



Adventure on the Ocmulgee

By Jeanne Roddenberry

The new Water Works Park showcases some of Macon's most beautiful and challenging river front terrain. I toured it all in the recent Ocmulgee Adventure Race- and I do mean all of it, from the crystal clear river to the stagnant ponds and storm culverts.

Around the end of June, my husband said to me, "Let's do the adventure race this year." "Yeah," I laughed, "sure." He said, "No, I'm serious. They've made it easier, beginners can do it. Come on, it will be

great." "Hum," I said and tried to avoid the subject from then on. I was scared to death to do it. I'm not much of an athlete; in fact I have only started running about 3 months ago. I had visions of my husband dragging me through the course while I cried and called him terrible names that I would regret later. Still, part of me wanted to do it to see if I could actually finish.

I never told him yes or no but he continued on as if I was as excited about it as he was. I was hoping he would forget to sign up. No such luck. Eric had signed us up as a co-ed team.

The night before, we loaded our boat, bikes, bug spray, sun screen, and poison ivy block into the truck. We debated about whether to wear our clip on bike shoes -I decided not to, one less way to fall I figured. I tried on all of my exercise clothes, trying to find the best combination for biking, swimming and running all at the same the same time. I couldn't be-



Eric & Jeanne Roddenberry make a great team at the Ocmulgee Adventure Race on July 26th.

lieve I was doing this, but I was as ready as I knew how to be.

Part of the "adventure" of an adventure race is that the check points and how you will get to them is a closely guarded secret until the morning of the race. Inside of our packets that morning we found a sheet of paper with 3 topo maps. The maps were marked with 10 numbered red dots and 15 numbered yellow dots. The instructions consisted of: 1) How they determine the winner - the team finding

the most checkpoints i.e. red or yellow dots, 2) how much time you have -4 hours, and 3) you must stay within 100 feet of your teammates at all times. There were a few sentences about which check points to get first and when you need a life jacket and that was about it. I kept turning the paper over and over. Where are the rest of the instructions? I looked around at the other teams; most of them were poring over their maps and marking them with colored highlighters. Other teams were warming up or carrying coolers full of drinks to the staging area. They all looked like they were better prepared and in better shape than I was. As I strapped on my backpack containing a camelback of warm water and an energy bar, I tried to hand the map to my husband "I think we need to make a plan" I said.

Unfortunately, since we were both new to adventure racing we didn't really know how to make a plan. So

(Continued on page 4)

Running Club News:

It's time once again for the **Macon Labor Day Road Race!** We've got a great bunch of talented volunteers working hard on the race and it's shaping up to be another great year. Be sure and get your registration in early as the wicking t-shirts are going to be awesome. Save a stamp and make sure your name gets spelled right by registering online at www.macontracks.org. There is no service fee!

I'm very happy to announce that many new sponsors have signed-on since the last newsletter. Many thanks to **GEICO** and **Walthall Oil** for being major sponsors, **Cherokee Brick**, **YKK**, **Run Fit Sports**, **Security Bank**, and **O'Neal, Brown, & Clark Law Firm** for being supporting sponsors, and **The Medical Center of Central Georgia**, **Dent Tricks**, **Taylor Services**, **Chambless**, **Higdon**, **Richardson**, **Katz**, & **Griggs Law Firm**, **Sawyer Realty**, and **Cheddar's Restaurant** for being sponsors. We're also grateful for our in-kind sponsors, **Georgia Sports Hall of Fame**, **Peachsports.com photography**, **Penske Trucks**, **Powerade**, **Starbucks**, **McAlister's Deli**, and more. We couldn't run without you!

This year we'll be using a new timing system called Chrono Track that utilizes disposable paper chips. You'll peel a strip of paper off your bib number, crease it along the folds, insert it in between your shoelaces, then use the adhesive to form it into a "D" shape. Because the D-tag is disposable, you'll receive it at packet pick-up and won't have to wait in line on race-day morning to get it. You won't have to worry about returning it after the race or



Linda Neville makes acquaintance with Richard Marshall's running partner. Who're you going to bring to a Moonlight Miles 5K? A dog named **Ghost**, of course!

Photo by Michael Williams, www.michaelwilliamsphotography.net

risk incurring a lost-chip charge, either. Event Tech will still be doing the timing, they'll just be using the new system.

Teams are starting to form, with YKK putting together a team and GEICO fielding at least 2 teams (look for the matching shirts!). Karl Christianson's company, Armstrong, is again sponsoring their employees to run the race and providing team shirts to over 80 employees and family members. Dave and I will be a husband/wife team

for the 5K which hopefully will give me some added incentive to push hard that last tough mile. Steve Corkery is going to run the 10K race this year. After decades of being race director, he's finally going to get to run his own race!

Official Labor Day Race photographer Tommy Chambers and his Peachsports team will be out on the course taking photos. Tommy has generously offered to post medium resolution photos online which can be downloaded for free. There will be a nominal \$10 charge to have the high-res digital photo e-mailed to you. Be sure and search for your photo on www.peachsports.com after the race.

Help us get the word out about the race. Print off applications on-line and put them out at your work place or favorite hang-out. Tell your friends and family to come run or walk. The more the merrier.

See you at the finish line!

Kerry ☺

FPD Cross Country Retreat

by Grace Tinkey

The FPD Cross Country team went to Florida to volunteer for the Lighthouse Family Retreat. The Lighthouse Retreat is for families who have kids that are going through or recovering from cancer or leukemia. Fourteen families came to the retreat and each volunteer was assigned to a family to take care of for the week we were there.

Every day we would take the kids to the pool, play games with them on the beach, and sing karaoke! I worked with a family from Snellville, Georgia, who had a 9-year-old boy, Ryan, and a 12-year-old girl, Alyssa. Alyssa had started chemo in 2007 and has a year left till her treatment is over. She's doing great. She is one of the sweetest girls you could ever meet and is as strong as ever! At night we had Beach Olympics with 4 teams with names that the kids made up, like the Yellow Bananas, White Lightning, Greyhounds, and the Red Dragons. It consisted of a sack race, egg toss, making a pyramid with all the people on your team, tug-a-war, and many other activities. We even had a talent show and a luau! The kids there were so sweet, it really helped us realize how thankful we should be not having to go through cancer or leukemia.

Even though these kids are going through such terrible diseases like cancer and leukemia, they have happy attitudes and an excitement for every activity that gave everyone smiles and lots of laughs. It was a



Top: Grace with two of the family members at the Lighthouse Retreat. Right: Cross country runners Ashley Blann, Madison Ham, Ashley Cope, Lauren Sanders, Lanier Flanders, Grace Tinkey, and Coach April Willingham.

great experience and so many friendships were made.

This retreat is like a vacation for the families that have a child going through cancer. It gives the parents time to relax while the kids get to have fun instead of being at the hospital and it's free for them. It was a great week spending time with the kids who had cancer and it brought our team closer together. They are always looking for volunteers for the several retreats they do every year. If you want to learn more about the retreat you can go to www.lighthousefamilyretreat.com.



Upcoming Macon Tracks Piedmont Sports Medicine Series Races:

Macon Labor Day Road Race 5K & 10K, Sept. 1st

Race for Camp Little Shot, Sept. 13th

Run for the Health of It 5K & 10K, Oct. 11th

Jay's Hope 5K & 10K, Nov. 1st

Peacemakers 5K, Nov. 8th

Will Robinson 5K

Bartram Forest Marathon & 50K, Nov. 29th

Reindeer Run 5K

Christmas Lane Dash 5K, Dec. 13th

(Continued from page 1)

we decided just to get the required check points pretty much in order and only to worry about the optional check points if we ran right into one. My main plan was to get through the course within the 4 hour time limit and to not need medical assistance.

At a brief informational meeting they told us how each checkpoint (CP) was marked with a flag, and how to mark the appropriate place on the passport. We had exactly 4 hours to get as many punches on our passport as we could. The most important thing I learned at the meeting however, was that only one team member had to go to each CP. The other team members only had to get within 100 feet; this is especially important when the CP is in a body of water (especially the nasty body of water that would become the front page picture on the [Macon Telegraph](#)'s local section the next morning).

Okay it was time to start. We ran a short sprint and then onto our bikes. At this point it was easiest to follow the crowd. Around the first bend I got a look at the new playground. Wow it is awesome! It's the best playground in town for sure. I can't wait until this park is finished. The trail we were riding was dirt road-like with a few sandy spots and hills that were a little tricky but we made it through. CP1 is in the middle of a pond. While my husband is swimming out to it, I grab a drink, relax and study the map. Maybe this won't be so bad after all.

After CP2 it was time to paddle. We dragged/ carried our canoe about 100 yards to the river and put in. There was not much water in the river but it was crystal clear and felt great. We had to paddle upstream to the town creek reservoir. It was hard to tell which was faster, walking or paddling. We all do a lot of both. The river is really pretty here. I saw a swamp hibiscus in full bloom on the bank and a huge spotted gar swimming right next to our canoe. After about an hour, we made it to the take out point 2 miles upstream. It was good to see the race organizers there checking off each team as we came on shore. At least they will know where to look for me if I don't come back.

After we ran through the swamp and up and down hills for an hour the paddle downstream was a great time to enjoy the scenery and have a snack. At this point I was really enjoying myself. I

no longer had the fear of not finishing or being hopelessly lost in the woods. Now it was a great scavenger hunt and I was having a blast. Back on our bikes, my eagle-eyed husband spotted CP6 in the woods just after the team in front of us went sailing by. As I waited on the trail he shouted, "Pretend you are lost so no one will see where I am!" Oh yeah, we are starting to feel more competitive now.

The rest of the race went smoothly. We had great fun trying to outsmart the other teams and trying to find the quickest route from point to point. We did end up getting one optional CP. Several teams were searching in one small area. It turned out to be about 6 feet into a culvert. We quietly snuck away hoping no one would notice we had found it. We had 30 minutes left as we came to the finish line. We could have gone after another CP or two, but this was our first adventure race, and we decided we would not push our luck. I had a fabulous feeling of accomplishment and exhilaration as we finished. Oh, and the cold beer and pizza at the finish line went nicely with the endorphin rush.

Adventure racing it turns out is as much about strategy and map reading as it is about endurance and physical abilities. It is a great exercise for the body and the mind. I understand that as far as adventure races go this one was easy. For me it was perfect. I am definitely planning to do it again next year. We learned a ton and next year I am sure we will be in the running for a prize. I know at least I will have my highlighters ready to mark up my map with a well thought-out plan. If you have never done a race like this, I highly recommend signing up next year. I can't think of a better way to spend a Saturday.



Adventure racers Dave Oedel, Monika Bubacz, Leslie Spiegel, Andrea Berger, Kerry Oedel, and Sam Martinez. Dave, Monika, & Sam's team took 2nd place and won \$500!

Photo by F.M. Barron

A Crazy Thought *By Deborah Botkin*

Who'd ever thought that one crazy thought, partially a dream and partially a joke could turn into fruition? I can only imagine how it started....Andrew was searching the Marathon Maniacs site for a drivable race this summer and found none close by. Surfing the MM site he stumbled upon what officially constitutes a marathon for their statistics and the idea was born. Sprinkle in some warm-hearted individuals from a running club and a few more maniacs and POOF! you have a race.

This race was different than most races as it was a race for just us Macon Tracksters (and a few Maniacs). Who else but us would be crazy enough to run an endurance race in the middle of the summer in GA? Boy, that answer surprised me. By race day we had 4 states represented, NC, AL, VA, and GA.

This is actually going to be somewhat different of a race report as several good descriptions are already out on the forum. I'd like to take this space in the newsletter to share what I noticed.

I got to the race early to help set up. Andrew had already had the incredible signs put together and ready to be staked in the ground. He even had the foresight to tape flashlights onto the signs for evening use.

Just before I headed out for my first loop Andrew's wife marked my starting time. BTW, my first loop at 5:30PM was HOT and somewhat in the sun. Not fun. Good practice for another upcoming hot race I planned to do, however.

I came around for completion of my first loop and saw some of our wonderful volunteers had already arrived and joined the festivities. I was cheered into the water/aid station by our wonderful team members, offered food, pop-sicles, and drink. Charlie, my wonderful friend from Virginia, and I headed out for my second loop, this time with Amy G. on her bike keeping us company. I love running with Amy. The time just flies with her wonderful conversations. The next thing I knew, the second loop was done.

By this time, I saw that folks were taking off ahead of me to start their race and there were more MTRC volunteers at the aid/water station. Our race HQ had now turned into a running party. A crazy thought crossed my mind that we should do this more often. (Running parties...not long runs in the middle of night). The amount of food had now doubled at the aid stations and of course there were now Rice Krispie treats on the table...SWEET! (Thanks Tim)

Night time had finally arrived and the race was now in full swing with all the participants. I actually think my 4th loop was my favorite just because I knew all of us participants were all out there on the course having fun. The amount of positive energy that could be felt and giving/receiving verbal high fives on the course was absolutely priceless.

I'd like to thank all of our participants. When we first started planning this race I had a fear that we wouldn't

find a third person to complete our race. How amazing it is that we had 8 marathon finishers. Kevin, Curtis, Daryl - thanks so much for driving in to join us and make this a fun club race. Charlie, Mat, and Phil - a HUGE thanks for traveling the distance to run in our humble marathon. I hope you enjoyed your time with us as much as we enjoyed having you there.

Becki, slow down, girl - I couldn't catch up with you to introduce myself! Congrats on your race. I think I heard it rumored that this was your first? Don't worry, the next half marathons will be easy after this. Tommy and Phil, how in the world do you make running in that heat look so easy? Thanks so much for bringing the extra humor and entertainment to the race.

Donna and Stefanie, you guys were awesome! I've noticed that in running, some folks are fast and get the pain (errr... race) done quickly. Then there are the rest of us who have to maintain that same level of effort for many many many more hours. Us slow folks seem to work harder to finish the same goal. I admire you both because you are out there working hard. Although it takes a lot of effort for us slow pokes to get to the finish I think at the end we really are the champions as we had what it took to bite the bullet and finish the race.

Thanks to everyone that came out to help us. This race would not have been successful without your help, love, and support. Thank you for cheering, working the aid stations, lighting us up with glow sticks, and sending out positive energy.

Most importantly, thanks to Andrew for posting a half crazed idea of putting on this marathon. Thanks for using your RD skills to organize and host a fantastic race. I'm looking forward to doing this again next year.

Next crazy idea....Macon Mini Bad Water. From a joke thrown out by Curtis, how about a 5K in the middle of a corn field at high noon in Aug?

Editor's note: We'd have to start at the lowest point in Middle Georgia and end up at the highest. Hmmmm.....the Ocmulgee River bottom to the top of Coleman Hill?

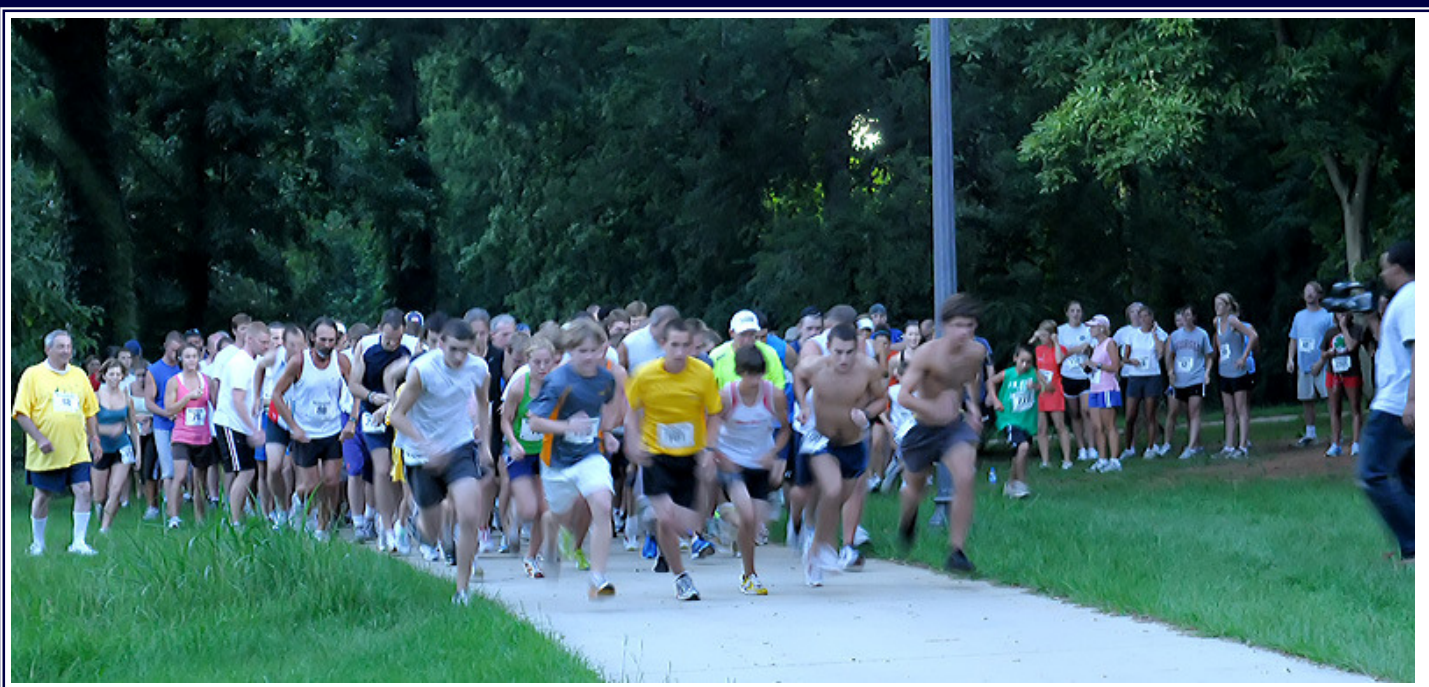


Marathon Maniac Andrew Strickland

Need to Renew? Check your mailing label for your renewal date. Easily join online at www.macontracks.org. Thanks for supporting your local running club!

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MACON, GA
PERMIT NO. 204

MACON TRACKS RUNNING CLUB
P.O. Box 18175
Macon, GA 31209-8175



Runners take their marks, get set, and go! at the **Moonlight Miles 5K** on July 19th. The race was a huge success, with 247 people coming out on a Saturday night to run the Riverwalk/Ocmulgee Heritage Trail. The race was held in conjunction with the Bragg Jam Festival and proceeds were donated back to the trail. Many thanks to Chris Horne and Heather Braun for putting it all together. Can't wait to see what they come up with next year!

Photo courtesy of Michael Williams, www.michaelwilliamsphotography.net