

# WASHINGTON COUNTY ROAD RUNNERS CLUB

ESTABLISHED 1974

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VOL. 26/ No. 5

VISIT US ON THE WEB @[WWW.WCRRRC.COM](http://WWW.WCRRRC.COM)

## NEWS AND NOTES

So far, the weather has not co-operated much with running, but let's hope that better days are ahead. With the last (hopefully) cold snap behind us, we probably will only have to contend with the rain.

We would like to welcome back four members that re-upped for this year's running season. Welcome back Carrie and Eric Perrell and Matt and Sarah Brandstetter. It's good to see you all out and about again.

Bob will have trophies to give out at a few upcoming races.

## UPCOMING RACES

The racing season is really starting to heat up once again. Listed are races we found in the Tri-State area. And remember that all club races are marked with an \*.

- 5/16 – \*Rails to Trails 5K – Barnesville, OH
- 5/16 – \*Pike Hike 5K – Claysville, PA
- 5/16 – South Fayette 5K – South Fayette HS
- 5/16 – Joggin for Frogmen – Mt. Lebanon PA
- 5/16 – Sewickley Classic 5K – Sewickley, PA
- 5/17 – Phils 5K – Uniontown, PA
- 5/23 – Memorial Day Remembrance 5K – Allison Park, PA
- 5/30 – A Run Through the Woods – Pittsburgh, PA
- 5/31 – SouthRidge Trail Race – Allison Park, PA
- 6/6 – \*Run For Alex 5 Mile – Bentleyville, PA
- 6/6 – Run For Alex 2 Mile – Bentleyville, PA

6/7 – Greenfield Glide 5K – Schenley Park Oval, PA

6/13 – PGH Melanoma 5K – South Park, PA

6/14 – Duck Dash 5K – Wellsburg, WV.

## WCRRRC AT THE RACES

The weather was actually warmer than usual for the month of April. And it also saw a few more races running during the month. Here is a recap of a few that we had some participants in.

### **Boston Trail 5K**

There was pretty good turnout for the annual Boston Trail 5K and Half Marathon. We had no members competing in the haff, but in the 5K we had Dave Dziamniski as our first male finisher in a time of 29:59. And Amy Ference was our first female finisher, coming through in 30:46.

### **Carnegie VFRB 5K**

Here was another well attended race in Carnegie. And for club members, we had Greg Mussitsch finish as our first male runner in a time of 19:20. And Roxanne Wray was our first female finisher in a good time of 26:51.

### **Stop, Drop, and Run 5K**

On a cold last weekend of the month, we had a smaller turnout for the annual race. CanonMac's Carter Hawthorn was the first overall finisher in 17:20. Kelley Murdock was our first female finisher in a time of 26:13, and Rich Sandala was close behind at 26:20.

To report Grand Prix times, call Tom Trettel (724) 229-0201 or e-mail [trettelt@comcast.net](mailto:trettelt@comcast.net). Or Grace Goffi (724-554-0081) at [gracegoffi@verizon.net](mailto:gracegoffi@verizon.net). For newsletter information or to submit an article contact Bob Pikelis e-mail [r.pikelis@comcast.net](mailto:r.pikelis@comcast.net).

## THOUGHTS I SHOULD HAVE FORGOT

*Mickey Hornack*

\* Anyone able to peel a foil wrapped chocolate Easter Egg without getting a bit of chocolate under a fingernail?

\* What beach smell hits your fancy the best? Salt air? Sunscreen? Chocolate foil Easter Egg?

\* Think of an odd number spelled out what ain't got no "e" in it.

\* Why are plastic 5lb bags of potatoes secured with this iron clip that Superman can't open?

\* As I climb the chronological ladder I discover that things I have, even tho they are new, do not work. Golf clubs being #1.

\* Ch 4 WTAE did a super job covering the Pittsburgh Marathon. They had 1 color commentator, 2 on air anchors at home base desk, 4-5 reporters who had personalities that entertained anyone who watched. Cool!

\* The Mrs. told me blueberries protect your brain against aging and cognitive decline. I put a package of blueberries in a 2 gallon Ziploc and put it over my head. Where my brain is! Geeeeez! She told me.

\* I canceled my Netflix, Disney+ & Amazon Prime. You ask why? Political ads are on!!!  
WoooHooo

\* Finally best for last, if all yinz didn't know our own Bobby "Bo" Pikelis was inducted into the Pittsburgh Marathon Hall of Fame this past weekend. That's quite an honor and I add quite deserved. Kudos Bo!

\* Opps I forgot this... will we soon see our HoF'er recognized by the American Poetry Museum to celebrate his outstanding iambic pentameter! Rock on Bobby!

\* Sorry I omitted running/walking snippets. There's plenty of good stuff elsewhere in the fishwrap!

\* 🙌❤️ U WCRRC folk.

## How to Make Running Way Easier, Starting on Your Next Run

Does running really have to feel so hard? Nope! Here's some real, practical advice for making running more fun.

Growing up, [Angela Tran](#), a New York-based public relations professional, only ran when she was forced to. In high school, she opted to play volleyball and avoided soccer because it required too much running. "Running was a punishment," she says. "If you lost a game or you didn't do well, your coach would make you do sprints or suicides. That's what I associated it with."

About a year ago, Tran was forced to reassess her relationship with running when she became interested in [Hyrox](#), a fitness competition that includes eight functional workout stations (think farmer's carries and sled pushes) interspersed with 1-kilometer runs.

"I really wanted to get into Hyrox last year, but I knew my fitness wasn't up to par," she says. She didn't want those run intervals to be slow and miserable, so she decided to take the year to build up her endurance.

Armed with a four-week training plan and a pair of fashionable but unsupportive cross-trainers, she began preparing for her [first race, a local 10K](#). Looking back, she realizes that four weeks was not enough time to prepare. "That race was *hard*," she says.

But she finished with a sense of accomplishment and a determination not only to do better at her next race but also to enjoy herself more. After all, maybe running could be more than a physical punishment.

### How to Make Running Feel Right

After a year of training, Tran is ready for her Hyrox competition this June. But her running journey won't end with those 8 kilometers; she's registered for the 2026 New York City Marathon. "My biggest goal is definitely to sub 4:30 and just being able to finish my first marathon and be able to say I'm a marathoner," she says.

Through her own trial and error, Tran found that a few things helped running feel like less of a struggle:

### Slowing Down

"I would be completely gassed after the first mile because I went all out," she says. "My chest was tight. I just didn't feel good." A coach helped her figure out her pacing, encouraging her to keep her slow runs really slow. She realized it was easier to pick up the pace later in her run than to recover from a too-aggressive start. Over time, as her fitness improved, her "easy" pace got faster.

### Proper Running Shoes

In her first pair of proper running shoes—Brooks Glycerin 22s—she felt more comfortable and supported than she did in her casual sneakers. "They have cushion and a wider toe box," Tran says. Plus, during her fitting, she realized that she needed a size bigger than what she'd been running in. "Your feet expand when you run; I didn't know that either."

### The Mind-Body Connection

"I learned that running is really mental," Tran says. She found ways to "trick" herself into running more and make the miles ahead seem less daunting. Her EDM playlist became an essential tool. "I was running 10-minute miles, so that's about three songs per mile," she says. "So I told myself, *If I get through three songs, I get to the next mile*. And then I just keep going like that."

## What Experts Say About Making Running Easier

Even if you don't have your sights set on a future marathon (yet), it's worth it to find ways to make running feel just a bit easier and more enjoyable. Because if you're having fun (or at least not hating every moment), you're more likely to be consistent. And that consistency will only feed back into your enjoyment, explains Michelle Quirk, M.D., RRCA-certified running coach and host of [Mindful Marathon Podcast](#).

"People look at runners, and they're like, 'They're crazy. They all seem to be smoking something. They're all very happy,'" she says, joking about the elusive "runner's high."

Beginners often expect to feel a sense of euphoria right away, and they're disappointed when they don't. "You have to get to some sort of consistency with it before I think you feel all of the endorphins and the joy and the passion for it," she says.

We asked Quirk and [Melissa Kendter](#), a UESCA-certified running coach, for the advice they give to new or struggling runners to make their miles more chill so they keep coming back for more. Here are some of their go-to tips:

### Stop Obsessing Over Your Pace

"The most common mistake I see in beginner and experienced runners is that everyone is running too fast for their level of fitness," Quirk says. Runners have an idea of a pace they "should" be running, or they compare their metrics to what they see online. And when they push themselves to meet those expectations, they often feel like crap.

Quirk encourages people to slow down, forget about the numbers on their watch, and tune in to their effort

level. "If I can get their effort level down, usually people are like, 'Oh, that didn't feel so bad,'" she says, noting that the "talk test," or making sure you can carry on a conversation while you run, is a good way to maintain a moderate, sustainable intensity.

### Talk Walk Breaks

Kendter finds that many beginners are under the false impression that only continuous, uninterrupted running "counts." "They think, if you're not running for a certain amount of time or a certain distance, you should just give up altogether," she says. Then, when they attempt to run back-to-back miles without adequate training, they get discouraged. Kendter encourages runners to embrace [walk/run intervals](#). For example, you can alternate one minute of walking with one minute of running, or take a one-minute walk break for every 3-5 minutes you run. Or, you can head out for a brisk walk and intermittently run between landmarks like trees or telephone poles. The point is to purposefully incorporate periods of active rest so that when you do run, you feel strong.

### Get the Right Gear

Good [running shoes](#) are non-negotiable, and investing in a few additional items may add to your overall comfort and enjoyment. "Beginners tend to overdress and become too hot," Quirk says. Learning to dress for the weather comes with experience, but it's also helpful to have a few running-specific pieces made from sweat-wicking materials designed to regulate body temperature.

Also, keep in mind that even mild dehydration can negatively impact how you feel and perform. So, if you run outside, consider buying a handheld water bottle, Quirk suggests.

### Take Notes on Your Runs

Both Quirk and Kendter recommend keeping a running journal. What you use, whether it's a running app, a basic notebook, or your calendar, doesn't matter, and you don't have to write full entries. Just a few quick notes about what you did and how you felt allows you to track your progress and spot patterns and trends. For example, you may discover that one pre-run snack is easier on your stomach than others, or that you have more energy on evening runs than morning runs.

"At the end of the week, I have people write at least one or two wins from their week of movement," Quirk says, noting that these highlights don't have to be about running (Try things like step count, yoga, meditation). This practice helps runners recognize and appreciate their bodies and what they can do.

"It shifts the thought process a little bit, because most people concentrate only on what's hurting and what is not going well," she says.

## Follow a Structured Training Plan

It may seem counterintuitive, but following a [structured training program](#) can bring a sense of freedom to your running. "I've seen how having structure gives people enjoyment by taking away the guesswork and decision fatigue," Kendter says. You don't have to figure out what to do; you just have to show up and do it. "When you finish, you feel accomplished," she says.

When choosing an initial plan, look for one that's time-based rather than mileage-based so that the work feels manageable and you don't feel pressure to run a specific distance, Kendter advises. And avoid programming that includes back-to-back runs. Ideally, beginners should have a rest day between runs.

## Sign Up for a 5K

Even if you're not sure you're quite ready, consider registering for a local 5K just to experience the support

and camaraderie of the running community. "I think that really helps with the enjoyment of running, to be in that environment and to have people being excited about this thing," Quirk says. She notes that most people, even if they can't yet run the full distance, can walk 5K. (And hey, you don't [have to](#) stay local — turn your first [race into a runcation](#).)

## Embrace the Term "Athlete"

Kendter and Quirk refer to all of their clients, regardless of their experience, as "athletes." It's a practice that often catches beginners off guard. "There are a lot of people who are like, 'I'm not an [athlete](#),'" Kendter says. But she encourages them not only to embrace the term but also to embrace what it implies: fueling and hydrating, getting adequate sleep, following a structured training plan consistently, and tracking runs.

Treating yourself like an athlete "gives you this identity with the sport you're doing, and it gets you excited to keep going and see how much you can progress," Kendter says.

## Remember: Nobody's Paying Attention

If you've ever felt self-conscious running in public or like you don't belong at the start line of a race, you're not alone. "A lot of people have those thoughts, but everybody belongs at the start line," Quirk says. As for other runners watching and judging you? They're not. "Everybody is just worried about themselves," Quirk says. "No one is worried about what other people are doing."

The From Alex With Love Foundation is a non-profit charitable foundation which awards scholarships to local high school students and provides support to families in need.

Over 300 scholarships have been awarded.

For a complete list of endeavors supported by Alex's Foundation please check our website:

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

**WHEN** June 6th, 2026

**WHERE** Bentworth High School  
150 Bearcat Dr  
Bentleyville, PA 15314

**TIME** Races start at 9:00am

**PACKET PICKUP**

Bentworth High School Parking Lot

Friday June 5th 4:30-7:30 pm

Saturday June 6th 7:00am- 8:15 am

*No race day registration*

Contact Jim Loos at:

724-747-2865 or

[jimloos@fromalexwithlove.com](mailto:jimloos@fromalexwithlove.com)

for more details

**Race Shirts Guaranteed**

**IF REGISTERED BY MAY 1st**

(Subject to Availability After May 1st)

**Awards to Top 3 overall Male  
& Female runners in each race.**

**Numerous age categories**

(See Website for Details)



**FIVE MILE  
RUN**

Moderately challenging  
course through beautiful  
countryside

**5 MILE RECORDS**

Male Brandon Gillingham

27:41 2012

Female Anna Beck

29:55 2011

**TWO MILE  
RUN**

An out and  
back run along  
part of the 5  
mile course

**2 MILE RECORDS**

Male Kevin Gregg

10:07 2012

Female Laura Mucho

11:45 2012

**ONE MILE**

**FUN RUN/WALK**

An untimed event for  
the individual who wants  
to support this wonderful  
event but does not wish  
to compete. It is ideal  
for families and is  
stroller-friendly!

**MAIL ENTRIES TO:  
From Alex With Love  
101 Ridge Road  
Eighty Four, PA 15330**

Online Registration At  
[www.FromAlexWithLove.org](http://www.FromAlexWithLove.org)  
OR [www.runsignup.com/runforalex](http://www.runsignup.com/runforalex)



Contact Jim Loos at:

724-747-2865 or

[jimloos@FromAlexWithLove.com](mailto:jimloos@FromAlexWithLove.com)

for more details

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

- No race day registration
- Must be parked by 8:30 am
- All roads closed by 8:45 am
- Roads will remain closed until course is clear of all participants. (If you must leave early, park at the bus garage)
- AWARDS will not be mailed

**21st  
Annual  
Run For Alex**

*All proceeds from the race will go to the  
From Alex With Love Foundation*

# ENTRY FORM

**ONE ENTRY PER FORM** (Copies of form may be made)

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Age as of 6/06/2026 \_\_\_\_\_ Gender  M  F

EMERGENCY Name \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

## RACE PREFERENCE

RACE TYPE (please circle one)	BY June 4th	LATE DAY June 5th
1 Mile Children 10 and under	\$10.00	\$12.00
1 Mile 11 and over	\$12.00	\$15.00
2 Mile Run	\$18.00	\$20.00
5 Mile Run	\$20.00	\$25.00

## SHIRT SIZE

(please circle one)

Youth	S	M	L	<b>2XL or 3XL</b>
Womens Cut	S	M	L	<b>\$2.00 Extra</b>
Unisex	S	M	L	XL 2XL 3XL

Mail Entries to:

From Alex With Love  
101 Ridge Road  
Eighty Four, PA 15330

Makes checks payable to From Alex With Love

You must sign waiver to participate

### Waiver and Release

(If under 18 have a parent or legal guardian sign this release)

In consideration of acceptance of this entry, I the undersigned, intending to be legally bound hereby, for myself, my heirs, executors, and administrators, waive and release any and all rights and claims for damages I may have against the Bentleyville Borough, Somerset Twp From Alex With Love Foundation, and any other sponsors and their representatives, successors, and assigns, for any and all claims or liabilities of any kind arising out of my participation in this event, even though that liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of the person named in this waiver. I agree to abide by any decisions of a race official relative to my ability to safely participate. I assume all risks associated with participating in the 1 Mile, 2 Mile or 5 Mile challenge, including, not limited to, falls and contact with such risks being known and appreciated by me. I attest and verify that I will participate in this event as a race entrant, that I am physically fit and sufficiently trained for the competition of this event, and that my physical condition has been verified by a licensed medical doctor. Further, I hereby grant full permission to any and all of the aforementioned parties to use my name, likeness, and voice as well as my photographs, videotape, motion pictures, recording or any other record of this event in which I may appear for any legitimate purpose in advertising and promotion for such broadcast and reuse.

X \_\_\_\_\_

From Alex With Love  
101 Ridge Road  
Eighty Four, PA 15330



# Run For Alex

## June 6th 2026

Bentleyville, PA

5 mile run

2 mile run

1 mile fun walk

and

Kids fun dash

## 2026 GRAND PRIX BEGINS

The 2026 Grand Prix has begun!! Once again, members can compete in the regular GP, the walk GP, and the Long Distance GP. Times can be submitted to the club website or provided directly to GP wizard Grace Goffi. Times need to be submitted in a timely manner.

### 2026 GRAND PRIX

1.	Ann McCormick	1	32:18
2.	Mike Romzy	1	39:34
3.	Bob Pikelis	2	41:52
4.	Rich Sandala	3	42:46
5.	Kelley Murdock	1	44:53
6.	David Dziamniski	1	45:40
7.	Carrie Perrell	2	45:42
8.	Gary Lorenzi	1	46:38
9.	Steve Chabala	1	50:22
10.	George Dziamniski	1	50:29
11.	Sarah Donley	1	51:35
12.	Gary Chabala	1	52:20
13.	Kathy Starkey	1	52:49
14.	David Bess	1	52:49

### 2026 GP WALK

1.	Sister Kevin Berdis	1	46:00
2.	Bill McCormick	1	58:46
3.	Blake Headen	1	1:39:23

## 2026 LONG DISTANCE GP

1.	Mike Romzy	2	40:24
2.	Steve Chabala	1	48:01
3.	Kelley Murdock	2	51:00
4.	John Titus	2	52:11

## RUNNING SHORTS

- The London Marathon is in talks to make the race a 2-day event accommodating 100,000 runners with a separate men/women's race on separate days.
- The Boston Marathon used 6 start waves instead of 4 to improve the start efficiency.
- A 10-year study in JAMA found that post-marathon heart changes are temporary and don't translate into progressive dysfunction.
- The New York City Marathon was the country's largest race in 2025 with over 65,000 finishers.
- People who drink 2-3 cups of coffee daily have a lower risk of dementia.
- The 2026 Barkley Marathon ended with no finishers for the second straight year.
- Ethan Shuley ran a 2:07:14 in Osaka, becoming the 6<sup>th</sup> fastest American ever.

## WCRRRC AT THE RACES

### BUNNY HOP 5K(PA)

Shane Brunazzi 28:06(A-1)  
Gary Lorenzi 31:13(A-1)

### BUNNY HOP 5K(OH)

Carl Kondrach 26:10  
Blake Headen 1:12:28(W)

### BAND ON THE RUN 5K

Rich Sandala 25:19(A-1)  
Shane Brunazzi 26:37(A-3)  
Dave Dziamniski 28:40(A-2)  
Amy Ference 29:21(A-2)  
Gary Lorenzi 29:56  
George Dziamniski 31:19

### MARTHA'S 10K

Mike Romzy 48:39(A-1)

### DYNGUS DASH 5K WALK

Blake Headen 59:41

### ALBUQUERQUE 13.1M

Kelley Murdock 2:10:02

### COAST GUARD 26.3M

Sarah Donley 4:22:02  
Carl Kondrach 5:28:38(W)

### FOOD TRUCK 5K

Ann McCormick 28:34(A-2)  
Bill McCormick 51:21(W)

### BOSTON TRAIL 5K

Dave Dziamniski 29:59(A-2)  
Gary Lorenzi 30:37(A-3)  
Amy Ference 30:46(A-1)  
George Dziamniski 32:26

### CARNEGIE 5K

Greg Mussitsch 19:17(A-1)  
Mike Romzy 21:17(A-2)  
Rich Sandala 24:28  
Roxanne Wray 26:51

### RUN YOUR MOUTH 5K WALK

Blake Headen 48:11(OA-1)

### WARRIOR 5K

Blake Headen 50:40(OA-1)

### CASA 5K

Kelley Murdock 26:56(OA-3)

### AUTISM 5K WALK

Carl Kondrach 30:21(OA-1)  
Blake Headen 58:05

### DRAFT DAY 5K

Rich Sandala 25:47

### STOP, DROP, AND RUN 5K

Kelley Murdock 26:13(A-3)  
Rich Sandala 26:20(A-2)  
Bob Pikelis 27:52(A-3)  
Ann McCormick 28:03(A-1)  
Carrie Perrell 33:06(A-2)  
Bill McCormick 42:14(W)

### PITTSBURGH MARATHON 5K

Rich Sandala 25:11

### DONORA 5K

Gary Lorenzi 29:22(A-3)

### THE WAY 5K

Naomi Brandstetter 25:53(A-10)  
Levi Brandstetter 29:09  
David Bess 33:00(A-1)  
Kathy Starkey 38:02(A-1)

### RUN FOR JUSTICE 5K WALK

Carl Kondrach 33:42(OA-1)  
Blake Headen 53:06

### PITTSBURGH MARATHON 13.1M

Mike Romzy 1:59:44  
Tom Carter 2:46:14

\*\*\*\*Congrats to our own Bob Pikelis for his selection as one of four new members of the Pittsburgh Marathon Hall of Fame. Bob was selected for his longtime support of running in Western PA. As we all can attest, no one is more deserving. **BIG CONGRATS, BOB!!!!**

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.

Washington County Road Runners Club  
1427 Willowbrook Drive  
Washington, PA 15301

