

WASHINGTON COUNTY ROAD RUNNERS CLUB

ESTABLISHED 1974

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VISIT US ON THE WEB @WWW.WCRRRC.COM

NEWS AND NOTES

July is now upon us, and the heat is cranking up, not only in the weather, but also in the Grand Prix. There are quite a few racers competing for the top spots in all three categories, and it looks like we will have a very successful end run. Keep those times coming in and watch to make sure that your races have been counted. Any questions, contact Tom or Grace.

We would like to welcome another new member to the WCRRC. John Flower from Washington, PA just joined us. John is looking forward to racing with us, and he also asked a question to see if anyone would be interested in competing in the Senior Games at the end of July.

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 *.

7/18 – *Bridgeville Boro 5K – Bridgeville, PA
7/25 – *Rain Day 5K – Waynesburg, PA
7/25 – Turtle Trot 5K – Turtle Creek, PA
7/25 – Summer Slay 5K – Oakdale, PA
7/25 – Killian's 5K – Allison Park, PA
7/26 – Sewickley Sundae 5K – Sewickley, PA
7/29 – Betty Zane 5K – Martins Ferry, OH
8/1 – Howl At the Moon Night 5K – Beaver, PA
8/1 – St Barnabus 5K – Gibsonia, PA
8/1 – Two Face 10K – Wexford, PA
8/7 – Passavant Hospital 5K – Allison Park, PA

8/8 – *Brookline Breeze 5K -Brookline, PA
8/8 – North Borough 5K – Pittsburgh, PA
8/12 – Courtney's Ice Cream Run – Grove City, PA
8/15 – *Corny 5K – Claysville, PA
8/15 – Historic Hill 5K – Pittsburgh, PA

WCRRRC AT THE RACES

June saw a few more races run, and more club members came out to take advantage of the Grand Prix races. Here are a few recaps of the races.

Run For Alex 5M/2M

It was a little toasty for the annual running of the Run For Alex race. For the 5Mile event, John Mihalek was the overall winner in a fast time of 28:16. Our first overall male finisher was Greg Mussitsch, who came through at 36:02, and our first female finisher was Jaminique Milliren, crossing the line in 41:43.

In the 2-mile event, we had Hoyt Rodenbaugh coming through in first place with a time of 11:28. The WCRRC first overall male finisher was Rich Sandala in 16:42, and our first female finisher was Kelley Murdock, just slightly behind Rich in a time of 16:52.

Peters TWP XC 5K

We only had one finisher in the trail race. Colton Silvestri was the overall winner in a time of 15:32. Our only finisher was Steve Chabala, who came through in a time of 23:05.

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

Thinkables

Mickey Hornack

- * Scientists say if you don't dream then you have a personality disorder! But I dreamt I had a personality disorder.
- * Whiskey Rebellion race was always a fav, luv the subtle hills (all of them), streets lined with folks yelling come on pick it up and the finish on the track (finally a flat place) hope everyone enjoyed it. Fun one.
- * I asked the Mrs. what I should give my favorite dentist? Her reply "a little plaque!"
- * World running day (walking? Too) was June 5. Mark it for next year. Celebrate appropriately!
- * Walking sideways burns about 78% more calories than walking forward. Go ahead and walk sideways thru your neighborhood for a mile or two. Excluding Bálakè where Abby-Normal is expected!
- * One more walking thing: a 15 min walk can curb chocolate and sugar cravings. Well, I'm now limiting walks to 14 min.
- * My friend has the correct philosophy on racing saying: the sooner I fall behind the more time I'll have to catch up! Gotta think about that one
- * Eat N Park Smiley cookies rock, however the packaging is "open" proof. When opening it everybody in the house knows you're in the cookie jar, the plastic tabs seem like super glued shut, you gotta start thinkin' "I'm in, better go for 2"
- * if your absence doesn't affect them--your presence never mattered.
- * Just read all these things can damage your body: skipping breakfast, too much sugar, not drinking water, stress, fried foods ok enough--certainly was a crisp awakening for me!!!

  U to all WCRRC

6 Core Strength Exercises Every Runner Should Do Regularly

• Ashley Arnold

Raise your hand if you ever feel low back pain after running. How about nausea? Side stitches? Even hip flexor tightness?

While there are certainly reasons you could be feeling these things post-run, a weak core might be a major contributor to each. That's because your core is key to keeping you upright, supporting your breathing, maintaining your arm swing and, overall, ensuring that you're able to move smoothly and efficiently through your stride for the entire distance of a run or race.

If you're chasing a PR, a strong core will probably make you a faster runner, too. [This study](#) from 2009 showed that after just six weeks of core strengthening, runners who performed regular core work recorded faster 5K times than those who maintained their regularly scheduled training with no additional core work.

And, while this is certainly my personal hypothesis, experience gives me reason to believe that a strong core might also decrease recovery time since it means your middle shares some of the load your body experiences with each step. And a shared load means your body's collaborating like a high-functioning team to make each step happen which, in theory, leads me to believe that you might experience less soreness (and faster recovery) overall when your core shows up on time to the party.

[This study](#) from 2019 discovered that a functional strength routine, including core work, increased running economy, improved runners ability to move symmetrically and increased their speed at the 5K distance.

Have I convinced you yet that you need to be doing core strength work? If so, read on to learn my favorite six core strength exercises you need to do twice per week to be an all

around stronger, more resilient, balanced, and faster runner.

Plank on an Unstable Surface

While plain ol' planks are certainly a valuable exercise, adding in the variable of instability by placing your feet on something like the flat side of a [BOSU ball](#) or [wobble board](#) makes this tried-and-true exercise my number one favorite core strength exercise for runners.

Why? Well, a few reasons:

First, placing your feet on an unstable surface means you need to activate your deep core that helps support your spine and pelvis. Second, the balancing improves your proprioception so you're better connected with your body, which helps you to better connect with your body when you're running in order to react quickly to any missteps or obstacles and maintain solid, coordinated form.

And, finally, similar to running, your core has to stabilize as a reaction to the microshifts you're experiencing from your legs—similar to the micromovements that happen in your body when you run over varying surfaces (which can happen in both road and trail running).

Here's how to do it:

1. Place your BOSU or wobble board on the floor near where your feet will be in your plank.
2. Get into a high plank position (beside your unstable surface) with your palms open and pushing into the floor, your feet about hip distance apart.
3. Step over to your BOSU or wobble board (while maintaining your plank position), and ensure that your body is straight from your shoulders to your heels (no sagging hips, please).
4. From here, you can either maintain the high plank position or come down to your elbows (play around with what feels best to you).

5. Hold the plank for 25 to 60 seconds (if you're new to planks, start on the shorter side).
6. Repeat four to six times with 30 to 60 seconds of rest between each.

Dead Bug

It's another deep-core stabilizer, but also important for running coordination because it requires opposite arm and leg extensions that mimic how you move your body when running. The dead bug exercise teaches you how to maintain a neutral spine and engaged core while you move your arms and legs so that we develop better posture for running.

Here's how you do it:

1. Lie on your back with your hips, low back and shoulders all flat against the floor with your legs and arms straight up in the air (like ... a dead bug).
2. From the starting position, lower your opposite arm and opposite leg away from each other. Your arm should go over your head and your leg should go out and down toward the ground. Note: only go as low as you can go while your low back maintains contact with the floor. Alternate sides.
3. Return your arm and leg to the starting position, take a breath and move on to the other side.
4. Perform two to three sets with 10 to 15 reps per side. Rest for 60 seconds between sets.

Bird Dog

Bird dog is one of my favorite core strength exercises because it feels like a fun game (my toddler loves attempting this one) and it doesn't seem all that challenging on the surface—but I see postural improvements right away when I perform this exercise regularly. And that's because you're pushing into the ground on all fours and working on maintaining a neutral spine (which helps to prevent trunk rotation when running).

And if you're over there thinking that you're just doing another version of the same thing if you've just completed your reps of dead bug, incorporating bird dog into your weekly core routine is actually making your workout even better! Here's why.

Dead bug is all about maintaining a stable core while your arms and legs move mid-stride and bird dog is all about core stability when you land and take off since you're working against gravity (on all fours).

Here's how to do it:

1. Get into all fours with your palms and knees pressing into the floor, your spine neutral.
2. Extend an opposite arm and leg out (horizontal to the ground) while keeping your spine neutral and your shoulders and hips square to the floor.
3. Hold the extended position for three to 6 seconds.
4. Return to your neutral all-fours position, take a breath and move on to the other side.
5. Perform two to three sets with 10 to 15 reps per side. Rest for 60 seconds between sets

Glute Bridge with March

Doing a running-focused core strength routine without glute bridges would be incomplete. Your lower abs, glutes and hamstrings shine with this exercise, and your hip mobility and pelvis stability increases. It's a win-win for improving your running form, your power and reducing injury.

The added element of the march ensures that the strength and stability gained in the exercise translate to running.

Here's how you do it:

1. Lie on your back with your hands at your sides, knees bent and your feet resting on the floor, hip distance apart.

2. Slowly and with control, lift your hips while engaging your core and pressing into your heels (imagine drawing your heels back and toward your shoulders).
3. Continue to lift your hips till your body forms a straight line from your shoulders to your knees (a mirror can be a helpful tool here).
4. While maintaining this stable, straight line (don't drop your hips), lift one knee toward your chest, then lower it back down.
5. Repeat on the other side without coming down from the bridge position.
6. If you can, maintain the bridge and alternate marches; alternatively, come down from the bridge between each rep, reset and start again.
7. Be sure to rest for at least a minute between sets.
8. Perform two to three sets with 10 to 15 marches per leg. Rest for up to 90 seconds between sets.

Side Planks

Side planks target your lower back, obliques and lateral chain—including the glute medius (basically the top of your hip)—and help to build balanced strength that will improve your running posture and protect you against injury.

What's more, side planks are a fun exercise you can easily scale/modify (from your knees, lifting a leg, etc

Here's how to do them:

1. Lie on your side and place your forearm on the ground.
2. Engage your core and stack your feet vertically on top of each other.
3. Lift your body, ensuring you maintain a straight line from your shoulders down to your feet (no sagging in the hips).
4. Hold for 20 to 60 seconds and then slowly lower down.
5. Repeat three to six times per side with 60 seconds of rest after completing one round (a round consists of a left and right side plank).

6. Added challenges: Hold your weight in your hand vs. your elbow, raise your leg, perform upper body twists

Deep Belly Breathing

Yes, your diaphragm can be considered part of your core—a very important part at that! A strong diaphragm helps to prevent the dreaded side-stitches new runners often feel, helps you to breath more efficiently and supports overall core engagement and posture.

Plus, after all the hard work you just did by completing the last five exercises, it's nice to just lie down on the floor and focus on your breath. So, use deep belly breathing as your opportunity to slow down, rest and tune into your body while knowing you're doing important work to improve your breathing while running.

Here's how to do it:

1. Lie down on the ground with one hand on your abdomen and one hand on your chest.
2. Close your eyes, relax and draw in a deep breath through your nose, focusing on expanding your belly as you do. Be mindful that your chest doesn't move—it's called belly breathing for a reason!
3. Exhale through your mouth slowly. Relieve extra tension by letting out a noticeable sigh.
4. Repeat.
5. Set your timer for three to five minutes (we think six is the ideal number) and don't focus on the number of breaths, just relax and deep belly breathe until your timing chimes.

OK, now that you know how to do each of these six exercises, my challenge to you is this: start this simple routine in the six minutes you have following reading this article. Repeat it twice per week for the next month. And pay attention to how your body feels.

WE'RE BACK!

RAIN DAY

5K RUN WALK

JULY 25, 2026



Registration 8:30am
Kids Mile 9:00am
5K Run/Walk 9:30am

Race proceeds support
Cross Country programs
in Greene County



Scan
to
register

595 East High Street
Waynesburg, Pa 15370

Registration \$30
Kids 1 mile \$10



The Cory 5K & 1 Mile Run/Walk will be on August 15, 2026 on the Claysville National Pike Trail. All proceeds will go to First Lutheran Church to help restore our 100 year old building.

All participants who register by August 1st are guaranteed to receive a commemorative race T-Shirt and Swag bag! Participants who register after August 1st will receive a shirt if still available so be sure to register early. For members of Washington Road Runners Club, we have a discount code for \$5 off of current rates; use code WRRC5.

Date: August 15, 2026

5K Race Time: 8:30am (\$25 until May 18, then \$30)

1 Mile Run/Walk Time: 8:35am (\$20 until May 18, then \$25)

Online Registration is also available at:

<https://runsignup.com/Race/PA/Claysville/CoryK>

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Gender: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

EVENT: ____ 5k ____ 1 mile T-Shirt Size: _____

Emergency Contact Name & Phone Number: _____

By signing below completing this form and participating in this event, I agree (or agree on behalf of my child) to all race policies. The policies may be found at: <https://runsignup.com/Race/CoryK/Page/policies>.

Send completed form and payment to: First Lutheran Church, 92 W. Walnut St., Washington, PA 15301.

2026 GRAND PRIX BEGINS

The 2026 Grand Prix is in full swing. The current standings are listed on this page.

****If you ran/walk a 4th of July race that we did not get, make sure to let Grace know or submit to the website

2026 GRAND PRIX(7-4-26)

1. Ann McCormick	4	33:13
2. Cathy Loos	1	33:52
3. Mike Romzy	2	37:28
4. Greg Mussitsch	3	38:44
5. Amy Ference	2	39:19
6. Rich Sandala	6	41:01
7. Bob Pikelis	4	41:28
8. Jaminique Milliren	3	41:37
9. Dave Dziarniski	2	44:34
10. John Flower	1	44:40
11. Kathy Starkey	4	45:14
12. Carrie Perrill	4	45:53
13. Kelley Murdock	2	46:48
14. Steve Chabala	4	47:42
15. Gary Lorenzi	3	48:08
16. Stush Sadowski	1	48:50
17. Tom Carter	1	49:50
18. George Dziarniski	4	50:08
19. Shane Brunazzi	2	50:19
20. Nathan Milliren	1	50:22
21. Sarah Donley	1	51:35
22. Roxanne Wray	2	51:44
23. Gary Chabala	1	52:20
24. George Dziarniski	2	52:49
25. Mary Krett	1	59:45

2026 GP WALK(7-4-26)

1. Sister Kevin Berdis	2	44:17
2. Dave Dziarniski	1	54:10
3. Carl Kondrach	2	57:57
4. Kelley Murdock	1	1:01:29
5. Sarah Donley	3	1:02:47
6. Bill McCormick	4	1:07:20
7. Blake Headen	3	1:30:24

2026 LONG DISTANCE GP(7-4-26)

1. Mike Romzy	2	40:24
2. Steve Chabala	1	48:01
3. Kelley Murdock	2	51:00
4. John Titus	2	52:11
5. Matt Brandstetter	1	52:38
6. Sarah Brandstetter	1	1:01:51

E. WETZEL JULY 4 5K WALK

Blake Headen 59:15(OA-2)

ELLWOOD CITY 10K

Shane Brunazzi 58:54

OGLEBAY FIRECRACKER 5K WALK

Kelley Murdock 40:27

RUNNING SHORTS

- A study in the European Heart Journal; found always salting food increased risk of premature death by 28%.
- 90% of Americans exceeded the daily limit for sodium each day.
- Over 240,000 applicants applied for the 2026 New York Marathon.

WCRRRC AT THE RACES

RUN TO BREATHE 5K

Shane Brunazzi 29:38(A-3)
Dave Byers 46:15

MELANOMA 5K

Mike Romzy 22:33(A-1)
Dave Dziemnicki 29:05(A-1)
Amy Ferenced 29:37(A-1)
George Dziemnicki 29:55
Gary Lorenzi 30:01(A-3)

TWILIGHT 5K

Carl Kondrach 27:10
Sarah Donley 27:26

DUCK DASH 5K

Kelley Murdock 26:32(A-1)
Shane Brunazzi 30:52(A-2)
Ashlyn Brunazzi 43:21(A-3)

DUCK DASH 5K WALK

Carl Kondrach 29:16(OA-1)
Sarah Donley 39:46(OA-2)
Blake Headen 52:05(A-2)

SUMMER SOLSTICE 5K(FLA)

Tom Carter 31:21(A-1)

CURE SARCOMA 5K

Dave Dziemnicki 29:07(A-2)

PET TWP 5K C-C

Steve Chabala 23:05

RUN LIKE AN ANIMAL 5K

Shane Brunazzi 29:41
Ashlyn Brunazzi 36:13

DINO DASH 5K

Shane Brunazzi 29:27(A-3)

OMELET RUN 5K WALK

Kelley Murdock 36:53(A-1)

WELLSBURG 5K WALK

Blake Headen 54:43

GLOW RUN 5K

Kelley Murdock 28:00

RUNNING WITH RYAN 5K

Jaminique Milliren 23:13(A-2)
Rich Sandala 24:45(A-1)
Cathy Loos 27:05(A-1)
Shane Brunazzi 27:35
Ann McCormick 28:09(A-2)
Amy Ference 30:12(A-3)
George Dziemnicki 31:03(A-3)
Gary Lorenzi 31:28

RUNNING WITH RYAN 5K WALK

Sarah Donley 35:28(OA-1)
Carl Kondrach 35:29(OA-1)
Kelley Murdock 35:55(OA-2)
Dave Dziemnicki 36:00(OA-2)
Sister Kevin Berdis 45:05(A-2)
Bill McCormick 51:33

WHISKEY REBELLION 5K

Rich Sandala 25:28(A-2)
Ann McCormick 29:04(A-1)
Roxanne Wray 29:32
Bob Pikelis 29:39(A-3)
John Flower 29:41(A-4)
Tom Carter 32:43
Kathy Starkey 33:25(A-2)
Carrie Perrell 33:38

WHISKEY REBELLION 5K WALK

Bill McCormick 50:47

BRENTWOOD FIRECRACKER5K

Mike Romzy 21:54(A-1)
Greg Mussitsch 28:10
Dave Dziemnicki 28:53(A-3)
George Dziemnicki 29:56

FREEDOM 5K

Jaminique Milliren 23:04(M-1)
Nathan Milliren 26:36

FREEDOM 5K WALK

Carl Kondrach 30:19(OA-1)
Sarah Donley 36:10(OA-1)
Sydni Kondrach 43:47(A-1)

THOMAS WITT FIRECRACKER 5K

Steve Chabala 26:23(A-2)

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.

