

## President's Message by Lou King, September 15, 2016



As always, the club has a lot going on. Please take the time to thank the volunteers who make it all happen. As I write this we have completed three of our signature races, and are about to have the fourth.

First was our new Summer Solstice Twilight 8K, led by race director **David Levine**, which was held June 18. By all accounts this race was successful – the runners liked the evening start and the course as well, and the race netted \$19,428 which was given to Blessings in a Backpack. Blessings in a Backpack will use this money to feed 190 kids from Waverly ES on weekends for the entire school year! It was a hot and humid evening, but we had 269 finishers in this inaugural year, 87 of whom were Steeplechasers.

Then we had the Women's Distance Festival 5K (and 1K fun run), race director **Harriet Langlois**, which was held August 13. This was run on a new course this year to avoid the dreaded double loop around FCC. This race netted \$14,795

which was given to the Women's Giving Circle of Frederick County. Women's Giving Circle uses this money to enable and empower women in challenging situations to improve the quality of their lives and the lives of those for whom they are responsible. Another hot day, the 5K had 410 finishers (113 Steeplechasers) and by all accounts the new course was fabulous!

The Market Street Mile, race director **Anne Light**, was held on September 10. Market Street Mile has been the traditional kick-off for Celebrate Frederick's In the Street festival for 33 years now! Proceeds for this race benefit the Lincoln Elementary School free after school Panther Running Club program. This program encourages children in grades 2-5 to develop a healthy lifestyle through exercise and nutrition. MSM had 173 finishers for the timed events (52 Steeps), and we're still counting the number of family participants we had. Thankfully, it was cooler for this race, but not raining and cold like the year before. Ooo, ooo – there was a new course record for Women – 4:48 by Rachel Schneider – holy moly!

And finally the Rick O'Donnell 5.22 Mile Trail Run and Ultra Challenge, led by the committee of **Crista Horn, Bill Susa, Mike O'Grady** and **Kerry Shepherd**, will be held September 18. This race will benefit the new FSRC Memorial Scholarship, to be given to Frederick-area high school seniors who have made a difference in the running community. See <http://steeplechasers.org/about/fsrc-memorial-scholarship/> for more details. This race has 5.22 mile loops around Greenbrier State Park – the first loop counts as the grand prix race, but runners can run as many loops as they want in 8 hours.

We have now completed 12 of the 2016 grand prix events, with a total of 395 participants. Speaking of competition, our competition committee chairs **Sage Norton** and **Shannon Matthews** are looking at a new competitive series, this one made up of local 5K races. Watch for the email blasts, Facebook and the web page for an announcement about this, coming before the end of the year.

While we are talking about statistics (one of my favorite subjects), I'll mention that as of Sept 15, the club has 818 members, which is 105 more than last year on this date, and more than we have ever had. I think most of the credit for our exploding growth goes to people like **Luanne Houck**, with the great job she's been doing with

club communication, especially the Facebook group, and **Luanne Houck, Billy Clem** and **Jan Harris** for managing the great training programs over the last several years, and **Mark Lawrence** and **Tim O'Keefe** for making our low key races and decathlon series so much fun. There are so many other volunteers included in our "team of helpers" that really are the core of "the club".

If you didn't go to the picnic you missed a great event. There was some wonderful food brought by the participants, which supplemented the hot dogs, hamburgers and beverages (adult and otherwise) provided by the club. Thanks to **Art Gregory** and **Ruth Taylor** for pulling this together. **Tim O'Keefe** gave out the decathlon awards there, so that the winners would get their awards close to the end of the series. See <http://steeplechasers.org/about/hall-of-fame/award-winners-2016/decathlon-tributes-2016/> for the tributes, which is not nearly as fun to read as it is to hear Tim giving these out.

The General Membership Meeting will be October 19, so please mark your calendars. Like last year we will talk a little about club operation and have some films. Unlike last year the talking and film viewing will be shorter, which will give members more time to socialize. Also, this year will be BYOB, so a) no worries about getting a liquor license or extra insurance, and, b) you will be able to drink what you prefer. See <http://steeplechasers.org/events/general-membership-meeting-2/> for more information, and for information on how to register. Our Vice President **Javier Montenegro** is coordinating the meeting, and our volunteer appreciation coordinator **Lori Mensh** will be handing out volunteer appreciation gifts at check-in to volunteers who have made significant contributions this past year.

Our racing team, led by **Katelin Peropat** and **Chris VanSant** welcomes their newest members, **Conny Pritchard, Tim Morgan, Chad Connors** and **Kelley Heffner**. Congratulations on making the team! To learn more about our racing team and what it takes to join, see <http://steeplechasers.org/competition/racing-team/>. Applications for the team are closed at this time, but will be open again in December.

The Fall marathon and half marathon training groups are in full swing, thanks to our leaders **Billy Clem** and **Jan Harris**, coordinated by Training chair **Javier Montenegro**, and we have a successful Women's Distance Festival 5K training program, thanks to leaders **Luanne Houck** and **Roseann Abdu**. Please see <http://steeplechasers.org/training/training-groups/> for more information about our training programs.

And regarding training, listen to this: **Luanne Houck** will be starting a new training program for the 5 mile / 10K distance. She is finalizing the details but it looks like the first session will be this spring. Please watch our communication channels (email blast, Facebook group, web site announcements) in the coming months for more details.

Sadly for us, we will be saying goodbye to one of our key volunteers, **Jan Harris** who is moving out of town. Jan had led marathon training and has been coordinating happy hours for quite a while. A couple of folks have stepped up to take her place for happy hours, so keep an eye out for posts from **Heidi Novak** and **Syble Roane** who will now be coordinating these.

On a similar note, our long-standing newsletter editor and racing team member, **Malcolm Senior**, and his wife **Hazel** will be heading off to England. We wish them good cheer in their retirement. **Julie Harris** took over the newsletter from Malcolm a while ago, and has been doing a great job!

That's all for now – I hope to see you around town soon.

Lou King

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