

RUNNING SHORTS

How to stay motivated to get out and run

By Ken Johnson

Personally, I hate to run. At the same time, I realize that consistent exercise is a vital part of staying as healthy as possible, for as long as possible. There may be some other physical activity, such as swimming and biking, that will provide the same aerobic benefits as running, but running is the most convenient and economical. You can run whenever is best for you and all you need is a good pair of running shoes.

In most cases, just knowing the benefits of running is not sufficient motivation to keep you on the roads, track or trails. It takes more. Over the years, I found that it takes a “system of motivation.”

In my early years of running, the Army made me do it. After I retired from the Army, I had to find other motivation for continuing to run. Joining and becoming an active member of a running club helped with motivation. Association with other runners and the mutual support helps set the stage for running.

Setting goals for myself became important. As goals were achieved, I set new ones. The idea is to keep challenging yourself.

In 2014, I achieved my goal of completing 101 marathons and ultra-marathons (I served with the 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam). Now, I am working on 101 half marathons (completed 81). I have also set a goal of 1,000 races (completed 927, so far). When those goals are met, I will set new ones.

In the early 90's, I started “streaking” and joined the U.S. Running Streak Association. To be a streaker, you have to run at least one continuous mile every day. I have had to break my streak for medical reasons three times, but each time I started all over again. My current streak is over 7 years.

In 2008, I began blogging, which is basically keeping a diary on the Internet. I blog virtually every day and report my running activity for that day. While I have never publicized the blog, I have found it to be an effective personal motivator. It helps make me accountable.

Writing this column and including recent race results has become a strong motivator. There have been many times during a race, I felt like walking or giving up. Then, I think about my finish time being reported with this column. Hopefully, this column and the race results have helped others with motivation.

Unless you are one who actually likes to run, you may have to develop your own “system of motivation.” Do whatever it takes to stay healthy and fit.

After 10 years of writing this column, I am retiring and passing the column over to Dr. Darren Grant, effective next month. However, I will continue to compile the Recent Race Results section of the column. So, please send your race results to me at 1941runner@sbcglobal.net.

Thanks to Niki Bellnoski and Katy Lampson and more recently, Matt Wagner, for periodically writing the Running Shorts column. Also, thanks to the readers, especially to those who have stopped me on the street with positive comments about the column.

Merry Christmas.

Recent race results:

Santa Hustle, Galveston, Dec. 18

Half Marathon (13.1 miles)

Myla Weber	2:29:15
Cayla Weber	2:29:16
Makenzie Whitt	2:36:56
Maria Wicker, 52	2:49:46
Ken Johnson, 75	2:52:19

5K (3.1 miles)

Randy Kenyon	25:44
MacKenzie Hall	33:26
Sara Schweitzer	33:29
Brandy Robbins	42:17
Megan Kaltenbach	44:30
Linda Webb	44:41
Ashley Webb	48:46
Tia Schweitzer	57:00
Jim Weber	1:06:53
Cara Weber	1:06:54

Honolulu Marathon (26.2 miles), Hawaii, Dec. 11

Christopher Shank, 33 6:33:24

BCS Marathon, College Station, Dec. 11

Marathon

Angelina Santos, 51	4:42:08
Giovanni Valdivia, 31	5:35:00

Half Marathon

Doug Dretke, 58	2:25:51
Ken Johnson, 75	3:00:16
Cindy Pate, 56	3:02:29

Note: If you ran this race and your results are not listed, congratulations. The race refused to provide a list of Huntsville runners.

Fort Bend KIA 30K (18.6 miles), Sugar Land, Dec. 11

Dan Byrne, 58 2:12:45

Kalakaula Merrie Mile, Honolulu, Dec. 10

Dana Formon, 28 7:32

Christopher Shank, 33 8:21

Santa Stroll 5K, Kaufman, Dec. 10

Steve Allen, 44 21:44

Jingle Bell 5K Run, Livingston, Dec. 10

Jan Parks, 60 35:19

Ken Johnson, 75 36:15

Don Ortloff, 71 49:15

1-Mile

Jadyn Justice 8:05

Reindeer 5K Run, Lufkin, Dec. 10

Ken Johnson, 75 35:38

Upcoming races in Huntsville:

January 1, 2017 – New Year’s Resolution Run, 10K, 5K, 1-Mile, 2 p.m., Physical Therapy Associates

January 21 – Frost Your Fanny 5K & 1-Mile, Spring Lake Sub-division

February 4 & 5 – Rocky Raccoon 100-Mile Trail Run, Huntsville State Park

February 11 – Rocky Raccoon 50-Mile & 50K Trail Run, Huntsville State Park

February 18 – Love.Run.Marathon & Half Marathon & 10K Trail Run, Huntsville State Park

For more information about these races and others in the area, visit the Seven Hills Running Club website at <http://www.7hills.us> and click on Race Schedule.