

CVR - Meetings

Secretary's Notes - November 13, 2002 Meeting

Compiled by Michael Chernick

Opening: Club President Richard Cleveland welcomed the participants to the meeting convened at Tim Noonan's home. The attendance was larger than at several past gatherings.

Leafpeepers: The first order of business consisted of Leafpeepers' race director, Curtis Picard's, 2002 race report. The news was most encouraging as both revenues and registered participants rose. The 967 preregistered individuals exceed last year's total by 123 persons. The cap for the half-marathon was lifted to 700, and the 5k, while not numerically capped, still has room to expand. While the number of registrants continues to rise, a parallel phenomenon is the substantial number of runners who fail to appear on race day. This year that percentage rose to 22% continuing an existing trend. As a consequence, Curtis proposed an increase in the half marathon runners cap from 700 to 750 runners.

Financially, race income rose to \$19,325.00, and post-expense income was \$6,431.83. Based on the runner allocation formula, a check for \$4,497.83 will be sent to the Harwood Union High School Boosters. The balance of \$1,934.00 is club revenue.

Among the logistical issues to be addressed is the need to recertify the course. This is due to the disappearance of shrubbery at the turn around point.

Curtis announced that the Vermont Chamber of Commerce's 2003 Vermont Travel Guide will feature Leafpeepers as one of the 10 top fall attractions in the state. Also, Yoplait Yogurt has offered to provide free product at the 2003 race. Curtis will no longer serve as the race's director, although he will still serve on the race committee. Sandy Colvin has tentatively agreed to serve as a co-race director for 2003

The next Leafpeepers race committee meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2003.

First Night: Race director, Rowly Brucken, will assume the directorship succeeding Dave Kissner, who has been very helpful in the transition. There

will be prizes awarded to the top winners from Tubbs Snowshoes, SportsImage, First- In- Fitness and Massage Works. Each of these companies has donated either product or services as prizes.

Rowly announced that the parade permit for the race has been secured. The pavilion office building, including the auditorium and adjacent lobby, has been reserved from 1:30 to 5:00. The Onion River Arts Council will distribute printed applications which will also be posted on the CVR website. The race will start at 3:00 P.M. Rowley will contact State House security to ascertain whether the new security gate at the parking lot will be operating that afternoon.

Alternatively, the racecourse will be slightly altered to begin further east on Court Street and to conclude on Governor Davis Street.

New Race Timer: Since June, at the Capital Stampede, the club has been operating with only two portable timers. Normally, the club has three timers for races. Norm Robinson moved, and Dot Helling seconded, a motion to purchase a new portable timer. The cost will be approximately \$350.00 to \$400.00. Norm agreed to make the purchase with the hope that the new timer will be available for First Night.

Central VT Race Series: For the past several years, Onion River Sports has cosponsored, with the club, a grand prix race series. The store supplies gift certificates as prizes. A cumulative point scoring system for runners, encompassing place finishing and volunteering at a race, and a club membership prerequisite, has been established. However, concern was expressed that insufficient attention has been devoted to the series. Some of the top finishers are not eligible for listing due to their lack of volunteer time. Dot Helling has offered to meet with Onion River Sports representatives, if the club wishes to explore ways to generate more attention for the series.

The race prizes for last year were not awarded until the Bear Swamp race in June. Few of the winners were present. As an effort to draw greater attention to the awards, and in order to present them on a timelier basis, the awards ceremony will occur on December 31 at the Pavilion Building Auditorium. They will be presented while the First Night results are being tallied. Prizes will include \$25.00 gift certificates from the Capitol Cash (downtown Montpelier businesses.) They will be awarded to the top male and female finishers in each age category. In addition, the overall top male and female finishers will be awarded a grand prize of either a season's pass at the new Morse Farm cross country ski facility or an \$90.00 gift certificate at Onion River Sports toward new running shoes. As a further award, all ten winners names will be placed in a drawing for a free plane ride courtesy Dick Ferno, a veteran licensed pilot.

Newsletter: Jamie Shanley, who has been an outstanding newsletter editor, has indicated that he will no longer be available to edit the newsletter on a

regular basis. The club is in search of a new newsletter editor.

Road Runners Club of America: The Road Runners Club of America (RRCA), of which CVR is a long-term member is experiencing administrative difficulties. Criticism, from the organization's founders, has been leveled at the recently hired executive director. The organization's executive committee notes are no longer published and the online forum on its website has been eliminated. Promises of increased race sponsorships have failed to materialize and the executive director is serving in an effectively absentee role.

The RRCA's problems directly impact CVR because the club purchases its insurance through this national organization. RRCA is now requiring both dues and insurance assessments to be premised on the number of persons in a member's household and not on a club's actual number of members. To date, there are already conflicts within RRCA regarding the new assessment policy.

Darragh will contact the US Track and Field Association, to which CVR belongs, to inquire if that organization can become CVR's insurance provider. One question will be whether CVR, which is not a 501(c)(3) qualified organization can avail itself of the US Track and Field's insurance program. A second issue is whether the coverage would include all CVR activities, including the fun runs, and not just races.

CVR Organizational Visibility / Future of Club: The meeting's concluding time focused on the future of CVR. Norm Robinson expressed the opinion that the club has lost its energy. He cited lower participation levels at fun runs and the lack of a regularly published newsletter. The newsletter, in Norm's opinion, should be the soul of the club. He did note the wonderful exception to the club's difficulties was the continuing health of the Leafpeepers race. Norm suggested that the location of the fun runs be altered to the start of the bike path on Bailey Avenue. Richard Cleveland commented all of us need to be CVR ambassadors and promote the club's activities. Tim Noonan commented, for a club our size, we are sponsoring too many races. On that score, Norm noted that the Manchester area club had scaled back its schedule of races. Manchester has dropped a number of smaller events and dissolved its grand prix series. He observed his preference would center in the opposite direction. Namely, focus on the smaller, not larger, races.

A related point is the current lack of a printed membership form, although an online version continues to be posted on the club's web site. As a way to increase the visibility of club membership, and to begin developing an updated roster, it was decided to include a membership form with the First Night race application. Runners will be able to fill out the form and pay their 2003 dues when registering for First Night.

Next Meeting: The next potluck and regular CVR business meeting will occur on Thursday January 9, 2003 at Darragh Ellerson's home on North Street in Montpelier. The potluck will commence at 6:30 P.M., and the business meeting is scheduled for 7:00 P.M.