



OMAHA RUNNING CLUB NEWSLETTER

*For the members of the Omaha Running Club * Vol. 52* Winter 2022-23*

Get set for a challenging Chiller

It's that time of year again — time for the Chiller Challenge. It's the ORC's opening event for 2023. The Chiller again returns to Papillion Landing, which is located on Lincoln Street, just west of 84th Street and east of 96th Street. The races begin at 10:50 a.m. on Sunday, Feb. 5.

The Chiller has a long history. For many years, starting in 2006, it was held at NP Dodge Park, which had ample parking and ideal trails for runners. Even in the years when snow was on the ground, the trails were cleared — although sometimes icy in spots. But then came the Missouri River floods,

ORC Chiller Challenge

Date: Sunday, Feb. 5

Time: Races begin 10:50 a.m.

Meal: Starts at noon, followed by the annual meeting and announcement of the new Hall of Fame inductees.

Register/information at: getmeregistered.com (search for Chiller Challenge)

which eventually closed the park, forcing ORC officials to find a new venue for the 2020 Chiller. The Club's Hall of Fame induction ceremony was changed to coincide with the Chiller starting in 2019.

That same year, a new fitness facility opened in Papillion. Papillion Landing gave the ORC permission to use its gym on the east side of the building for the 2020 Chiller. That also was the

first year that the annual meeting was held in conjunction with the races (1K, 2-mile and 8K). For many years before that, the annual meeting was held at Chalco Hills Lake Wehrspann in west Omaha in November.

The move to Papillion Landing wasn't without a major obstacle. COVID-19 was in full force that first year, but the event was allowed to take place with the restrictions we've all but now forgotten.

When it comes to February weather, you never know what you're going to get for the Chiller. In 2020, the temperature was downright balmy as 160 runners participated. A year later, it was the complete opposite with just a handful of hearty souls hitting the trail.



Blake Ziegler of Omaha was the 8K winner of last year's Chiller Challenge. He ran the course in 29:49. After the race came the ORC annual meeting and the announcement of the three new Hall of Fame inductees.

With COVID-19 pretty much in the rearview mirror, we return to a closer to normal life. As always, the Chiller is a free event to ORC members. Non-members can register for a fee that includes a one-year ORC membership. Following the races, voting takes place for the 2023 officers and Board members. Lunch will be served, followed by the awards and announcement of the new HOF inductees. ORC apparel will also be available for purchase or trade-in of volunteer points.

Friends made from Step Into Running

One of the side benefits of the Step Into Running program was the building of friendships. **Page 2.**

Runners share their favorite events

What's your all-time favorite race? That's what we asked the local running community. **Page 5.**

Training clinic produces friendship

Pam Car and Tina Slump got an extra benefit from participating in last year's Step Into Running training clinic. The two became friends. The Omaha residents agreed to share with the newsletter their experiences. Their responses to questions via email follow:

Did you join the Step Into Running program for the first time this year?

Pam: Yes, this was the first time I participated in the Step Into Running clinic. I signed up for the program because I ran track in school, and since then I mostly ran by myself. I have been a member of the ORC for a number of years as a casual noncompetitive runner. When COVID-19 restrictions hit and the runs were virtual, I stopped running and gained a lot of weight. In January of 2022, I wanted to start losing weight so I could run again. I joined a personal training gym, the Bodysmith, which helped me with nutrition and strength training. I lost enough weight to feel comfortable to try running again. I was not sure about how I would do as a runner as I eased back into it, so I decided to give the Step Into Running program a try. It came at exactly the right time for me as I was looking to rebuild my confidence as a runner.

Tina: Yes, this was my first time being involved with the Step Into Running program.

How did the program help you? Did it motivate you, inspire you, etc.?

Pam: The program is a 12-week program that prepares women to run a 5K. That was a distance I felt I could run. The program helped me in a number of ways. First, I was able to build confidence. I saw my running improve every week. I soon discovered my body could do things I did not know I was capable of. Running teaches me that I am capable of much more than I ever imagined. I learned how to run in various weather conditions, how to pace splits and how to pick up speed when needed. I was honored to have Bea Sides as my coach. She taught me both how to be a better runner and a better person. With Bea, I was able to run the entire time with no walk breaks. The program also helped me mentally, because I was able to push myself beyond what I thought I was capable. I felt more comfortable because the program consisted only of women and was inclusive of all ages and ethnicities. We supported and encouraged each other, which inspired me to keep going and improve.

The program also helped me physically. I continued my weight loss journey, and with the nutrition and weight lifting, my strength and weight improved incrementally. By mid-program I lost all the extra weight, felt better physically, was eating better and my running improved. I understood consistency in running is important, so I was motivated to run several times a week. I enjoyed running and looked forward both to finding out how much more I was capable of and being with the other ladies. By the end of the program, I was healthy both physically



Pam Car, left, and Tina Slump. (Photo supplied by Pam Car.)

and mentally. The program culminated in the Go Girl 5K. I was inspired by my teammates who were all at different stages of their journey. We supported each other. I was thrilled with my time in that race (34:17) and received a medal in my category. The program worked well for me, and I continue to run, train and participate in various races.

Tina: The program helped me stay on track by giving me weekly goals to meet and providing an environment in which I could share my accomplishments and disappointments. I was so inspired to see runners of all ages, sizes and abilities. I experienced so much positivity, encouragement and community in this group. The leaders and other group members sincerely wanted me to succeed. My group pacer NEVER allowed me to be negative toward myself. She, as well as Jeremy and Bea, taught me how to shift my mindset. I learned to focus on what I DID do and the obstacles I overcame, instead of focusing on what I DIDN'T do. I've become stronger not only mentally but emotionally as well. I have also dropped a decent amount of weight and lowered my A1C significantly.

Had you entered any races before Go Girl? If so, how many and what distances?

Pam: Just before the commencement of the Step Into Running program, I wanted to determine my limits and capabilities. So I participated in the Jim McMahon Memorial Track Meet, where I placed second in the over-40 age female 100 meters. Then about every other week during the 12-week training clinic, I participated in random 5K races to gauge my progress. I also ran the 2-mile ORC Wehrspann lake race. I estimate that I ran about 10 5Ks before Go Girl, and each time my pace and fin-

See training program, Page 3



ORC presents checks

Left photo: ORC president Tom Whitaker awards a certificate of commendation to U.S. Marines Capt. Alec Croegaert in recognition of the outstanding support that Detachment 1 Maint. Co. provided for the Heartland Marathon. Daren Konda, far right, presents a check for \$500 to Marine SSgt. Christian Jacobs to support the Marines' Toys for Tots program. Right photo: Tom and Daren hand a check for \$500 to Woody Bradford, President of the Omaha Police Foundation, one of the charities supported by the Heartland Marathon.



Training program: Go Girl Run inspired runners

Continued from Page 2

ishing time improved, inspiring me to keep training. I was also thrilled for my teammates who transformed into wonderful runners who supported each other.

I have run about 22 total 5Ks (in 2022), along with the 4-mile Beer and Bagel run and the Thanksgiving Feast and Feathers run, both of which exposed me to trail running. I continue to regularly run on my own and with some teammates. I commenced distance running and train with the ORC Wednesday-night running team that runs all year long. This has exposed me to new challenges, such as endurance running, and extremes in weather conditions. I am thrilled to have the opportunity to train with some of the best local endurance runners and push my personal limits.

Tina: Yes. More than 20 years ago, I ran two half-marathons and a few local 5Ks. I was training for a full marathon but did not complete the training. I had to stop running as it became unhealthy for me to do. In approximately 2019, I randomly signed up for a local 5K. I didn't train one bit! I was at my heaviest weight in my life. However, I thought maybe, just maybe, I could love running again. It went so well that I decided to sign up for another race two weeks later.

I then signed up for the Color Run, knowing it was a big running party. I ran it with my nephew and had a blast. From there I signed up for two or three local 5Ks, none of which I trained or prepared for. Each time I felt more joy and life . . . something that had been missing for several years.

Do you plan on entering more events in 2023? If so, which ones?

Pam: Yes, In 2023, I expect to participate in various 5Ks and 10Ks. I also hope to participate in the track group and do distance running. I expect to participate in the distance clinic to improve in long-distance running. I have my sights on running the half marathon in the spring and one of the ORC Heartland Marathon events in the fall. I also hope to be part of a relay

team for the Market to Market Relay and do the ORC Chiller Challenge. Additionally, as shorter runs are my forte, I plan to sign up for some spring 5Ks and the St Patrick's Day 10K. I hope to continue to run as long as my body allows.

Tina: Yes! The Go Girl Run/Step Into Running group again. As many 5Ks that I can possibly fit in. I'd like to do a few 10Ks as something I'd love to be a part of this year. We shall see.

Anything else to add?

Pam: Yes, a significant and unexpected benefit of the ORC and its programs are the close friendships that develop among the runners. Even though we often compete against each other, we always support each other. After the Tuesday night Step Into Running program ended, every Tuesday night (weather permitting) a group of about six to eight of those teammates, and I continued training together and support each other in many areas of our lives. I am grateful for the lasting friendships I have made and the support I have been given by the other runners. The Wednesday-night ORC group has been extremely supportive as well.

Tina: As previously stated, my goal for joining this group was to fall in love with running again. I needed a community of people who understood running as a lifestyle. I didn't know how I was going to get back into running, but I knew I needed to and wanted to. Randomly seeing an advertisement for Step Into Running was my answer to prayer. My passion and love for running has been restored. It is now a healthy way I deal with life. My mind is focused on the joy of how I feel meeting with my running peeps. The camaraderie is amazing. I have made some great friends from the group. We continue to run Tuesday nights, enjoying the variety of weather, paces and the people that come. I even meet up with Pam each week if possible. She has been a great support as I've been recovering from shoulder surgery. She frequently checks in to see how I'm doing and has taken time to meet me if only to walk 20 minutes. Without Step Into Running, I probably would've missed out on some great friendships. What a sad thing that would've been!

2023 ORC Board Officers and Board Members

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

Follow the Club on
Facebook, Twitter and
Instagram!

President's Message

It has been unusually cold, with a wind chill of minus-40 one day recently, hardly weather conducive to thinking about running races. But it is time to start planning events for the coming year.

I am particularly excited as the New Year approaches to be able to say that Omaha's Heartland Marathon, marathon relay, half marathon and 10K races, Omaha's only fall marathon, will once again be held in 2023 on Sept. 24. At this point, we will be returning to our start and finish location at Millers Landing and will utilize the same courses. I sincerely hope that you will mark your calendars and plan to support your local Club and what we are doing to help our local running community. If you are not ready for 26+ miles, that is fine; sign up for the 10K or half marathon, or get five friends together and form a relay team. The relay legs will be various distances, so there will be a right distance for everyone.

If you aren't interested in running at all, we will need many volunteers to make this a success, so we urge you to sign up as a volunteer. We will be extremely grateful for your help! Please spread the word, not only here in Omaha, but as far and wide as you can. Do you have a running relative or friend in another state? Invite them to come join us and help continue making our event a success for the Omaha running community.

With the end of another year, it's time to look back on the many accomplishments of the Omaha Running Club. I am grateful for and extend a special thank you to each 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 who really keep us going. We could not do anything without you.

This was particularly true with our Heartland Marathon this year as our volunteers received many positive comments from participants. Marty Ertz, our new volunteer coordinator, has established an outstanding

record of managing our volunteer function. I am grateful as well for all the runners who turned out to support our events and gave us their mark of approval by their participation.

My sincere best wishes to our members for a healthy and successful 2023. Thank you for supporting our Club. I look forward to seeing you at the Lake Manawa and LaPlatte winter series runs, and, hopefully, at the Chiller Challenge

and annual meeting of members that is scheduled for Feb. 5.

Check the ORC website for updates.

We are busy planning our usual list of events for 2023 even though the coming year is still filled with uncertainty. Registration is open and, as mentioned above, we are moving forward with plans to hold our premier event, Omaha's Heartland Marathon, on Sept. 24. It is not too early to begin planning your fall event. If you are interested in accurately measured and clearly marked courses, prompt and accurate results during the race, photo tagging and runner tracking, and race officials and volunteers who really care about your race experience, then we are the race for you. Check us out at heartlandmarathon.org. And the best part? The proceeds stay right here in Omaha to facilitate the ORC's year-round mission to support the local running community.

Run safely, and Happy New Year everyone!

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO OUR ORC MEMBERS



Tom Whitaker

Runners share their favorite races

First off, Happy New Year to our Club members! Here's hoping we have nothing but ideal weather for walking and running as we look forward to spring. With so many runners exploring races all over the country — indeed, the world — I thought it



would be interesting to find out what their favorites were. As you'll note, some had difficulty picking just one, which is understandable. But, for sure, I was happy to see how many contributed — many with photos. So I'm filling up space with as many responses as possible. Enjoy!

Denny McFarland: Corporate Cup is my favorite annual Run!

Tiffany Jennell: Bolder Boulder

Liz Alderson: California International Marathon

Kris Powell Severe: Vacation Races Zion Half Marathon

Craig Dogger: Disney World's Dopey Challenge

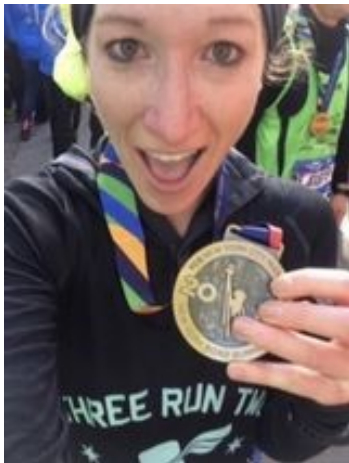
Joy Mann: Good Life Halfsy

Jennifer Dierks: Disney Princess Half

Malisa Rozell Radke: RNR Las Vegas Marathon!

Jo Stephens: Jack and Jill North Bend Washington Marathon

Mary Hillabrand: Wineglass Marathon in the Finger Lakes Region of New York. Beautiful fall foliage. The PR also sways my opinion.



Amanda Failla Tjarks: New York!

Jenny Stelk Morrick: Dizzy GOAT — when it was at Schramm.

Michael Wollschleager: Feast & Feathers Half

Tina Slump: Lincoln Half Marathon

John Ritland: St George Marathon

Hilary Catron: Grandma's Marathon

Clete Roth: Corporate Cup Run. It started in downtown Omaha with a lot of runners.

Jennifer Lee Wilson: Run for the Lakes Marathon in Nisswa, Minn.

Alice Perry Spence: Midwest States 100!

Constance Anne: Because it was in Nebraska, in the Sandhills, an inaugural event and with a fabulous crew, I have to say Cowboy 200.

Craig Christians: The Living History Farms cross country race in Des Moines was always one I looked forward to. Cornfields, creeks, mud. It was a special kind of hell.

Tom Whitaker: Tied with the Presidio 10 10-miler that runs across the Golden Gate Bridge and back in San Francisco and Garden of the Gods 10-miler in Colorado Springs.

Bob Glissmann: New York City Marathon. Incredible crowds.

Greg Crisman: Beer and Bagel/Heartland Marathon



Craig Halverson: Boston Marathon!

See favorites, Page 6

Diaper Drive hailed as big success



December's Diaper Drive week to support Lydia House was deemed very successful. Event coordinator Hilary Catron gathered the donation on behalf of the Omaha Running Club. Hilary also used cash donations to purchase diapers. Thanks to all who donated, and special thanks goes to Hilary for taking on the project.

Favorites: Runners share their past No. 1 events

Continued from Page 5

Michael Yowell: The Canada Army Run in Ottawa

Jennifer Kilzer: Sandhills Marathon in Valentine!

Bob Garcia: Omaha Corporate Cup



Mariana Phipps: Boston —
with your best friend

Hollis Buffkins: Wehrspann
10K



Stacy Lawson: I can't say it really is my favorite race ever, but I sure do miss the "old" Corporate Cup Omaha when it was downtown.

Sarah Johnson: Grandma's Marathon

Sheila Moon Mikulicz: Another vote for NYC Marathon

Cheryl Clayton: Good Life Halfsy

Logan Watley: Columbus Downtown Runaround at Glur's Tavern! Free pizza and beer at the finish of the 2.3- or 5-mile race.

John A. Hall: Bay to Breakers: San Francisco

Kevin Gallagher: Statehood and Richfield, they opened and closed my racing year.

Abby Crimmins: San Diego Beach & Bay

Nancy J. Sutton-Moss: Lincoln Marathon

Ritland shows off his other talent

Through the years, John Ritland's name has appeared many times in this newsletter for his running prowess. If you follow him on Facebook, you know he's completed marathons all over the world, from Utah to Boston to, most recently, New York City — even Berlin, Germany. But he's not "just" a runner.

John recently shared photos of his December performances of the Nutcracker at Omaha's Orpheum Theater.

"My first role with the ballet company was in Dracula at the Orpheum in October of 2011," John said. "My first time in the Nutcracker was 2013, and I've been in it every year since. I've had roles in other ballet productions along the way — Cleopatra, Swan Lake and Giselle. I played a bartender in a 1920s scene in their Momentum production earlier last year."

He continued: "It's a pretty good résumé for someone who can't dance. Yes, I love it. And it's such an honor to be on stage with all the beautiful, talented dancers. Their level of fitness is incredible. And they have to smile while they're dancing — something we don't have to be concerned about! Hell, we can spit if we want to!"

John, who turned 70 last year, has run more than 60 marathons, starting with the Dallas Marathon in 1984. Knee-replacement surgery nearly three years ago hasn't slowed him down. He has completed nine since that 2020 operation. He finished 2022 with 1,788 miles (didn't miss a day of outdoor running) and four marathons.

He and ORC Hall of Famer Chuck Cooper were featured in the most recent issue of Omaha Magazine. Chuck, who was inducted into the Hall in 2005, has an impressive 35-year running history with 65 marathons under his belt, including five Boston



John Ritland escorts a fellow Nutcracker performer as they walk a dog on stage. (Facebook photo supplied by John Ritland.)

Marathons. Retired from running, he was asked to comment about today's running scene.

"The biggest change I've seen is it's gotten much more casual, relaxed," he told the magazine. "Back then, I didn't know somebody who ran a four-hour marathon. Now, probably half the field comes in over four hours. It's almost a vacation sport, and I think that might be better, to be honest with you. I miss it today. I'm cycling now — 40 or 50 miles a day at age 70. But I'd go run, if I could, in a heartbeat. I miss it every day."

A look back at photos from 2022



Far left photo: There was a good turnout for last month's final Wednesday-night group run around Lake Zorinsky. They gathered at the 168th and Center Peak Performance store.

Left photo: A good time was had by all at the October ORC Bones Run 5K at Standing Bear Lake.

OMAHA RUNNING CLUB

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