENE PARK

Finding Happiness Through Tinkering, Evolving and Inspiration

Gene Park began running marathons over 27 years ago when he was in his twenties but took a break for over two decades before coming back. Now in his fifties, he enjoys the fact that he is faster than ever. A self-professed "tinkerer" who likes to see how things work, he continues to explore ways through which he can improve as a runner. His tinkering nature has allowed him to evolve in the sport, where he is less driven by competition and more motivated by the peace he derives from being out in the woods and the inspiration of other runners he sees along the way. Gene is a Budget Director and enjoys life in Kensington, MD. Below, he shares highlights of his growth and gratitude as a runner.

Other than running, what are your talents and/or hobbies?

I love tinkering with things to see what makes them work and then figuring out how to make them better. So, in trying to figure out how to improve my running, I took up interests in healthy cooking and yoga. For me, they've made a difference. I'm a big fan of the *Run Fast Cook Fast Eat Slow* recipes, as they've given me a new appreciation for yummy foods like tempeh, miso, and quinoa. On top of that, they've given me an extra boost in my energy levels. Yoga has been a major factor in staying relatively injury free. I never knew how off-balance I was until I tried to pull off a Warrior III on my left leg (basically standing on one leg). With a bit of practice, I feel like I'm more centered now in my movements and have been able to reduce strains that would typically lead to injuries. Due to COVID, my yoga classes have been cancelled, but I've made up for it with some decent online sessions. "Ida May's Yoga for Runners" is not bad (a bit fast-paced, but not bad).



What motivates you to run?

Beating Lee Firestone (Lee, where are you?) is my main motivation for running. Seriously, I feel like my motivation has evolved over time. I still love competing with others and testing myself to see how far and fast I can go. But now, I also really enjoy the peace of mind I get by going for a light run through the woods and maybe happening across some friends along the way. Running has become my escape and like an old friend says, "It's the cheapest form of therapy." Honestly, I almost always come back from a run happier.

What do you enjoy most about being a part of MCRRC?

There are two things I really enjoy about being with MCRRC. I love being part of a group of such diverse, talented, and inspirational athletes. I wouldn't be half the runner I am now without their help and support. I also appreciate the fun races that the club puts on. The Suds and Soles 5K is one of my favorite races and always ends up as a great party.

What was your best race experience?

My 2019 Richmond Marathon was both my best and perhaps most frustrating race experience to date. I ended up finishing only 9 seconds over my dream goal time! Coming down to the end of the race, I was well within my target, but I cramped up within sight of the finish and had to pull off to the side to wait for my muscles to unfreeze. In the end, I finished with a big PR (for me), which I never thought possible at my age. Though I was a little disappointed that I couldn't shave off those few seconds, the race was the closest I'd ever come to a negative split. The near perfect weather conditions (for me) and fantastic crowd support will have me coming back.

What was your worst race experience?

That's a toss-up between my first Marine Corp Marathon (isn't it everyone's worst race experience?) and my first Boston Marathon (2013). For MCM, I tapped out on the 14th street bridge and pretty much had to limp 10K to the finish in the cold. In Boston, I cramped up before Heartbreak Hill and was taken to Newton-Wellesley Hospital, where my family had to come get me. Actually, that was super fortunate, since if I'd tried to jog/walk to the finish from there, I probably would have been within range of the bombing. My family was waiting for me at the finish on Boylston Street, so it was a blessing that I ended up in the hospital, and they left the finish line to rescue me.

What is your favorite running spot in Montgomery County?

I'm a firm believer in getting hills in, so my favorite nearby spots are repeats up and down the hidden little hill near Ken-Gar Park (from Rock Creek Trail up to Plyers Mill Road) and the longer Forsythe and Mormon Temple hills (Ken Trombatore mapped out a "Toilet Bowl" route up these hills which is great!). In my opinion, hill running improves your speed and strength. It also helps me think about my form as I'm constantly working to keep my head up, hips forward, and back straight.

What running goal(s) do you have?

I have unfinished business in Richmond to shave 9 seconds off my marathon time....

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](#).

Cadence

The Beat from MCRRC's Inclusion and Equity Committee

By: Yvette Murphy

Running on Common Ground

There is a lot to say about the historic events of this past week, which I lack the eloquence to capture. Many of us have been struggling to process the election of the first Black senator from Georgia, the first Jewish senator from Georgia, and the confirmation of the first Black and South Asian woman as U.S. Vice President, alongside the trauma of the breach of the Capitol building and democracy itself by those wanting to preserve white supremacist systems. It leaves one wondering if the divisions in our nation and our communities are surmountable. Is there a way we can find common ground to move forward?

Some may feel that running is a way to leave all of these issues behind. However, if we agree that MCRRC is a community -- *our* community -- then it's each member's responsibility to understand that the simple act of running is not the same for everyone. Racism, safety, and exclusion aren't left behind when Black and brown folks go out and run. If the club is our community, then it's upon each member to contribute to its strength. From that common ground, we can move forward with the changes necessary to make it more inclusive and equitable. We may not all agree on the ways to get there. We may not get along with every person involved in ushering in change. But our common ground gives us a place to take our first stride toward a stronger club and make a positive impact in our broader Montgomery County and nation.

Please consider joining MCRRC's Inclusion and Equity Committee in 2021. Meetings are once every 3-4 weeks, but we appreciate any level of participation.

New I&E members are always welcome. If you have any questions or would like to get involved, please email Yvette G. Murphy and Jefferson Lunsford at diversity@mcrrc.org.

Tangents

By: Kristen Serafin

Hang in there. We've heard that phrase so many times over the past year or so. Running in the winter without a scheduled race is hard, especially if you spent most of last year chasing non-race-related goals. So, this week I've got some content meant to get you fired up for running in the new year. The question is not whether racing will return. The question is: Will you be ready?

- Got a great recommendation for Scott Fauble's book, [Inside a Marathon](#). The recommendation speaks for itself so I'll just copy part of it here (many thanks to Jamie McGuire): "The book goes day by day through Scott's training for the 2018 New York Marathon, and the second edition has a new chapter on Scott's 2019 Boston Marathon training. Scott is naturally hilarious, but he also provides a lot of wisdom as well as good reminders that we already know, like keeping easy days easy." Side note, if you want a peek at something fascinating, here's [his daily training profile](#). LOOK AT ALL OF HIS EASY RUNS.
- I stumbled across this [wonderful profile](#) of Kevin Webber. Kevin was diagnosed with terminal prostate cancer in 2014 and given two years to live. I don't want to ruin his story by sharing too much here, so just go watch it yourself. It's 13 minutes long and absolutely incredible. If you want to hear more, I have [this podcast](#) on deck for my next solo long run. Let's see how far a positive mindset can take us in 2021.
- Many people have heard about Sarah Hall's amazing accomplishment in [the Marathon Project](#), which was held just a few weeks ago. Most people don't know how many setbacks she has had until this point. In my opinion, her story is what makes her feats remarkable. Check out [this great profile](#) in the New York Times.
- Finally, if you need any more inspiration and motivation look no further than Aliphine Tuliamuk. The winner of the 2020 Olympic US Women's Marathon Trials is [pregnant and due in February](#). She's still planning to race in the trials. Say what you want about whether that's "fair", it's a gutsy decision and I look forward to seeing her do it. Here are some details on [her approach to getting back into training](#) and [her training log](#).

*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. Thanks in advance for your contributions.*

Competitive Racing Team Results

By: Nicolas Crouzier

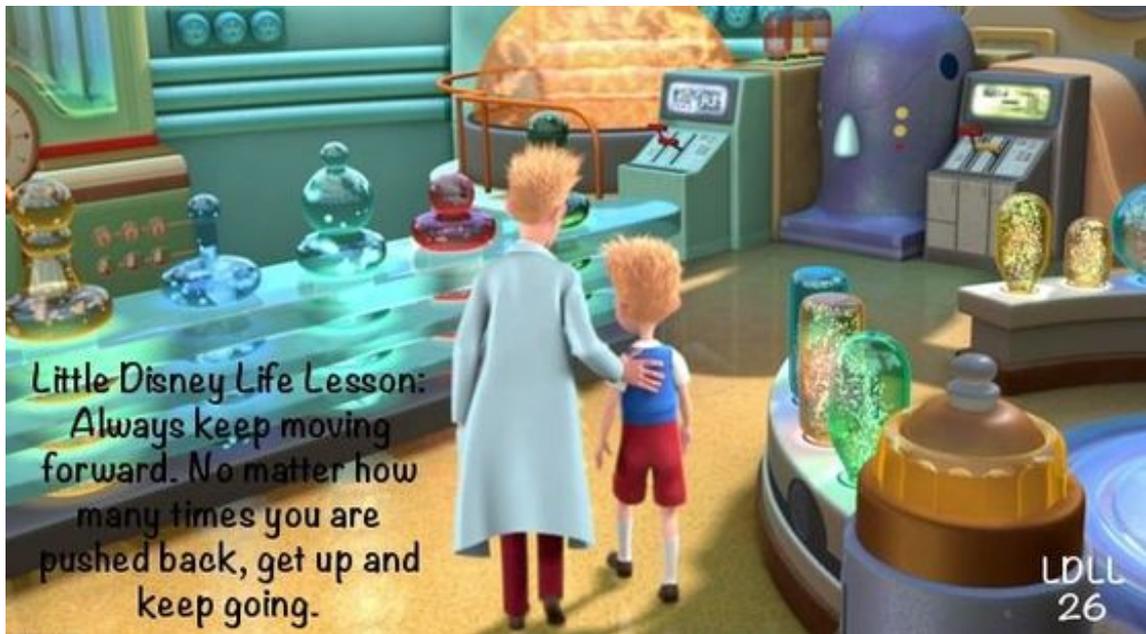
Potomac Valley Track Club Christmas Caper 10K -- 2020-12-19

Taylor Williamson 37:36 (Gender rank: 2nd of 13, Overall rank: 2nd of 19)

Potomac Valley Track Club Christmas Caper 5K -- 2020-12-19

Erica Singleton 20:01 (Gender rank: 2nd of 12, Overall rank: 9th of 37)

Cindy Conant 20:36 (Gender rank: 3rd of 12, Overall rank: 11th of 37)



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

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