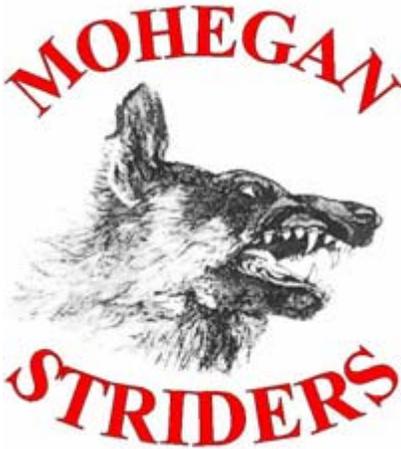


# **THE MOHEGAN STRIDERS RUNNING CLUB NEWSLETTER – January 04, 2009**



[www.moheganstriders.org](http://www.moheganstriders.org)

**President: John Trahan (860) 536-8766**

**Vice President: Michael Fusaro (860) 886-1122**

**Treasurer: Don Sikorski**

**Membership: Joanne Gilepsie**

**Secretary: Kris-Anne Kane**

**Membership: 261  
USATF Team No.28**

**JOLLEY CONCRETE  
42 JUNIOR AVE.  
DANIELSON CT 06239  
779-3980, 800-752-5720 (CT)**

## **Training Runs**

**Tuesdays: East Lyme High School, 6:00pm**  
**Run, Track and Swim Workouts**  
**Pace = All levels, mostly casual**  
**Contact: Marshall Collins (860) 859-1555 or**  
**Way Hedding (860) 739-2884**

**Sundays: Mohegan Park, 8:00am**  
**Norwich Rec Facility**  
**Pace = All levels, mostly casual**  
**Contact: Michael Fusaro (860) 889-6784**

## **A Note from the Editor**

**By Chris Hansen**

Hello Striders! Thanks to all the membership for the articles, essay's, race results, and anything that's interesting and fitting for the Mohegan Strider newsletter. It is what we all make of it.

**Please send me any pics fit for the newsletter!**

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER IS: APRIL 1st**

**Please submit all newsletter articles as follows:**  
**Microsoft Word, Font =Times New Roman, size=12, all**  
**margins=1”**

## **President's Page**

### **By John Trahan**

What's new is old...and that's something to work on!

In case you couldn't tell from the 'by' line your president of many years, Tim Kane has decided to retire – not from running, or working his day job, but from serving as Striders' President. So the first order of business is to give him a great big round of applause for a job well done!

Tim was President for 13 years, a dog's age as they say, and during that time the Striders have thrived and excelled. Under Tim's leadership the Striders have continued the long tradition of fielding competitive teams while broadening the social aspect of club membership. There have been trips, both foreign and domestic, picnics, banquets, and the annual Tommy Toy Fund Fun Run. During Tim's tenure the Saturday Slug runs grew from a small group training for a marathon to what is tantamount to an annual competition for a slot on the schedule to host as many as 50 of your closest friends. There have been many great events during Tim's 13 years, and of course a few foibles. Some might recall the time a group of Striders was doing a track workout at NFA and Tim barreled straight through the band when they failed to yield the track, which was followed closely by Tim being chased down by an irate band leader! But we won't dwell on the negative...okay, maybe just a little from time to time. On balance though, we've been very fortunate to have had such a dedicated President for such a long time. We all owe Tim our thanks and congratulations for a job well done.

So now it's on to something new...with somebody Old...er...than Tim even! Yup, that's right, your new President has been a Grand Masters runner for a couple years now and that brings us to the one thing I think our club needs to work on: We have an aging membership. This is not all bad. There are many good things age brings to runners, experience and thinner competition in the upper age groups are two, though I'm yet to personally realize the benefit of the latter! Experience though is something every club needs and we're lucky to have in our club many experienced runners who continually do the behind the scenes work that keeps the club going for the rest of us. We're reaching the point though where we need to start shifting the leadership demographics back toward the lower age groups in order to ensure the club's longevity.

I was struck by an article in the Norwich Bulletin a couple years ago which noted the Mohegan Striders' membership is an aging population. More recently Membership Secretary JoAnne Gillespie, in our November meeting, presented some key information on member ages. Of the 308 members on record as of November 2008:

- 189 (61%) are over age 40
- 73 (24%) are under age 19, with more than half of them under age 15
- 46 (15%) are age 20-39

It's the last two groups we need to work on, because from their ranks will come the future of the club. The average age of your current club Executive Board is 47. Sure, we'll be okay for a while, but within the next 5-7 years, we'll need to find some candidates from the lower age groups willing to step up and run the club. One opportunity I see is the many family members we have. Those children of adult members are growing up with the Striders. It would truly be a win-win if the kids get involved in running and that leads to them becoming club committee members

or officers in the future. So I'm laying down the challenge for you 20-39 year olds and those of you who are adult members with kids 19 and under, to help yourselves and the Mohegan Striders Running Club by getting more involved in running and running your club. The more you get involved in club events the better able we'll be to continue to provide the vibrant and creative club you've come to expect from the Mohegan Striders.

Another way to help is to recruit new members as we enter the 2009 membership year. Membership applications are available on the web site and we'll soon also have a membership poster available for download, which we encourage you to print and post as many places as possible. A few other new things:

- The web site will soon have a Calendar feature where the year's events will be posted.
- The Striders' Newsletter will be distributed on line only rather than mailed.
- The notices for club quarterly meetings will be posted on line, along with agendas for topics to be discussed. The plan is to also send meeting reminders by email, subject to resolving a recent problem with group email 'blocker software' on some servers.

Now for what I feel is perhaps the most important part of my first message to club membership as your new President: YOUR IDEAS AND COMMENTS. It is very appropriate for club officers to regularly solicit ideas and comments from members and a change of officers is probably the best time to ask, "How's it going?" So now is a great time to voice your opinion and let us know what you like, what you don't and what you'd like to see done in the future. A couple thoughts to get you going:

- Club Purpose (from the ByLaws) – "The primary purpose of the Club is to promote and encourage participation in track and field athletics, race walking, jogging, and long distance running with emphasis on healthful exercise and sportsmanlike competitiveness."
- From the "About Us" page on our web site – "But despite our successes in the various USATF age groups, we pride ourselves on having the most social, the most fun, club in the state. For speed is not the backbone of this club – camaraderie is. We are composed of runners of all shapes, sizes and abilities."

Please send any ideas, comments or questions to me at [jdtrahan@comcast.net](mailto:jdtrahan@comcast.net) or to any officer.

Lastly I like to ask that you all join me in thanking our current committee volunteers and officers for their dedicated service to your club. I look forward to working with all officers, committee volunteers and members to make the Mohegan Striders Running Club the best it can be.

John Trahan, President

Running Humor: (Warning - This one might hit a little too close to home for one of our members)

Deciding to take up jogging, the man was astounded by the wide selection of jogging shoes available at the local sports shoe store. While trying on a basic pair of jogging shoe, he noticed a minor feature and asked the clerk: "What is this little pocket thing here on the side for?" And the clerk: "Oh, that's to carry spare change so you can call your wife to come pick you up when you've jogged too far."



John wanted to post a picture of himself for those unfamiliar with him. He sent the race pic. I added the determined chicken-wing eating pic, taken after the St Patrick's Day race.



**Mohegan Strider Goodies now  
available at the Strider Web  
Store!**

**[www.moheganstriders.org](http://www.moheganstriders.org)**

## **FORMER President's Corner**

### **November 2008**

I had to go back and look it up since it had been so long since I was elected president of the Striders. The date, to my surprise, was November 1994...14 long years ago. I remember the details of what led to my election well. I was out getting beat up on a bike ride by Chris Hanson. Things have changed little in the intervening 14 years...Chris can still beat me up handily on a bike ride but on this day, while I was straining to keep up with him, he asked whether I, a then member of the Kelly's Pace racing team, might want to think about becoming a Strider and becoming Strider president.

I thought I might be hallucinating given the anaerobic effort trying to keep up with Chris but when I gasped whether I had heard him correctly, he assured me that he was serious. Thus began the nearly decade and a half journey that ended earlier this month. People have been calling me president for life for half that time and, being as dense as I can be sometimes, it didn't dawn on me until the last year or two that maybe they were right.

Being president for life sounds like a compliment from the club and I take it as such but it was really the result of no one else wanting to step up to the job. My time as president should have ended years ago and I should have put two and two together far earlier and realized that having anyone leading a club like ours for so long was an impediment to new ideas and new life. I should have given my notice long ago and feel that I have done the club a disservice by not doing so sooner.

I can't tell you how happy I am that John Trahan has been elected as the new Strider president. Many of you know John from his participation in the Saturday Slug Runs and his race directorship of The Mystic Aquarium Penguin Run the last two years. He is organized, committed and has some great ideas that will keep the Striders exciting and invigorated. I look forward to his time as president and know that he will find, much as I have for my years as president, that the Striders are the best group of people to work with anywhere.

My final president's corner wouldn't be complete without taking a little time to thank everyone who has helped, had fun and put up with me for so long. From Chris and Lynne Hanson who helped make my presidency possible and who have served the club in other capacities far longer than my 14 years, to Kris-Anne, the reason why I started hanging with this great group to begin with, to Short for her friendship and her determined effort on the newsletter and then the Delaney Dash, to the former Prince of Jewett City, Don Sikorski for his steady hand and advice over the years, to dedicated running team coordinators like the late, great Sean Delaney and Jon Kornacki who have helped steward Strider running excellence throughout the last 14 years, to Leslie and Wayno Jolley whose immense financial support has been key to the vitality of the Striders and to all the others that my feeble mind and the space remaining make it difficult to acknowledge here, THANK YOU for a great 14 years...I couldn't and wouldn't have done it without you.

## **Strider Summer Meeting Minutes, August 23, 2008**

Tim Kane called the meeting to order at 1:15 pm. Tim acknowledged Strider founding member John Martin and visitor Les from Newcastle, England among the group.

### **Racing Report:**

Jon Kornacki reported there has been a small turnout at the USATF races. The two remaining races on the USATF calendar are the New Haven 20K and the Niantic Half Marathon. Singlets (\$20) are still available as are jackets (\$55).

### **Membership:**

Joanne noted there are currently 291 paid members plus two who signed up today for a total of 293. Strider promotion flyer is currently being updated for 2009.

Leslie Jolley was acknowledged for her contribution of the Strider Pop Up tent which will be used at races.

Tim encouraged everyone to continue being recruiters for the club.

### **Treasurer's Report:**

No report submitted.

### **Grand Prix:**

There are three races left on the schedule.

### **Old Business:**

Rob Dahmer announced there have been approximately 275 runners attending the weekly Rec Runs in Mohegan Park. The first night had 125 runners. Rob reports Lou Depina is very pleased. He has gotten positive feedback.

### **New Business:**

Todd Fisher is looking for volunteers to help out with the Tommy Toy Fun Run. Raffle will be held to raise money for toys.

Tim Smith made a motion to approve funds for pizza and juice for the last Rec Run. Mike Fusaro seconded. All were in favor.

Terry Smith announced the Harry O Race will be held September 21.

### **Next Meeting:**

Tim K. announced the next meeting will include the yearly elections. Tim will be stepping down as President after 13 years in office.

Meeting adjourned 1:45pm.

## Strider Meeting Minutes, November 06, 2008

Meeting called to order at 6:45pm.

### Committee Reports:

#### Treasurer:

Don Sikorski reports we are in good financial shape. The club recently received monies from the USATF for the first four races of this year. A \$500 deposit was put down for the February Strider banquet.

#### Membership:

Joanne Gillespie announced the club has 308 members (applause from group). She presented group with graphics depicting the location of Strider households in the state and the age groups of Strider members. A new flyer was presented in order to recruit new members.

#### Newsletter:

Chris Hansen absent. Tim announced the newsletter will be going on-line in 2009. Other than Karen Short's article and Kris-Anne's Meeting Minutes, nothing has been sent in to Chris. Joanne asked if meeting reminders be sent out via e-mail instead of being mailed. Tim will talk to Chris about this because of the possibility of blocked e-mails by servers with group e-mail messages. Don S. suggested narrowing down the size of the group e-mail.

#### Grand Prix:

Norma V. spoke on behalf of Lori A. who is hospitalized. The EBAC race is the last race of the year.

#### Racing Teams:

Jon Kornacki announced the men's Open team finished in 2<sup>nd</sup> Place this year. He noted the number of members participating was down this year. The Men's Masters finished 3<sup>rd</sup>, Grandmasters finished 3<sup>rd</sup>, Seniors finished 2<sup>nd</sup>, and the Women's Team finished 5<sup>th</sup>.

#### Old Biz:

**Tommy Toy Fun Run** will be held Friday, December 5. Mike Fusaro reported Todd Fisher will be recruiting volunteers and looking for raffle prizes. Liz Tefft said Todd will be getting press stuff out soon.

Rob Dahmer announced Lou Depina was very happy with the turnout of **the Norwich Rec Runs** this summer. Rob will be moving out of state next year. He picked Jon Smedley to take over. Tim K. thanked Rob and Debbie for all their hard work.

Kris-Anne Kane announced the **Summer picnic** went well. She thanked all those who helped out.

**Uniforms** are still available. Old style jackets are \$50. Jon K. is taking orders for singlets (\$20).

**Group Runs** still continuing on Sunday mornings at 8 am in Mohegan Park and 6 pm on Tuesday nights at the ELHS. Tim announced the Strider Banquet will be held February 21, 2009. Applications are now available from Chris and Lynne Hansen.

**Saturday Slug Runs** are being coordinated by Bob Buckingham. These group runs will run from January through April.

Jon Kornacki proposed any one becoming a new member at the XC race be allowed to have their membership continue to the end of December, 2009. George Gillespie suggested doing away with the ½ price membership after September. All were in favor.

Don S. proposed the **current membership fee** of \$15 remain for 2009. All in favor.

Joanne G. suggested a **Lifetime Membership** fee be created. Tim said it was a good thought. It has potential; will welcome any one doing research. Tim Smith noted we are a not-for-profit organization. If we show significant revenue it may pose a problem. Tim K. suggested we discuss this same time next year. Don S. also suggested the possibility of **on-line registration** for members. Tim K. said this would require some researching. All were in favor.

### **Elections of 2009:**

Joanne Gillespie was nominated for Membership Secretary. Ed Root seconded. All in favor.

Kris-Anne Kane was nominated for Recording Secretary. Joe Banas seconded. All in favor.

Don Sikorski was nominated for Treasurer. Jon Kornacki seconded. All in favor.

Mike Fusaro was nominated for Vice President. Wayne Jolley seconded. All in favor.

**JOHN TRAHAN WAS NOMINATED FOR PRESIDENT.** Ed Hogan seconded. ALL IN FAVOR!

Tim shared “This has been the longest yet shortest years of my life. He thanked everyone for helping him during his Presidency. Tim was presented with a Thank You Cake. Meeting adjourned at 7:42pm.



Striders at the New Haven 20K Road Race

# SHORT TAKES

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2008 **Delaney Dash** Final Jeopardy Round. The answer is: Perfect

<insert 30 seconds of Jeopardy ditty here, ending with “boom boom”>

What is, “The stars and snowflakes?” According to Ronnie Cammareri, I suppose this question is acceptable but it’s not the one I had in mind. (A bit of “Moonstruck” for those not enthralled enough with the film’s script to recognize one of it’s many memorable lines).

What is, “A type of baseball game where the pitcher tosses a no-hitter but also does not walk or hit a batter and no one reaches base on error?” True, quite true. But, alas, not the correct question.

Who is, “**Pete Volkmar**?” To me, this question fits but when I defer to the judges, I see that they are shaking their heads and laughing uproariously.

What is, “The overall assessment of this year’s **Delaney Dash**?” YES! The winning answer!

**May 24, 2008.** The eighth running of the **Delaney Dash** is history and what a fantastic day – gorgeous weather, substantial turnout, loads of volunteers, minimal leftover food, \$\$\$ raised for the scholarship fund, and no complaints to date. Race highlights:

- 187 runners (up 3 from last year!) crossed the finish line, led by **Mark Olivier** who set a course record (**25:17**), earned an extra \$50 and owns bragging rights for at least another year. **Erin-Kate Aleksak** was the overall women’s winner in **33:16**.
- Race sponsor **Carl Fortuna (33:55)** wasn’t our first Old Saybrook finisher (**James Whelen (31:52)**) but **Carl** lost precious seconds taking the dog-hand-off from **Matt Smith** of Pfizer Pfame. First Old Saybrook woman finisher was **Tracie Sarette (36:22)**.
- Premier race sponsor, nutritionist, sports rehab expert and chiropractor extraordinaire, **Dr. Kurt Strecker (39:26)**, not only sponsored our race. . .not only brought massage therapists for post-race relief. . . not only conned his wife into having HER business sponsor our race (**Moroso Motorsports Park**). . .not only repaired my ankle despite my selective hearing (“two weeks of no running really means six days, right, Doc?”). . .not only donated our OS finisher prizes. . .but also led the kids’ fun run and almost got his butt-kicked by some frisky 10 year olds. **Dr. Strecker** is noteworthy on many levels: he runs the races (he walks the talk), he heals pesky injuries, he listens, and he cares. His positive attitude is infectious and his smile alone will cure a sour mood. Sure, his office (The Center For Better Health) may be in Old Saybrook which isn’t local for some of the *Striders* but I, for one (**Hedding** and **Volkmar** for two and three), will tell you that the trip is worth the time invested and gas money spent.
- Race proceeds help fund The **Sean Delaney** Scholarships, which are awarded to a male and a female Old Saybrook High School senior who have participated in track/x-country. A big thank you to the members of the OSHS track/x-country team who volunteered on race day; an equally big thank you to **Coach Peter Capezzone** for selecting the scholarship recipients. And a “Do As I Say and As I Do” Award to **Coach Adam Eldridge (41:15)** who set a shining example for his high school athletes by running the race.

- While on the topic of The **Sean Delaney** Scholarships, I'm thrilled to report that the race committee presented **four** \$1000 scholarships at the Senior Awards night at OSHS. This year's winners: Zack Wright, Nick Bai, Deena Slobin and Lara Novinski.
- Team Pfizer made its **Delaney Dash** debut, bringing 26 runners to our race (!) along with race coordinator **Karen Santacroce** and disabled-list spectator, **Mark Berry**. To be chosen as a Team Pfizer race is quite the honor (translation: more runners, more income, more Pfizer Pfun) and we thank **Pam Award, Matt Smith** and the rest of the Team Pfizer race committee for selecting **The Delaney Dash**. Y'all come back next year! Pretty Please!?
- **Dave Jacobs** was presented with his very own, personalized, race T-shirt – size SMALLEST – which should (we can only hope) forever stifle any whining. . .er. . constructive feedback that he may utter regarding the T-shirt size availability at local road races.
- Thanks, as always, to my high school best friend, **Tacky Cunningham**, and her parents, **John and Linda**, for supporting both me and the race. My yearly quick hugs and 32 seconds worth of conversation is not indicative of how much I appreciate your presence every year.
- Post-race email snippet #1: “I absolutely love running **The Delaney Dash** – it is unquestionably by favorite race. This is largely due to the care you put into the race. Your organization and love of this event really shows through. And your volunteers are the best ever! They are all encouraging and friendly – they help me keep motivated and running, even when I'm starting to question why running ever sounded like a good idea. I love that it's a family thing; with walkers from several family generations, runners with baby strollers and dogs, and so many of the same people year after year. I regret that I never got to meet **Sean**, but I have no doubt that he would be proud and deeply touched by the way you keep his memory alive.”
- Post race email snippet #2: “Great plant, by the way. I, er, told the wife I won it because I finished 10<sup>th</sup> overall. As for the turtle, I told her I was awarded it because I stopped and assisted a dehydrated runner and could've finished 8<sup>th</sup> had I not helped the lad. . .It was a sportsmanship award.”
- Post race email snippet #3 (regarding this column): “Say good things about me and a few nasties about **Mr. (Tim) Smith**. Next time he's in a race, I'm going to catch up with him and pull down his trunks. By gum, that'll teach the little creep a lesson.” Editor's input: I'm told this was a reaction to a lost 2.10 seconds due to **Tim Smith** telling this runner to turn right -- right into the water -- when a left turn would've been more appropriate and kept the runner on the road. Truth or Fiction? You decide.
- The **Sean Delaney** Scholarship Fund has received just under \$2000 in direct donations this year alone, thanks to the generosity of **Joan Delaney, Roger Zotti, Barbara Ignatowich, Tom Degnan, Teresa Dickson, Tacky Cunningham, Beth Perry, Nick & Holly Delaney, Brian Delaney & Linda Willoughby, Kris-Anne & Tim Kane, Bob Buckingham and The Shortmars**.



Without volunteers and sponsors, there would be no race. And although **Volkmar** and I are the voice of the race and the scholarships, we know that keeping **Sean's** memory running takes a commitment from many people. I do need to use valuable newsletter space to thank our volunteers:

- **Tim Kane**, *Strider* President (last year for this title, right, Prez?), **Ed Root**, and **John "JB" Bysiewicz**. These guys are the foundation to

race day success. Our Road Crew. Reliable. Hard-working. Dedicated. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

- **Bob Buckingham** who arrived at my house at 5:30 AM ready to play the Carry/Lug To/From the Truck Game. He's always smiling, always helpful, always dependable. Always there. Always.
- **The Water Stop Crew: Deb Dahmer** and her two kids, **Alicia and Chelsea (Dad Rob** ran the race this year!), along with **Leah Citron** and her friend **Haley**, who tended to water stop hand-outs only after they finished their race T-shirt distribution duties.
- **Terri Smith** who is our clutch hitter. She delivers every time. She and **Doug Barlow** did an outstanding job with the food prep and prize set-up. What a relief it is to wrap up the kids' race, wander back to the tent, and trust that the prizes will be ready for the awards ceremony and that the runners will be chowing.
- **Themum Kane, T Dickson, Dennis Zajehowski**, the three **Bysiewicz Girls (Sophie, Isabel and Raissi)**, **Tracy Citron, Chris and Al Picklo, Jo Gillespie, Tim Smith, Ted Phillips, Ron Dombrowski, Dave Brady, Tony Savinelli, John McKeown**, the OS high school kids, **Jim and Nina, Way and Mo**, and anyone else that I've inadvertently forgotten for handling registration, T-shirts, SNERRO timing, traffic control, splits, flower distribution, walk turnaround, walk finish, yada yada yada.

And our sponsors, along with a few helpers:

- **Dr. Kurt Strecker** from **The Center for Better Health** (The best cross-friction massage in the tri-state area. Guaranteed to bring a tear to your eye and a grimace to your face. It hurts so good!)
- **The Mohegan Striders** (The bestest running club in the state)
- United Abrasives (**Christine Sacrey** who was missed this year!)
- Prides Corner Farms (**Tim Kane**)
- CL&P (**Joe Swift**)
- Savinelli Well Drilling (**Tony**)
- Iselin Tree Experts (**Charlie**).
- Fortuna & Cartelli, Attorneys (**Tom & Carl**, Tom had coaching duties on race day and couldn't run this year)
- Moroso Motorsports Park (**Ms. Moroso Strecker**)
- **Jon Kodama** who allowed us to park at the Dock & Dine again this year
- Signs and Digital Graphics (Banner by **Phil Schaller**)
- The Old Saybrook Police Department

In closing, "We cannot change the cards we are dealt, just how we play the hand." ~ Randy Pausch



**2008 DELANEY DASH PHOTOS**



**Nice Hat, Charlie Iselin!**



**Jo Gillespie and Tracy Citron take a short break between jobs.**



**Mike Fusaro and Rob Dahmer fight to the finish (Sean would've been proud!)**



**Tony Savinelli hoping for a princess; Guy Pulino hoping for two.**

# SHORT TAKES

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Can one actually eat one's words? Is it humanly possible? Data retention (uh, **Short**, you sound like a dweeb), I mean, the ability to save electronic copies of documents makes it quite easy to recall things once said (or typed) many years ago. Which, in turn, means that one could, oh, print a document and then chow on the output. Would that constitute eating one's words? Perhaps I'm being too literal.

On October 11, 2004, I typed, claimed, proclaimed, announced, predicted, stated and published, quite confidently, the following:

*I qualified for Boston, and now only want to run marathons for fun, assuming my quads will eventually allow me to walk again, let alone run.*

Are there special herbs and spices that will enhance the flavor of one's words?

What was I thinking when I suggested to **Sue Smith** and **Teresa Dickson** that we should try to qualify for Boston again? Had I truly lost my mind? I've run 4 marathons since Chicago 2004 and have enjoyed them all. **Sue** and I ran Boston in 2005 on minimal training. Sure, we suffered but we also saw **Crank, Tommy Lee and Gianni Ficarra** at mile 25 where **Crank** took the best picture I have of **Sue** and I, a photo that truly captures our joy. Boston was followed by a trip to DC where **T, Sue** and I joined **Beth Perry** as she finished her first (ooh-rah!). Way cool as the four of us then spent the night dancing at the post-race party. Next up? A return trip to Chicago for me and a PR for **Beth** as we endured then embraced The Windy City. And last year's adventure brought **Beth** and I to NYC where she taught me a lesson in perseverance and added a third medal to her collection. But this year, **Beth** was unable to commit to the marathon training, leaving me with options that I've willingly and consciously avoided over the last four years. I posed the Should-We or Shouldn't-We question to **Sue** and **Teresa**. They answered with a resounding yes.

Print. Crumple. Stuff. Gulp.

I worked with **The Disappearing Drexler** on a condensed marathon training plan after ruining my ankle during a 7 miler on April 1. I suffered through cross-friction massage and wobble board drills courtesy of **Dr. Strecker**. I wondered if half-marathon pace was the same as tempo, if 30 second strides were long enough, and if I could indeed run a marathon, let alone a Boston qualifier, when my knee started to shout at me with 2 weeks remaining until race day. A return trip to **Dr. Strecker** resulted in a diagnosis of an inflamed MCL, but I had his medical release to attempt the marathon (An aside: why is it that when a doctor locates the exact pain point of an injury, he will invariably return to the source repeatedly, pressing harder each time, until The Injured is just about screaming for mercy? "Is that it? Right there? This is the spot? Here?"). Through it all -- through the doubts (this training plan was designed for thirtysomethings; doesn't he know we're fifty?), through the track work (who would'a thunk a 7:23 mile would feel easy?),

through the long runs in the rain (our bladders ain't what they used to be), through the residual hacking from a cold that had an extended, unwelcomed stay in my/Sue's lungs, and through **Teresa's** decision that juggling nursing school, work and marathon training was just too much stress – I had one unwavering and overriding desire:

*I'd give it all up in an instant if **Beth** were able to run with me. Because if she could, then things would be different, he would be healthy, and they'd be smiling again.*

The God of Luck, good or bad, chooses its victims randomly. Certainly we can influence some outcomes and mitigate risks. But, unfortunately, shit happens. And, as Randy Pausch has told us, "We cannot change the cards we are dealt, just how we play the hand." Five days before the marathon, with a knee that was sore to the touch, I had to face the reality that my goal of running a time indicative of my "pig-like" commitment may not be feasible and, more importantly, my chances of qualifying for Boston were suddenly in serious jeopardy. Exactly how was I going to play this hand?

With a hearty dose of perspective. Yes, I had made sacrifices. Yes, it hurt to think that I may not achieve my goals. But...it's one race. It's a point in time. It's a disappointment. It's not a terminal illness. It's not watching loved ones suffer. It's not witnessing a man surrender his dignity by standing in the traffic median on route 184 for hours, holding a sign asking for help because he's homeless. It's a road race. And although it matters to me, it alone does not define me. I can only hope that the God of Luck gives me another chance, that I can be fortunate enough to make the choice and be able to try again.

We selected The Bay State Marathon for one primary reason – it's flat. It's a small race, ergo no jockeying for water at the stations. It's a small race so plenty of room to move on the course. It's a small race so 7 Port-a-Potties at the start. HUH? Yes, a whopping 7! The (ex-)expo was comprised of 2 booths, 3 racks of discounted clothes, a high school band (who were pretty good), and a woman in yoga garb purposefully working a hula hoop. The pasta dinner was, well, spaghetti and meatballs, although I don't think the organizers anticipated the colossal crowd of 32 people and had to boil another pound while the hungry runners waited. To quote **T**: "Seriously?!" Bay State was not an attraction like NYC or Chicago. But we couldn't ask for the advantages of a small race and then demand the frenzy of the popular events. We wanted to stack the deck in our favor as best as we could. Besides, the Doubletree Hotel still provided warm chocolate chip cookies to their guests. Bum knee or not, life was lookin' good.

<insert edge-of-your-seat, nail-biting-suspenseful pause here>

**Sue's** first words to me after we found each other at the finish: "We're going to Boston!" The ensuing hug lasted a long time.

I ran 3:51:37 for my second fastest marathon; **Sue** also ran her second fastest, 3:53:42. We were together for 6 then she backed off the pace a tad. I kept waiting for her to catch me (literally), especially after I hit mile 23 and my legs started doing the Bonk-Buckle (when will I learn to carbo-load properly?). We battled an incredibly annoying head wind the last couple miles but **Sue** ran a strong finish and appears to be grinning (grimacing?) in the finish fotos. Me? Well, I

never intended to put anything “in the bank.” I ran 23 consistent miles, with the exception of mile 2 being a bit frisky. I’m just lucky that the bills came due late in the race. I had enough in reserve to finish in a time that makes me smile and buys me a ticket to Beantown.

But. . .RATS!!!! I can’t help but feel I could’ve done better if I had just modified my GU intake. Am I really insane to believe that it is possible to run an even pace for 26.2 miles, assuming, of course, that one trains properly and runs within her capabilities? Or should I just be satisfied with my accomplishment, commend myself on a job well done, and concentrate on healing my knee, which indulged me during the race and now expects me to reciprocate? I’m quite certain that **T, Sue and Beth** are -- in unison -- requesting that I shut up and be happy. And have another margarita.

Trust me, I am happy. And well aware of how lucky I was, how lucky I am. My love and gratitude to:

- **Mike K Smith**, my buddy across The Pond, who is traveling to Dublin for the marathon while I type this missive. Thank you for the constant laughter, the witty and entertaining emails, and the “How Was Your Long Run?” Sunday/Monday exchanges throughout our respective training cycles. You are a gem.
- **Tacky Cunningham** for 33 years of friendship and unconditional support.
- **Mark Berry** for your inspiring, dead-on differentiation between being involved vs. committed to the marathon. Oink Oink.
- **Gianni Ficarra (4:17:57 in Hartford)** for your words of wisdom. You said it best when you wrote, “There is a certain mystique surrounding marathons making them an event like no other, be it the long range focused commitment, the never ending training runs, the personal sacrifices, the aches and pains and yes the knowledge that you are about to accomplish something that only a very few can appreciate. It’s a gift and a curse.” Wow. Perfect. Wish I said that. I’ll steal it instead.
- **Dr. Kurt Strecker** for your enthusiasm, your compassion, your expertise, and your can-do attitude. You experience gratification by helping others. The world needs more people like you.
- **Dan Meyer** for caring about me and my running. Your friendship is a gift, both unexpected and deeply valued.
- **Sue “TW2” Wyatt (4:55:45 in Deetroit)** for being more worried about my knee than you were about yours. I miss you very much.
- **Teresa “T” Dickson (2:02:04 in the Half)** for your face at the finish line. Your expression melted my heart. Thank you for making the trip to Lowell when you could’ve been home studying.
- **Beth “BBB” Perry** for somehow finding the selflessness to be genuinely happy for me when you are more than entitled to feel cheated. You are a remarkable person and I am blessed to call you my friend.
- **Sue Smith** for the 600s, the 800s, the 1000s, the mile repeats, the pace miles, the tempo runs, the strides, the long runs and the shared dream. We may each doubt ourselves but we believe in each other. End result: this Well-Oiled Machine is Boston Bound. Again.

- **My Love** for the outrageously sweet good luck note written on a banana, for the Moonstruck quotes, for the gronk head in my running shoe. . . for the countless creative ways you demonstrate what you meant when you said, “It’s you, Short.” I adore you. Still.

And in closing: I get by with a little help from my friends – John Lennon





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**by Ron Dombrowski**

Life was good. Chet had his own apartment, a girl he was crazy about and who was crazy about him. Money was not great but enough to pay the bills and he was doing something he loved: running. All through high school he ran and his life revolved around running. Although his grades were not good, he got by and graduated from high school. There were no scholarship offers for him. Chet's girlfriend, Julie moved in with him and worked as a waitress. With Chet paying the apartment bills, Julie's money went for their enjoyment. Yes, life was good.

Julie somehow was not as happy as Chet and started to nag him about getting a regular job but he was happy doing his road races. He ran just hard enough to win each race and take home the purse of the day. He told Julie he didn't want to work and, while he was still young, he wanted to enjoy himself and his life. Julie finally saw that Chet was not going anywhere and that he had no ambition. She was suddenly very unhappy. For the next two years Chet and Julie lived from one race to the next. Life was still good for him but Julie was trying to make a decision that would change their lives.

Chet had always meant to keep his car in good shape but the money always went in other ways. One day, on the way to the next town for a race with a big purse, he got a flat tire. While changing it, the jack let go and came down on his leg. He was lucky he wasn't badly hurt but he was still injured to the point that he would not be able to run. "What am I going to do now?" he asked himself. Where was the money going to come from? Chet had no medical insurance and, therefore, did not seek help for his injury. He started looking for a regular job but he really had no experience.

Julie finally made her decision to leave him. She wanted to say "I told you so" but felt sorry for him. Chet eventually lost his apartment, had no savings and no job. He was alone, broke, injured and had nowhere to go. He was homeless, living in his car while he looked for a job. He had reached the end of his rope.

Chet really missed running but it hurt so much when he tried to work out. Now he knew he had really screwed up. All those years wasted. What was he qualified to do to earn a living? He should have done better in school and taken an interest in learning some skills but he didn't and now what?

He tried to rekindle his friendship with Julie. He really missed her but Julie was already moving on with her life. Although she still loved Chet, she knew it was over and she could never live like they had again. In despair, hurting and feeling sorry for himself, Chet went to a road race to see the guys and watch. Every year he had won the race he was watching and when he saw his running buddies they asked why he wasn't running. He was too proud to go into his problems and he just mumbled something about his injury and walked away.

Don, one of the older guys who raced in the masters category and had always befriended him, stopped to talk. He told a few jokes and asked about his injury. Chet couldn't stand it any longer and poured out his problems to Don. Don was old enough to be his grandfather but was a real cool guy and owned his own construction business. He listened intently then told Chet to

come home with him and, if he promised listen and do as he told him, he would get him back on his feet. Chet wanted to like himself again so he agreed and moved in with Don that very night.

Don gave him a job, not a plush, easy one but a good job just the same. In a few weeks with a few hundred dollars in his pocket, Don took Chet to a clinic for x-rays on his leg. Luckily, the doctor told him he just needed more healing time and some physical therapy and he would be as good as new.

In a few weeks he started training again. He still worked with Don and started saving money. He got his car registered, insured, fixed up and back running. Don suggested he still stay with him and continue training. He started getting fast again and things were looking up.

Don suggested that Chet start thinking about college. Of course Chet wanted to go but where was he going to get the money to pay for it? It would take him a lot longer to save enough to take that step. Don offered to loan him some money and, suggested that with the help of financial aid, he should be able to get started. Chet was eager but wondered to Don how he was ever going to pay him back? Don jokingly told him to just make sure he had a seat at the Olympics to watch him. With that Chet applied to the University of Oregon, was accepted and began classes the next year.

Under his coach's training at Oregon Chet did fantastic, winning lots of races. He worked hard in school and in running. In his junior year he set an American record in the 5000 meters and broke the same record his senior year. After four years he ended up winning the NCAA championship in Cross Country to cap off his senior year. He graduated from college to a great job, a great apartment and he was happy but he still wanted more.

The Olympics were two years away and he was thinking about them a lot. He called his good friend Don who had helped through his through his tough times and told him what he was thinking. Chet was best in America but he would have no chance against the Kenyans, at least according to the media. He hated doing things unless he could do them well but he took a chance on college, which turned out great so, why not take a chance on the Olympics? Don told him to 'Go for it!'

Chet trained intensely. Some people called him a maniac. He was running ten miles in the morning before work and ten miles in the evening once he got home from his job. His hard work paid off and, once the Olympic Trials came, he qualified for the 5000 with Don watching from the stands. Qualifying was tough but the tougher job lay ahead...preparing to run against the Kenyans. Chet had natural talent but it was going to take far more than that against the Kenyans.

The time between the trials and the Olympics was a blur and passed quickly. Chet and his biggest supporter, Don, were off to Australia. Race day arrived and Chet felt he had worked his hardest and felt he was ready for everyone but the Kenyans. On the line waiting for the gun stood the six fastest 5000 meter men in the world. The gun sounded and off they went with the Kenyans leading the way and Chet tucked in close behind.

Chet knew he couldn't slack off for a second without losing touch with the leaders so he hung in there on the pace with 800 meters to go. He knew he had to make his move now but the Kenyans weren't letting up. He pushed harder, wondering if he could take the pain needed to hang in there. As the final lap approached Chet and one of the Kenyan runners remained with the others dropped in their wake.

The Kenyan was pushing to his limit and looked at this American hanging with him stride for stride in disbelief. With 150 meters to go Chet went for broke with one final push and blew by the Kenyan. He pulled away in those final meters, crossing the line to win the gold medal while setting a new world record in the event.

Suddenly Chet was the talk of the games. People couldn't believe that this American from nowhere could beat the best in the world. Reporters and endorsement offers followed him and Don back to the U.S. after the games. Nike, Adidas and the world wanted him, what, asked reporters, was he going to do? As he made his way home he told reporters he had made his decision. He already had a good job and a good life. He wasn't in it for the money or the endorsements and turned them down. He returned to his quiet life and gave Don, his friend, mentor and savior his gold medal. It was the least he could do for the friend that stood by him with unshakable faith from the beginning, through good times and bad.

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Alan and Chris's Wedding – June 28, 2008

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**Local Residents Place in Top Three in Their Age Divisions During  
Mystic Aquarium & Institute for Exploration's  
5k Run or Walk Benefit Penguin Research and Conservation**

**MYSTIC, Conn. (October 22, 2008)** – More than 350 people laced up their sneakers on Saturday, October 18 and ran or walked for the good of our feathered friends during Mystic Aquarium & Institute for Exploration's second annual Penguin 5k run and two-mile walk, raising more than double the amount they raised last year for penguin research and conservation.

The event consisted of a 5k run on a trail, field and road course, two-mile walk and ¼-mile kids' race. The walking route wound through the aquarium and Olde Mistick Village. The top three runners in each of eight age divisions for males and females received a ceramic tile, donated by Get Fired Up of Westerly, R.I., featuring artwork created by the penguins, and the top fundraiser, Melissa Blayman of Griswold, Conn., was awarded a larger original piece of penguin art on a canvas. To create their one-of-a-kind works, the penguins stepped in multi-colored paints and walked on the tiles and canvas.

For the first time this year, the event included a middle school cross-country team competition. The winners, Pawcatuck Middle School, received an engraved trophy that will be passed to next year's winning team. Each of the members on the Pawcatuck Middle School team also received a meet-and-greet with a penguin.

The money raised from the event will go toward the aquarium's research and conservation efforts around African penguins, whose population has experienced a significant decline in the past three years, threatening to place the beloved birds on the endangered species list.

SNERRO timed the race. The top three runners in each age division were:

**Males 13 and under**

1. Henry Kaczman, Stonington, CT 19:35
2. Austin James, Preston, CT 23:35
3. Colby Decker, Colchester, CT 24:42

**Males 14-19**

1. Ryan Graves, North Kingstown, RI 26:59

**Males 20-29**

1. Jeffrey Wadecki, Ledyard, CT 16:53
2. Tom Martin, Rocky Hill, CT 17:12
3. Bradon Atkins, Old Lyme, CT 17:39

**Males 30-39**

1. Spencer Rogers, Waterford, CT 18:27
2. Joshua Pothier, Moosup, CT 20:45
3. Nicholas Griffis, New London, CT 22:06

**Males 40-49**

1. Christopher Hansen, Hope Valley, RI 18:55
2. John Pajer, Leicester, MA 19:03
3. Bob Lane, Westerly, RI 20:15

**Males 50-59**

1. Tim Cane, Preston, CT 19:22
2. Scott Roth, Branford, CT 20:09
3. John Valentine, Roxbury, VT 21:14

**Males 60-69**

1. Ted Phillips, Niantic, CT 25:32
2. Ken Steinkamp, Mystic, CT 26:13
3. Tom Baker, Oakdale, CT 26:47

**Males 70+**

1. Ronald Gale, Norwich, CT 26:21
2. Colburn Graves, Pawcatuck, CT 45:38

**Females 13 and under**

1. Molly Crowley, Mystic, CT 22:56
2. Kathryn Cyn, Westbrook, CT 23:45
3. Jennifer Pager, Leicester, MA 23:54

**Females 14-19**

1. Taryn Brogan, Manchester, CT 26:35
2. Carolyn Bai, Old Saybrook, CT 28:02
3. Alyssa Delaporta, Mystic, CT 30:18

**Females 20-29**

1. Abbey Gosling, Meredith, NH 19:17
2. Carolyn Martin, Rocky Hill, CT 19:56
3. Alexandra Varanka, Amherst, CT 21:40

**Females 30-39**

1. Gabrielle McGrath, Ledyard, CT 23:44
2. Suvi Simila, Stonington, CT 24:11
3. Christine Logan, Pawcatuck, CT 25:29

**Females 40-49**

1. Kris-Anne Kane, Preston, CT 21:50
2. Nancy Davis, Lisbon, CT 23:20
3. Lynne Hansen, Hope Valley, RI 23:22

**Females 50-59**

1. Jamie Roach-Decker, Colchester, CT 26:12
2. Gayle Sirpenski, Voluntown, CT 29:14
3. Robin Hubert, Danielson, CT 29:51

**Females 60-69**

1. Rose Buckingham, Norwich, CT 26:42

2. Shirley Boyd, Wakefield, RI 27:53
3. Susan Sheckley, Niantic, CT 28:38

#### **Females 70+**

1. Irene Burke, Storrs, CT, 41:23

Prize donors included Ancient Mariner, Angie's Pizza Restaurant and Pier 27, Anthony J's Bistro, Bartleby's, Captain Daniel Packer Inne, Comina, Cousin's Dog House & Grille, Del Sol, Diamond Deli Catering, Ground Round, In Touch, Lighthouse Gift Shop, Margarita's, Mystic Gem Company, Mystic Pizza, N.L. Shaw & Company, NEMMA Karate & Kickboxing, Penguin Café, Road ID, Ship & Shimmer, Sound RUNNER, The Black Lobster, The Blue Horse Children's Shop, The Company Craftsman, The Emporium, The Goldsmiths and Silversmiths Co., The Grapevine, The Yellow House, Village Kitchen, VooDoo Grill, Whyevernot and YeOldeSpiritShoppe.

Sponsors of the event included Coca-Cola, Capital Studio Architects, General Dynamics Electric Boat, *The Day*, Zip 06, Panera Bread, Event Network, Tee's Plus, Tim Horton's, Agway, Old Mistick Village, Panera Bread, Dunkin Donuts, Charles River Laboratories, ALT (American Laboratory Trading), Cavanaugh Springs, Monsanto, Camaro Signs, Get Fired UP, Ocean Blue Catering, Lawrence & Memorial, Beacon Prescriptions, John Trahan and Splash Lids, Center for Better Health – Sports Rehab and Massage, Mystic Noank-Library, Denison Society, the Stonington Police, Mystic River Ambulance and Old Mystic Fire Department.

#### **About Sea Research Foundation, Inc.**

Mystic Aquarium, Institute for Exploration and Immersion Presents are divisions of Sea Research Foundation, Inc., a private, non-profit, charitable organization incorporated in the State of Connecticut. The mission of Sea Research is to inspire people to care for and protect our ocean planet through education, research and exploration.



Alan and Chris's Wedding – June 28, 2008

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## Mohegan Strider Newsletter Advertising Rates

The Mohegan Striders invite all individuals and businesses with an interest in running and an interest in reaching a unique, committed, athletic audience to advertise in our (4) times yearly newsletter. The Strider newsletter has been the club lifeline for over 30 years keeping our (300) member strong running group informed, together, and inspired. The demographics of the Mohegan Striders are ideal for any business or service firm looking to reach an active, 25 to 65 year old market of individuals with considerable disposable income, centered in eastern Connecticut and western Rhode Island with an emphasis on the New London county area. The Strider newsletter is sent to all club members (4) times a year and distributed at dozens of local road races throughout the year

In 2005, the Strider Newsletter will be published in February, May, August, and December.

### Sizes and specifications:

- ¼ page (3.6' x 4.85'') \$30.00/insertion  
Insert in all (4) issues and pay only \$100.00!
- ½ page (3.6' x 10'') or (4.85'' x 7.5'') \$50.00/insertion  
Insert in all (4) issues and pay only \$160.00!
- Full page (7.5' x 10'') \$75.00/insertion  
Insert in all (4) issues and pay only \$240.00!

All submitted advertisements must be on a CD or emailed in as a .jpg or word.doc format. Deadlines for submission for each issue are 4/30/04, 7/31/04, & 11/31/04. Ads must be submitted to Chris Hansen, 361 Arcadia Rd. Hope Valley, RI 02832 or e-mailed to [clehansen@cox.net](mailto:clehansen@cox.net).

### Special Advertising Bonus:

Advertisers committing for all (4) issues will receive the additional bonus of having their ads posted on the Mohegan Strider website ([www.moheganstriders.org](http://www.moheganstriders.org)) at no additional charge! The Strider website averages hundreds of hits each month and is a valuable venue for getting your advertising message out, not just to club members, but to other runners and athletes that regularly visit the site.

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### **Training:**

- (300+) members in 2004 make it easy to find a club running partner!
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- Tuesday night track runs at East Lyme High School year round for runners of all abilities.
- Saturday Morning Slug Runs throughout eastern Connecticut January 1 through April 1. All abilities welcome!
- Summer recreational runs at Mohegan Park for (8) Thursday nights after July 4<sup>th</sup>. 2 kids runs and 5K run means fun for the whole family!
- Strider Grand Prix circuit at local races allow you to compete against other Striders in your age group for year-end awards.
- Strider USATF racing team that competes and wins at the statewide level. All members welcome!
- \$1 membership rate for all students high school age and younger!

### **Social:**

- Annual Mohegan Strider Banquet. Grand Prix race awards and the best party value of the year!
- Strider Summer Family Picnic. Fun, games, and comradery for the whole family!
- Strider Night at Dodd Stadium. Spend a summer night with fellow Striders at the ballpark.
- Mohegan Strider newsletter (4) times yearly with the latest Strider news, race results, training information and advertising to enhance your running.
- [www.moheganstriders.org](http://www.moheganstriders.org), the official Strider website. Pictures, information, & more keep you up to date on Strider activities.
- Meet new friends while attending Strider meetings or volunteering at Strider runs and events!

### **Discounts:**

- Shoe and Clothing discounts available at Nassiff's in Willimantic and Kelley's Pace in Mystic.
- Strider running store on-line offers the latest in Strider gifts and apparel.
- Strider vacations and group travel discounts allow you to travel the country and the world with Strider teammates!

All are welcome to join the Mohegan Striders!