

The Starting Line

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FTC Cleans Up Falmouth!

by Sandra Blatchford

Moving forward and giving back- a motto that is often heard by those who know Carl Gustafson well. Giving forward to the community and then perhaps giving a little more. Don't just do what is expected of you, do one more thing, and that is what eleven Falmouth Track Club members did on Sunday April 30th. Steve Vanderlaske came up with the idea to orchestrate a clean up on Jones Road. Motivated by Carl's quest for ideas for a Spring give-back, Steve threw out the idea to organize a day of picking up trash on Jones Road. So it began, Carl sent out emails, quoting Dr. Seuss making track club members aware of the April 30th clean-up.

The sun was shining on April 30th, the crisp spring air brought eleven participants who were ready to walk the 1.7 miles towards Cape Cod Bagel. We met at Stop and Shop, gathered our gloves and trash bags and set out to pick up trash. The comradery and enthusiasm grew as we trekked down the road cleaning up the trash that accumulated. Twenty bags of trash later we all convened at Cape Cod Bagel to share the feeling of community and enjoy each other's company after a job well done. A nice bagel and a warm cup of coffee, while delicious was nearly not as satisfying as the morning had been. We cleaned, engaged in positive conversations and shared the joy of giving back to our community, our home.

Sandra Blatchford enjoys running and sharing her running experiences with her children. From running a Mudderella with her daughter, to running with her son as he runs his first marathon. Running is more than exercise it is a time to share conversation, engage in new adventures, and embrace the memories.



"I know it may seem
small and
insignificant, but it's
not about what it is,
it's about what it can
become"

-The Once-ler
Dr. Seuss' The Lorax



Caption: "Dr. Seuss' The Lorax" 2012
Photo: Eden Project Website
Designed by: TheLifetimeAdventurer.tumblr.com



UNLESS someone like you
cares a whole awful lot,
nothing is going to get better.
It's not. —The Lorax



Getting to know: Jack's PACT founder ~ Sam Mueller

By Lindsay Benson

I have had the pleasure of working directly with Samantha "Sam" Mueller in her role as elementary school adjustment counselor for the past several months, when my students were transferred to her caseload. Since our introduction, Sam has become my go-to for all questions and concerns regarding students' social/emotional health and counseling needs, despite the fact that she is only on our campus one day per week. "Don't worry, Sam will be here on Thursday. She's awesome..." has become one of my mantras. I was first introduced to Jack's PACT in February, via social media. I decided to utilize the contact form on the Jack's PACT website, in order to become involved with this year's Run Jack Run event. To my surprise, I received a response from Sam. Sam - OUR Sam - is the president of Jack's PACT. As Sam



four FHS seniors who have volunteered Jack's PACT us for several years (L-R: Theresa Porter, Kerry Shanahan, Grace Peterson and Casey Waggett).

for "Positive Alternatives for Community & Teens" and also describes the "pact" we have that allows folks to sign a pledge committing to not drink and drive. Today, we offer a variety of community service opportunities for youth to engage in positive ways with others including Peer Mentoring which is a core component of Jack's PACT.

LB: Did you assume a leadership role in the organization from the beginning? How has your involvement evolved as

Jack's PACT has grown?

SM: There have been several key members of Jack's PACT and most are board members. I have been president since it began and that did evolve into Youth Advisor as well once we began working more closely with the schools, helping students with their Senior Projects at FHS, and as a contact for the many teen volunteers we have. Over the last nearly 6 years, the involvement has grown as our group has continued to grow. The time is far greater to just check my Jack's PACT email than even three years ago. All of our volunteers' level of involvement has grown over the years, which I am so grateful for, and I think it is a testament to the impact this group has been able to make on our community in memory of my brother.

LB: How did Jack's PACT become involved with local running events, such as Cape Cod Trail Race & the Falmouth Road Race?

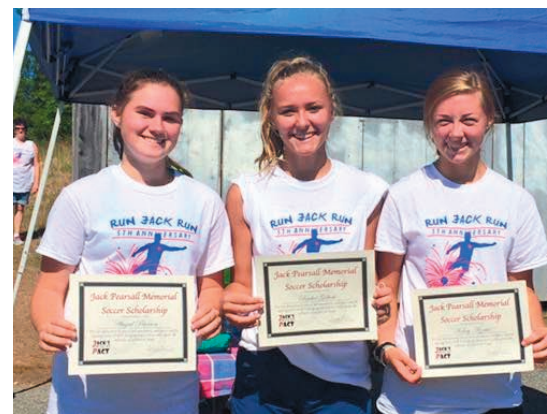
SM: Our biggest event each year is our own running event, "Run Jack Run Family Fun Run/Walk" held every 4th of July, the anniversary of Jack's death. This year will be the 6th annual event. It is just a 1-mile fun run and way to raise awareness for the severity of drunk driving, but it also draws attention on the local running community. I think the Falmouth Track Club has been hugely supportive of many causes like ours that are local and personal. We appreciate Carl and others from FTC spreading the word, running in our event, and of course being sponsors too. Jack's PACT was lucky enough to be chosen twice as a charitable recipient of the Cape Cod Trail Race. It was a wonderful opportunity to share Jack's story with a caring compassionate audience. We also have organized a volunteer team the past few years to help out at the Falmouth Road Race Finish Line. Tony Sciarrillo, one of our loyal volunteers who has been a Cape Cod Marathon and Falmouth Road Race volunteer for years, helped land us that great gig and we love it each summer!



and I corresponded more about the organization and their involvement in community events, specifically running events, I knew that she would be the perfect candidate for an interview for The Starting Line.

LB: Sam, thanks so much for taking the time to allow me to "interview" you - virtually. Please provide a brief history of Jack's PACT.

SM: This group was established after my brother Jack Pearsall, 16, was struck and killed by a drunk driver in July 2011. At first, it was a way to honor him by just providing scholarships for graduating seniors in his name. It quickly became much larger than that as our family and friends recognized the powerful message we were beginning to create for youth as well as adults about never driving while under the influence. PACT stands



LB: How did you decide on creating your own running event (Run Jack Run), in order to honor Jack & raise awareness surrounding the dangers of drunk driving?

SM: My mom Kelly Pearsall came up with the name "Run Jack Run" because Jack was super fast, and competitive. He played soccer his whole life and we remember coaches always yelling that to him. Jack loved running. It was a passion of his. When he was really young he began beating me (7 years older than him) in the Falmouth Main Street Mile. It was clear we needed to honor him with a running event, and having it start at one soccer field (the FHS Varsity Field) and end at his travel soccer field (Trotting Park) was really a perfect route.

LB: Describe your experience volunteering at the 2017 Cape Cod Trail Race. (Thanks for cheering me on!)

SM: It was my second year volunteering at the CC Trail Race and I love it. The energy at the Start/Finish is really inspiring and fun to be part of. It takes a lot of dedicated folks to put on an event

athlete Jackson Chorchos. To register to run/walk or check out sponsorship opportunities, folks should visit our website www.jackspact.org to either download forms or sign up online. On July 4th we will also be organizing our "SHINE ON Jack" event for the 2nd year in a row. It is simple way to show support for our cause to prevent drunk/drugged driving by shining a light at sunset--flashlight, porch light, candle, sparkler, etc. It serves as

a reminder to drive safe and encourage friends and family to do the same on a holiday that has historically seen far too many drunk driving crashes. Details are also on our website about this and we encourage anyone anywhere to take part and share their "SHINE ON Jack" photos for this year's



video.

LB: What do you envision for the future of Jack's PACT?

SM: We are working now to expand our current pledge from not drinking and driving to be more applicable to a greater audience and to include younger children who are of course not yet able to drive. This is important to our board as well as youth that are currently involved. We are working on language that can convey the idea of "making healthy choices" at any age. We are also going to continue growing our Peer Mentoring Program with the Falmouth Recreation Center and improving the way we support other initiatives locally that fall within our mission of providing "positive alternatives" (i.e. youth sporting events, holiday toy/gift drives, Falmouth's substance-free After-Prom Party).



like that and it just shows how much people care about this event and what it stands for: Run Forward, Give Back. We will definitely continue to be part of this race in the future!

LB: What can we expect for Run Jack Run 2017? How can local runners and other members of the Falmouth community register to participate or to become involved in another way?

SM: For our 6th annual RJR on Tuesday July 4th, we hope for great weather! Rain or shine, we always have a great time with wonderful music to pump you up from Sister

Spin Entertainment/Cheryl Atherton and Tony Sciarillo, fun pick-up soccer games after the race at Trotting Park, a brief recognition ceremony also following the race for our incredible scholarship recipients. This year's t-shirts have a awesome design and were created by FHS student-

Lindsay "Blizzard" Benson is a former summer-person, who returned to her Massachusetts roots after spending eight years in Charlotte, NC. She lives in Falmouth Heights with her husband and three sons. Lindsay is the lower elementary (K-4) Therapeutic Intervention Program (TIP) teacher for Falmouth Public Schools. When she's not teaching, Lindsay enjoys running, hiking, reading Elin Hilderbrand novels, and working on her post-run selfie technique.

A Dinner to Remember..... and the 4th Annual Cape Cod Trail Race

By Nina Geatrakas

On April 9th, a record 430 runners competed in the 4th annual Cape Cod Trail Race, running distances from 5K to 50K. Each step they took on the beautiful trails of the Frances A. Crane Wildlife Management Area benefitted the Martin Richard Foundation; Children's Integrative Therapies, Pain Management and Supportive Care (ChIPS); Massachusetts Outdoor Heritage Foundation; Cape & Islands Police K-9 Relief Fund; and Calmer Choice.

The night before the race, runners were invited to the Navigator in East Falmouth to try some yoga, learn about Physical Therapy, browse new running shoes, and meet the representatives from each of the charitable organizations. Runners were then treated to the Dinner of Champions, a pasta dinner prepared home-style by a small but dedicated group of volunteers who love to cook amazing food. The culinary volunteers made fresh salsa and guacamole for the pre-dinner chips and dip appetizer, and then whipped up wheat and gluten-free pasta, with alfredo sauce, vegan sauce, meat sauce and a fresh vegetable sauce. Almost 200 runners and their families enjoyed this delicious meal and then settled in to hear Bill Richard speak of his experiences since the death of his son Martin during the 2013 Boston Marathon Bombing. On Race Day, there were many, many miles run in honor and remembrance of Martin Richard.

On Sunday morning, runners were energized for the day ahead. Many gathered for a pre-race yoga session in a cleared field with the rising sun as a picturesque backdrop. We all enjoyed the uplifting sounds of bagpipe music, and then the racers were sent off to run by the singing of the National Anthem. Along the trails, they would encounter a Hawaiian-themed Aid Station, and those who were feeling nostalgic could fuel-up at the MASH-Unit Aid Station—



final runner has crossed the finish line; the men and women who brave strong winds and rain to put up tents at the Aid Stations and at registration in the days before the race; the

Medical team seemingly everywhere at once keeping an eye on our runners and tending to those who need attention; the logistics 'guys' who do the heavy lifting we never see but depend on; and the countless others who organize volunteers, recycle and compost so the race is nearly waste-free, seek out donations from the local community, run the raffle and registration, and many, many more.....this is our running community and together we nailed it again!! Another great Cape Cod Trail Race, with memories to last a lifetime!



Back to Boston

by Jill Polvinen

After Boston 2014 (my 3rd marathon), I “retired” from running marathons. At the time I felt there was no way I could physically or emotionally top that achievement. Running the Boston marathon is something I (as a slow runner) never thought I would have the opportunity to do, but thanks to the BAA’s invitational entries extended to the general public after 2013, I took a chance, wrote an essay and got my number. The experience was amazing - there’s nothing like running down Boylston Street and seeing the crowd and the finish line - but after the all the hard training and pain that comes with running a marathon in mid-April, I said “never again”.

Fast forward to 2016, I became a volunteer at the finish line on Boylston Street. That’s when Boston Marathon fever struck me again. When I learned that Meb (who won in 2014) and Kathrine Switzer would be running, I wanted to be a part of it. This would be Meb’s last Boston and the 50th anniversary of Kathrine’s infamous Boston run. When I ran in 2014, I wrote 261 (Kathrine’s 1967 bib number) on my bib, so I felt a connection to both of them. When the time came, I applied for an FTC waiver and was thrilled to be granted one at the end of 2016.

But now it was time to get to work. Over the past few years I had some ailments that seriously compromised my immune system, including Lyme Disease and Adrenal Fatigue. Oh and don’t forget Seasonal Affective Disorder and my general disdain of winter. This was going to be a challenge. Right away I knew I had to forget about beating my marathon PR (4:28:52). This year it was going to be about getting to finish line without compromising my health. My plan was focus on the endurance aspect by conditioning my aerobic system by training with a heart rate monitor. By training at a slower pace and not going anaerobic, I was eventually able to run for long periods with minimal fatigue and soreness. I was also able to run a less frequently and get lots of rest in between. I also focused on eating an anti-inflammatory diet to avoid illness and injury. You can find more information on this revolutionary training approach from Mark Sisson’s [Primal Endurance](#) book and podcast.

April 17, 2017 was a beautiful spring day. Because I wasn’t focused on my time, I was able to really enjoy the experience and once again feel the exhilaration of running down Boylston Street. Marathons are like child birth or tattoos, after the pain fades you start thinking about the next one, however I have no plans to tackle another marathon any time soon. But I know now to never say never.

