

THE ARKANSAS ULTRA RUNNER

December 1996

A Newsletter For Members Of The Arkansas Ultra Running Association

ULTRA NEWS OF THE DAY - The reasons I like to go to Hot Springs in November are twofold. One, to support the Arkansas Road Running Club of America (RRCA) during Healthfest weekend and, two, be present when the **ULTRA RUNNERS of the Year** are announced. This is the seventh year that the state RRCA has recognized ultra runners. Congratulations to Ray Bailey and Dianne Sweatt for earning the title of **MALE and FEMALE Ultra Runner of the Year** and to Dr. Feelgood and Lou Peyton who were **MASTERS Ultra Runner of the Year**. The State RRCA gives good plaque. The plaques were presented by Bob Marston who kept records of the point totals. Also, AURA's Debbie Desjardin was selected the RRCA's Race Walker of the Year. Congratulations to all.

Other news to come out of Hot Springs is that Lynn Warner will cease publication of RUNNING ARKANSAS. Lynn was the founder, editor and publisher of the only state wide magazine devoted to running. I contributed a monthly column on *ultra running* and furnished results of the Trail Series runs. Several pictures that I submitted found their way to the pages of RUNNING ARKANSAS. As I stated this was the only state wide publication devoted to running in Arkansas. With the phasing out of Lynn's newsletter in January, the slack is being picked up by AURA's Pete Ireland and the folks of the Saline County Striders. The name of the newsletter is ARKANSAS RUNNING. I have seen a sample issue and I was impressed. All phases of running will be covered. Chrissy Duryea-Ferguson will have the first article on ultra running in the initial issue. I have signed up and if you also are interested I have included an application in this newsletter.

Somewhere in this newsletter you will find a map of the Whistlin' Dick 40K. You will notice that it is not complete. Bring it with you when you come to the run. The reason it is not complete is because I have not had the opportunity to decide on the exact route that you will be running. On Friday, the 6th, I plan on marking the route. You will need the map to give you confidence to find your way as I don't plan to put out a lot of ribbon.

ULTRA PROFILE

Angie,--while we were doing the AT-100 you and the several others got to go to the Grand Canyon and run. Tell us about it. You know, one of those what, when and how did it go articles.

THE GRAND CANYON: Rim to Rim.--Angie Ranson

The dream had always been in my mind to someday see the Grand Canyon. I said see it, not run it. Then last spring Mary Alice Spann and Kathleen McComber started talking up the idea with Arkansas Running Klub members to go as a group to run rim to rim. They had already tested the waters and did it in 1994 with the help of their very supportive husbands.

Energized by their successful completion of the run, they took on the task of organizing a larger group and organizers they are. We had several meetings complete with a slide show, information sheets and maps about the canyon. I highly recommend Mary Alice and Kathleen's travel agency(ha).

So on Friday, October 11th, 17 foolish souls, taken by the proselytizing of Mary Alice and Kathleen, assembled at the Little Rock airport to embark on an extended weekend of fun, exercise, camaraderie and adventure.

We boarded the Southwest flight non-stop to Phoenix with bags of goodies like Power Bars, GU, Gatorade, etc. You know, all that running stuff. We began the litany of excuses - not enough training, bad knees, sore feet, five extra pounds, etc. But we were also psyched - this was an adventure of a lifetime.

We landed in Phoenix and collected the two vans George Benkert had arranged to rent. For a while it looked like we were going to have to sacrifice either a person or a suitcase but we squeezed in and headed for Flagstaff, a 2 and one half hour drive where we would spend our first night.

We awoke Saturday morning ready to see the sights. George had arranged a float trip on the Colorado River so 10 of us went to Page, Arizona, to enjoy a leisurely float on the river through Glen Canyon. It was breath taking and we had a wonderful guide to tell you all the history of the area. The remaining seven decided to boost the economy and sight see. We met up at the North rim that evening and had our last carbo load before the expedition. There was a group of 40 hikers from Phoenix that had hiked from the South rim to the North rim on Saturday and were going to hike back on Monday. They had done this for the past 20 years. I could see Mary Alice and Kathleen plotting our next adventure. We left the lodge at 5:30 a.m for the 20 minute drive to the North rim for a 6:00 a.m.start. It was a nippy 39 degrees but would warm up allot especially as you got down into the canyon and on the South rim. Some decided to keep some warm clothes on while others braved the morning briskness. We huddled for a picture and down the trail we went with caution at first since it was still dark. The Kaibib Trail was rocky, dusty and slippery for a few miles down. I came to a fork with a sign pointing one way to Roaring Springs and the other to Cottonwood. Decision time! Luckily some hikers came by and pointed the way to Phantom Ranch.

The trail continued downhill with some narrow straight-aways. At times the trail hugged the canyon walls with huge drop-offs. We saw beautiful waterfalls, streams and the high rising canyon walls. The North rim gets more water so the area is more forested and prettier than the South rim. At Cottonwood Canyon the trail leveled off and running was easier. The trail is well maintained and smoother than some of our trails in Arkansas. We followed the trail through the canyon walls down to Phantom Ranch at the bottom of the Grand Canyon. We crossed over the Colorado River to begin the trek up the Bright Angel Trail. The beginning to the trail is sandy, making footing difficult. It slowly winds its way up to Indian Gardens about 4 1/2 miles from the top. The trail then becomes very steep and its definitely a fast walk or climb to the top. Along this section we meet two groups of mules taking the "sane" people down the trail. Not only did the mules create a lot of dust, they left their calling cards along the trail(ha). You thought this last section would never get to the top and was by far the hardest.

Thanks to Debbie Strobel we had a beautifully designed T-shirt identifying us and the nature of our adventure. They had ARK-Rim to Rim 1996 on them. People would spot the shirts and ask what we were doing and would be in amazement that we were running rim to rim in one day. Most people were encouraging and made us feel like goodwill ambassadors for Arkansas. With about three miles from the top there was allot of traffic of tourist and hikers making there way down the trail from the South rim. You would hear allot of different languages a they passed by. It was getting hot now on the hard push to reach the top. With the afternoon sun it was sure to get even hotter.

Paulette Brockington and I finished first in 6 hours. Mary Alice and Kathleen in just under 7 hours. Everyone was in within 10 hours with no major injuries or mishaps on the trail. Ray, George and Connie were our drivers to transport the two vans from the North rim to the South rim to pick us up. Unfortunately, Paulette and I finished a bit ahead of the predicted 7 hours and had two wait two hours at the top for our ride. It takes 5 1/2 hours to drive it and they were a little late departing the North rim. We all make it with no major injuries and we had a great day. I took pictures on the run and would love to share them with you and highly recommend that you do the Canyon at least once in your life.

We had a nice dinner together that evening, shared stories and turned in our old tired bodies. We departed around 8:30 a.m. the next morning for our drive back to Phoenix which was about a seven hour drive. As we stopped several times to sight see, take pictures and shop, people must of wondered where we had been or better still what we had done. A sorry lot we were with screaming quads and using the handicapped rest rooms, you know with the hand rails. "Help! I've sat down and I can't get up."

Our flight left around noon straight to Little Rock. Thanks to Mary Alice and Kathleen for organizing a fantastic trip. The Grand Canyon implanted some wonderful memories again. I highly recommend this trip and take a panoramic camera.

ULTRA CALENDAR

Dec 7th	Whistlin' Dick 40K, UTS#4. 8:00 a.m. Lake Sylvia parking lot
Dec 14th	Texas Trail Endurance Runs. Huntsville, Texas.
Jan 4th	Tall Peak Marathon Fun Run, Albert Pike Recreation Area. 8:00 a.m.
Feb 1st	Rocky Raccoon 100
Feb 8th	WhiteRock Classic
Feb 15th	Sylamore 50K
Mar 1st	Mississippi Trail 50. Laurel, Mississippi. Carl Touchtone. (601)649-3471.
TBA	Ouachita Trail 50
TBA	The Loggerhead. (Arrangements incomplete)

ULTRA CORNER

NOVEMBER 9TH, 1996

1996 ROCK LEDGE RUMBLE			
JIM SWEATT	5:10		
DIANNE SWEATT	6:30		
GAIL BRADFORD	6:42		
DONNA DUERR	7:14		
CHUCK DESJARDIN	8:20		
ANN MOORE	8:30		
1996 QUIVERING QUAD 50MILE AND 50K			
BOB MARSTON	9:48	50 MILE	
NICK WILLIAMS	6:59	50K	
ROGER WILLIAMS	6:59	50K	
RSEMARY MARSTON	9:14	50K	



AURA's
Debbie Desjardin(left)
being presented her
Arkansas RRCA
Race Walker
of the Year
plaque.

Saline County Striders

Membership Application / Renewal / Arkansas Runner Subscription
P. O. Box 866, Benton, AR 72018

Check one:

Arkansas Runner Subscription (\$15/yr—8 issues) OR Saline County Strider Membership (\$15/yr)
Membership / Subscription good for 1 year from date received (a minimum of 8 issues of Arkansas Runner)

Date: _____ New: Renewal: Years paying for: One Two Three

Are you now a member of an RRCA Running Club? If yes, please name: _____

NAME: _____ ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ HOME PHONE #: _____

For Membership Application Only:

Date of Birth: _____ Occupation: _____ Employer: _____

Name of Spouse: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Occupation: _____

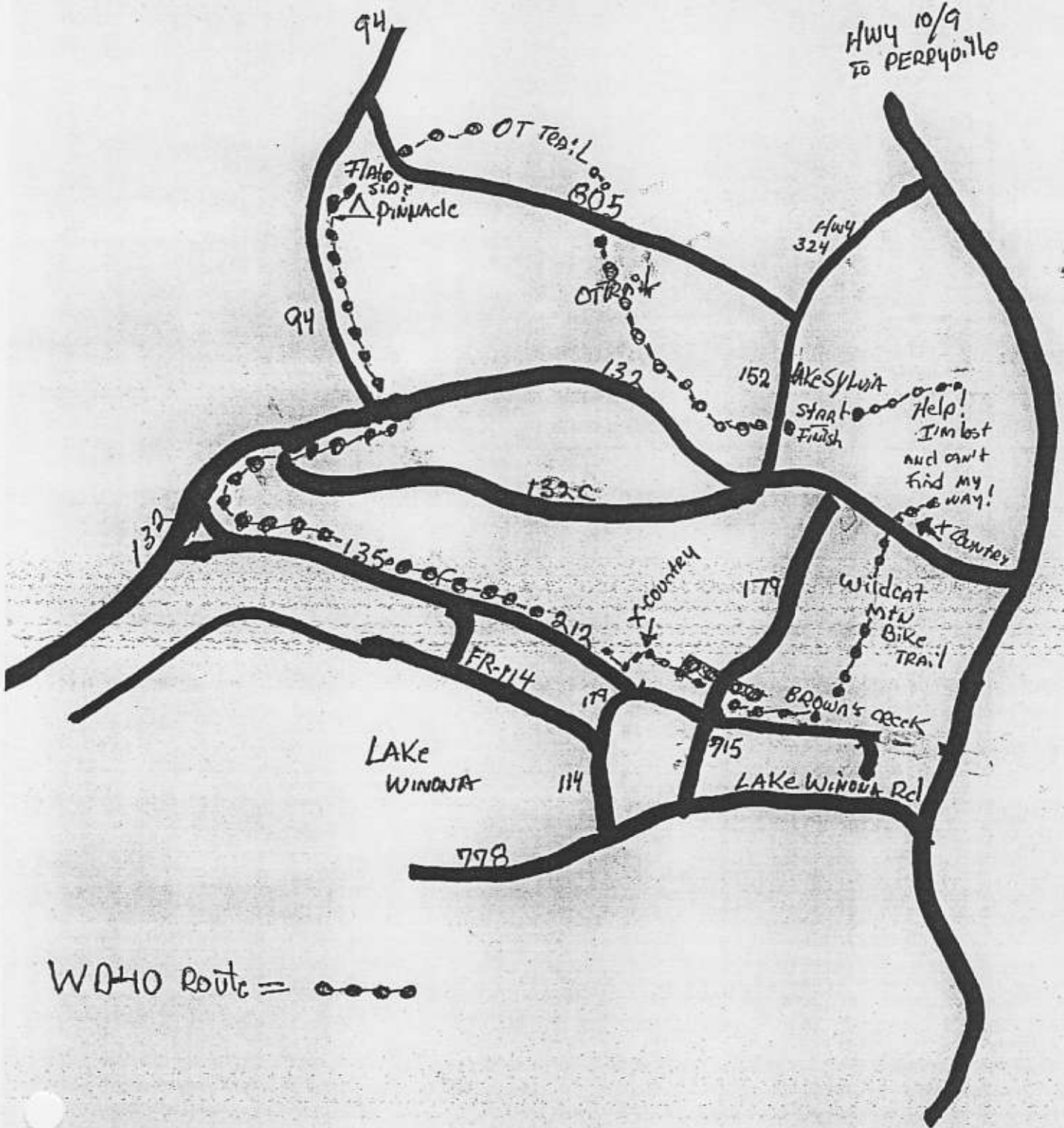
Spouse's Employer: _____ Name(s) & ages of children: _____

WAIVER: I recognize that running and related activities are potentially hazardous. I assume all risks associated with participation in club activities, including but not limited to running, racing, volunteer work, fun runs and meetings. Having read this waiver, I voluntarily agree, for myself and anyone acting on my behalf, to release the Road Runners Club of America and Saline County Striders Running Club, and its officers and members, from all claims or liabilities of any kind arising from my participation in club related activities.

Signature(s) of all adult members (required)

Whistlin' Dick 40K

Dec 7th/8 a.m./Lake Sylvia Trail Parking Lot/UTS #4



HWY 10/9
TO PERRYVILLE

HWY
TO HS

WD40 route = ●●●●