

# CVR at the 1997 Lake Winnepesaukee Relay!

Mack Gardner-Morse

The Central Vermont Runners (CVR) fielded both a women's open and a men's open team at the 1997 Fred Brown Relay/9th Annual Lake Winnepesaukee Relay on Saturday, September 20, 1997. Each team had eight members to run the eight legs of the 65.7 mile relay around Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire (N.H.).

The eight legs varied from 4 to 11 miles in length. Although most legs had rolling hills, several did have steep climbs not unlike our Vermont topography.

The running surfaces were mainly paved road shoulders. Some were nice wide shoulders and some narrowed to no shoulders. With heavy traffic, this was a little uncomfortable in spots. Vistas of huge scenic Lake Winnepesaukee provided a reminder of the team goal: completing a circuit around this lake.



CVR Men's and Women's teams for Lake Winnepesaukee Relay, Weirs Beach, NH, 20 Sept. 1997.

**Front row:** Dave Kissner, Tim Noonan, Mack Gardner-Morse, Tim Heney. **Middle Row:** Merrill Cray, Christine Maloney, Dot Graham Martin, Darragh Ellerson, Donna Smyers, Mai-Lis Ellerson. **Back row:** Maureen Carr, Richard Cleveland, Norm Robinson, John Martin, Steve Burkholder

The North Medford Club (North Medford, Massachusetts) did a good job with water stops and police officers to direct traffic. Bonnie Burkeholder (East Montpelier) assisted the North Medford Club by doing one of the water stops. There did seem to be a shortage of bathrooms at the start at the Funspot (near Weirs Beach) which sent us jogging to CVR member's rental cabins for relief.

The weather was good for running: cool temperatures and an overcast sky with a few sprinkles of rain.

The members of the women's open team in order of the leg they ran were: Donna Symers (Riverton), Dot Graham-Martin (Barre), Christine Maloney (Randolph), Milisa Ellerson (Northfield), Merrill Cray (Berlin), Maureen Carr (East Montpelier), Mary Bates (North Conway, N.H.), and Darragh Ellerson (Montpelier).

The team finished 11<sup>th</sup> in the women's open division and 99<sup>th</sup> overall in a time of 8:24:33 (7:41 pace). Fortunately, Mary Bates (a friend of CVR) was able to fill in at the last minute after an unexpected illness in the family of a CVR runner.

The members of the men's open team in order of the leg they ran were: Tim Noonan (Montpelier), John Martin (Barre), Dave Kissner (East Montpelier), Tim Heney (Montpelier), Norm Robinson (Montpelier), Richard Cleveland (Northfield), Steve Burkeholder (East Montpelier), and Mack Gardner-Morse (Calais).

The team came in 31<sup>st</sup> in the men's open division and 56<sup>th</sup> overall in a time of 7:43:12 (7:04 pace). Thanks to the great organizational efforts of Norm Robinson, the relays went off without a hitch.

CVR runner Sam Davis (Colchester) helped the Ski Rack Racing team to 2<sup>nd</sup> overall. Vermonter Eric Morse anchored the Central Massachusetts Striders team to 1<sup>st</sup> overall. In all, 165 teams completed the relay around Lake Winnepesaukee.

Many CVR members and their families and friends went over Friday night and some spent the weekend in N.H. We felt proud to have put two teams into the relay. A lot of the team was at the start. Many cheered each other throughout the race. Everyone was at the finish. We shared a lot of comraderie and had great fun running successfully together around Lake Winnepesaukee. Next year?

## **Leaf Peepers: 1997 a Grand Success. What's Next?**

Thanks to all who helped make this year's largest-ever Leaf Peepers happen. We had over 550 registered runners and 517 official finishers, with 357 in the Half and 160 in the 5K. The difference, we trust, was mostly no-shows! Just as important, we had about 90 volunteers on race day. Nearly half of these were Harwood students working at aid stations (thanks to Barbara Maynard's efforts!) — a good thing since it was a very warm day and runners (even the 5Kers) were looking for water.

Racewise, Half Marathon times were hit by the heat, with repeat winners Marc Gilbertson and Cindy New turning in winning times (see elsewhere in this newsletter) about 2 minutes off their 1996 marks. Nevertheless, there were some great age-class times run and ever-improving Joe McNamara ran a very strong 1:13:04. It was particularly gratifying to see the number of younger runners in the 5K — 18 of the first 50 were under 18, including winners Paul Ryan and Caitlin Compton. Twelve year old Ryan Kerrigan ran an incredible 18:36, good for 8th overall.

We can't pinpoint why we had nearly 100 more runners this year. Thanks to Bob Murphy, we had our race form on the Web in Cool Running and we know some people came through that source. In any event, we hopefully took care of the runners in good enough style so that they'll return and bring their friends. Some new things we did that helped improve the event included indoor registration, plenty of food, more aid station staffing, more course monitors (including two floating bikers), cell phone communication, a PA at the start/finish area, and more prompt awards ceremonies.

What of these changes will be carried over and/or built on? What new things might we do? And MOST important, who will be involved next year!! For starters, the bridge near the recreation field is long-last being repaired and we have the option of designing a loop course for the 5K that could also double as the first leg of the Half Marathon. This change, which has exciting potential, would naturally require some upfront planning. We also need to shore up relations with the Duxbury Selectboard and resolve some issues that have cropped up over the years.

We'll take a good portion of the November 17th Club meeting to critique this year's event and brainstorm about 1998. If you can't make it but have some thoughts, please call one of us prior to the meeting. Thanks.

Darragh Ellerson  
Gordon MacFarland

1997 Co-Directors

# Grand Canyon Double Crossing

On November 1, I completed another dream adventure by running a Double Crossing of the Grand Canyon. It was a magical experience.

I flew to Phoenix on Friday after a hectic week. Julie Arter from Tucson picked me up. We drove to her cabin in the San Francisco peaks to get her husband. Arizona is enchanted. Just outside the Phoenix City line starts the desert with huge cactus formations and distant mountain peaks. It was sunny and in the 80's. From the cabin we drove straight to the South Rim of the Grand Canyon, checked into our lodge, and went to the cafeteria for pasta and to meet other ultra runner friends. Then I packed my gear for the next day and hit the sack. My friend Susan Gimbel from southern California started running at 9:00 p.m. with plans to do a Quad crossing. She completed the Quad several years ago and was hoping to beat her previous time. She only completed the Double this year because of a water shortage on the trail, but remains the only woman to have ever completed the Quad. I hope to do it with her next time.

I started on Saturday at about 5:40 a.m., bundled up like a Vermonter. It was temperatures in the 30's and pitch black with only a new moon. I started down the South Kaibab trail with some Washingtonians. There were many of us doing the same thing this day but all at different start times, and some different routes. Not  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile down the trail I was hot and stopped to dress down and realign my pack. I watched the ribbon of runners' flashlights disappear into the black hole of the Canyon. I continued and ran down steep switchbacks out onto a ridge with a drop to either side of thousands of feet. It reminded me of the Knife's Edge at Mt. Katahdin, except this fell from 7,000' at the South Rim to 1,500' at the river below. (The North Rim is at 8,000'.) Just two days before a man had fallen to his death. I was happy to see the sunrise and get back to trail where it only fell off to one side. The trails are only 3-4' wide with loose sand and rock, and periodic water bars and stone cut steps that take finesse to maneuver on the run.

The South Kaibab trail drops down 7 miles to the Colorado River where you run through a cave and cross a bridge before coming to the Phantom River Ranch. Here there is camping, a cafeteria, and water. At about 6 miles I had hooked up with some Oregonians and stayed with them to the Ranch and for a while thereafter. We stashed our extra clothing in the River rock on a bank by a tree, including my two extra full bottles. I had planned to carry four bottles of liquid for the hot climb back up. From there we wove in and along a tributary of the Colorado River, across some bridges and shoulder to shoulder with amazing geologic rock formations and cliff walls. We then started to slowly rollercoaster as our ascent to the North Rim began. Not 2-3 miles from the Ranch we ran into Sue Gimbel who informed us that all the drinking water ahead had been shut off. She was dehydrated. No one had warned her and she

had run 9 miles without water, including her ascent to the North Rim.

I knew from my hike in the Canyon 16 years ago that, after the Cottonwood Campground at 14 miles, there would be little or no water. So I drank my two bottles and filled up at a good spot in the River just before leaving it to climb. I was still with the group and we shared some iodine tablets. Although it tasted lousy, using them might forestall any stomach problems from the water.

After Cottonwood the group dropped back and I climbed the next 7 miles to the North Rim mostly alone. It was introspective, beautiful, meditative. The aspens along the River were turned a sweet buttercup yellow and I could see the South Rim behind me, ever so far away. The trail was another long series of steep switchbacks. I took numerous photos with my little throwaway camera, hoping they would come out. The trail passed by the private residence of an artist who mans the water supply. His kids grew up there and climbed the North Rim to catch the school bus. On inclement days they home-schooled.

In a very narrow side canyon I came around a steep curve and heard a hoot. Way above me I could see my friend Lynn O'Malley from Washington waving hello. My name echoed through the chasms of the Canyon. Shortly after that I started to reach treeline. At this point there had been full sun and temperatures were in the mid 80's so the trees were welcome. I was completely dry. I caught up with Becky Wallach from Washington who was struggling in the heat. I stayed close and urged her on one step at a time. As we neared the top her boyfriend ran down from the trailhead and said he would wait for her below.

At the top (8,000') I tried waving down some passing tourists and then spotted a couple climbing out of a parked car. I asked them for water but they thought they had none to spare. I sucked on some Werther's Originals for moisture and Becky and I started to head back down the trail, when the couple came over with a Pepsi bottle full of cool water. They had thought it over and felt they could spare us this. It was a lifesaver. I would have paid \$20.00 for that bottle of plain water.

I ran with Becky until she reached her boyfriend Mike Britt. We stayed in contact for several miles back down the switchbacks, until they climbed to the water under one of the bridges below the Roaring Forks waterfall. I went on and filled up at the River below Cottonwood Campground again, this time without iodine, and splashed myself cool with the wonderful clear and cold mountain water. The two miles from where I left Becky and Mike to my watering hole were like a dance. I ran effortlessly with no sight of humans, the sun in my face, gentle breezes and awesome views. I was ahead of schedule. I had gotten to the North Rim in 6 hours, so I decided to take a detour and run to Ribbon Falls.

Ribbon Falls is off a trail to the west across a bridge below the Cottonwood Campground. In 1981 my friend Susan Greenhalgh from Burlington and I went there to tend to her heat stroke. We then bushwhacked south back to the main trail and forded the River. This avoided a climb back up to the bridge. This time, 16 years later, there was a small path following the River south which I followed. I never found a designated River crossing so I forded it again and bushwhacked back onto the Kaibab trail. The River felt wonderfully refreshing. The area just below Cottonwood is tundra-like and is locally known as the "hot box". This year it was in the mid 80's. In 1981 Susan and I encountered 110° and dozens of rattlesnakes coiled on flat rocks all around us. This time I only saw a frightened mule deer and small skittering lizards.

Back on the trail it was very runnable. Mike passed me, said Becky was fine and he was back on his own pace. I started to run with him but my wet insoles were rolling in under my feet. I stopped to pull them out, changed my socks, and strapped the insoles on my pack to dry. When I looked for them later they were gone. The next morning one of the Washington women told me how funny it was when she and her group came upon my insoles laying on the trail as if I had stepped out of them while running along. They picked them up, not knowing whose they were.

After my shoe stop, I ran most of the next six miles along the River back to the Ranch. It was fun and breathtaking. I was alone again. I brushed my hands along some of the canyon walls, took more photos and worked out some personal issues in my head. I found myself singing and feeling like I was floating or levitating my way through the canyon niches, back and forth across the River. As I neared the Ranch, I started looking for the tree with my stash but could not identify it. At the 10th and last tree and pile of rocks I checked before giving up, I found my stuff. Another ¼ mile and I trotted into the Ranch where I found a dozen or so ultra runners sitting at a picnic table, including Lynn and some folks I knew from northern California. They were drinking cold lemonade from the cafeteria. I joined them. Because of the early time I informed them that I was going back on the Bright Angel trail, west of where I came down and three miles longer. Two of the runners had decided the same thing but the rest were headed back up the South Kaibab trail. Gene Thibeault and Deborah Askew headed off to Bright Angel before I was ready. I left about 3:30 p.m. after eating and repacking my now heavier load. I took another bridge across the Colorado River and found the first 2-3 miles of ascent very runnable. The trail followed the southern shore of the mighty Colorado. The River was raging and some of the rapids were like high ocean surf. It was getting cooler as the sun dipped lower in the sky. The canyon walls turned varying shades of red and pink. This trail was very different from the South Kaibab I'd come down.

As the trail became steeper it started to switch back and forth and I caught up with Gene and Deborah. We had 4½ miles to go and about ½ hour of light. Gene had stomach problems and they were walking the rest of the way. Wanting company in the dark and not having a spare flashlight, I decided to stay with them. We shared some beautiful sights - a polished stone rock fall, white mineral formations that looked like snow and ice, rosetta-like velvety moss vegetation, and the marvelous sunset.

After sundown we bundled up as the temperatures dropped dramatically. The last three miles were a grunt as we climbed back up to 7,000 feet. I enjoyed the company. I'd never met Deborah before and she was a delight - also very knowledgeable about the canyon. Gene and I had known each other for years from West coast ultras but never spent time on the trail together. We decided that a vegetarian pizza would be our reward at the top and I salivated over that thought for the last two miles of seemingly endless climb. Just before the final switchbacks we came upon four long-horned sheep clustered 3-4 feet from us off the trail. We studied them with our lights.

We finished at 7:00 p.m. At the trailhead we found Mike waiting for Becky with a bag of tortilla chips. He was concerned about her. At about 10:00 p.m. a search party went down and found her bundled up in a sleeping bag in one of the emergency shelters. Dehydration had slowed her and her light had died. She was fine and they all climbed out.

I found Sue in the cafeteria and confirmed that she had not gone back out for the Quad. I guzzled a large orange juice, sipped a hot tea and then went back to the room to shower before pizza. My body felt electrified from the experience. I could not, and still haven't, cleared my mind of the reflections I had in the Canyon, visual and mental. My total mileage was about 46 miles with approximately 24,000' of vertical, and I spent 13 hours in the canyon. It is a spiritual place where your inner being can embrace the power of the natural world and be at complete peace. It is tranquil and forceful, subtle and kaleidoscopic, all at the same time. The Grand Canyon is truly one of the (Seven) Wonders of the World, a cathedral for life. Anyone who wishes to touch on their truth and come to terms with themselves will surely do so by worshipping here.

Dot Helling

# Race Roundup

*This month features CVR results from some of the longer Vermont fall classics: Leaf Peepers half marathon, GMAA Marathon and half-marathon, and the Vermont 50-miler. Also, some great performances by CVR runners in out-of-state marathons, and Donna Smyers is top female Master in the Hawaiian Ironman! See Dot Helling's write-up on the 50-miler, Gordon and Darragh's write-up on Leaf Peepers, Mack Gardner-Morse's report on the Lake Winnepesaukee Relay, and Norm Robinson's story on a spooky Halloween race in Burlington.*

	<i>Class</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Class place\total</i>	<i>Overall place\total</i>
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## **Mad Dash 4-mile race, 9/28/97, Waltsfield, VT**

John Valentine	M4049	20:54		7\167
Merrill Cray	F4049	23:34		42\167
John Kaeding	M4049	24:41		58\167
Bob Olkin	M5059	30:25		129\167

## **Vermont 50 mile race, 10/5/97, Brownsville, VT**

Dot Helling	F4049	9:13:38	1\3	26\83
Sigh Searles	M4049	9:39:01	11\22	34\83

## **Leaf Peepers half-marathon, 10/5/97, Waterbury, VT**

Sam Davis	M3039	1:20:01	3\76	7\357
Michael Feulner	M4049	1:28:18	10\82	31\357
Dot Martin	F3039	1:29:00	2\51	36\357
Jamie Shanley	M4049	1:29:07	14\82	38\357
Donna Smyers	F4049	1:31:04	2\34	47\357
Rick Hubbard	M5059	1:34:07	5\25	62\357
Dave Kissner	M3039	1:35:49	23\76	70\357
Merrill Cray	F4049	1:38:44	4\34	87\357
Norm Robinson	M4049	1:40:32	30\82	99\357
Neil Van Dyke	M4049	1:42:31	32\82	108\357
Carol Van Dyke	F4049	1:52:08	9\34	199\357
Janice Kulak	F4049	2:00:47	14\34	256\357
Nance Smith	F3039	2:03:13	38\51	272\357

## **Leaf Peepers 5K, 10/5/97, Waterbury, VT**

Jon Reidel	M2029	19:00	1\9	10\160
Dick Millar	M3039	19:04	2\16	13\160
Doug Burns	M4049	20:07	5\17	22\160
Laura Medalie	F3039	21:34	1\24	37\160
Richard Cleveland	M4049	21:38	8\17	38\160



Michael Chernick	M4049	21:45	9\17	40\160
Bob Mercier	M6069	24:44	2\11	65\160
Mai-Lis Ellerson	F3039	27:11	10\24	96\160
Deirdre Ellerson	F4049	27:18	4\12	98\160
Reidun Nuquist	F5059	27:26	3\6	101\160
Roger Cranse	M5059	32:22	11\12	151\160

**Bethel Forward Festival 5K Run, 10/11/97, Bethel, VT**

Gordon MacFarland	M4049	16:44	1\12	2\70
Jon Reidel	M2029	18:11	4\9	8\70

**GMAA Arthur Tudhope 10K, 10/11/97, Shelburne, VT**

Carol Van Dyke	F4049	47:49	1\1	11\19
Jean Kissner	F3039	51:00	2\3	15\19

**Green Mountain Marathon, 10/18/97, South Hero, VT**

Michael Feulner	M4049	3:10:08	4\29	6\88
Dot Martin	F3039	3:11:10	1\11	8\88
Newton Baker	M5059	4:00:45	4\8	56\88

**Green Mountain Half-Marathon, 10/18/97, South Hero, VT**

Gordon MacFarland	M4049	1:18:46	2\52	6\180
Tim Noonan	M4049	1:21:36	4\52	9\180
Michael Chernick	M4049	1:39:57	26\52	64\180
Ann Palen	F3039	1:46:38	7\18	92\180
Jean Kissner	F3039	2:14:23	17\18	170\180

**Greater Hartford Marathon, 10/18/97, Hartford, CT**

Tom Kaiden	M3039	2:45:21	2nd Vermonter!	21\840
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**Ironman Triathlon, 10/19/97, Maui, Hawaii**

Donna Smyers	F4049	10:43:27	1\9	Top F Master!!
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**Marine Corps Marathon, 10/26/97, Washington, D.C.**

Linda Hallinger	F4049	3:42:08	10\306	308\4318 (women)
Al Gore	M4049	4:58:00		

# CVR Meeting minutes -- September 29, 1997

The meeting was held at Gordan MacFarland's house and began with a yummy potluck dinner, followed by a discussion of CVR activities.

Gordan gave us an update on **Leaf Peepers**.

- Registration will be held inside this year and opens at 9:00.
- Gordon decided to go with a sound system, which he can rent from Play it again, Sam for \$20, rather than use the megaphone.
- Water stops will be placed differently than previous years.
- Race Organizers: Nan Atherton will be assisting on the finish line and Howard Atherton will be trouble shooting, Bob Murphy and David Ellerson will mark the course, Sue Barber is registration supervisor, and someone will be on a bike monitoring the course. Gordan estimates that between 60 and 70 people are involved in organizing the race.
- Food: Apples from Morse Farm, 75 dozen bagels from Burlington Bagel Bakery, a limited amount of ice cream from Ben and Jerry's, some apple cider, sports bars, and Green Mtn coffee.
- WDEV will be announcing the race. Also coverage from Times Argus and WORLD.
- Gordan plans to use cell phones out on the course.
- There will be signs on the course to alert drivers that there is a race going on.
- Runners will be provided with a race info sheet.
- Awards will begin around 11:50 for the 5K and 1:15 for the half.
- The policy as far as T-shirts goes is, \$5 off registration fee if we run out.

Tim Noonan says that he would like to direct the **Northfield** race again next year, with the help of 10 or so CVR people. He suggests changing the kids course so that it does not cross the RR tracks. Registration needs to be improved and he would like to do the awards earlier.

First Night: Dave Kissner, race director, will be meeting with other First Night coordinators on Wednesday. ORAC is sponsoring First Night this year. They don't want to have race T-shirts. Maybe we could go with something else, like gloves, headbands, hats, etc. Bob Murphy would like to see signs on the course since it is difficult to mark in the winter. Dave is looking for volunteers.

Oct 21 is run to work day.

Utica, NY will be (is?) the home to the Distance Runners Hall of Fame.

Norm Robinson, as RRCA rep, is planning to attend a Battenkill Valley Roadrunners Club meeting. Anyone who would like to join him is welcome.

Darragh is waiting to hear back from the person who requested that Leaf Peepers be included as the third race in a grand prix series, along with Maple Leaf and Covered Bridges. He is putting together a proposal for CVR's review.

Jamie Shanley would like to include an article on the **Lake Winnepesaukee Relay Race** in the next newsletter.

The next meeting will be held on November 17 at 6:30 at Michael Chernick's. Michael lives at 7 Baird Street, Apt 15 (3rd floor), in Montpelier. (223-0918)

# Vermont Sweep in Vermont 50

The Vermont 50 produced a sweep of home state victories including the top male, top three females and most of the age divisions. Just as the Westerners generally prevail on their home turf, we are now doing the same. Certainly it helps to have an increasing ultra population and the fine quality of the 50 miler and 100 miler put on by Laura Farrell and the VASS volunteers. They are incredible!

Shari Bashaw of St. Albans, Vermont won the women's division in a course record of 8:03: 15. She also placed 9th overall just 10 minutes behind the incomparable Ralph Swenson (first in the 50-59 division). Her training partner Tony Treanor, 2nd at his first 100 miler in Vermont this year, was just four places ahead of her. What makes Shari's performance particularly awesome is that it was her very first ultra, two weeks after running a hilly 3:12 Adirondack Marathon and in a year when she broke 18:30 for the 5K and 38 minutes for the 10K. I used to beat this rising star but doubt I ever will again. The 36 year old mother of two is a tribute to Vermont women athletes, particularly knowing how hard she worked and how focused she stayed on her running, despite life's other responsibilities. We are willing her to do a "Mike Morton".

Race day this year went from pouring rain to a perfect, sunny, warm foliage day. The 450 mountain bikers sharing the course were mostly courteous and fun, even if the mud they created got a little tiresome. I had a wonderful day running off and on with my dear friend Sigh Searles, with Sue Johnston, and with my dog "Smoochie" who showed up for the last four miles through the woods and trails of Ascutney.

Now I must set the record straight. Sue Johnston and I finished in a tie for second place with Smoochie even though our times show us a second apart. We were savoring the day, skipping down the ski trail in the sun, proud to be Vermont ultrarunners and looking forward to our "just desserts". Alas, although I've gained the reputation for being the fastest runner in Vermont from the finish line to the food table, Smoochie has me beat. Someone gave her the taste of a hamburger and she became an instant obnoxious "Moochie". Moral of the story: fuel the runners but not their dogs.

Dot Helling  
October 1997

## REMEASUREMENT OF THE BOSTON MARATHON COURSE

by Bob Murphy

In mid-September, I received a call from Wayne Nicoll (New Hampshire's course certifier extraordinaire) asking whether I'd like to participate in a remeasurement of the Boston Marathon course. As should be no surprise, I immediately accepted. Over the next couple of weeks, arrangements were made for the remeasurement to be done on the 29th and 30th of the month. Although rain was predicted on both the 29th and the 30th, Wayne pointed out that these were two separate weather fronts, and that there was supposed to be a period of calm between the two events, creating a window of opportunity for us.

On Monday, the 29th of September, I packed my bike, helmet, Jones counter and other road race measurement paraphernalia, and drove to Concord, NH, to meet Wayne. All my stuff was transferred to his truck, and we were on our way. As we traveled south on US 3, the rain was coming down in buckets. Predictions were still that the rain would end in the PM, and that the next front wasn't due until Tuesday morning. Sure enough, shortly before we arrived at our hotel just outside of Hopkinton, the skies were clearing!

At the hotel, we met Ray Nelson, the third measurer to be used in this effort. Ray is from Rhode Island and has gained considerable fame as the director of the Ocean State Marathon. He is also the course certifier for that state. We checked into the hotel and then headed directly out to Hopkinton to set a calibration course. We searched several streets in the village and found a location on lightly-traveled Church Street where we could lay out a 1000' measured course in conditions of good pavement and flat terrain. As we finished the first measurement, threatening storm clouds blew in, and we felt a few sprinkles. Then, almost miraculously, by the time we finished the second measurement, the clouds had blown by and the sky was blue and nearly cloudless! We then checked the location of the first three mile points (painted in the center of the road), just to get a feel for the points to which we would be measuring.

At about 4:30pm, after setting the calibration course, we went back to the hotel, ate supper and just hung out until 10pm. (Traffic in the area is too heavy to allow safe measurement at any time other than the late night hours.) We then returned to Hopkinton, got our bicycles out, donned reflective vests, and headed for Church Street. By now the sky was clear, the stars were shining down, and the temperature was about 58 F. Street lights provided pretty good visibility for our four rides over the calibration course, although we needed our flashlights to read the Jones counters on our front bicycle wheels. We then calculated counts per mile and kilometer, and the counts we should expect at each mile, each 5 km point, the half-marathon point, one-mile-to-go point, and the finish.

We returned to the Hopkinton green, where we met Joe, a representative of the Boston Marathon (with a van) and a state police officer with a cruiser. Our plan was as follows: Wayne, Ray and I would ride our bicycles over the course, cutting across the road (even into opposing traffic lanes) as needed to measure the shortest possible route. The state police officer would follow us with a blue light to provide some warning to

approaching vehicles and to protect us from cars coming up from behind. Joe was to follow in the van, carrying snacks, repair parts, extra clothing, etc., and (principally) to provide us and our bikes a ride back from Boston at the end of the measurement. The three measurers provided one more measurement than was really needed, and provided one more opportunity to get as accurate a measurement as possible of the course length.

By 11:30pm we were ready to begin our ride. We gathered at the start line (three lonely bikers in the dark!), took down our initial counter readings, and it was off to the 1-mile point. The first three miles were particularly interesting, as the course winds a lot, and we had to move first to one side of the road, and then the other, being especially careful in our crossing over the opposing traffic lane. This back and forth riding, particularly when there was opposing traffic, troubled the following policeman, who advised us against it. Wayne then had a brief meeting with him, explaining once again what we were doing and why we were doing it. He seemed to accept that we would use reasonable caution, and we continued on our way. After searching, and ultimately finding, the first three mile points (finding them in the dark, or with minimal illumination, was proving difficult), Wayne came up with what turned out to be an excellent idea. Joe, the van driver, was very familiar with the course and knew where all the milepoints were. So he then took the lead, stopping at each point, so we'd know where to stop and take our readings. His being in front had an additional benefit. It allowed us to see which direction the course was going, and allowed us to anticipate left and right hand turns.

From that point, things went swiftly and smoothly, as we moved through Ashland, Framingham and Natick. When we were traveling against traffic on the left side of the road we would occasionally have to stop to avoid startling the oncoming drivers, but as the night wore on, there were fewer and fewer conflicts. The only real close call came as we approached the halfway point in Wellesley. A young fellow in an old beat-up car approached Route 135 from a side street and was about to pull out into the road without stopping, when Wayne caught his attention, and he screeched to a halt. (Maybe it was the blue light following us that caught his attention.)

The thirteen-mile and halfway points were non-existent, as the road had recently been paved over, so at those points, we set marks in the road where our calculations indicated they should be. A brief pause for energy bars, and we were off again on the road to Boston. The ride through the Newton hills and down into Brookline and Boston was relatively uneventful. I kept my eye on Ray ahead of me, who seemed to be getting very close to the inside of curves. My competitive nature took hold, and I tried to get even closer, to produce the shortest measurement of all. I got too close at one point, and my pedal struck the curb, causing me to be a bit more cautious from then on.

We crossed the finish line on Boylston Street at about 3:30am (Boston is real easy to bike through at that time of the day!). We loaded our bikes into the van, bade the police officer good day, and returned to Hopkinton for the post-measurement calibration. We found that the temperature had actually warmed by a couple of degrees since our initial calibration, and stood then at 60 F. The sky was still clear – our weather luck had

held out!

After our four recalibration rides, it was back to the hotel, where we did some quick calculations. I was gratified to learn that my riding was indeed pretty good. I produced the shortest measurement of the course, and it showed that the course is actually 5.2 feet longer than necessary! Ray's measurement was second shortest, but our measurements differed from each other by less than 0.02% (the standard we had to meet was a difference no greater than 0.08%).

My participation in this remeasurement meant a lot to me. The Boston Marathon is, of course, a fabled event, and the opportunity to take part in its measurement was an honor. It also represented a number of firsts for me: my first measurement of a marathon course, the first time I've worked with other seasoned measurers, my first time measuring with a police escort, and my first nighttime measurement. It was not my first time over the Boston Marathon course; however, it was my slowest! This experience has been valuable for me, and has given me some ideas that I may apply to future measuring here in Central Vermont.

## Upcoming events

*It's Turkey Trot season!!*

November 17 (Monday), 6:30 pm. CVR meeting, Michael Chernick's, 7 Baird St., Apt. 15 (3rd floor), Montpelier. *Phone: 223-0918*

November 22 (Saturday), 10 am. **Turkey Trot 2-mile/10K/100-yard dash** (kids), Westford.

November 23 (Sunday), 1 pm. **Turkey Trot 10K**, Hanover, NH.

November 23 (Sunday), 12 noon. **Turkey Trot 10K and Gobble Wobble 5K**, Middlebury.

November 27 (Thursday), 11 am. **Turkey Trot 5K for Burlington Food Shelf**, Burlington.

November 29 (Saturday), 10 am. **Turkey Trot 5K**, Fair Haven.

December 6 (Saturday), 10 am. **Winter 5K Road Race**, Rutland

December 7 (Sunday), 1 pm. **Reindeer Ramble 5K**, Essex Junction.

December 31 (Wednesday), 3 pm. **CVR 3<sup>rd</sup> annual First Night 5K**, Montpelier.

January 1 (Thursday), 11 am. **First Run 5K and Kid's Run 1-mile**, Burlington.

# Halloween Howl

Have you ever felt like you were in the dark with your running? Not sure where you are headed, or how long it will take you to get there? Have had times when you worried about unseen obstacles and unimagined problems in meeting your goals?

Tim Noonan and I had all of these situations and more, in the span of about 20 minutes of running, at the Halloween Howl 5K in Burlington on the Monday before Halloween.

The race started at 6:30 p.m. from the Burlington Boathouse and was an out & back run up the bike path. It was a very dark and windy night. The organizers tried to shed light on things somewhat with a few Jack-o-lanterns, and folks with flashlights along the way. In reality, the lights in particular were more of a problem than help. Your eyes would just get adjusted to the dark, and then the lights would hit. The worst, was a well meaning volunteer who had his car high beams on. Instant blindness!! Thank God for a smooth, paved path.

The real challenge was when the leaders made the turn and there were runners going both directions on the path. Careful passing, and look out for the giant puddles!! Our warm up took us out the first mile or so, which thankfully was the area with the most water. We just picked our spots to pass; which added to the challenge.


Another change from normal daytime racing was the inability to see who you were running against, mile markers (if there were any) or your watch. You had to run totally by instinct and experience.

In spit of everything, Tim ran a strong 18:20, and I had a 21:05. Both of us felt we could have had quicker times; but enjoyed the different experience, and the post race pizza.

Norm Robinson



## News FLASH!



Who was the tall gray CVR runner, far away from home again, taking short cuts over fallen trees and historic bridges at the Vermont 50, and was also observed slicing the corner off the square route over a grassy field on the Ascutney trails??

