

RUNNING SHORTS

Travel, racing go well together

By Ken Johnson

Participating in races is part of the sport of running. Races fulfill the need for competition and give runners the opportunity to interact socially with others who strive to stay healthy.

We have plenty of races in Huntsville, but it is nice to mix travel and racing. It gives us a chance to participate in races and at the same time visit other parts of Texas and the United States.

Clubs have been formed to create competition between runners who combine racing with travel.

In 2001, Steve and Paula Boone of Humble, created the 50 States Marathon Club. It is a club for runners who have completed or who are trying to complete a marathon (26.2 miles) in all 50 states. The club has grown to over 4,000 members and includes members from all 50 states and 15 foreign countries.

So far, 1,159 of its members have completed all 50 states and many have completed all 50 states multiple times.

At the top of the list is the amazing Larry Macon, 71, of San Antonio. He has completed a marathon in all 50 states 21 times. What is even more remarkable, he completed all 50 states within one year 11 times! With 1,719 marathons under his belt, Macon has run more than anyone else in the United States. He is also the world record holder for the most official marathons completed in one year (239).

The Texas 254 Running Club was formed in June of last year by Mary Kaplan of Llano, Texas. The club now has 18 members. The club is for those runners who are trying to complete a race (not necessarily a marathon in distance) in all 254 Texas counties. No one has ever accomplished this, but Kaplan is getting close. She has completed 239 counties and expects to complete the remaining 15 by the end of this September.

Kaplan, 77, is a retired Air Force colonel. She has also completed races in all 50 states and D.C. In her quest to complete a race all 254 Texas counties, she found about 40 counties that did not have a race. She either convinced county officials to put on a race or she organized a race for them.

Steve Allen, 44, of Huntsville is a member of the Texas 254 Running Club. He just completed his 55th county.

If you are a runner and planning a vacation, include a race at your destination. Or, find a race that is held in conjunction with a local festival. It will enhance both your running and travel experience.

Recent race results:

Rock 'n' Roll Chicago Half Marathon (13.1 miles), July 17)

Maria Wicker, 51 2:22:52

Jurassic Night Trail Run, Glen Rose, July 16

15K (9.3 miles)

Jason Wallace, 41 1:22:05

5K (3.1 miles)

Jill Blake, 37 40:23

Move Your Feet 5K, Bessemer, AL, July 16

Donna Fabian, 41 25:32

Rock n Roll Chicago 5K, July 16

Maria Wicker, 51 29:23

Rock Island 4-H 5K, Hempstead, July 16

Ken Johnson, 75 39:01

Magnolia Hill Trail Run, Navasota, July 10

21K (13 miles)

Angelina Santos, 51 2:37:05

Cindy Pate, 55 5:05:41

11.5K (7.1 miles)

Leah Koester, 50 1:48:31

Run Thru the Park 5K, Snellville, GA, July 10

Donna Fabian, 41 25:48

Christmas in July 5K, Houston, July 9

Morgan Ashworth, 28 33:51

Run The Woodlands 5K, The Woodlands, July 9

Steve Bickford, 55 23:34

Cathy Bickford, 54 42:42

What-A-Melon Crawl 5K, Center, July 9

Steve Allen, 44 22:04

Heatwave 5-Miler, Baytown, July 4

Jesus Perez, 18 41:47

Upcoming races in Huntsville:

July 23 – Dog Days 5K & 1-Mile, Elkins Lake

July 30 – Think Pink 5K

August 20 – Heat Wave 5K & 1-Mile, Waterwood

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