



## *Chickamauga Runners Rise to the Challenge*



Chris Woodgeard looking good at the finish.

The challenge was met on November 10<sup>th</sup> as a group of us traveled to Chattanooga to run the Chickamauga Battlefield Marathon. We were blessed with perfect running weather – 40 degrees and sunny. The park was full of great scenery with the leaves turning colors and the sun just beginning to warm the many stone monuments throughout the park. But the best part was that we were there with

friends, the culmination of a journey that began last summer on long training runs in the August heat.

Andrew Beasley, a Mercer law student, was there to run his first marathon after losing many pounds and transforming both his inner and outer self through running. He ran many Sundays with Chris Woodgeard, also there to run his first marathon, following in his mom, long-time Macon Tracks member Bonnie Woodgeard's footsteps. Dan Ash, though he already qualified for Boston last December, came to run his second marathon in preparation for a trip to Bean Town in April 2008. Karl Christianson's family was counting on him to qualify for Boston, as they already were making plans for a family vacation! Deborah Botkin ran it as a training run in preparation for a 50-mile race she'll attempt in March. Ryan Yadav, also a Mercer law student, was there as a first-time marathoner, as was Sam Martinez, who only started running a little over a year ago and is already very accomplished and a leader helping others with their running. Dave was there because I wanted to run another marathon. He got me started running, so now there's

no turning back!

*by Kerry Oedel*

The biggest question facing all of us, an eternal marathoner's dilemma, was, "What should I wear?" The shorts vs. tights question was fairly easy with the temperature at 40 and expected to rise from there. It was the shoe question that got me this time. Should I wear the 13.9 ounce Mizuno's with graphite insoles I'd done all my training runs in, or the brand new 8.2 ounce lightweight trainers, an older but identical pair of which had served me very well in 5K's and 10K's, but were untested in distances over 9 miles? I read that lightening my foot load by 4 ounces could make a difference of a minute and 45 seconds over the course of the marathon. I decided to take a flyer and wear the fast shoes. What is the marathon anyway, but one big gutsy gamble that your glycogen stores will last long enough to get you to the finish, that you'll be able to climb over the wall if they don't, and that you can triumph over the little voice in your head telling you how lovely it would be to just stop and lie down beside the road for awhile?

As we arrived at the church early Saturday morning, the mood was one of nervous anticipation. There were 482 runners participating in the marathon, as well as 411 there to run a 10-mile race (including Angela Hrad and Frank Eady). Runner's World listed Chickamauga as a "must-do" marathon in January '07, so I'm sure that contributed to the great turnout. As the national anthem began, the runners solemnly sang along in a moment of quiet unity. Then we were off!

It was one of those magical days when every time you look at your watch, you're surprised that you ran that mile in such a fast time, the kind of day that keeps you going through all the other days when you feel like the tin man before he got his oil can. Partly this was due to the miracle of the taper, when, after

months of running on tired legs as the miles accumulate, suddenly after a week of taking it easy all that training benefit comes to fruition. Partly it was due to the camaraderie of being out there with other runners, kindred souls on a journey to the finish. Or maybe it was just being out there on a beautiful day, glad to be alive and running.

The course was a double loop, with one section of the loop consisting of an out-and-back. This was my favorite part, as I was able to cheer for fellow runners both ahead and behind. It was also a great place for family members to see their loved ones. Lucky for us, Sam's family was out in full force, taking pictures, taking now-unnecessary clothing, and giving encouragement, not just for him but for everyone. Thanks Robin, Rosalba, Steve, Brenley, & Bethany!

About a third of the way through the race, I discovered I was the Second Female. I had many people yell, "Second female!" as I passed. Even my husband held up two fingers as he passed me on the out-and-back, yelling extra loudly, "Second female!" to be sure I could hear him over the 80's music playing in my ears via my iPod. I was quite happy to be Second Female, as I never even expected to be Third Female. I saw the First Female ahead of me on the out-and-back and wished her well. Still, by some miracle, my watch kept reeling off much faster splits than I had anticipated. I "hitched a ride" with a guy in yellow and green shoes. He was quite charitable while I alternated running alongside trying to keep pace with him and running behind him trying to lower my wind resistance. We exchanged a few friendly words. I did a second GU at mile 18, and grooved to U2's Elevation.



Second Female, feeling good!

Then came mile 20, and I spotted Dave just ahead. And there, just ahead of him, was the First Woman. Dave ran with me to give me courage while I passed the First Woman. Then, holy cow, I was the First Woman! I had no idea how much energy the person formerly known as First Woman had left, so I tried to "pass with authority", not an easy thing to do when you're almost 21 miles into a race. I managed to knock out a couple of fast miles, then chanced a look behind me and didn't see anyone, female or not. I tried to relax, but my toes began to cramp, and my calves (little cows as Coach Joe calls them) began to seriously Moo. I thought about how neat it would be to win with my parents there to see it. You never get too old to want to make your parents proud of you! Somehow I held it together and crossed the most beautiful finish line I've ever seen, amazed to see that the clock said 3:13. Sam had come in just ahead after running a blistering 3:11 for his first marathon, despite having hit the wall seriously hard his last few miles. Dave was just behind at 3:16, and, for once, I got to cheer him in to the finish line!

Karl easily qualified for Boston with a personal record of 3:20 – his family must be packing their suitcases right about now. Ryan came in at 3:58, Chris at 4:28, and Andrew Beasley at 4:38 – awesome times for their first marathons. Dan shaved 5 minutes off his best time and re-qualified for Boston with a 3:39. Deborah finished in 5:45 despite having run a marathon just 2 weeks prior. Andrew Strickland ran his best time ever, too, finishing in 4:57 even though he got very dehydrated when several of the aid stations ran out of water. We all finished what we set out to do – a great accomplishment for everyone.

Friends and family gathered at the hotel that night to share stories of the race and get much-needed replenishment. This was the perfect race. Let's get together and run another one next year!

## Peacemakers 5K: Cross Country “Run Like the Indians”

By Jane Donahue

What a heady day for Peacemakers! Saturday, October 27, was our inaugural fundraising 5K run/walk. We had been warned that first races are often a bust and that we would be very lucky if we made enough money to cover our expenses. “Okay,” we thought, “we’ll proceed with the goal of meeting expenses and look to the future.” Imagine our joy when, the morning of the race, we doubled the number of participants! We are still elated at the unexpected level of success with this first race. We thank Rudy, Carolyn, Willie, Allen, Dave and Kerry, as well as all of you who came out to run or walk on race day. We look forward to our Second Annual Peacemakers 5K Run/Walk next fall. Watch for the date soon!

We did some things right (accidentally or otherwise): Choosing the site - Ocmulgee National Monument is an amazingly beautiful place. Having a cross-country run - although we had not initially planned our trail to be cross-country, it turned out to be a good move. Hosting a running event - runners are really nice people. Race participants pitched in to set up tables after the locked visitors’ center doors were opened late, everyone was good-natured about our mistakes, and many folks made helpful suggestions.

Some Things to Change for 2008: Have a later start time, probably 9:00AM. Have more people on the trail to help runners and walkers find their way. Give more awards: 3 deep in each category.

All of you who participated in the Peacemakers 5K: Do you know what heroes you are? The funds from your registrations and from sponsors, after all expenses were paid, will send three children to the 2008 summer camp.

Peacemakers began in 1998, so 2008, our tenth year of working with young people, is special.

We set out to bring together children of unlike backgrounds (faith, ethnicity, economic status and social strata) for the purpose of learning to live together peacefully. We learn about each other’s backgrounds, customs and ways of living in the world.

One main principle that we model and teach is to resolve conflict peacefully. What a joy to our staff when we hear children use the words,

“Stop. Think. Remain calm,” and “Identify the problem”.

Our camp is a four-night, five-day adventure at a nearby facility that can house and feed thirty children and the twenty counselors-in-training and adult counselors who accompany them. The staff are all volunteers. We like sites that offer swimming, canoeing and kayaking, hiking, playing fields and basketball



court. We also prefer ropes courses when we can afford them.

Peacemakers work is deeply rewarding. We try to enroll children at age eight and keep them coming each year until they age out at thirteen. Many of those then become counselors-in-training and stay with the program until at least college. We have seen amazing growth among those who start early and stay with Peacemakers. Several of them have written their college entrance essays on how Peacemakers changed their lives.

So, again we thank you for sending three children to camp next year. If any of you are interested in becoming involved further, please contact John Donahue [donah35@cox.net](mailto:donah35@cox.net) (478.743.8969) or Jane Donahue [janedonahue@cox.net](mailto:janedonahue@cox.net) (478.731.8969).

## 2007 Chicago Marathon

Several years ago I visited an orthopedic doctor. My husband and I had just begun running and if I ran over four miles I had knee pain. Sitting in the doctor's office waiting to be seen, I was intrigued with a framed poster that was on his wall. It looked like a "herd" of people were running in a large city and they were in shorts with gloves on. I could not imagine where this would be and why so many people?

When the doctor came I asked him about the poster. He said, "That's the Chicago Marathon". "Why are they wearing gloves?" I asked. "Because it is very cold and that keeps their hands warm." That was a puzzle to me. First, I could not imagine a run with so many people; second, why would you run in the cold; third, how long is a marathon but I think I would like to do that!

As I said that was several years ago and a different orthopedic doctor and miles of pounding the pavement have past. This year David and I had the opportunity to run the Chicago Marathon. We were excited! We packed gloves for sure. Saturday before the race we drove to downtown Chicago, found our packets and the expo. Then to the race start, found parking, how to get to our corral—just everything—like a dress rehearsal!! We were set!! Only problem—Saturday's temperature was in the upper 80's—it felt like Georgia. I had a feeling we would not need the gloves.

Sunday A.M. we were up at 4:15 ready to roll and be in town by 6A.M. We found our parking place without any problem even though the spaces were filling up fast. We decided to just sit in the car and eat our pre-race breakfast. We talked about carrying fluids or not and decided we would as we could always toss them along the way. At 7 we went to the port o potties and found our corral. The announcer was telling everyone to drink lots of fluids—I do not know where he thought folks would get them before the start but whatever. The race began at 8am. The press of the people was unreal! By mile three the heat from the road, tall buildings, large amount of people and no breeze made it like a steam bath! About mile eight David slowed and dropped a bit behind but

I felt ok and kept going. About 1/2 ways through I felt like I had bricks on my shoulders. I started drinking more and dumping the water on my head and shoulders. At mile 21 police and fireman were in the road telling us that the marathon had been canceled! I did not believe them! They told everyone to walk! I (and others) kept running. At mile 22 the temperature on the bank we passed was 97 degrees! I was shocked! At mile 24 the police, fireman, and race officials were in the road demanding that people walk! That was a long walk and many were very upset! When the finish line was in sight I ran happily to finish the Chicago Marathon!! My time was terrible—5 hrs and 30 minutes but I finished! David was also able to finish! Many were rerouted or bussed back to the start/finish. David and I met up, happy to finish and walked to the car. It was GONE! Our friend was unable to finish and when he got back he thought we had finished and gone on public transportation back to LaGrange (where we were staying). But that is another story for another day. Needless to say, I have a Chicago Marathon poster to put on my wall—but No Gloves!

### Start Your New Year off Wright

Bob and Anne Wright, their son, Michael, and his wife, Bridget, have decided to combine forces and reinvent the New Year's Day run.

The "Start Your New Year Right Long Run and Pancake Breakfast" is returning to its historic roots this January 1st. This year the event will be held at Mike and Bridget's home at 244 College Street at 9:00 am. They will be offering the run, pancakes, and beverages but will be asking participants to bring something to share.

Start the new year off Wright by making a resolution to come run and brunch with friends!

## Macon Tracks Running Club News

I'm pleased to announce that we had a great response to the e-mail I sent out asking for volunteers. Eight people volunteered to be on the board: Michelle Everett, Gerry Ford, Deborah Botkin, Andrew Strickland, Steve Corkery, Neel Dickey, FM Barron, and Jim Baldwin. Standing for election/re-election at the annual meeting are myself (president – one more year), Sam Martinez (vice-president – a title to go along with a job he's already been doing), Gwen Wilkes (treasurer – if this were the military she'd be eligible to retire by now!), and Kathy Stege (secretary – thank goodness we'll have someone to take minutes at the next meeting, as the bank won't let me be on the account unless there are minutes proving I'm who I say I am!). Julie Christopher, Kathy, and FM all volunteered to help rescue me from newsletter overload. It's a great group of folks, and I'm looking forward to working together to make our running club even better. Thank you, everyone, for taking the plunge and volunteering your time and talents. If you didn't get your name on the list, don't despair, as Labor Day race planning will be getting underway in the next few months, and we'll need TONS of help to get that mammoth undertaking launched. Whether you're a newbie or a seasoned veteran, a member or not yet a member, please plan to come to the annual meeting on Monday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, 6:30 pm, at the Wellness Center on Northside Drive. In addition to taking care of business, we'll be enjoying each other's company, munching on pizza, and having fun!

I want to say how wonderful it is to see so many new runners posting on the forum. Running is never easy, but it's especially tough when you're first starting. I used to endure a half-hour of running only because my husband was sweet to come along so it was time spent together and because it made me feel so good the rest of the day. It was a long time before I actually enjoyed going out for a run. Having support from friends can really make the difference between giving up or getting strong enough to feel good while running, and I really appreciate Amy Galeazzo coming up with the ingenious idea to start an "Ask the Newbie" category on the forum. People have been arranging to meet for group runs, getting advice on staying motivated, and encouraging each other to come out and run a race. Check out the forum on [www.macontracks.org](http://www.macontracks.org). It may be just what you needed, and you might help someone else besides!

As the holiday season approaches, it's easy to spend more time shopping and wrapping and less time doing healthy activities like running. One solution is to sign up for a holiday race. Bring the whole family and enjoy a run or walk together on a crisp morning to put you in the spirit of the season. Wear your jingle bells and Santa might even give you a new personal record!

Kerry ☺

### Progressive Christian Academy Race for the Future 5K

Time: 16:45  
3rd Overall

By Andrew Strickland

(Trophy...on the way)

Notes: This one obviously needs a little explanation. No, I did not find a miracle training regimen that allowed me to take 12 minutes off my 5K time in a week. No, this is not a misprint. The exceptionally kind folks at Progressive Christian Academy held this race for the first time this year. It was very poorly attended with three local runners and a group of students and friends of the school. The race started nearly 30 minutes late as the race director held off hoping for more people to arrive. They also had trouble getting their route approved by the Macon Police. The route the Police did approve shortened to course down to about 3K. The runners found out about this around the time we were crossing the finish line: thus my miraculous 16:45 for a "5K". The shortened course was rather fun especially if you enjoy urban running and hills. Despite all the problems of a first-time race, I really enjoyed this experience. Everyone was incredibly friendly. The three of us who placed were treated like visiting royalty. For someone like me who rarely even sees the first place runners, this was quite new. In fact, I was a little freaked out by seeing empty space in front of me at the beginning of the race. I was relieved to drop back into 3rd! I especially appreciated the prayers held before and after the race. I hope the race organizers will reach out to the running community and allow us to help build the participation in this event for next year. The wonderful people of PCA really deserve it!

*Editor's note: Results from the PCA race are as follows. 1st Place - David Parrett, 2nd Place - Steve Huff, 3rd Place - Andrew Strickland. See what happens when you show up?*

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Sam Martinez, Dan Ash, Karl Christianson, and Dave Oedel met the challenge!