



OMAHA RUNNING CLUB NEWSLETTER

*For the members of the Omaha Running Club * Vol. 48* Winter 2018-19*

Annual meeting fun, informative

The Omaha Running Club's annual meeting is always full of good food, preceded by a fun run, and fine fellowship. The Nov. 18 gathering at the Chalco Hills Recreation Area showcased all of that.

Following the run, a turnout of around 70 gathered inside for the pasta lunch. President Tom Whitaker then called the meeting to order. First item on the agenda was the announcement that all 2018 board members were reelected. The Club's advisors were then recognized.

The Hall of Fame induction ceremony usually takes place at the annual meeting, but Whitaker informed the crowd that the announcement was postponed due to a change in directorship. It's now set to take place at the Feb. 3 Chiller Challenge.

Turning his attention to races for the new year, Whitaker said the board will discuss possible changes to the Run the Magnet series for 2019.

"We are going to go over (races) that we're pretty sure we're going to have next year," Whitaker said. "There are a few others that we have listed that will be dropped."

Race directors then gave brief updates on their 2019 events.

Kim Kanellis, who oversees the Run the Magnet series, said: "We are taking a look at the races that we're going to be doing next year."

She and the rest of the board are processing the results of the survey taken during the meeting.

"We want to know (which races) that you really enjoy," she said, "so we can make sure that we're putting on good, quality races throughout the year for the mem-



As is tradition, a fun run kicked off the ORC annual meeting at Chalco Hills Recreation Area Nov. 18. A turnout of around 70 members enjoyed the pasta lunch and fellowship that followed. (Photo by Joe Drugmand.)

Bea Sides reflects on her running career. **Page 3.**

bership."

The 2019 RTM events will be revealed at the Chiller Challenge, and magnets should be ready to be distributed then.

The NE5 is moving once again in hopes of drawing more interest. The location has yet to be determined, but it will be announced soon. Club members are encouraged to check out the ORC Facebook page for updated information.

Trail cleanups take place throughout the year. Those dates will be posted on the Club's Facebook page.

Daren Konda gave a report on past and future fun runs. The Thanksgiving Day Fun Run took place Nov. 22, and the final one, the ORC Holiday Lights Fun Run, was held Dec. 9 at the Gene Leahy Mall. Next year, he said, that event will

be relocated due to renovation of the mall.

"We're really excited for Chiller Challenge next year," Konda said. "New this year, we're doing custom Chiller Challenge medals for age-group winners. So get signed up soon, and kick off your 2019 running at Chiller on Feb. 3."

Derek Fey outlined the next Jim McMahon Track Meet, which takes place June 9.

"Field events will start at 8," he said, "so if you've ever wanted to throw the shot or discus, you certainly can, or do the long jump or the high jump. Those are the field events."

He said running events range from the 100-meter dash to the 5K.

"So if you've ever wanted to race on a track," he said, "the events use fully automatic timing. We'll have it down to the

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Meeting: Boxer 500 to be last for race director Sweet

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thousands of a second.”

Entry fees from the event help cover a \$250 boys scholarship and a \$250 girls scholarship to a local high school runner in honor of McMahon, who founded the Omaha Running Club when it was known as the Plains Track Club.

“We have awards for every event,” he said. “We have a bunch left over from last year, particularly the older age groups, so come on out.”

One of the biggest races of the year, which continues to grow, is the Boxer 500. Kelli Sweet, who directed the event for 10 years, announced she is stepping down.

“I decided that after 10 years it was time to step back and see what the next lifespan will be for the event,” she said. “But to help with the transition, mark your calendar for Aug. 11, 2019. We’ll be back at Werner Park with the 5K run. There’s the Pancake Man, and it’s a great event. It’s a race, a run and a walk.”

She added: “The Boxer 500 is a partnership between the Omaha Running Club and the Great Plains Colon Cancer Taskforce. We celebrated 10 years (in 2018). When we first had this run, it had 150 people. It was a fun run at Walnut Creek, and we quickly outgrew it and moved to Werner Park.

“We raised over \$40,000 for the Great Plains Colon Cancer Taskforce. We’re super proud to say that overall since we started the Boxer, we’ve raised over \$222,000.”

The Boxer is also the RRCA championship event.

Tim Lens returns to direct the Lake Wehrspann 10K next Aug. 4.

“It’ll be a little warmer, hopefully, but not too warm,” he said. “The race starts at 7:30 in the morning, so we try to beat the hot, summer heat. We have 2-mile and a 10K as well. We’ll have a kids’ run, too. There will be cake, medals and good fellowship.”



Top photo: Mandy Kennedy, left, and Kim Kanellis work the merchandise table. Left photo: A license plate on a pickup in the parking lot says it all.

Jeremy Kaliff returns for her second year directing the Step Into Running program and the Go Girl Run.

“It’s a huge task,” she said, “and I could not have done it by myself. Thank you to everybody who was involved in it by helping.”

One change, she announced, was the Step Into Running program will start in June rather than April or May.

“We got a lot of feedback that we were starting too early,” she said, “so we’re going to try that. We’re also going to have the Go Girl Run on Labor Day. We did have a great response this year. We raised \$3,000 for the Hope Center for Kids and \$1,000 for Fit Girl.”

The Club president rounded out the presentations with an update on the Heartland Marathon. The 2019 date is Sept. 22.

“Our numbers this year were about the same as last year,” Whitaker said. “We were very, very happy about that when

you look around, a lot of races’ participation (rates) is deteriorating. Running seems to be on a downswing at the current time, so for us to stay even with the year before we were very, very happy about that.”

Before door-prize winners were announced, Whitaker closed the meeting by recognizing the hard work by the Club’s volunteer coordinator John Hall.

“I just wanted to thank everybody for volunteering this past season,” Hall said. “We had some great races, and we needed volunteers to support it, and you guys came through. For the Heartland Marathon, we needed beaucoup volunteers, and everybody signed up.”

He reminded all that the volunteer points certificates can be used to collect ORC merchandise, which was on display at the meeting and will appear at various Club races, including the Chiller Challenge.

Thanks goes out to all for attending and to those who put everything together.

Sides stepped into running naturally

Bea Sides was a relative late bloomer when it comes to running. Growing up in Nebraska, her high school near Columbus didn't offer girls sports. There was no Title IX for women's athletics.

She eventually moved to Omaha, and she's been in the area ever since. She took up running in her early 30s and hasn't stopped well into her 60s. Bea's association with the ORC dates at least 20 years ago. Last September was her final year of directing the popular Step Into Running program and the Go Girl Run.

Bea has participated in so many running events that she's lost count.

"I never kept track of all the events I do," she said. "I find some that I really enjoy year after year. Others, I do them once, and I'm fine."

It all started around the time her father had a heart attack.

"They had to life-flight him into Omaha," she said, "because they couldn't regulate his blood pressure. Prior to that, I had started doing high-impact aerobics in my house. I'd get up at 4:30 in the morning, spend an hour before family got up. After he had his heart attack, my mom was staying with us, so I couldn't get up at 4:30 in the morning and turn the TV on.

"So I started going running, and I've been doing it ever since."

During those early days of running, Bea heard of the ORC's Masters Classic and wanted to enter. She submitted her registration — this was before the Internet — and it was rejected.

"You had to be a minimum of 35," she recalled. "I was in my 30s. I didn't know that was the rule at that time."

No big deal, she just kept running.

"It became a natural," she said. "It just felt good. It just felt like I could do it."

So how and when did she get more involved with the Club?

"I don't remember the year," Bea said, "but I remember the time I did. I met Tom Cody, Bob Seymour and a couple other guys at Bergan Mercy Hospital.



Bea Sides, left, was honored for her long tenure as director of Step Into Running and the Go Girl Run, which takes place each Labor Day. Introducing her last September is Megan Berry Barlow. "All I ever hoped to do is just change one person, one every year," she said of Step Into Running. (Photo by Joe Drugmand.)

They used to have a run there, and I had signed up to run that event. They delayed it, because there was lightning, and then they made it a 1-mile event."

That was the day she was invited to join the group that ran on Sunday mornings.

Her association with the Club just kept growing. At one of the Club's annual meetings, she was urged to become an at-large member of the board. That was about 20 years ago, she guessed. Before long, she became president. It was during her tenure that Omaha's Go Girl Run was born.

Avon was starting 5K races, and Bea discovered the cosmetics giant would sponsor the event.

"They had the program all set up," she said. "From there, we just kept it going as an Avon event. A few years later, Avon dropped out, and it was renamed the Women's Distance Classic."

The name "didn't seem right," she said, and the Step Into Running program was born 20 years ago.

Bea takes great pride in directing the girls over those decades. She was able to watch them turn into young ladies.

"It was awesome," she said. "It was amazing. All I ever hoped to do is just change one person, one every year. What it's done, it's not only changed their life as far as running or being active, it's also changed who they are. It gave them the ability to say, 'I can.' This gave them that positive step that they needed.

"Basically, I didn't do it all, but you gave them that step. They just needed that push, realizing it's something they could do."

ORC president Tom Whitaker called Bea a very valuable member of the running community.

"She has been the face of women's running in Omaha for 20 years," he said. "She has coached, encouraged and supported thousands of women into leading a healthy lifestyle. Her advocacy for women has been very important to the Omaha Running Club."

Bea credits her success with Step Into Running to the many who helped her.

"Without the volunteers who come back every year that have been in the Step Into Running program have been the ones

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For more about the ORC, go to:
omaharun.org

Follow the Club on Facebook!

President's Message

As 2018 draws to a close, I look back on the year and the many accomplishments of the Omaha Running Club. I am grateful for and extend a special thank you to each and every member of the ORC Board and our great

advisors for their time and hard work to help our Club fulfill its mission of supporting the Omaha running and walking community. But most of all, I am extremely grateful to all the volunteers who give their time and effort so freely all year, as they are the ones that really keep us going. We could not do anything without you. John Hall will continue his outstanding record of managing our volunteer function, and our volunteer appreciation dinner will return next year as well.

I also want to send a special thank you to Mandy Kennedy and Daren and Teresa Konda for managing the Thanksgiving Fun Run at Lake Zorinsky. Again this year, Joe's photos showed a great turnout which is even more remarkable in view of the other Turkey Day runs that are being put in our metropolitan area.

Thank you, also, to Daren and Mandy for all their work putting on the Holiday Lights Fun Run and our other fun runs this year. The pleasant December weather conditions this year made for ideal running conditions and all the lights around downtown really

made it seem like Christmas. And the hot chocolate, cookies and candy afterward were an enjoyable reward for everyone's efforts.



Tom Whitaker

My sincere best wishes to our members for a healthy and successful 2019. Thank you for supporting our Club. I look forward to seeing you at the Lake Manawa and LaPlatte winter series runs, and particularly at the Feb. 3 Chiller Challenge. This is a free race for members, but you need to sign up ahead of time. We plan to continue our Super Bowl Sunday tradition by starting the run at 11 a.m., followed by refreshments, Hall of Fame and Run the Magnet recognition. This is our primary membership renewal drive for the year, so we hope to see as many of you there as possible. You should be finished and back home in plenty of time for the Big Game.

If you have resolved to be more active in 2019, the Lake Manawa and LaPlatte events are a good way to start. Check out the dates on our omaharun.org event calendar. We have a great year lined up and encourage everyone to pick up their Magnets at Chiller to help keep track of events. Also be sure to check the calendar on the website for upcoming local races and events in Omaha, Lincoln and nearby towns.

Run safely, and Happy New Year everyone!

Sides: Handing off baton was easy

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who helped it stay and helped it grow," she said. "Those women come back every year to volunteer to help."

Bea handed the baton to Jeremy Kaliff last year, and she couldn't be happier with how her successor has carried on in just her first year since taking over.

"She's got a way of getting others involved that I didn't have, which I think is amazing," Bea said. "That's what I wanted to happen."

Bea said she cherishes the friends she's made by joining the ORC.

"If I would not have become involved in the running community," she said, "I would not have met all these wonderful people."

Chiller Challenge a Super start to Sunday

Now that we've either made it through the first weeks of New Year's resolutions — or, in many cases, given up on them — it's time to prepare for the first ORC-managed running event: The Chiller Challenge. The biggest question, as always, is: What kind of weather will runners encounter on Super Bowl Sunday?

For those who have lived in the Midwest well know, our winter weather is like Forrest Gump's box of chocolates: You never know what you're going to get. We basked in above-normal temperatures the first couple weeks of January. Of course, by Feb. 3, that could all change when the starting gun is fired at NP Dodge Park.

Regardless of the conditions, participants clearly enjoy the first ORC race of the season. It's a great way to kick off Super Bowl Sunday. With the first of the three races — the 1K kids' run — starting at 10:50 a.m., followed by the 2-mile fun run at 11, and the 8K five minutes later, everyone will be home in plenty of time to prepare for football.

The best news is the Chiller Challenge has no entry fee for active ORC members — if you register by Feb. 1. Otherwise, the fee is just \$10, and race-day registration is permitted.

If you want a T-shirt, you must order by Jan. 24.

New this year will be the announcement of the inductees into the ORC Hall of Fame during the awards ceremony.

Don't plan to run but want to help out? Race organizers are always looking for volunteers. Those who have accumulated volunteer points can apply them to a wide array of ORC merchandise that will be on display that day.

So dust off those running shoes and get ready for the Chiller Challenge!

Run the Magnet for 2019 to be released at Chiller

Club officials have been tweaking the Run the Magnet calendar for 2019, and the popular series is expected to be released



Runners line up for the 2017 Chiller Challenge. The event kicks off the 2019 races directed by the ORC. (Photo by Joe Drugmand.)

at the Feb. 3 Chiller Challenge or soon after. As announced at the Nov. 18 annual meeting, some races from 2018 will be dropped, while new ones added.

Kim Kanellis, who directs RTM, hoped the magnets will be ready for pickup at Chiller. To qualify for the RTM prize, you must accumulate 20 points — 10 points coming from ORC-sponsored events. ORC events are worth 2 points, and other events are worth 1 point.

As always, RTM dates and events are subject to change, so it's a good idea to check omaharun.org for the latest news.

Distance training clinic set to return for 2019

Derek Fey is gearing up to lead the ORC's distance training clinic, which begins April 3. The clinic, which runs for 20+ weeks, helps men and women prepare for a half marathon or a full marathon. The

clinic sessions take place each Wednesday and Saturday at Peak Performance's 78th and Cass location.

Complete details will be released later, but if you have any immediate questions, call Derek at (402) 740-9941 or email him at fey.derek@westside66.net.

Step Into Running returns with some changes for 2019

The growing Step Into Running program, directed by Jeremy Kaliff, will have a change in starting date of June 11. But the Go Girl Run, which caps the summer training program, will still be held on Labor Day, which this year is Sept. 2.

Cost for girls participating in the program is just \$5 for ORC members who are active as of May 10, \$30 for non-members. Early bird registration runs May 4-11.

Complete details will be announced in the spring newsletter.

From the editor's point of view

A chance to catch up with new friends

One of my favorite Omaha Running Club events is the annual meeting that takes place each November. It's a great chance to see folks for the first time in months and even meet new people. A highlight, also, is the introduction of the ORC's Hall of Fame members in attendance.



The pasta lunch is always delicious, and the fellowship during the meal is delightful. It always gives me a chance to

catch up with the friends I've made over the years. The meeting moves right along, and it's adjourned after about two hours.

The meeting is quite informative as race directors announce the events for 2019. A surprise came when Kelli Sweet stated she is stepping down as director of the immensely popular Boxer 500. Hats off to Kelli for a great 10-year Boxer run.

During last year's meeting, Bea Sides stepped down after directing the Step Into Running program for 20 years. Jeremy Kaliff took over in 2018, and the program didn't miss a beat.

After the most-recent meeting, I had the pleasure of interviewing Bea. (The story begins on page 3.) I've known Bea for many years, starting while working the finish line at many of the races in which she participated. She continues to be among the top runners in her age category. More important, though, was her dedication to the young women she helped train over two decades.

Bea is typical of most of our ORC members in that since joining she's crafted many friendships through the years. We all share a passion for what running and walking can do — from health benefits to establishing friendships.



Above photo: A crowd of around 70 listens to the brief program that followed the pasta lunch. Left photo: Daren Konda speaks as Club president Tom Whitaker stands by. (Photos by Joe Drugmand.)

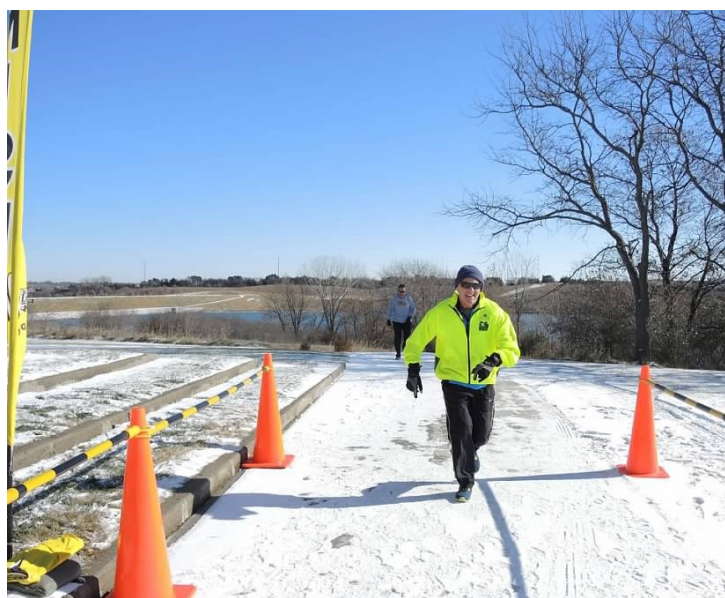
In my case, my circle of acquaintances has grown during my association with the ORC. I always enjoy sharing my experiences as a runner with others. And it's fun to work the finish line at races to see the smiling faces of those who celebrate completing their run.

As we look back on a great series of events in 2018, let's look ahead to what 2019 will offer. It all starts with the

Chiller Challenge on Super Bowl Sunday (Feb. 3). For those of you who want the bigger challenge, you have many months to train for the next Heartland Marathon. Race officials are excited about the growth of the Club's signature event and are bullish about future growth. The marathon gets better with each passing year.

To all our members, Happy New Year!

ORC Annual Meeting Photos by Joe Drugmand



Upcoming Area Race Dates (For Complete Details, Go to omaharun.org)

JANUARY

- 12 — No Frills Racing Series, LaPlatte, Neb.
- 12 — Empyrean Trail Run
- *19 — BTC/ORC Lake Manawa Winter Series
- 19 — Full Wolf Moon 5K
- 26 — No Frills Racing Series, LaPlatte, Neb.

FEBRUARY

- *2 — BTC/ORC Lake Manawa Winter Series
- *3 — Chiller Challenge (RTM)
- 6 — Ladies of the Evening Group Run
- 9 — Valentine's Day 5K
- 9 — No Frills Racing Series, LaPlatte, Neb.

- *16 — BTC/ORC Lake Manawa Winter Series
- 23 — Halley's Comet 10K
- 23 — No Frills Racing Series, LaPlatte, Neb.

MARCH

- 2 — Heat the Streets Run & Walk for Warmth
- *2 — BTC/ORC Lake Manawa Winter Series
- 9 — No Frills Racing Series, LaPlatte, Neb.
- *16 — BTC/ORC Lake Manawa Winter Series
- 23 — No Frills Racing Series, LaPlatte, Neb.
- 30 — Sherman-Steichen Memorial Run (5K/10K)

* Indicates ORC-sponsored event. (RTM) indicates Run the Magnet event.

OMAHA RUNNING CLUB

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