

# *Keeping Contact*



*Newsletter of the Delaware County Road Runners Club*

AUGUST, 1993

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## ARE RUNNERS BECOMING DINOSAURS?

From all indications, the jogging craze is on the wane. Even the Wall Street Journal has noticed, as apparent in the article: "Fitness Keeps Losing Ground With the Public," (6/9/93). Fewer people are lacing up, pumping up, or fastening on high-tech footwear in order to hit the streets running. Instead, the latest trend is for kinder, gentler forms of exercise. Something strenuous enough to ease the guilt of a sneaked Snickers bar without having to break a sweat. Walking is good. Watching an exercise video, even better. According to the WSJ article: "Most prominent among those abandoning calisthenics for the couch were the pioneers of the fitness revolution, runners."

At barbecues these days, gone is the talk about speed workouts, endurance training and mileage logs. Instead, the chit chat leans more toward mortgage refinancing, Range Rovers, and sensible exercise. Today it's: "Oh, sure, I used to run. I did the Marine Corps marathon, Boston. But, I just don't have the time anymore. Now I'm into convection oven cooking and composting."

The "cool quotient" of running is at its lowest point in years. Thank God for short attention spans.

Some may mourn the passing of jogging from public consciousness. Especially the "Just Do It" people who are being told, in effect, "Oh Grow Up!" I think running's fall from favor is a positive development. I've seen enough obsessive/compulsive types who jog in place on street corners waiting for the light to change. I say begone O legions of running suits worn by aging Olympic wanna-bees on their lunch hours. It's heartening to see that graying baby boomers are taking a second look at all that neon footwear and, instead, are going back to basics: Keds, in black or white.

Personally, I continue to run several times a week. Call me a dinosaur, if you will, but then I've always been somewhat counter-culture. For me: If it's in, it's out. I don't want to do what everyone else is doing. I don't want to wear what everyone else is wearing. Isn't that the point of individual freedom in America?

Now I've never been a particularly fast runner -- just dedicated. Kind of like the tortoise in its race against the hare. In fact, I am the tortoise behind all the other tortoises. Usually I cross the finish line mere nanoseconds ahead of the First Aid wagon. That doesn't bother me. What bothers me is being passed by babies in strollers, dogs with their owners and women old enough to be my grandmother. A competitive field like this has to be an anomaly. And it's one that reinforces a deep-seated conviction; running shouldn't be a fad that everyone gloms on to until it's out of fashion -- or until one or both knees wear out. It shouldn't be one more thing on the "to do" list. If you're going for a life-long sport, it needs to be as automatic as brushing your teeth and as comforting as a good night's sleep.

Running should be the sole province of those who truly love the conventions, the traditions, the whole culture of the activity. Everything from stretching routines to Power Bars, running expos to orthotic arch supports. For the injured, there are fitness physicians to soothe and rehabilitate every ache, stress, and strain. For the nutritionally minded, eating closely resembles a science as you balance your intake of complex carbohydrates and fats. Race day becomes a multi-stage event, starting with pre-dawn warm-ups, counting down to the starter's pistol, and concluding with a tailgate party, flush with food, drink, and sweaty camaraderie.

Beyond the physical aspects of the sport, there's a very satisfying mental component. If you just listen, you can hear the internal dialog between your opposing muscle groups (Yes. No. Ouch. Stop. Go.). The repetitive nature of running allows you to operate on automatic pilot, letting your mind roam the universe while your body cranks out mile after mile. The challenge is you against yourself, as you push beyond the personal record set just last month -- or last week. It's also you against the world, as you work through the day's problems, replay conversations, and get some literal and figurative distance on things.

It's this balance of the mental and physical that keeps dedicated runners moving forward. Mile after mile after mile. At all hours of the day and night. In all kinds of weather. Runners are much like mail carriers in this respect (but very few ever get paid). It's the essence of the sport that stays with true runners long after the faddists move on. Don't get me wrong, following fitness fads is not necessarily a bad thing. Exercise is exercise. Whatever keeps you moving. But for me, I'll stick with running even though the word "speed" is a misnomer when describing my race pace.

To all those ex-runners who have gone on to step aerobics or NordicTrack, I extend my heartfelt thanks. I've always hated being part of a crowd. Now there's more room on the road, fewer competitors in my age group, and a favorable shift in the supply/demand balance of running gear (which means lower sale prices and greater bargains).

To return the favor, I promise not to crowd your racquetball courts; I won't reserve tee-time on your golf course; and I'll never take tennis lessons. Fair is fair. There are enough sports activities for everyone. Why should we all have to do the same ones? After all, there are just so many hours in the day.

### WHO'S AFRAID OF A LITTLE RAIN? NOT RUNNERS!

By Amy Binder

It was a dark and stormy night. And then it wasn't.

It was a bad idea to be outside in the elements. And then it wasn't.

While the weather was making up its mind about what it wanted to do, 29 runners gathered in Swarthmore for the first of two summer races sponsored by the DELAWARE COUNTY ROAD RUNNERS CLUB. To paraphrase a tired phrase: if you hold it (a race), they will come.

DELCO RRC gets involved in many running events over the course of the year: from its premier race, the Media Five Miler, in June to the Women's Distance Festival in August to the Delco Cross Country Championships in October for high schoolers. It's all part of the club's philosophy to run for fun and fitness.

The summer races were championed by club president Steve Whitmore, past-president Tom Hirsch, and those running Graces, Ron (a.k.a. club veep) and Marianne, as a low-key, mid-week, get-the-fun-back-in-racing series.

The first race was a 5K held July 14 on the Swarthmore College Campus. The second was a 5K cross country race on for August 17, at Rose Tree Park. Entry fees were set at \$3 each. That's right: \$3. The club decided to roll back racing fees to 1970s levels. It also decided to had out 1970s-era giveaways: ribbons to all runners instead of tee shirts.

Another throwback to earlier races are the numbered popsicle sticks handed out as each runner crosses the finish line. Then, as places are called, each runner steps up for identification. This may not be feasible for larger races, but in a field of a few dozen, it makes everything a bit more intimate and cozy. For some, just holding that popsicle stick was a nostalgic reminder of racing days gone by.

DELCO RRC showed its environmental colors at Swarthmore by using water-soluble chalk to mark the course. Too bad the rains washed it all away just minutes before the start of the race. That left a handful of volunteers scurrying around, trying to beat the runners to strategic points along the course, in order to point out the twists and turns. Generally, this wasn't a problem, although a long-time club member who should have known better led three other runners down a slightly more scenic, but not necessarily shorter, path.

The top male and female finishers, Matt O'Neill and Phyllis Botson, were awarded \$25 gift certificates to Bill Battey's Sporting Goods in Media. During the post-race raffle, six additional runners (split 50/50 between the sexes) won \$10 gift certificates to Battey's. Similar prizes was awarded at the August race.

SWARTHMORE FINISHERS (apologies in advance for misspellings)

1) Matt O'Neill	17:46	16) Jim Tyler	22:08
2) Charlie Frassoni	17:50	17) Bill Marra	22:13
3) George Jacques	18:07	18) Jerry Moulton	22:47
4) Mark Oleynick	18:11	19) Carolyn Di Giambatista	23:43
5) John Greenstine	18:33	20) Terry Adamson	23:45
6) Sean Gallagher	18:37	21) Bill Boselli	23:51
7) Spencer Jung	18:55	22) Dave Gingras	25:08
8) Chris Reynolds	19:14	23) Ralph McKinney	25:41
9) Chris Fuhrman	20:05	24) Joel Moranz	25:43
10) Bob White	20:09	25) Gene Martinson	26:16
11) Phyliss Boston	20:11	26) Diane McNannus	26:23
12) Mike Tuohy	20:21	27) Bill Morgan	26:32
13) Marianne Grace	20:46	28) Jim Werley	28:11
14) Jim Cooper	21:16	29) Pat Stockley	28:12
15) Ryan Gallagher	21:42		

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The following two letters were received in response to a letter that appeared in the last issue of KEEPING CONTACT. The letter writer expressed concern over the club's decision to offer a "Babysitter Discount" at the mid-Winter Mixer.

### Letter to the Editor

Dear Ed,

I found the letter in the July, 1993 issue of KEEPING CONTACT rather interesting. While I do not totally disagree with the author, I would like to remind him or her, and others who disagree with club decisions, that DELCO RRC has monthly meetings which are open to all club members.

I believe that all of 1993 meetings were listed earlier in the year, and the minutes always state the date and location of the next meeting. I agree with the author that DELCO is not a "social service agency," and it is also not intended to be run by just a few members. However, there are always the same members showing up meeting after meeting.

An organization such as DELCO RRC is a great place to meet people who share a common interest and can foster training partners as well as friendships. Unfortunately most members would rather let "the other guys/gals" run the club. This is ok as long as they are available to do it. But people get burned out, they have other things in their lives that require their attention, so what happens; the club falls a part due to lack of leadership, workers, and in general those interested in putting in the time. I've seen this happen to Haverford AC. Let's not let it happen to DELCO. If you have an opinion, if you don't like what's happening, if you want to volunteer at one of the clubs many functions, or what ever, come to the regularly scheduled monthly meetings and get involved - voice your opinion. Let's keep DELCO a strong running club for us and for the community.

Ron Grace

#### REPLY TO "LETTER TO THE EDITOR" JULY 1993 ISSUE

This is in response to the anonymous letter in the July issue about the \$5 babysitting discount for the Mid-Winter Mixer.

My first reaction was: "Give me a break. We're only talking about \$5." But on reflection, the writer does have a point worth discussing. The problem is: 1) withholding his/her name cuts off any meaningful interaction, and 2) these issues are debated at the monthly club meetings -- why doesn't he/she use that forum to try and change the practice.

It's all very well and good to sit back and criticize, especially if you do it anonymously. You may feel a whole lot better, and you avoid any potential confrontation -- but it doesn't help (and, in fact, hurts) the club. We don't ask much of our membership, and there are no requirements for joining. We are strictly a volunteer organization; even our dues are voluntary. But we desperately need willing hands and minds to help us in planning and staging events for our membership, be they running or social.

We can usually get enough bodies to help with races: to register runners, direct traffic, handout water, work the finish line. But it's always a struggle to get people at the monthly meetings. To get someone to run for office. To channel some of that running energy into new and innovative ideas for the club. It's even harder to get some follow through on the ideas that do surface. Maybe that's why the critical letter bothered me so.

I believe that you earn the right to criticize -- and that if you haven't already paid your "dues" (by volunteering your time, not just sending a check), then it's up to you to try and right what you think is wrong.

The next Mid-Winter Mixer will be here before you know it. Planning for it will soon begin in earnest. I'd like to invite the anonymous writer and everyone else out there to become part of the process -- for all DELCO events. Let's make them something we'll enjoy. Don't wait for someone else to do it. This time, it's your turn.

Signed,  
Amy Binder

## WOMEN TOPS AT BROAD STREET

DELCO's team of Marlene Barr, Phyllis Botson, Marianne Grace and Diane Mc Manus captured first place in the Women's Open Division at the Broad Street Run in May. Congratulations to one and all on another fine showing.

## RUNNING SHORTS

\* Our California membership is down to one! Dave Covey is still in LA - LA - Land, but Rick Jones has relocated from Oakland to Pittsburgh, which means we'll probably be seeing a bit more of him.

\* Tony Belfiglio is always active and here are a few race results to prove it:  
- Glen Mills 10K -- 46:00+  
- Mid-Summers Night 5K Run -- 21:03 (2nd place, 50+)  
- NEA 5K -- 21:23 (in spite of the hills) (1st place in age group)

Way to go Tony! Club members are always welcome to send or provide the editor with their race results...as long as they are in writing. I'll publish them (Please, no verbal reports...my memory is short!)

## EDITOR'S PLEA!

Help! The newsletter needs articles...YOUR articles. Due to an ever increasing workload at my regular job, I have not been able to write as many articles as in the past. To make our newsletter viable, I need to hear from you! Race reports, short stories, club member profiles, whatever, please send them to me at 408 Pershing Blvd., Collingdale, PA 19023.

I'd like to personally acknowledge Amy Binder for her recent contributions to the newsletter. Amy's view of the running world keeps me consistently entertained. There has to be a few more writers out there somewhere, so send in you articles now!

- Bob Huggins

## LATE SUMMER/EARLY FALL RACE SCHEDULE

Compiled by Bob Huggins

- Sept. 4 Race Against Cancer 4 Mile Run  
Alverthorpe Park, Abington, PA  
Contact: American Cancer Society  
643-4840
- Sept. 10 Philadelphia Friday Night Out & Back Party  
East River Drive, Phila.  
Contact: Fleet Feet  
527-5510 or 782-8811
- Sept. 11 CAMcare United for Mental Fitness 5K  
Cooper River Park, Pennsauken, NJ  
Contact: Barbara Wrzeszcz  
Mental Health Center, Inc.  
Box 1990  
Camden, NJ 08101  
609-541-1700 ext. 310
- Bottle and Cork 10 Miler and 5K  
Dewey Beach, DE  
Contact: Marathon Sports  
109 Ninth St. Plaza  
Wilmington, DE 19810  
302-654-6400
- Devereux Race Day 10K, 5K  
Exton, PA  
Contact: Mike Malloy  
c/o The Devereux Foundation  
P.O. Box 400  
Devon, PA 19333  
964-3299
- Latin American 5K  
Wilmington, DE  
Contact: Westside Health Service  
Adams Four Shopping Plaza Ste. 401  
Fourth & Adams Sts.  
Wilmington, DE 302-655-5822

- Sept. 11 5K Wings of Fire Road Race  
Lumberton, NJ  
Contact: 609-267-0637
- Historic Rittenhousetown 5K  
Lincoln Drive & Forbidden Drive, Phila.
- Sept. 12 3rd Annual Road to a Cure 5 Miler  
Main St. Voorhees, NJ  
Contact: Bill Green  
609-753-0632
- Sept. 18 Dane Delancey Memorial 5K  
Rockford Park, Wilmington, DE  
Contact: Mt. Salem United Methodist Church  
302-658-1807
- Read a Loud 5K  
Christiana Mall, DE  
Contact: Marathon Sports  
See Sept. 11
- Sept. 19 Philadelphia Distance Run Half Marathon  
18th & Market Sts., Phila.  
Contact: Philadelphia Distance Run  
P.O. Box 43111  
Phila., PA 19129  
293-0786
- Applications at Mellon-PSFS branches - 553-8800
- Sept. 25 CORA Services 5K  
Philadelphia  
Contact: Bob McElhenney  
c/o CORA Services  
733 Susquehanna Rd.  
Phila., PA 19111  
342-7660 Ext. 216
- Beach Front Runs, 4.4 Miles & 2 Miles  
Cape May, NJ  
Contact: Civic Affairs Dept  
Beachfront Run  
643 Washington St.  
Cape May, NJ 08204  
609-884-9565
- Oct. 2 UMDNJ University Doctors 5K  
Stratford, NJ  
Contact: 609-782-6149

- Oct. 3 Delaware Distance Classic 15K  
Wilmington, DE  
Contact: Marathon Sports  
See Sept. 11
- Radnor 5 Mile Run  
Wayne, PA  
Contact: American Lung Assoc.  
1534 McDaniel Dr  
West Chester, PA 19380  
692-4233
- Run for Sobriety 5 Mile Run & 1 Mile Walk  
Engleville, PA  
Contact: 539-6000
- Oct. 16 Archway's 3rd Annual Maucie Miller 5K  
Alco, NJ  
Contact: Lavonne Johnson  
197 Jackson Rd  
Alco, NJ 08004  
609-753-2969
- Oct. 17 Atlantic City Marathon, Half Marathon, 10K, 5K  
Contact: Boardwalk Runners Club  
P.O. Box 2181  
Ventnor, NJ 08406  
609-822-6911
- Oct. 24 Marine Corps Marathon  
Arlington, VA  
Contact: Marine Corps Marathon  
P.O. Box 188  
Quantico, VA 22134
- Oct. 30 Run for the Rarest 5K  
Memorial Hall, Phila.  
Contact: Marge Cuning  
222-3636
- Nov. 7 Run Wild at the Zoo 10K  
Phila. Zoo  
Contact: Run Wild  
Philadelphia Zoo  
3400 W. Girard Ave  
Phila., PA 19104  
243-1100 Ext. 237
- Nov. 14 21st Annual YMHA 8.4 Mile Loop Race  
Tentative Date  
Contact: Dave Brier  
545-440

Nov. 25 Fairmount Park Turkey Trot  
Contact: Joe Callan  
685-0051

MULTI-SPORTS

Sept. 4 Do the Tri  
Cooper River Park, Pennsauken, NJ  
1/2 Swim or 2 Mile Run, 15 Mile Bike, 5K Run  
Contact: RMI  
P.O. Box 462  
Collingdale, NJ 08108

Sept. 11 Pine Barrens Triathlon  
Atsion Lake, Hammonton, NJ  
1 Mile Swim, 24 Mile Bike, 10K Run  
Contact: RMI  
See Sept. 4

Lancaster YMCA Duathlon  
Lancaster, PA  
5K Run, 25 Mile Bike, 5K Run  
Contact: Jeff Kenderdine  
Lancaster YMCA  
572 N. Queen St.  
Lancaster, PA  
717-397-7474

Sept. 12 Lancaster YMCA Triathlon  
Lancaster, PA  
1/2 Mile Swim, 15 Mile Bike, 5 Mile Run  
Contact: Jeff Kenderdine  
See Sept. 11

Skylands Triathlon - Clinton, NJ  
.75K Swim, 20K Bike, 5K Run  
Contact: Skylands Triathlon  
P.O. Box 5163  
Clinton, NJ 08809

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**Tuesday, September 21, 1993**

7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

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**Dick White, PT**

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*Please RSVP by September 20th:*

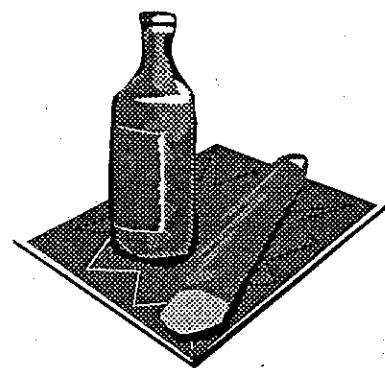
**(215) 586-7000**

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**Kick off the *Philadelphia*  
*Distance Run Weekend*  
with the  
**DELCO RRC  
Pasta Dinner**  
**Sept. 17, 7 to 11pm.****

Masonic Lodge  
Route 420  
Springfield

\$15 per person, includes beer and soft drinks. (Bring your own wine and an offering for the dessert table.)



Send checks payable to Delco RRC, c/o  
Marianne Grace, 254 Bryn Mawr Ave.,  
Lansdowne, PA 19050.

623-3069 for more information.

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