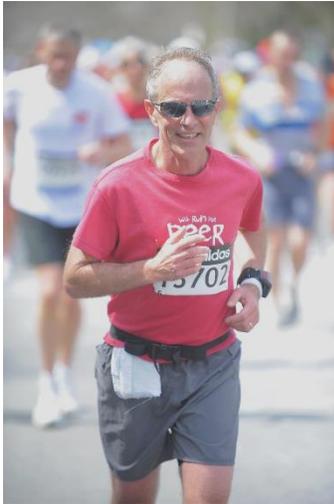


President's Message by Lou King, November 28, 2015



Wow – we had a very successful General Membership Meeting on October 28 at the Delaplaine. 97 people showed up to watch the movies, reminisce about the Steeplechasers over the last 40 years (yes, we were incorporated November 14, 1975), and learn a little bit about club operation and the volunteers who make the club work like a well-oiled machine. Big thanks to **Javier Montenegro** for pulling this together. Next year we're thinking about renting a popcorn machine!

Speaking of the Delaplaine – mark your calendars. The annual running celebration and awards ceremony will be Saturday January 30. This year will be a little different – due to liquor liability insurance reasons this will be a BYOB event. Because the club will not be furnishing the alcohol, we will not need to purchase the (very expensive!) liability insurance. This will help us to keep the event affordable for everyone. Stay tuned for

more details coming from our Social Committee co-chairs **Ruth Taylor** and **Art Gregory**.

Market Street Mile had a banner year. Over \$8800 was earmarked for the Lincoln Panther Running Club Program at Lincoln Elementary School. \$7400 of the Panther fund was used to help pay for the new track around the LES practice field. **Anne Light**, MSM Race Director and head of the Lincoln Panther Running Club program is doing a great job!

Our last race of the year, the Rick O'Donnell 5.22 Mile Trail Race and Ultra-Challenge, was another great success. This race, ably led by race directors **Crista Horn** and **Kerry Shepherd**, was a sell-out in 2015 with over 200 runners registered. Net proceeds of over \$5000 were donated to the Cholangiocarcinoma Foundation in Rick's name. Next year we hope to convince Greenbrier State Park to increase the size of the field to 300, relying on our established record of low impact on the trails and the park.

Our three signature races (Women's Distance Festival, Market Street Mile, Rick's Run) netted \$28,269 for charity this year. Wow!

But wait, there's more! **David Levine** saw a need and has proposed a new signature race. This race is proposed for the evening of June 18, and will be called the Frederick Summer Solstice Twilight 8K. David is going through the process with the city: getting permits, etc., so this isn't yet a done deal, but I have high hopes he'll be able to pull it off. This race will benefit the Frederick chapter of Blessings in a Backpack. See <http://blessingsinabackpack.org/> for more information about this great cause.

You probably don't realize how much **Luanne Houck** has been doing for the club because a lot of it is behind the scenes, but for the last several years she has been the Membership Chair, Volunteer Appreciation Chair, Communications Chair and has been helping **Mark Lawrence's** Race Support team by providing a premium promotion service. Happily, we will be giving her some additional free time (she says now she'll have time to run!), because **Kerry McHugh** and **Nikki Martin** have agreed to co-chair the Membership Committee, and **Lori Mensh** has agreed to chair the Volunteer Appreciation Committee.

Thanks to our new volunteers, and thanks to Luanne for having been the glue which holds this club together!

Did someone say Membership and Volunteer Appreciation? At the time of this writing we have 744 members, of whom 177 volunteered at least once this year (24%). Do you know why we get such a good volunteer turnout – because it's fun! If you haven't volunteered yet, please keep an eye on the Facebook group or periodic mailings "News from the Steeplechasers" for volunteer opportunities.

Volunteers? 21 of you braved a chilly morning at Lock 34 of the C&O Canal to support the amazing runners of the JFK50 Miler. At the Steeplechasers Mile 19 aid station, the runners enjoyed some music, peanut butter and jelly, homemade cookies and a host of other treats. Thanks to all who gave their morning for this.

If you are reading this message in the *Intervals* newsletter (and even if you're not), you should know that we have a new newsletter editor. **Malcolm Senior** has done a great job in this role for many years, but due to a new job has decided to pass the torch. **Julie Harris** immediately volunteered to take his place – thanks Malcolm, and thanks Julie!

For the Racing Team, applications for calendar year 2016 will be opening up Dec 1 and will run through the end of the month – go to <http://steeplechasers.org/competition/racing-team/> for more details. The last team event was Rockville 10k/5k – five of our members ran, all placing or winning their age groups. The team has run in a wide variety of races this fall – to list a few: NYC Marathon, Freedom's Run, Across the Bay 10k, Rockville 10k/5k, and Parks Half (there are many more as someone races every weekend).

The Marathon Training, Half Marathon Training, and Introduction to Trail programs in the fall are complete. There was a lot of positive feedback from participants. Marathon group leaders **Billy Clem** and **Jan Harris** felt like the RRCA Coach Certification training was beneficial, and they'll be able to apply the principles they learned even more in the Spring. We are looking at adding an additional program for shorter distances, so keep an eye on Facebook and your emails for more information.

Hey, you ultra runners – in the coming year there will be a new ultra series, the MD Grand Ultra Series. Awards will be based on participation, not speed. The first race of the series will be in February with the Mid-Maryland 50K. We will pass on more information about the series as soon as all the races are identified.

Did you just join the club this year? New members should watch Facebook and club emails for opportunities to meet other members. These are also posted to the website events calendar. **Jan Harris** sets up our monthly happy hours and **Karen Ochs** will be starting up the breakfast runs soon. Breakfast runs are most Saturdays through the winter -- the host provides running routes of usually 3, 6, 9 miles, and the guests bring some food to share for after the run. These are great opportunities to get to know the other members.

Well, that's all for now – I hope to see you around town soon.

Lou King
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