

RUNNING SHORTS

Running for cash and other things

By Ken Johnson

Most runners will never win prize money at a race. That doesn't mean that all runners, even slow ones like myself, can't pick up some cash or other things. We just have to do it while we are out running on the roads.

I have picked up a few one dollar bills in the gutter and even some fives and two twenties. A friend of mine in Florida found \$200 while running on the beach. Many of the sockets and many other tools in my toolbox were found along the roads and streets in Huntsville. My best pair of hedge clippers was found in the gutter along Sam Houston Avenue. Sure makes training runs pay off. While I do not pick up lug nuts, there are enough of those along the road to supply Detroit for a year, along with hubcaps, washers and various types of hardware.

I know some runners who pick up every coin they come across while running, but I have my standards. Since my knees are stiff and sore most of the time and it is hard to stoop down, I limit myself to quarters and the green stuff.

On a couple occasions, I found wallets. One contained a drivers license, social security card and every known credit card, but no cash. The other contained cash and a drivers license. Luckily, in both cases, I found the owner and returned the wallets to them. They were grateful and it felt good to be able to help them out. Another time, I found a drivers license and several identification cards loose along the street. They all belonged to the same person. As it came out, her purse had been stolen and the thief apparently discarded these items out of the car window.

Another Huntsville runner told me that she ran early in the morning on trash day before trash pickup. As she would run through the neighborhood, she would note the nice things that people would put on the curb as trash. After her run, she would go back with her pickup and beat the trash truck to the things that she could use.

A while back, I was running alone on the trails at the Huntsville State Park. I looked ahead on the trail and saw two does on the trail. As I approached them, they took off. However, right where they were standing, there was two bucks laying on the trail. I thought it was my lucky day. I had never found money on the trails, so I picked up the cash and bought a \$2 lottery ticket on the way home (I lost). I thought later – two does and two bucks. That's weird.

Then, there is Hans Jaeger. When Hans ran his first Sunmart 50K at Huntsville State Park, he was wearing a nice red jacket with a Marlboro patch on the sleeve. I asked him why a big time runner like him was wearing a cigarette jacket. He explained that for years, he picked up cigarette packets from along the road while he was running. He would send them in and redeem them for merchandize – like nice red jackets. His house is full of things he got from sending in thousands of empty cigarette packs, such as a bicycle, stereo system, power tools, cameras, DVD player and clothing.

See, not only does running increase your physical fitness, it pays off in cash and other things. So, make sure you have pockets in your running shorts and get out there and run the roads.

Race results:

Fall Fun Run 5K, Huntsville, Sept. 29

Michael Dean, 23	24:19
Phillip Clark, 44	24:37
Adam Miller, 29	25:19
Curtis Barton, 28	25:20
Darren Grant, 42	25:37
Jake Chick, 30	26:42
Chris Wilson, 57	27:36
Lavonne Zaiontz, 40	30:22
Skipper Nethery, 58	31:31
Mary Sweeten, 23	32:22
True Cousins, 73	37:19
Ginger Plummer, 50	41:19
Calli Miller, 33	48:10
Janice Lewis, 50	50:11
Kathy Byrn, 59	50:12

Upcoming Races:

Oct. 6 – Kats for the Cause 5K, Huntsville

Oct. 13 – Huntsville Half Marathon & 5K Run/Walk
(Early registration deadline is Oct. 7)

Oct. 14 – Shittake 5K Run, Madisonville

Nov. 3 – Rocky Raccoon 25K & 50K, Huntsville State Park

For a link to these events, go to <http://www.7hills.us> and click on Race Schedule.