WASHINGTON COUNTY ROAD RUNNERS CLUB
Established 1974
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Visit us on the web @www.wcrrc.com

NEWS AND NOTES

Hello, one and all, and welcome to 2026. All of us hear at the newsletter desk hope that the holidays were good for you, and that you are now fully recovered from the festivities and ready to tackle the 2026 race schedule. In the next newsletter we will put together the WCRRC Grand Prix races that we know about, along with the rules for the GP.

We also want to send out a reminder that the 2026 dues are now due. We know that you all look forward to all the ramblings in this, what Mickey Hornack calls the "Fish Wrap", newsletter. So, if you don't want to miss out on all the happenings this year, send your dues in APAP.

UPCOMING RACES

There will not be many races scheduled for the first three months of the year, but here are a few that we found that may interest a few. And, as always, the * indicates a Grand Prix race.

1/11 – Frigid Five Miler – Allison Park, PA
1/17 – Run to Read Half Marathon – Fairmont, WV
1/31 – Groundhog Day 5K – McCandless, PA
2/14 – Community Options Cupids Chase 5K – Acrisure Stadium – PGH
2/14 – Cupids Chase 5K – Butler, PA
2/28 – Spring Thaw 5/10/15/20 Mile – Allison Park, PA
3/1 – Withrow 5K – Helicon Brewery – Oakdale. PA

3/7 – Shamrock Run 5K – Cranberry TWP, PA
3/7 – Ellport Comm. 5K – Ellport, PA
3/7 – South Park Half Marathon – South Park, PA
3/8 – Shamrock Run 5K – South Park, PA
3/28 – *Barnesville Rotary 5K – Barnesville, OH
3/28 – *Bucks for Bucs 5K – Houston, PA

WCRRC AT THE RACES

Although December usually brings some cold weather and snow, the early part of the month kept most of both away. And the club did have a few members participating in some races. Here's a recap of a few.

Santa Spring 5K/1Mile

There were 81 souls taking to Barnesville to run the annual Santa Sprint race. The winner of the 5K race was Travis Moore, who came through at time of 18:50. Our only participant in the race was Greg Mussitsch, who ran it in 20:06. In the walk category, we had Carl Kondrach come through first overall in a time of 29:43, and Sarah Donley was the second overall female finisher in 36:01. And the one mile had Carl finish in 8:22, and first overall again. Sarah was the third overall female in 10:37.

Run Santa Run 5K

Although there were 4 races scheduled in this GCXC timed event, the South Park race was cancelled due to inclement weather. But, in the Cranberry race we had Kelley Murdock finish the event in a time of 28:13. And the Oakdale race had Rich Sandala finish in 25:41, and Kelley in 28:29.

Workout of the Week: Perceived Effort Ladder

This interval workout improves your ability to run hard all the way to the end of a 5K or 10K

I love this workout because it truly improves how we race a 5K or 10K. Most of us tend to go out quick, settle into a pace, and then hope to hang on at the end. In this workout, you practice going out fast and settling into the pace — but then running strong at the end. It is as much a mental exercise as a physical one. I originally learned about this workout from a friend who spent some time in New York City and ran with the Central Park Track Club. I have modified it slightly to fit the needs of the adult athletes of all levels that I work with. Even though it is designed for the track, I have also done this workout on the road with marked distances.

Workout Summary

- 2 x 400 meters @ hard perceived effort
- 2 x 600 meters @ 10K perceived effort
- 2 x 800 meters @ 10K perceived effort
- 1 x 1200 meters @ 5K perceived effort

Take 90 seconds of timed recovery between every repeat.

Workout Description

Perceived effort is the key to this workout: Most of the athletes that I coach are adults with very busy work and family schedules. We meet early in the morning and/or the evening. I have found that if I give them specific paces to hit that it often leads to injury. Specific times can also have the opposite effect for some: They may be ready to make the next "jump" in their fitness and to run workouts at a faster pace, but they limit themselves to a set given pace. The goal for the first two 400-meter intervals is to run them hard but smoothly. This pace typically ends up being their **current** mile/3K pace. I then emphasize that the 600 and 800 intervals need to be run at an effort that they feel they can sustain for a 10K with the goal of maintaining that pace even as the intervals get longer and they start to fatigue. Consistent pacing is extremely important. The real test of the workout comes at the end: They finish the workout by running faster—at a current 5K race pace effort—for a final 3 laps (1200 meters).

I tend to do this workout at least two to three times in the buildup to a 5K or 10K race. The number of times depends on how "smooth" the athlete gets through the workout. The first time most runners are struggling by the last 800-meter effort and have difficulty completing the 1200 as designated. Once the athlete can truly run quickly during the first two 400-meter segments and looks smooth and under control during the last 1200 meters, I feel confident that they are ready to line up for their race.

ELLPORT BOROUGH

COMMUNITY 5K

Ellport Borough Community Center
200 Booster Way
Ellwood City, PA 16117

Saturday, March 07, 2026
5K race begins at 11:00 a.m.

Directions: Take Route 488 North from Ellwood City. Take left onto Golf Avenue across from Ellport Junction Convenience Store. Signs will be posted.

Nice course along back streets of Ellport Borough. Flat and Fast. Restrooms will be available inside the Community Center. Registration and award presentation will be inside. DJ this year and National Anthem at the start of the race.

Many refreshments after the race including Pizza Joe's Pizza.

Top 3 overall male and female runners

Top 3 in each age group male and female runners:

1-14,15-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-74. 75-79, 80 & over

Top 3 overall male and female walkers

Prize money to top 1 male and female 70-74, 75-79, 80 & over.

$150.00 cash award for overall course record breakers.

Men: Nick Edinger - 15:20.1   Women: Leah Anne Weaver - 17:43.3

$20.00 for preregistered up to January 28, 2026.

$25.00 after January 28, 2026 and day of race.

Contact: Herb Cratty 724-841-6528 E-Mail: bonnherb@yahoo.com

Make checks payable to: Miles of Smiles

Mail payment and application to:

Miles of Smiles Timing Services
511 Harpers Ferry Road
Ellwood City, PA 16117

Online Registration also available at RunSignUp.com

All preregistered for tee-shirts are to be received by Friday, February 27, 2026.

Gender: Male   Female   Age: _____   RACE: 5K RUN   5K WALK

(CHOOSE ONE)   RUNNING GLOVES OR   TEE SHIRT: S   M   L   XL

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____   Zip: _____   Phone: _____

I know that running is a potentially hazardous activity. I should not enter or run this event unless I am medically able and properly trained. I agree to abide by any decision of a race official relative to my ability to safely complete the run. I assume all risks associated with running in this race including, but not limited to, falls, contact with other participants, the effects of weather, the conditions of the road and traffic on the course, all such risks being known and appreciated by me. Having read this waiver and knowing these facts, and in consideration of your acceptance of my application, I, for myself and anyone entitled to act on my behalf, waive and release this race and all organizers, sponsors, their representatives and successors from all claims or liabilities of any kind arising out of my participation in this event . I also release any photos that may involve myself.

Signature: _____ Date: ___/___/2026

Participant Signature Parent or Guardian

How Healthy Are You Aging? Take These 4 Fitness Tests to Find Out

These simple at-home assessments can offer insight into your strength, balance, and mobility.

By Sydney Wingfield

- Experts say **how well you move** is a strong predictor of **how well you're aging.**
- **Four at-home tests** may offer insight into your fall risk and longevity.
- If you're struggling with these tests, don't panic—**consult your doctor and exercise regularly** to improve mobility.

A variety of factors determine how well you're aging, like emotional well-being and cognitive function. But experts who study aging agree on another powerful indicator: **how well you can move your body.**

Your ability to move with or without ease comes down to muscle mass, range of motion, flexibility, and energy levels, according to Richard Dupee, MD, **chief of geriatrics at Tufts Medical Center.**

Unfortunately, these factors tend to decline with age, which can make daily tasks harder and increase the risk of falls, the leading cause of fatal injuries among adults aged 65 and older.[1] You want to be "strong enough to prevent falls or injury when possible," emphasized Colleen Christmas, MD, a physician in geriatric medicine at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

So how can you know how you stack up? The good news is that it's possible to measure your own physical function—and you don't even have to leave your home to do it. Here are **four simple, research-backed tests** that offer a quick read on your fitness and longevity. (Note: If you're unsteady on your feet or have an injury or disability, check with your doctor before attempting these exercises.)

Timed Up and Go (TUG)

This test is designed to assess mobility, balance, and fall risk, and several studies suggest it can be a reliable predictor of mortality. For example, a 2017 study found that slower TUG times were strongly associated with a higher risk of death from any cause within 12 years in a group of roughly a thousand adults aged 65 and older.[2]

How to perform:

1. Grab a stopwatch.
2. Sit back in a standard armchair.
3. Identify a line 10 feet away on the floor.
4. Start the stopwatch.
5. Stand up and walk to the line on the floor at your normal pace.
6. Turn around.
7. Walk back to the chair at your normal pace.
8. Sit down again.
9. Stop the stopwatch.

Taking 12 seconds or more to complete the test may indicate an increased risk of falling, per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.[3]

Standing on a Single Leg

Standing on one leg might sound simple, but it can reveal a lot about your balance and overall physical fitness. One study suggests that for adults aged 50 and older, the inability to stand on one leg for 10 seconds may indicate a two-fold increase in the risk of death within the next decade.[4]

How to perform:

1. Stand with your feet together and your hands at your sides.
2. Lift one foot off the ground, keeping it slightly bent at the knee.
3. Start a timer (or have someone time you).
4. Hold that position for 10 seconds while looking straight ahead.

Sitting-Rising

One reliable way to test balance, strength, and range of motion—the extent to which a body part can move freely—is the sitting-rising test, which gauges how well you can sit down on the floor and rise back up without assistance.

How to perform:

1. Stand barefoot on a non-slip surface, such as a thin mat.
2. Without worrying about speed, try to sit on the floor using as little assistance as possible.
3. From the seated position, rise back up to standing—again, using the least amount of assistance needed.

To determine your score, start with a maximum of five points for sitting and five for rising. Deduct one point if you use any body part, such as a knee or hand, for support. Any unsteadiness or loss of balance during the test knocks off a half point (crossing your legs at any point is fine, as long as you don't use the sides of your feet for support).

A recent study found that middle-aged and older adults who scored below 7.5 had a significantly higher risk of dying from natural causes within 12 years compared to those who scored a perfect 10.[5]

30-Second Chair Stand

This assessment measures lower-body strength and endurance, and it can help identify adults at risk of falling. It may also be predictive of mortality—research has found that performing fewer than four stands in 30 seconds is linked to a threefold increase in risk of death among people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.[6]

How to perform:

1. Set a stopwatch for 30 seconds, or have a friend time you.
2. Sit in the middle of a chair.
3. Cross your arms and place your hands on opposite shoulders.
4. Keep your feet flat on the floor, your back straight, and your arms against your chest.
5. Begin timing.
6. Rise to a full standing position, then sit back down again.

7. Repeat as many times as you can within 30 seconds.

According to the CDC, a below-average score may indicate a heightened risk of falling. For those aged 60 to 64, the average score is 14 for men and 12 for women.[7]

What If The Tests Are Too Challenging?

If you're struggling with these tests, don't panic. Instead, use it as a wake-up call to make some changes.

Christmas recommends bringing your test results to your primary care physician rather than risking an injury. "A fall can result in a huge change in a person's life and something we in geriatrics fear tremendously," she said. But the "great news," she added, "is that many of the factors that contribute to a high risk of falls are fixable."

What's key, she said, is a **consistent exercise routine that focuses on building strength, mobility, and balance.** Christmas recommends working with a trainer or physical therapist, or participating in exercise classes catered to your age group. If that's not possible, even simple activities you can do on your own, such as climbing stairs, can build strength and coordination.

As she put it, "The benefits of exercise cannot be overstated."

Thoughts thoughtlessly thought thru thoughtlessness!

Mickey Hornack

* Happy 2026 to all WCRRC members. May your shoes last longer, your injuries last shorter and your bank account grow and weight decrease! Santa got confused last year.

* Point of focus- if you go to your "go to" food store have you ever tried going in the opposite direction to shop? Honest!

* Sorry I greatly dislike snow. As of recent data W.PA. is +11" over last year. Great.

* Neighbor says mentally he 29, humor he's 12, physically he says he believes he fought in Civil War! I get it.

* I tell my wife every morning I'm going out jogging. Then I don't go!! It's a running joke.

* Did you know hand sanitizers ONLY work on clean hands. Wait, oxymoron maybe? Tough one ain't it?

* Can you think of an "English" word that rhymes with PURPLE?

* Well AI jumps into the 2026 running/walking scene. There's the new "stuff" in shoes-ATPU foams or PEBA polymer blends and then expect more high-performance trainers with carbon plates and of course sensors embedded in shoes. The Mrs will know when I walk to the DQ not on the trail!

* Being messy is a sign of creative brain at work. I think that'll take some convincing

2025 GRAND PRIX UPDATE

The GP series is in the final stretch. Published below is the semifinal list. We will continue to take updates and corrections until December 31. Please check the results below and report any emissions or discrepancies to Grace before Dec 31. No changes will be accepted after that date.

LONG DISTANCE GP (12/16/25)

1.	Sarah Donley	8	45:49
2.	Kelley Murdock	5	48:28
3.	Steve Chabala	5	48:38
4.	Carl Kondrach	7	49:43
5.	John Titus	5	52:58

GRAND PRIX (12/16/25)

1.	Ann McCormick	8	31:58
2.	Mike Romzy	6	34:50
3.	Greg Mussitsch	5	37:30
4.	Amy Ference	6	39:35
5.	Rich Sandala	18	40:05
6.	Dave Dziamniski	6	43:04
7.	Kelley Murdock	9	44:00
8.	Steve Chabala	9	44:40
9.	George Dziamniski	7	45:16
10.	Sarah Donley	5	47:15
11.	Gary Chabala	6	49:17
12.	Shane Brunazzi	5	49:41
13.	Gary Lorenzi	8	49:47
14.	Pat Calmbacher	5	52:29

WALKING GRAND PRIX(12/16/25)

1.	Sister Kevin Berdis	5	43:37
2.	Carl Kondrach	5	55:51
3.	Sarah Donley	5	1:01:39
4.	Kelley Murdock	5	1:03:59
5.	Bill McCormick	8	1:08:41
6.	Blake Headen	7	1:23:26

RUNNING TIMES

RUN SANTA RUN 5K(Cranberry)
Kelley Murdock   28:13

12K'S OF XMAS 5K
Carl Kondrach	26:00(A-2)
Sarah Donley	27:06(A-1)
Blake Headen	56:37(Walk)

CANDY CANE 5K
Kelley Murdock   28:07

RUN SANTA RUN(Ohio)
Kelley Murdock   34:12

ROCKET CITY 13.1M
Kelley Murdock   2:03:43

TURKEY TROT 5K(Uniontown)
Kathy Starkey   37:24(A-1)

RUN SANTA RUN(South Park)
Kelley Murdock   25:32

CHILLY CHEEKS 5K
Shane Brunazzi	36:25
Ashlyn Brunazzi	40:16

SELFLESS ELF 5K WALK
Carl Kondrach	29:20(OA-1)
Sarah Donley	36:44(OA-1)

CHILLY CHEEKS; 5K
Shane Brunazzi	36:25
Ashlyn Brunazzi	40:16

SELFLESS ELF 5K WALK
Carl Kondrach	29:20(OA-1)
Sarah Donley	36:44(OA-1)

MT DORA 13.1M(FLA0
Tom Carter   2:32:53

UGLY SWEATER 5K
Kelley Murdock   26:58

WCRRC AT THE RACES

DIABETES 5K WALK
Carl Kondrach   34:27(OA-1)

VETERANS SALUTE 5K
Shane Brunazzi   25:09(A-3)

VETERANS DAY 5K
Carl Kondrach   25:55(A-2)
Sarah Donley   28:52(A-3)

EQT 10K
Rich Sandala   52:22(A-2)

EQT 10M
Jaminique Milliren   1:19:11

VETERANS 10K WALK
Carl Kondrach   1:02:47(OA-1)
Sarah Donley   1:14:26(OA-2)

GREENWAY 5K
Deb Calmbacher   35:21(A-3)
Pat Calmbacher   35:25(A-3)

LAST TRAIL 5K
Kelley Murdock   30:54

BELLE VERNON T. TROT 5K
Gary Lorenzi   33:55(A-3)

BURGS. T. TROT 5K
Steve Chabala   25:32
Gary Chabala   36:15(A-2)

BOWLBY T. TROT 5K
David Bess   32:22(A-2)

BOWLBY T. TROT 5K WALK
Carl Kondrach   37:16(OA-1)

IT'S LEG DAY 5K WALK
Carl Kondrach   30:47(OA-1)
Sarah Donley   36:47(OA-1)

PIGSKIN 5K
Carl Kondrach   25:30
Sarah Donley   28:22

KISKI T. TROT 5K
Shane Brunazzi   26:32
Ashlyn Brunazzi   36:55

PITTSBURGH T. TROT 5K
Mike Romzy   21:45(A-1)

NIGHT BEFORE 5K
Carl Kondrach   26:24
Sarah Donley   28:21
Kelley Murdock   30:09

GREENWAY 13.1M
Kelley Murdock   2:04:53

SAXONBURG 5K
Shane Brunazzi   26:40
Ashlyn Brunazzi   36:14

UNIONTOWN T. TROT 5K
Rich Sandala   25:03(A-2)

HEROES GOBBLE GALLUP 5K WALK
Kelley Murdock   34:09(OA-1)

SANTA SPRINT 5K
Greg Mussitsch   20:06(OA-4)

SANTA SPRINT 5K WALK
Carl Kondrach   29:43(OA-1)
Sarah Donley   36:01(OA-2)

SANTA SPRINT 1M WALK
Carl Kondrach   8:22(OA-1)
Sarah Donley   10:37(OA-3)
Blake Headen   16:34(A-3)

BEAVER COUNTY 5K
Shane Brunazzi   25:17(A-1)
Pat Calmbacher   35:25(A-3)
Deb Calmbacher   36:41(A-3)

RUN SANTA RUN 5K (OAKDALE)
Rich Sandala   25:41(A-3)
Kelley Murdock   28:29(A-3)

HO HO HUSTLE 5K
Shane Brunazzi   25:40

WCRRC "One of the areas oldest and largest running clubs"
Established 1974

(*Please check one*) New Member_____ Renewal_____

(*Please print*)

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____State_____Zip_____

Phone _____Date of Birth___/___/___ Age____ Sex_____

Email Address _____

Additional family members_____

Years Running or Walking?_____Willing to help at club events?_____

Yearly Dues: $15.00

Mail application and payment to: WCRRC
1427 Willowbrook Drive
Washington, PA 15301

All information given is for the club's records and will be kept confidential.