

THE FLEET FOOT

NEWSLETTER OF THE GULF WINDS TRACK CLUB | MARCH 2025



THANK YOU
FRED DECKERT

Photo credit: Jeanne O'Kon

VOLUME 50 | ISSUE 3





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Road Runners Club of America Member Club

USA Track & Field Member Club #14-1275

JANUARY 2025 BOARD MEETING RECAP

The first Gulf Winds Track Club (GWTC) board meeting of the year, held on January 8 and hosted by David and Mary Jean Yon, covered key updates, race closeouts, and new initiatives to keep the club thriving in 2025. The full minutes are at <https://www.gulfwinds.org/minutes/>.

Welcoming New Board Members

President Jerry McDaniel welcomed new board members and asked them to introduce themselves. Hawthorne Hay, an FSU graduate and SMIRFS volunteer, joins as a director. Matt Vermeer, a primary care physician and Tri Club president. Emily Webster, an 18-year Tallahassee resident, serves as Training Groups Coordinator.

New Business and Event Planning

With 2025 marking the 50th anniversary of the Palace Saloon 5K, race directors are considering ways to celebrate this milestone. The race will benefit the Tom McHaffie Scholarship Fund and the Oasis Center for Women and Girls.

Committee and Club Reports

- **Membership & Communications:** The GWTC Strava group is growing, Instagram efforts are underway, and individual membership stands at 1,275, up slightly from last year.
- **Race Directors:** A meeting is set for January 12, and a new race is in the works at Cornerstone Learning Community.
- **Triathlete Club:** The Duathlon is scheduled for February 23, led by Averi Lewis.

- **Education & Socials:** An upcoming lecture will feature Abigail Crowe discussing strength training.
- **Diversity & Inclusion:** Black Girls RUN! will have strong participation in the Tallahassee Marathon.
- **Merchandise:** The club is considering switching online vendors to Print Your Cause due to fulfillment challenges with Monogram Art.
- **Equipment & Safety:** Three water coolers were repaired, and the club purchased two defibrillators for race safety.
- **Chip Timing & Grand Prix:** Multiple club races are scheduled for chip timing, and preparations are underway for the Annual Awards Meeting on January 26.
- **Looking Ahead**

GWTC continues to grow, with training groups consistently seeing 30+ participants, and the January Streak challenge gaining momentum. With strong community involvement, exciting race milestones, and a focus on enhancing club communications, 2025 is off to a great start.

Wright, Robinson & Associates
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Managing Director
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FEAR NO DISTANCE

The background of the entire page is a photograph of several runners in silhouette, running on a road. The scene is set against a bright, hazy sky, likely at sunrise or sunset, with the sun low on the horizon. The runners are in various stages of their stride, and their shadows are cast on the road surface.

JUST YOU AND
THE OPEN ROAD
CAN DO WONDERS FOR
YOUR MENTAL HEALTH.
STAY HEALTHY, SAFE,
UP AND RUNNING.

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RACE CALENDAR



MARCH 2025

01 Shamrock Scurry 5K/1M, 8 a.m. 1M; 8:30 a.m. 5K. Killlearn Methodist Church, 2800 Shamrock South (at the Killarney Way traffic circle). Online registration available at EventBrite.com. Visit www.shamrockscurry.com; or email to jim@killlearn.church.

01 Capital City Senior Games (50+) - Track and Field, 9 a.m. javelin; 9:30 a.m. fun walk; all other events on rolling schedule starting at 10 a.m. Godby High School, 1717 W. Tharpe St. Online registration and information available at www.talgov.com/seniorgames; or Lucas Williams at (850) 891-3825.

01 St. George Island Red Pepper Run 5K, 8 a.m. Paddy's Raw Bar, 240 E. 3rd St. (start at Fire Station on East Pine), St. George Island, FL. Online registration available at Webscorer.com. Visit www.stgeorgeislandchilicookoff.com.

01 Gate River Run 15K, 8 a.m. Gator Bowl Blvd., Jacksonville, FL. Online registration available at RaceRooster.com. Visit www.gaterriverrun15k.com; or ryann@1stplacesports.com.

01-03 ACC Indoor Track & Field Championships, TBA. Norton Healthcare Sports & Learning Center, Louisville, Ky. Visit www.theacc.com.

02 FSU Medical Response Unit's 16th Annual Run for Your Life 5K, 9 a.m. Unconquered Statue on Langford Green, Doak Campbell Stadium, 288 Champions Way, FSU Campus. Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. FSU Medical Response Unit at (850) 644-3349 or uhs-mru@fsu.edu.

08 Realtors Community 5K, 8 a.m. Cascades Park, 1001 S. Gadsden St. Online registration TBA. Therese Gagliano at sarah@therese@TBRnet.org.

22 GWTC Bowlegs 5K Run for Scholarship/1M Fun Walk, 9 a.m. FSU/FAMU Engineering Building, Innovation Park, 2525 Pottsdamer St. (across from Seminole Golf Course). Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. Visit www.GulfWinds.org; or Bill Hillison at (850) 893-4557 or whillison@fsu.edu; or Larry Giunipero at (850) 878-5569 or lgiunipero@cob.fsu.edu. Rescheduled from 01/25/2025.

23-30 World Athletics Masters Indoor Championships, TBA. Alachua County Sports & Events Center at Celebration Pointe, 4870 Celebration Pointe Ave., Gainesville, FL.

27-29 Terry Long FSU Relays, 3 p.m. Thursday; 10 a.m. Friday; 10 a.m. Saturday. Mike Long Track, 1104 Spirit Way, FSU Campus. Visit www.Seminoles.com.

29 GWTC Springtime 10K/5K/1M, 7:30 a.m. 1M; 8 a.m. 10K/5K. Suwanee St. next to Cascades Park. Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. Visit www.springtime10k.com; or www.gulfwinds.org; or Jerry McDaniel at springtime10k@gmail.com.

29 Dash for DVA 5K, 9 a.m. Integration Statue on Woodward Plaza, behind Oglesby Student Union, 75 N. Woodward Ave., FSU Campus. Online registration and additional information available at alphachiomega.crowschange.co/46571; or Britain Dwyre Riley at briley@jmc.fsu.edu.

APRIL 2025

12 GWTC 50th Palace Saloon 5K, 8 a.m. Start at Messer Fields, corner of Jackson Bluff Rd. and Dupree St.; finish at The Palace Saloon, 1303 Jackson Bluff Rd. Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. Visit www.gulfwinds.org; or Tom Perkins at tomperkinsfu@gmail.com or (850) 264-4595.

12 Sopchoppy Worm Gruntin' Festival Wiggle Worm Fun Run (1.4M), 8 a.m. Corner of Rose St. and Municipal Ave., downtown Sopchoppy, FL. Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. Visit www.wormgruntinfestival.com; or Katherine Westmark at mkwestmark@gmail.com or (850) 445-4206.

19 Rose City Run 10K/1M, 8 a.m. 10K; 9:30 a.m. 1 M. North Broad St. at corner of Broad St. and Monroe St., near U.S. Post Office, Thomasville, GA. **No Race Day Registration for 1M.** Online registration available at <https://ymca-thomasville.org/rose-city-run>. Thomasville YMCA at (229) 226-9878 or rcr@ymca-thomasville.org

19 Hawk Run Jubilee 5K/1M, 1M 8:30 a.m.; 5K 9 a.m. Cascades Park, 1001 S. Gadsden St. Online registration at EventBrite.com.. Liz Gilliam at lgilliam@cornerstonelc.com or (850) 386-5550.

26 NeSmith Way 5K, 8 a.m. Phipps Farm/Meridian Meadows, 4300 N. Meridian Rd. (across from Maclay School). Online registration and additional information available at donate.giving.ufhealth.org/event/nsmith-way-5k/e645950; or Sue Ault at (850) 556-5922.

26 Nene Fest 2-Way 5K/1M, 8 a.m. 5K; 9 a.m. 1M. Optimist Park, 1806 E. Indianhead Dr. Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. Visit <http://facebook.com/nene5k>; or Marie Claire Leman at nenefest5kandfunrun@gmail.com.

26 Gladiator Challenge, an Adventure Race/5K (obstacle course races ages 3 and up; 5K obstacle course race ages 16 and up), 8 a.m. Phipps Farm, 4300 N. Meridian Rd. (across from Maclay School). Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. Visit www.gladiatorth.com; or Susan Huber at (850) 294-4204 or gladiatorth@gmail.com.

26 Rose City 5K Walk, 8:30 a.m. Thomasville Center for the Arts, 600 E. Washington St., Thomasville, GA. **No Race Day Registration.** Online registration available at <https://ymca-thomasville.org/rose-city-run-walk>. Thomasville YMCA at (229) 226-9878 or rcr@ymca-thomasville.org.

MAY 2025

01-03 SWAC Outdoor Track & Field Championships, TBA. Southern University, Baton Rouge, LA.

03 Tails and Trails Half Marathon/10K/5K/1M, 7:30 a.m. Half Marathon/1M; 8 a.m. 10K/5K. Tallahassee Animal Service Center, 1125 Easterwood Dr. next to Tom Brown Park. Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. Visit www.animalshelterfoundation.org; or Cara Fowler at carafowler@mac.com.

15-17 ACC Outdoor Track & Field Championships, TBA. Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC.

26-31 NCAA Outdoor Track & Field East Preliminary, TBA. Hodges Stadium, University of North Florida, Jacksonville, FL.

31 Alice Sims Track Invitational (AAU), 8:30 a.m. field events (rolling schedule); 10 a.m. running events (rolling schedule). Chiles High School, 7200 Lawton Chiles Lane. Alice Sims at alicesims3435@gmail.com or (850) 322-3929.



Tallahassee, FL

Gulf Winds Track Club

GRAND PRIX

All GWTC members receive points for finishing in the top 12 positions by age group for Grand Prix events. It's a fun way to compete with fellow members throughout the year.

2025 Complete Grand Prix Schedule

Date	Race	Adult	Youth
March 22	Bowlegs 5k & 1M	5K	5K or 1M
March 29	Springtime 10k, 5k, & 1M	10K	5K or 1M
April 12	Palace Saloon 5k	5K	-
April 26	NeSmith Way 5k	-	5K
June 7	Great Potluck Bash 4 Miler	4M	-
August 8	Breakfast on the Track	1M	1M
August 16	Miller Landing Madness 8K/5K/3K	8K/5K	3K
September 1	Bluebird Run 5k (1mile not timed)	5K	-
September 13	5K for Sickle Cell Anemia & Tim Simpkins 1 Mile	-	5K or 1M
September 20	Women's Distance Festival 5K & 1M	-	5K or 1M
September 27	Steve Prefontaine 5K Forest Run	5K	-
October 11	Pine Run at Tall Timbers 20K	20K	-
November 27	Turkey Trot 15k, 10k, 5k, & 1M	15K	5K or 1M
December 13	Tallahassee Ultra Distance Classic 50M/50K	50K or Marathon	-

GRAND PRIX STANDINGS

Get the complete 2024 standings by visiting:
<https://runsignup.com/Series/GWTCGrandPrix>



PRESIDENTS COLUMN

By: Jerry McDaniel, GWTC President

I have written time and again about my old running group, the Sloths. Not unlike the group runs that many of you are now a part of, this group of friends came together and bonded as a result of daily runs from a downtown office building in the middle of our work days. I cannot overstate the value and sense of satisfaction and well being that comes from: initial fun runs with new acquaintances, morphing into harder training alongside friends, and eventually stiff competition for bragging rights. No reason anyone needs to go further than the initial stages, it is just what happened to me and could occur in your group. As you can see from the picture, our runs migrated to bicycle trips. In the case of this picture which was coincidentally shared with me this past week, the seven of us planned a self supported bike ride along the northern stretches of the Great Divide Trail out west (off road trail from Canada to Mexico). We started in Banff, Alberta Canada and a few of us bailed in White Fish, Montana while other continued on.

This picture was taken at a lodge in Alberta, Canada after 2-3 days of riding and camping in the rain (thus my happy countenance). My hope is that as you all join groups, lasting relationships will form and possible trips together to marathons or other running events (or cycling adventures) will ensue. Emily Webster hinted in her Volunteer profile last month the special bonds that can and do form in such groups.

I would be remiss without mentioning the upcoming (3/29) Springtime Races which Jackie and I direct. I have written in a previous column how I accidentally entered the very first Springtime race in 1976, which I believe was my first racing experience ever. A look back at the history of this race is interesting and can be found on the website: springtime10K.com.



Of note are the large variety of race directors the race has had over it's almost 50 year span(16 -17 by my count); variety of courses(mostly variations on a theme - downtown/ Myers Pk); race(s) - other than the original 4 mile race, Springtime offered only a 10K for 30 years, from 1977 - 2007 at which point the current 3 races were offered; a Governor(Askew) awarded the winner's trophy one year, and another Governor(Scott) ran the 5K one year; lastly, the highest # of finishers was 1877 on 2011(which we hope to eclipse this year)! Please sign up to race, walk, watch or volunteer!

The Marathon/ Half was quite successful this year with record #'s. I wish to thank Geb Kiros and Tsige Tadesse, the Skrobs, the Wrights and a slew of volunteers for making this event happen this year. There are folks in this club that dedicate enormous amounts of time to this event and others just so runners can come from far and wide (and near) to have a well coordinated and safe race experience. Also, a big thanks to the Bank of America for stepping up to become the title sponsor for these races! We anticipate our partnership with Bank of America to continue for future races.



YEAR ROUND RUNNING GROUPS

Learn a lot more about
running groups by visiting
www.gulfwinds.org/training.

TUESDAY MORNING INTERVALS

Tuesday, 6:30am at Maclay School Track

TUESDAY EVENING INTERVALS

Tuesday, 6:00pm at Railroad Square (by skate park/rattler snake)

MIDTOWN MIDWEEK MILES

Wednesday, 5:30am at Whole Foods Market

WEDNESDAY EVENING INTERVAL WORKOUT GROUP

Wednesday, 5:30pm at Harriman Circle Park

OPTIMIST PARK THURSDAY NIGHT GROUP RUN

Thursday, 6pm at Optimist Park

SUNDAY AT FOREST MEADOWS TRAIL RUN

Sunday, 7:30am at
Forest Meadows Tennis Complex

REFLECTION TRAIL RUN

Every 2nd and last Sunday, 6:30pm
at Tom Brown Park



REMEMBERING FRED DECKERT: A TRUE PILLAR OF GULF WINDS TRACK CLUB

The Gulf Winds Track Club has lost a legend. Fred Deckert, longtime editor of Fleet Foot, race photographer, writer, race director, and mentor, left an indelible mark on our running community.

For many years, when you crossed the finish line at a GWTC race, chances are Fred was there—camera in hand, ready to snap the moment of triumph. His dedication to documenting the sport went beyond simple photography; he made sure that every runner, from the fastest to the last, had their moment in the spotlight.



Fred and his wife, Margarete, were the first couple inducted into the GWTC Hall of Fame, recognized for their countless contributions. Fred directed the Ultra Marathon, penned a beloved running column in the Tallahassee Democrat, and led the GWTC Lecture Series, always reminding his successor that the key to a good lecture was—of course—pizza. Even at 90, when he retired as Fleet Foot editor, Fred's passion never faded.

Our hearts go out to Margarete and all who knew and loved Fred. His legacy will forever run through Gulf Winds.

GWTC MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS OF FRED DECKERT

Jeanne O'Kon

Fred was extremely kind and always spoke to me in a humorous, joking way. His sense of humor was infectious! Fred spent countless hours taking pictures of every runner at our races. In addition, he and Margarete collected "gently used" running shoes and brought them to the kids at Summer Track every week. All of the shoes were taken by needy kids and their families. Both of them have always shown kindness and consideration to everyone in GWTC. They are truly "family."

Mary Jean Yon

Many runners keep a collection of their favorite running memories. A photo, a newspaper article, race results, etc. I recently learned that in Fred Deckert's collection, there was a copy of his speech when he presented me with the 2001 GWTC Runner of the Year award. So many fun memories. It would take me eight years to repay the favor by presenting Fred with an Appreciation Award in 2009 for his valued work as a club photographer and the endless hours he spent photographing our area races. Other GWTC awards he earned included Hall of Fame in 2003 (with Margarete) and the Cleveland Caldwell Advancement of the Sport in 2019. As for me...I'll always be looking for him at the finish line, hoping for a flattering shot!

Bonnie Wright:

He had the corniest of jokes, but they were funny.

Mark Priddy

Back before the Club was automated, the Club's Fleet Foot newsletter, with Fred as the editor and primary photographer, was then delivered only by the Postal Service. I was Membership Chairperson at the time, so when members relocated, and their Fleet Foot issues were returned as undeliverable, Fred would call me up, scold me because the mailing addresses were incorrect, (my fault, of course), and tell me that I had to locate these folks, update their mailing addresses, then drive all over town to personally deliver the returned issues. Not a problem unless they had moved out of town! I loved and respected him.

Bill Hillison:

Some time back, Bud Fennema and Fred got into an impassioned discussion about politics. It seems that they are on opposite ends of the spectrum. Neither Fred nor Bud was willing to concede. It was a time when Fred was doing most of the photography for GWTC. From that time on, we teased Bud that his GWTC pictures were always blurred or unflattering. 📷



Rose City Walk

Saturday, April 26, 2025

5,000 Meter Walk

- Performance T-shirts and specially designed diecast medals awarded to those who finish the course.
- Entry fee \$25 postmarked by midnight April 12, 2025. After April 12, \$30 late entry fee.
- NO RACE DAY REGISTRATION. NO REFUND.
- Walk begins at 8:30 a.m. at Thomasville Center for the Arts, 600 East Washington Street.
- Silver trophies to first three males & females & first three Thomas County males & females.
- Special Business & Civic Club Participation Trophies.
- Entrants must be 13 years or older to participate.
- WALKERS WILL NOT HAVE BIBS.

NAME: _____
(first) (last)

MAILING ADDRESS: _____
(street or box)

(city) (county) (state) (zip)

PHONE: _____

AGE (As of 04/26/25): _____ BIRTHDATE: _____ SEX: _____

E-MAIL _____

EMPLOYER AND CLUB AFFILIATION: _____

CIRCLE ONE: T-SHIRT SIZE:

Youth Large or Adult S M L XL XXL (\$3 extra) XXXL (\$4 extra)

ENCLOSED IS \$ _____ \$25 or \$30 for late fee after April 12, 2025

(Make check payable to Rose City Run)

Name and number of emergency contact _____

For and in consideration of my being allowed to participate in the Rose City Walk (hereinafter "the event") on behalf of myself, my heirs, personal representatives and assigns, I hereby assume all risks and waive all claims for injury or illness which may result, directly, or indirectly, from my participation in the event and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the City of Thomasville, the Thomasville YMCA, sponsors, organizers and their respective employees, elected officials, appointed officials and any other person or entity associated with the event of and from all actions and claims, including attorney's fees, which may be incurred by reason of my participation in the event. I understand that anyone entering the event who is not adequately trained is taking a definite risk of suffering physical ailments. I do hereby state that I have trained properly and that I am physically prepared to participate in the event, and I expressly assume the risk of any illness or injury which may result from my participation in the event.

I authorize the use of any photograph, moving picture, or any other graphic depiction made immediately before, during or after my participation in the event by the organizers or others and I expressly waive any claim or privilege or privacy, or right to compensation for the publication of any such photograph, film or other graphic depiction.

Signature of Entrant

MAIL ENTRY FORMS TO:

ROSE CITY RUN

P.O. Box 1037

Thomasville, Georgia 31799

(229) 226-9878

E-MAIL: rcr@ymca-thomasville.org



46th annual Rose City Run

Saturday, April 19, 2025

10,000 METER RACE

- Performance T-shirts and specially designed diecast medals awarded to those who finish the course.
- Silver trophies for first three males and first three females in each of 12 age divisions.
- Race day late registration 6:30-7:30 a.m. at Big Oak
- Race starts at 8:00 a.m. on Broad Street at post office
- Entry fee is \$25 postmarked by April 5, 2025. \$30 late entry fee. No refund.
- All courses TAC certified.
- Atlanta Track Club qualifying event.

1-MILE RUN

- One-mile run is for males and females 12 and under. Cost is \$15 early entry fee and \$20 after April 5.
- **NO RACE-DAY REGISTRATION. NO REFUND.**
- Trophies will be awarded to the first three males and three females in each of three age divisions.
- Age divisions 6 & under, 7-9 and 10-12.
- Race starts at 9:30 a.m. on Broad Street at post office
- Performance T-shirts and specially designed diecast medals awarded to participants who complete the course.

10,000 METER RUN

(Please Circle Which Race)

1-MILE RUN

NAME: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____
(first) (last)

(street or box)

(city)

(county)

(state)

(zip)

PHONE: _____ PUBLIC OFFICIAL YES NO

AGE (As of 04/20/24): _____ BIRTHDATE: _____ SEX: _____

SCHOOL, EMPLOYER

AND CLUB AFFILIATION: _____

E-mail address: _____

CIRCLE ONE: T-SHIRT SIZE: Adult S M L XL

XXL (\$3 extra) XXXL (\$4 extra)

CHILD: S (6-8) M (10-12) L (14-16)

ENCLOSED IS \$ _____ FOR MY ENTRY (Make check payable to Rose City Run)

****Bibs can be picked up race day at the Big Oak beginning at 6:30 a.m.****

For and in consideration of my being allowed to participate in the Rose City Run (hereinafter "the event") on behalf of myself, my heirs, personal representatives and assigns, I hereby assume all risks and waive all claims for injury or illness which may result, directly, or indirectly, from my participation in the event and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Gulf Winds Track Club of Tallahassee, Florida, the City of Thomasville, the Thomasville YMCA, sponsors, organizers and their respective employees, elected officials, appointed officials and any other person or entity associated with the event and from all actions and claims, including attorney's fees, which may be incurred by reason of my participation in the event. I understand that anyone entering the event who is not adequately trained is taking a definite risk of suffering physical ailments. I do hereby state that I have trained properly and that I am physically prepared to participate in the event, and I expressly assume the risk of any illness or injury which may result from my participation in the event.

I authorize the use of any photograph, moving picture, or any other graphic depiction made immediately before, during or after my participation in the event by the organizers or others, and I expressly waive any claim or privilege of privacy, or right to compensation for the publication of any such photograph, film or other graphic depiction.

Emergency contact's name and number _____

Signature of entrant, or of parent or legal guardian if under 18 years of age.

MAIL ENTRY FORMS TO:

ROSE CITY RUN

P.O. Box 1037 (229) 226-9878

Thomasville, Georgia 31799



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St. George Island, FL 32328
Phone: 850.799.1882
Fax: 850.799.1884

www.ManausaLaw.com

FEATURED FEET

LINDSEY ZANDER



Childhood ambition: I'm not sure that I had a specific occupation in mind, but I knew I wanted to make a meaningful difference in people's lives.

Current occupation: Executive Director, Florida Education Foundation

If money were no object, what profession would you choose? Possibly a teacher, or some sort of profession helping children.

Favorite running memory: Completing my first half marathon last year. Then, completing it for a second time this year (and 17 minutes faster)!

Indulgence: Ice cream or a nice glass of wine.

Non-running hobbies: Spending time with family and friends and working out at Orange Theory Fitness.

Favorite reads: Unfortunately, I don't have much time for reading these days.

Best place to run in Tallahassee: I typically run in the Betton Hills and Midtown areas as they're close to our house, but I love exploring the Tallahassee trails like the Greenway.

Preferred running technology: Apple Watch & Strava App.

Perfect day: My perfect running day is slightly overcast with temperatures in the mid-40's to mid-50's.

Biggest challenge: Balancing the demands of everyday life and finding the time to get the run or workout in. 🏃



Tallahassee, FL
Gulf Winds Track Club
GRAND PRIX

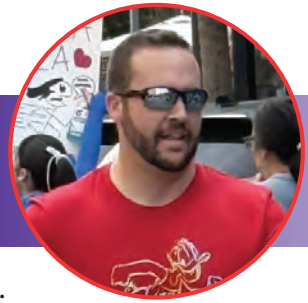
2025 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Members aged 15 and older must perform volunteer service for at least one GWTC race.

Document your volunteer service here
<https://tinyurl.com/GWTCVolunteer>

FEATURED FEET

SKYLAR ZANDER



Childhood ambition: My childhood ambition was to grow up and make as much money as possible to support my family. I grew up poor with my family living paycheck to paycheck and on a prayer. I just knew I wanted to not have to have the same worries and struggles my parents did.

Current occupation: I'm the State Director for a nonprofit called Americans for Prosperity which is an issue advocacy organization that focuses on making changes to Government.

If money were no object, what profession would you choose? I'd be a woodworker. I love creating things and focusing on the projects that I do is very therapeutic.

Favorite running memory: It's not one event, but many: running the Tallahassee Turkey Trot is my favorite. It's been a tradition of our family, and I haven't missed one in twelve years, I think.

Indulgence:
Bourbon and Desserts

Non-running hobbies: Golf and Woodworking

Favorite reads: Nightingale, Splendid and the Vile, and The Man Who Ran Washington: The Life of James A. Baker III

Best place to run in Tallahassee: There are so many incredible options, but I enjoy running through the midtown and downtown neighborhoods. Betton and Waverly Hills are my favorites.

Preferred running technology: Strava and my Apple Watch

Perfect day: 58 Degrees and Sunny

Biggest challenge: My biggest running challenge recently has been the Tallahassee Half Marathon. I hadn't run a half marathon in a long time and I've been battling injuries, but I made it through and had a blast. 🏃‍♂️

JOIN THE SPRINGTIME 10K TRAINING GROUP

**Mondays at 5:45 pm
at Myers Park**

Starting Feb 10th the training group runs for 7 weeks to prepare for the race!



PARIS MARATHON

2019

BY LISA BRITT



Pushing the registration button for the Paris Marathon, or Marathon de Paris, in mid 2018 meant I had committed myself to train and be marathon ready April 14, 2019 race day in Paris. I felt a mixture of excitement and fear at running 26.2 miles or 42 km through the streets of one of the most well known cities in the world. I didn't know that running the Paris marathon that year would put me front and center to Notre Dame Cathedral catching fire the next day. The recent reopening of the cathedral brought back the memories of the experience.

There's nothing quite like Paris. So running the Paris marathon felt like an epic experience. On the course I felt like I was running with the world. Runners had their name and home country on their bibs. I saw at least a dozen different countries, multiple nationalities, languages and cultures all there for the common running experience with an unspoken support for one another. American spectators on the course cheered "Go USA!" as I ran by. The race route took us by multiple landmarks in Paris, the Champs Elysees, Place de la Concorde, Place de la Bastille, along the Siene, Notre Dame, Eiffel Tower and Arc de Triomphe. Beautiful sights to distract from the building fatigue mile after mile. As I neared the finish I heard "Allez!", "Courage!" from the French people cheering. I ran continuously for 5 hours and 27 minutes. With an overwhelming feeling of elation at the finish, my daughter and I navigated back to our Paris flat for a well deserved rest. I looked forward to the remainder of the trip being relaxing and low key as I recovered and enjoyed Paris.

The next day a text from a friend asked "Are you okay?". I thought she was checking on my recovery then texted Notre Dame cathedral had caught fire.





“What?!” I thought, incredulous. I had just ran by it the day before. Being so close I looked out the window of our flat and could see the smoke billowing into the sky.

A very sad sight for me after having the privilege of touring the inside of the cathedral. I thought of the beautiful art and architecture now threatened by fire. Seeing the spire collapse I felt a pit in my stomach.

The next day my daughter and I walked near the cathedral. It felt like we needed to pay our respects to this longstanding symbol of French history and religion. Despite there being a large crowd of people it was eerily quiet. Not the usual hustle and bustle of a busy metropolitan city. It was like a collective breath holding while we gazed upon this wounded building missing its signature spire and roof, black char visible on the ornate stonework while firefighters continued their efforts. Amazingly many of the stained glass windows survived the blaze. We could see their various colors contrasting with the grey stone and black char. What a different mood from just 2 days ago when the Paris firefighters had their ladder trucks extended over the street with signs of encouragement for the marathoners, the whole city cheering and happy, the noise a joyful sound. This day it was somber and quiet, the eyes of the world on the Cathedral.

We flew back the next day. As I was enjoying my last French croissant with my tea I reflected on the experience of the race and the fire, obviously an unexpected but big part of the experience, and felt gratitude. I was thankful to be in a place that I love with people from all over the world to enjoy and then to endure these two events and witness the outpouring of so much human compassion.

J'ADORE PARIS. J'ADORE COURIR. (I love Paris. I love to run)

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Tell us briefly about your running experience. My running journey began in 2013, thanks to the encouragement of my now-husband. Our first 5K was a real challenge for me—I was even convinced I had exercise-induced asthma (turns out, I didn't). But we kept training, and with every mile I logged, running became easier. Since then, I've completed countless short races, nearly twenty half marathons, a marathon, a 27-mile trail run, and a 50K.

How long have you been a member of GWTC? When I moved to Tallahassee from West Virginia in 2019, I joined GWTC. Unsure where to start, I randomly picked a name from The Fleet Foot directory and emailed with

questions about local trails and training groups. To my surprise, she met me at Tom Brown Park the very next week. That small act of kindness made my decision to join GWTC feel right.

How did you first get involved as a volunteer? I began by volunteering whenever local races needed extra help. As I became more involved in the running community, I stepped up to lead the Turkey Trot Training Group and serve as a GWTC Group Run Coordinator.

What do you enjoy most about volunteering? What I value most about volunteering is the chance to introduce new runners to the sport I love. I also enjoy connecting with experienced runners and learning from their journeys.

Why do you volunteer? Volunteers play an essential role in organizing races, from behind-the-scenes preparations to race day support like handing out water, fuel, providing directions, and managing traffic. Their efforts ensure runners can safely enjoy the course. Our running community thrives thanks to volunteers! I chose to volunteer to give back.

What is your next volunteer project? I am currently helping with the new Tallahassee Half Marathon Training Group and plan to lead the Turkey Trot Training Group again next year. 🏃





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Investing in Our Community

GWTC club races contribute 50% (or more) of all race proceeds to an area charity. Here are a few of the many thank you letters your club receives.

