

# Opening Remarks

Hi. For those of you who have not met me, I am Lou King, lucky to be President of this wonderful organization.

I hope you all enjoyed the extra time at home we all had last weekend. If you were like me, you were getting chores done around the house and eating too much. Oh, maybe a bit of shoveling as well.

The Annual Running Celebration is one of two general membership meetings we have every year. As such, I am formally calling this meeting to order.

2015 was a wonderful year for the Steeplechasers:

- We celebrated our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Yes, the Frederick Steeplechasers Running Club was incorporated in November, 1975. Wow!
- We now have five RRCA certified coaches leading our training programs from 5K through marathon distances. We had over 475 registrants for these programs. Thanks to **Roseann Abdu, Billy Clem, Nicole Davis, Jan Harris** and **Luanne Houck** for leading these.
- We established a racing team, giving some of our faster runners a vehicle to compete together in local races. Thanks to **Sage Norton** for pulling this together.
- We had a very well attended general membership meeting, during which we saw some movie shorts about trail running, discussed club operations and reminisced about the last 40 years. Thanks to **Javier Montenegro** for organizing, and to **Mike O'Grady** and **Tim O'Keefe** for speaking.
- We manned the JFK mile 19 aid station which won 2<sup>nd</sup> place aid station for the race. Thanks to **Paul Christiansen** for organizing this.
- We had a break-out year in the decathlon, with 176 runners participating 656 finishes – thanks to **Tim O'Keefe** again
- We had 370 members participate in the grand prix, with 942 finishes – **Chad Ahalt** and **Cassy Crouse** organized the series and **Jenny Hallberg** did all the scoring.
- Volunteerism reached a high of 178 members who volunteered for at least one event. The organizers for this are many but **Mark Lawrence** stands out

for pulling together a huge majority of the finish line services we provided this year to 28 local charity races.

- We closed the year with over 780 members, an all-time high, 150 more than we had last year.
- Our three signature races (Market Street Mile, Women's Distance Festival, Rick's Run) netted over \$28,000 for charity this year. Thanks to **Anne Light**, **Harriet Langlois** and **Crista Horn/Kerry Shepherd** for directing these races.

Some news for next year:

- RRCA Maryland has a new ultra series, with awards based on participation in multiple races
- We have a new signature race, the Summer Solstice Twilight 8K, in June – **David Levine** is the director and more information will be coming out soon
- We had some new volunteers step into key positions:
  - **Kerry Hughes** and **Nikki Martin** – membership
  - **Lori Mensh** – volunteer appreciation
  - **Julie Harris** – newsletter
  - **Lisa Stern** – public relations
  - **Sage Norton** and **Shannon Matthews** – competition
  - **Katelin Peropat** and **Chris VanSant** – racing team

I mention the names of a few of the people who are so devoted to the club, but the list is actually quite long. Some of the others are mentioned in the program, and the full list is on the web site. If I didn't mention your name, be assured all the work you do is much appreciated. This club would not be as great as it is without you.

Anyway, I don't want to rattle on too long. Onward to the awards!

# Closing Remarks

Thanks to **Ruth Taylor** and **Art Gregory** for organizing this wonderful banquet.

Thanks to **Julie Harris** for producing the program and to **Joanne Hawelka** for the major award signs.

Thanks to **Brenda Jacobs** and **Meaghan Vance** for producing the Brag Corner placard, and if you haven't seen it yet, please take a look by where check in was.

Thanks to **Harriet Langlois** for the decorations, and again to **Harriet Langlois**, **Nicole Davis** and **Mark Norton** for all those wonderful desserts.

Thanks to **Cassy Crouse**, **Chad Ahalt** and **Tim O'Keefe** for pulling together all the awards this evening.

And thanks again to all the volunteers, who give you so much of your time and energy to make the club great.

Thanks to all of you for coming out tonight for our Annual Running Celebration.

We are not kicking you out – please feel free to catch up with your friends.

*Lou King, President – January 30, 2016*