

# WTRC Newsletter

2023 May/June

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**WEST TEXAS  
RUNNING CLUB**

LUBBOCK, TEXAS

Levelland, Texas Courthouse Square



# 2023 WTRC Board and other volunteers...

President: *Jonathan Botros*

Vice President/Operations/Media: *Emmanuel Ramirez*

Secretary: *Wendy Johnston*

Treasurer/Webmaster/Registration: *David Higgins*

Outreach: *Ron Lubowicz*

Trailer & Equipment: *Tommy Johnson*

Customer Service Director: *Suzan Caudle*

RRCA Representative/Course Marking: *Dean Threadgill*

**Board Members:**

*Cody and Autumn Lass*

*Debbie Gelber*

*WTRC Board Members can be reached through this email address: [westtxrunning@gmail.com](mailto:westtxrunning@gmail.com)*

Challenge Series/Newsletter: Steve German  
[stevegerman5@gmail.com](mailto:stevegerman5@gmail.com)

**WTRC Address:**

WTRC  
3401 Alcove Ave.  
Lubbock TX 79407

The monthly WTRC business meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. with the exception of July.

Members are welcome!

## Upcoming Races



## FIRECRACKER RUN

Race Director: Gabby Saldana 806.281.4691

54th Annual Firecracker Run  
Tuesday, July 4th 2023

**NOTE Earlier Start Times!!**

7:30 a.m.—10K                      7:32 a.m. 3-Mile

TBA — 1 Mile Elementary Kid's Run

Bib pickup on Race Day – 6:45 to 7:15

**RACE LOCATION:**

Coleman Park – Brownfield, TX

2nd Saturday in August

**HOT Dam!**

**Check the website for the Start Time -  
will be earlier than last year**

5 Mi & 2 Mi

Bib pickup on Race Day – check website

**RACE LOCATION**

Canyon Lakes #6: 22nd & MLK Jr Blvd

Start by the waterfall on MLK & 22nd St.

Race Director:

Wendy Johnston

806.544.5966

*Hot*  
**DAM RUN**

# Remembering Artie Corelis

Artie Corelis impressed all who know her. You might have known Artie as a member of the WTRC who

is married to John and has three beautiful daughters – Saylor, Kyden, and Brylie – all who run with the WTRC and run well! You might also have known Artie as an often-volunteer both for race days as well as the early packet pickup days we have for some of our races. Artie even took on the role of race-day photographer. Not too long ago you might have met Artie in her role as one of the Race Directors of the long-running WTRC Turkey Trot (her family all shared in that role) – the largest club running event of the year's 13 races.

There is one other significant aspect of Artie that you know about but some may not; that is, Artie was in a years-long battle against life-threatening cancer. Artie was diagnosed in 2006 with low grade astrocytoma with some oligodendroglioma. Bottom line, Artie had a brain tumor. At the very beginning of this battle Artie said this: “When I was first diagnosed in 2006 I felt strongly led to name the tumor, so I

called it ‘Gone’. I am once again praying, believing and hoping that Gone is gone. Forever....”

During this long battle against “Gone” Artie refused to let the cancer define who she is. Artie was many things – a wonderful woman, mother, wife, oft-volunteer, Christian.... the list goes on. Artie was kind, had a great sense of humor, loved her family (fiercely!). From all evidence there was no room in her identity to include being a victim



of a persistent, life-threatening disease.

Artie passed away recently – but she certainly left an indelible, deep, continuing, positive impression on all of us.

It is encouraging to be a part of an organization like the WTRC that includes people who inspire, encourage, challenge and lead by example. Thank you, Artie!





## Thoughts about Artie from Members of the WTRC Board

I don't know that I've met many people with such a kind and selfless heart as Artie Corelis. Artie never let circumstances control her treatment of others. She was the first to offer a helping hand, and always added light to whatever room she occupied. I'll always hold the days of working packet pickups and races with Artie near and dear. She helped fill the entire day with laughs.

I've always felt that you don't beat such an ugly disease by extending your time on Earth. You beat it by the way you fight, by the way you cherish every moment you're afforded, and by the way you impact those around you in a positive way. Artie did just that.



Artie's passion was noticed by all. Her dedication to the WTRC in volunteering, race directing the Turkey Trot and supporting her team of young runners was exceptional to say the least. We will all miss her dearly.

I'll spend the rest of my days thankful for Artie, her contributions to the WTRC, and to me personally.

We love ya, Artie!

Jonathan Botros

A vibrant and cherished member of our running club community, Artie touched the lives of so many with her unwavering spirit and

She was a great mom too!!

David Higgins



dedication. Artie was not only an active member of our running club but a pillar of support for all who crossed her path. Her commitment to our community was truly extraordinary. Artie volunteered tirelessly for numerous races, always lending a helping hand and spreading her contagious enthusiasm. Her selflessness and generosity knew no bounds, and her presence at each event brought an added sense of warmth and camaraderie.

Beyond her remarkable contributions to our running club, Artie was a friend who radiated joy and encouragement. Her infectious laughter, uplifting words, and genuine interest in others made her a cherished companion.

Emmanuel Ramirez

Artie was one of the best people I know. She would pitch in and help at races with a moment's notice. She had a ready smile and listening ear for her friends. In 2021/2022 while I was going through my diagnosis and treatments for my breast cancer Artie would call or text and check on me. She was a special friend and will truly miss her.

Suzan Caudle





# Hugh Haynes Memorial Horseshoe Bend Run

*Race Report — May 2023*

The rain we have needed so much and have prayed for came today! It was a wet and breezy Hugh Haynes Memorial Horseshoe Bend Run. There were many comments from runners about how much they enjoyed running in the rain — so, all-in-all it was a

very good day!! Nathan, Cathy and Eli Paden did a great job organizing volunteers and getting three races off to their respective starts. This race has the most water-stops of all of WTRC's races because the 11-mile option is a full loop while the 6-mile and 2-mile runs are out-and-backs. So — more-than-usual volunteers were needed and received and much appreciated!

There were 171 finishers for all races today — a big jump from last year's 134 finishers! There were 85 in the 2 mile, 53 in the 6 mile and 33 for the 11 mile run. Way to go all runners!!

For the 2-mile run, **Lucy Espinoza** led all female runners to the finish in 15:53 — **Elijah Smothers** led and won the race with a time of 12:12 — both great times! For the 6-mile race

**Brandon Fell** led all runners with a time of 37:07 and **Emma Lopez** led all female runners with a finish of 39:14 — great runs you two! In the 11-mile run, **Fernando Valdez** blew in with a fast 1:13:13 (a 6:39 minute pace for this distance...wow!) and **Amy Estrada** finished ahead of all female runners with an impressive time of 1:27:11 — way to go, both of you!

There were 8 age-group records set in today's race — 1 in the 2-mile race, 5 in the 6-mile race and 2 in the 11 miler. In the 2-mile race, **Logan Estrada's (7-9 male age-group)** record time was 14:08. In the 6-mile race **Emma Lopez (16-19)** ran a record 39:15, **Laurel Zarnoth's (25-29)** time was 42:30, **Margaret Woodfin's (55-59)** record time was 54:15, **Leesa Price (65-69)** set a record finish of 59:28, and **John Corelis (55-59)** set a record time of 39:53. **Michaela Jansen (50-54)** set a record of in at 1:28.31. Really great races!! Go to this site for all Horseshoe Bend Run records: <https://wtrunning.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/HSB-Records-2023.txt>

**Thank you volunteers!** They were: Nathan, Cathy and Eli Paden (race directors), David Higgins, Suzan Caudle, Tommy Johnson, Ron Lubowicz, Shana, Justin, Jolina and Jalynn Beaver, George Jury, Lydia Turner, Ramon Johnson, Mitch Monroe, Larry Lovato, Oscar Farias, Bill Felton, Thiago and Sebastian Rendon. Great work with the race all!

Running is such a great activity! Whether you run fast or maybe not so fast, whether you run long or shorter distances, there's a place for everyone in the running community in general and in the WTRC in particular! Whatever you do, keep on moving — lots of benefits physically, spiritually and emotionally to be gained. Thank you all for participating in this year's Hugh Haynes Memoria Horseshoe Bend Run!



Nathan, Cathy & Eli — great work directing the race!





# My First Marathon Only Took 5 Years

by WTRC Member Dean Threadgill

My fitness journey was in its infancy in the spring of 2018. Years of devotion to work and family had

become my main focus for the last decade and a half, so I was a far cry from the division one athlete that I once was. I started slowly in the gym, and about that time I read about the first Mayor's Marathon here in Lubbock.

I thought that it would be amazing to finish a marathon, but I also knew that I was in no shape to do it at the time. I naively thought that I could work hard for a year and be ready then. Since I am not a natural born distance runner, I soon discovered that there was no way that I could be ready for a marathon in a year. However, I was ok with that since I was falling in love with the process and improving.

Fast forward to May 1, 2021. My Saturday long run did not end as I had planned. In fact, it ended with an ambulance ride to UMC due to a massive heart attack. I'm here today due to the outstanding work from many fine people that day. When I was in their care, they never failed to remain upbeat and positive. But despite their congenial disposition, I knew I was in trouble when three hospital staffers came into my room at 4 AM and were trying to figure out why my Troponin levels were not dropping. I did not know what that meant at the time, and after researching I'll just say that I'm very happy they were able to get it corrected. I'll stop there because the details have already been published in a previous version of this [newsletter](#).

UMC did their job, now it was time for me to do mine. Coming back from my heart attack was a long and arduous process, but being able to run again was always a strong motivator. The good people in cardiac rehab taught me how to monitor my heart rate and activity so that I could exercise safely. Initially, I was only able to run about 50 yards before my heart would race to 160 bpm and I would have to stop. I'm sure any distance runner could sympathize with how frustrating that was. However, I was determined to get better. What choice did I have?

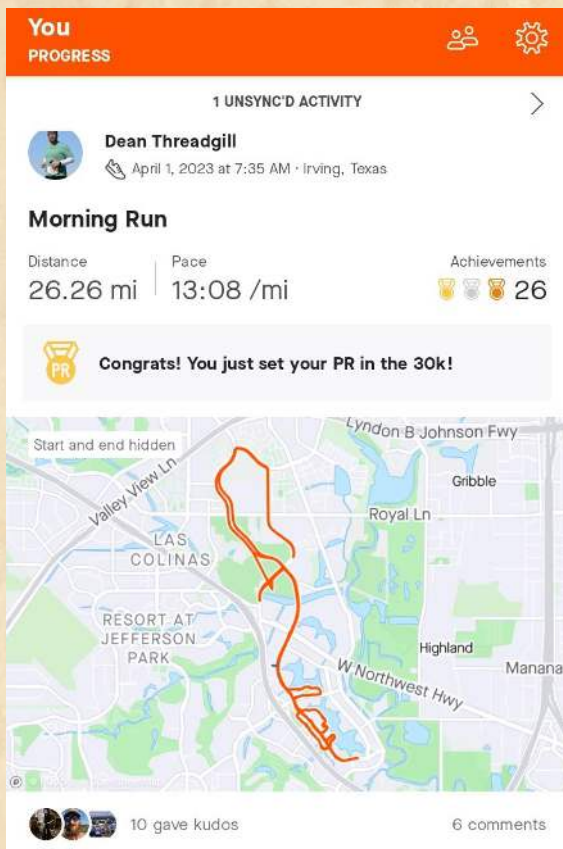
Soon, 50 yards became 100. Then, a quarter mile, then a mile. I was able to "run" the 2 mile Hot Dam race in August, then continued with subsequent club races beyond that. My persistence paid off and I was able to decrease my mile time and run in longer races. The diet and exercise treated me well and on April 24, 2022 I completed the Mayor's Half Marathon. I was especially happy to do it just before the one year anniversary of my heart attack.

I told my primary care doctor about the half marathon and mentioned that I wasn't sure if I could do a full. She immediately said, "of course you can, think positive!" Shortly after that, I met with my cardiologist and he paused and said, "make sure you hydrate." That was all the green light that I needed. From there, I started to add distance and build toward a full marathon. About that time, a friend recommended John Bingham's [Marathoning for Mortals](#). I was able to devour it quickly because it truly spoke to the type of runner that I am (back of the pack).



...continued next page





I was looking at possible spring marathons when my family informed me that we would be going to the Metroplex in April to see Taylor Swift. Fate threw me a bone, and the Irving Marathon was the same weekend. I took it as a sign that my first marathon would be in my home town, on streets that I knew well. I paid the entry fee and the die was cast.

Susan Sidoriak was never more right when she said, "I dare you train for a marathon and not have it change your life." Over the next 20 weeks, I followed John Bingham's plan and got into the best cardio shape of my life. Most of the workouts were not completely grueling. But doing them so often while mixing in strength training and cross training took its toll. The grind was as much mental as it was physical. I leaned on several runners that I've gotten to know for advice and encouragement and I felt like I had a chance of pulling this thing off.

When race day arrived, I felt prepared. I had made my list and checked it twice. I had what I needed and was at the starting line with nothing left to do but make it happen. And just like that, my corral was called and the last phase of my years-long marathon journey began.

The Irving Marathon consists of two 13.1 mile loops around the hills and canals of Las Colinas. The first loop, things could not have gone better. The weather was cool, I was following my fueling plan, slightly ahead of my goal pace, and I was encouraged by cheers from family on the RaceJoy app.

Things changed on the second loop. The weather warmed up and I started to cramp. Fortunately, I was prepared with pickle juice and it worked. At mile 17, it became clear that my fueling plan was not enough. Luckily the aid stations were well stocked. At mile 19, I knew that I would need to manage my expectations if I planned to finish. Although, I was encouraged to be passing some people that were younger and thinner than me. At mile 20, the cramps returned and I was fortunate to get pickle juice at an aid station since I had used up my own miles earlier.

At mile 23, Murphy's Law rained down upon me with a vengeance. The batteries in my earbuds died, Strava quit tracking, my heart rate was sky high, and I hit the dreaded wall. Time to reassess. The next aid station was only about 100 yards ahead. I could make it that far. I managed to get there and choke down a banana and a protein bar in addition to fluids and then pressed on. At mile 24, an Irving Police Officer gave me a big high five and reminded me of how close I was. Between that and the fuel, I was starting to feel better and my heart rate was normalizing. At mile 25, finishing was no longer an "if" it was a "when." At mile 26, my daughter gave me a fist bump and we crossed the finish line together.

Words cannot express what I felt next. My heart was overflowing with gratitude for those that helped along the way. Shortly after the race, I received a message from a runner that I greatly respect. It simply said, "Congratulations marathoner!" Extremely high praise considering the source.

Looking back, things have changed since I was hoisted into an ambulance and rushed to UMC. Running a marathon changed me in so many ways. From diet and exercise, to training a preparation and mostly to the deep confidence that I can overcome most anything with determination and persistence. Now, I'm looking forward to the second marathon!

**Dean**



# Run the Mosaics

## Bobby Birdsong Memorial Run

*June 2023 Race Report by Lydia Turner and Reeda York*

Sometime this year, Lydia Turner and Reeda York had an idea to bring the Bobby



Birdsong Memorial Run back to The City of Mosaics (Levelland, Texas!). June 10, 2023 brought the WTRC and Levelland MainStreet Director, Tania Moody, together to present Run the Mosaics, honoring Bobby Birdsong. Entirely new routes were created for the 10K and 2 mile races to highlight the largest and historic mosaics in Levelland and a 1 mile run was added – all distances with new staggered start times as a club experiment for future races. Les Kinman really added an unexpected spark to our 1 mile run with a bike lead! The early

start time was welcomed by the long-distance runners on a beautiful, warm, and calm West Texas morning! The recent rains had every part of nature in its best attire.

The Levelland Police Department Guidon ran part of the distance with the long runners while presenting the flags. City flag wavers of all ages were stationed at the 12 largest mosaics to draw attention to them. Everyone was encouraged to place a small piece of tile in a community mosaic that will be displayed next year. Many volunteers started the day in one location, finished their first assignment, and then hustled over to the next assignment! It absolutely takes many hands and feet to pull off this event.



Levelland stepped up to show off their City of Mosaics and invites everyone back throughout the year.

Gabe Preston and Taylor Limbaugh paced the eighty-nine 10K finishers with times of 35:40 and 38:51. Caleb Johnson posted a time of 11:40 for 1st overall out of the seventy-nine 2 mile runners. Britni Bermea led the women with 14:26. By the way, our oldest runner in this event was 80. Micha Bermea led the ten 1 mile finishers with an impressive 6:56. Our 4 year-old youngest runner finished with a smile!



*“If you are working on something exciting that you really care about, you do not have to be pushed. The vision pulls you.”* Steve Jobs



# Run the Mosaics Volunteers!!!

## Sundown Community Volunteers:

Jim Nichols  
Kendra White  
Zoey McCall

## WTRC Volunteers:

Suzan Caudle  
David Higgins  
Mary Ann Schwertner  
Adam Puckett  
Rebecca Puckett  
Steve German  
Les Kinman  
Angela Rendon  
Sylvia Miller  
Debbie Gelber

## Levelland Community Volunteers

Tania Moody - Levelland Main Street  
Program  
Lori Ware  
Ashley Bautista  
Amber Wisdom  
Ann Capps  
Jessika Flores  
Zaniah O'Canas  
Carmen V.  
Alize Almager  
Mari Acosta  
Julie Nicholson

Jim Ellison  
Preston Turner  
Rusty Huddleston  
Schahara Huddleston  
Stuart Moody  
Prentice Fred  
Martha Fred  
Juanita Mora  
Barbara Coleman  
Theresa Benton  
Carissa Arenivas  
Rob Haynie  
Alycyn Keeling - Wallace Theatre

## Levelland Police Department:

Chief Albert Garcia  
Captain Mateo Lopez-Guidon and flag holder  
Detective Rusty Fuentes- flag holder  
Officer Braxton Gilbreath - flag holder  
Officer Victor Rincones-intersections  
Officer Cory Foley-Intersections  
Officer Joshua Rhincones-Intersections  
Officer Dakota Moody-Intersections

## South Plains College Volunteers:

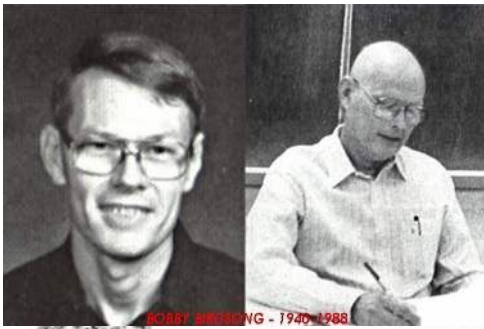
Robert Perkins -Residence Hall Director  
Police Chief John Sullivan  
Police Officer Griffin  
Security Officer Tom Evans  
R.A. Jalen  
R.A. Cyrik  
Brian Gerstenberger

## Abilene Community Volunteer:

Lori Wilhite







## A TRIBUTE

By Joe Post

### Bobby Birdsong Remembered

The passing of Bobby Birdsong on May 24 was a great loss to all of us who had the privilege of knowing this good man. The greater loss by far is to those new members who did not have that chance.

Bobby founded the Levelland Lope in 1980 and was Director for eight years. Not satisfied to just present a good race, typically Bobby went the extra mile and got local sponsors to fund Lope T shirts and equipment bags for his runners. Even when sponsorship funds were no longer available, he was trying to give the Lope a little something extra by working on a means to computerize the results and give the runners a personal copy. This spirit of extra effort was also evident in his work as a biology teacher at the Levelland High School, where the students recognized his impact on them by selecting him as Teacher of the Year for 1989.

I first met Bobby in 1982 when I called him for information about the Lope, the first race I was ever to enter. It was largely his friendliness and encouragement that convinced me to try it. After the race when I stopped to thank him, he even remembered my call and took the time to congratulate me and urged me to keep coming out to the WTRC runs. Since I was a novice runner, this really meant a lot to me. I haven't missed a Lope since, and it was Bobby's positive attitude and encouragement that made me want to join the WTRC.

As I got to know Bobby by helping out at the Lope and by spending a few minutes with him at the other races, it did not take too long to gain great respect for him as a man with perspective. He would compete hard during a race, but the result never seemed as important to him as the good effort. He thrived on courses which featured tough weather and/or terrain conditions. Quoted in the Amarillo Globe-News after the 1984 Palo Duro Canyon Run in January, Bobby said, "There are fair-weather runners and then there are runners." To me, this seems to sum up Bobby's approach not only toward his running but also toward his personal commitments and life in general. He chose not to do things because they were easy, but because they were important. The runs won't ever be as good again without Bobby to visit with.

So I guess that as long as there's a June and a Levelland Lope and I've got 6.2 miles left in my legs, I'll make the trip over because it will be the best way to remember Bobby, standing there on those steps, making jokes as he hands out the awards. And I won't ever pull on a Levelland Lope T shirt or pack a Levelland Lope equipment bag without being reminded that I ought to be a better person.

We would all be fortunate to leave such a legacy.

The June West Texas Running Club  
race will henceforth be known as

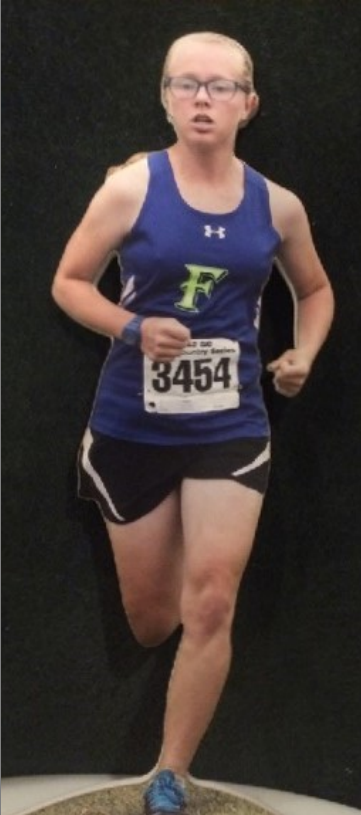
The Bobby Birdsong Memorial Levelland Lope

*From the editor: Joe Post — long time WTRC member, WTRC Board member and runner who recently passed away — wrote this about Bobby Birdsong for whom the WTRC Bobby Birdsong Memorial Run is named.*



# I've Always Wanted to Run!

*an interview with WTRC Member Megan Taylor*



*First of all, Megan -- tell us some about yourself. Maybe where you grew up, what schools you attended. How about what you did while in school -- activities, studies, anything that occupied your time and energy.*

I've lived here in Lubbock most of my life. I attended Frenship schools all through middle school and high school after going to Whiteside Elementary. I ran track and cross country all through middle school and high school and even enjoyed running when I was elementary. I was fairly well known for my running and even for my walking speed! I usually walked, and tend to still walk. I started working at Whataburger the summer before my junior year and continued working there until after I graduated.

Two other things that I was probably well recognized for at school were the hats I would wear on "Hat Day" or the stuff I made out of twist-ties which included parts of my hat for "Hat Days." I was rather obsessed with Hat Days when they would come around and would beg for there to be another one when it had been awhile since the last one. When I say I would beg for another Hat Day, I seriously would post on my Facebook tagging the school or doing a hashtag with it begging them for another Hat Day. I even noticed, and was so bummed out, when there was not one Hat Day during my junior year!

*I know you have multiple jobs -- that's something among other things that I admire about you! Can you tell us some about these? Which do you enjoy the most, maybe. Describe some of what you do in them.*

I currently have 4 jobs. My main job is with the transportation team at the Amazon sort center here in Lubbock. I help direct truck drivers where in the yard to drop off their trailers or which trailer to pick up and I help move trailers around in the yard. I also help my dad mow lawns, I deliver DoorDash now and then, and also, every time there's an election happening in the county, I work at one of the election sites where you go to vote. Needless to say, I keep myself pretty busy most of the time.

*Megan -- tells us a little about your friends and family. Who are they, who are your "go to" people? Who encourages you?*

So, I'm the oldest of three even though it appears like I might be mistaken as the youngest in some situations. Outside of where I know someone I don't necessarily talk to very many people besides family members (I attribute this to being an introvert!). Most of the time I tend to just hang out with my mom and aunt during my free time.

*How about running? I've seen you at WTRC races for quite some time. So -- what is your history with running? What motivates you? Who motivates you? What types of running do you enjoy -- maybe just road running or trails or some other form of running?*



So, from what I've seen in pictures of me as a kid and as I was growing up, I seem to have been a fan of running practically my whole life. I've seen pictures of me as a little kid, or even as a toddler, and it looks like I wanted to run. My family at that point had a treadmill, which I was too young to even remember us having, and there's a picture of me standing on it looking around like I'm wondering what this is. Then when I was just a few years older, I'm standing on the same treadmill hanging under the rail smiling at the camera as if I'm saying, "Now that I'm a little older, can I run on here?"

*From the Editor: Megan Taylor is one of those folks I've often seen at our WTRC races. One thing for sure you will notice about Megan is that she is always smiling. There's an inner joy Megan has that shines through.*

*Through the years I had short conversations with Megan -- just a few moments of "what distance are you running today?" or "what do you do for work and fun?" .... you, know, the typical things we all talk about with people we sort of know but really don't.*

*Added to seeing Megan at our club races I also see her at the election sites I go to for the various local, state and national elections. My resolve to know more grew so I asked Megan if I could interview her for the WTRC Newsletter. Typical for Megan, she good-naturedly said "yes" and she recently addressed the interview questions I listed for her.*

*As with all those we run with at many of the monthly WTRC races, there are endearing, positive, encouraging qualities that these runners embody that make for a better day when we know more about them. I think you will be encouraged by Megan -- I was and am!*







When I was in elementary school, I remember when we ran "pacer". Pacer is when you run each time you hear a "beep" and you go about 20 meters per beep and you see how long you can do this. The farther you get into the exercise the faster it goes. I always wanted to see how long I could make it to possibly beat my record. I think I mainly like road running but then I also kind of like running trails. When I was in high school, my cross country coach sometimes took us out by Mae Simmons Park to run some of the trail paths over by the dam (think of our HOT Dam race – that dam) and that was fun to do assuming you didn't make a

wrong turn and get yourself lost 😊 ! Luckily that never happened to me. Running long distance just seems to be something I enjoy doing all the time. Sometimes I just do it for fun, other times I might be doing it to calm my stress level and get myself back into a good mood.

*Do you have running buddies or are you more of a "run alone" person? Why do you prefer this?*

I'm more of a run alone person but running in a group definitely does have its perks. When running in a group it seems easier keeping your pace or being able to push yourself more and stop yourself from wanting to walk which is more of a temptation when you're by yourself.

*How did you become involved in the WTRC? What club races do you most enjoy?*

I first got into the running club when I turned 16. At the time, a few people from my high school cross country team were part of it and I wanted to be too. That year, for my 16th birthday, my parents paid to make it where I was officially a



member of the running club which I did not mind at all. I really like all of the races but I think I would have to say that my favorite is either the Turkey Trot or the Buffalo Wallow because I seem to enjoy a challenge when I run.

### Wayland Wellness 1/2 Marathon/10K/5K/1 Mile

Place	Sex	Div	Name	Bib #	Age	Sex	Gun	Tag	Pace	City
1			Montalvo, Martin	30	48	M	1:34:14	1:34:14	7:12	Plainview
1			Taylor, Megan	44	16	F	1:39:04	1:39:04	7:34	Lubbock
2			Moser, Mitchell	31	22	M	1:39:32	1:39:28	7:36	Abilene
2			Jansen, Michaela	24	40	F	1:39:41	1:39:35	7:36	Lubbock
3			Heinen, Travis	22	16	M	1:46:17	1:46:16	8:07	Plainview
3			Cotton, Journee	13	17	F	1:49:10	1:49:10	8:20	Littlefield
4		1	Steen, Christine	2	34	F	1:50:08	1:50:07	8:24	Lubbock
4		1	Heinen, Joshua	21	14	M	1:51:16	1:51:16	8:30	Plainview
5		1	Knox, Don	3	53	M	1:52:24	1:52:20	8:34	Wichita Falls

*So -- have you run any longer races -- maybe half-marathons, or marathons -- anything like that? If you have, could you tell us about a couple of those, maybe what race was your favorite and why? How did you last long race go (however you define "long!"). (If there are other races outside of those the club sponsors that you've enjoyed please feel free to tell us about these! They can be any distance!)*

Back when I was still in high school and within one year after I graduated I ran 5 half marathons as well as 1 full marathon. The full marathon was when I was still a sophomore in high school and the first half marathon being when I was a freshman. The only mistake at that point with doing the full marathon was the timing of it... 5 days before the regional cross country meet. Needless to say, my coach wasn't too thrilled when he heard about it but I still ended up doing good at both races. After that, though, my coach told me not to do that again because of the fact I was rather sore for 3 of those 5 days! Even though he didn't sound mad about it, I knew he wasn't kidding about not pulling that stunt again.

At the same time, both when I did my first half marathon and my first full, people were so shocked when they heard how young I was at the time. The only half marathon I've done outside of the Buffalo Wallow was back when the Wayland Wellness Run was being held for just a few years in Plainview.

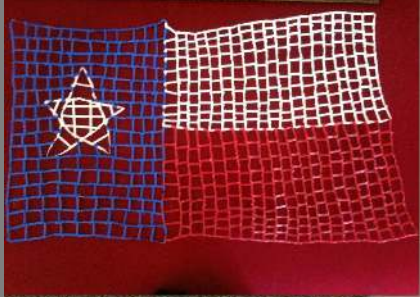


**This is me after my half marathon this morning. I was the first girl of all ages to cross the finish line and the second person over all with a time of 1:39:04**

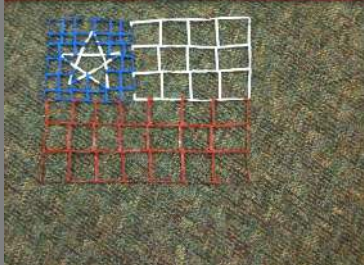




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Chile  
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RENSHIP



*What other things, people, activities, events fill your life? Tell us about things you do that give us more of an understanding of who you are.*

I generally just work a lot at my 4 jobs. But, on the side, I like to make stuff out of twist ties, hang out with my mom and aunt, ride my bike around town, and sometimes, when my work goes late into the night, I like to just sleep to relax from all the work.

*I'm sure I've not asked everything you might have thought of that would be fun, interesting to know. Take all the space you need to tell us!*

So this month makes 11 years that I've been part of the running club after my parents paid to make me part of it as a Sweet 16 birthday gift. My first race in the running club was the Hot Dam Run. I've also appeared to have enjoyed running since I was little because there's pictures of me as little kid and even as a toddler where it looks like I'm saying "I'm going to be a runner when I get older." So, running seems to just be part of who I am (even though I'm not as fast as I used to be).



2018 Loop the Lake



# WTRC Members Who Participated in the 2023 Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon Run to Remember

From the editor:

I had friends through the years who have gone to Oklahoma City to run in one of the Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon events. This event states, "Our mission is to celebrate life, reach for the future, honor the memories of those killed in the 1995 bombing and unite the world in hope."

The WTRC was represented in the Marathon and Half Marathon events. I asked them to relate their experiences. This event is one that is not all that far from Lubbock so perhaps you might read this and think about being a participant yourself in the near future! All who I know who have run in one of the events really enjoyed it — they give it very high marks.

Those members and their times are listed on this page. When searching the results for just the WTRC members I am constrained by your name being spelled the same on the Ok City Marathon registration records as it is on the WTRC registration records. So, I apologize if I missed listing your race result.

		Bib Number		Event	Chip Time	Overall Place
Carol	Coleson	11687	Lamesa	Half F 30-34	2:11:58	2068
Liana	Garza	10119	Lubbock	Half F 50-54	3:43:43	5984
Emily	Newcome	13685	Lubbock	Half F 30-34	1:40:52	270
Sheila	Price	10244	New Deal	Half F 55-59	3:43:42	5982
Riannon	Rowley	1125	Lubbock	Marathon F 30-34	4:32:24	855
Jennifer	Salas	2622	Lubbock	Marathon F 40-44	5:01:12	1202
Librada	Sissell	10268	Lubbock	Half F 55-59	3:07:53	5240

I just started running long distance again this past winter, after several years off. I set a goal for myself to run a half marathon before the summer, and chose the Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon because I heard it was a great atmosphere, and it was scheduled before the weather would get too hot! The race did not disappoint! There was not one single stretch of the course that didn't have people cheering, holding signs, giving out snacks, and shouting encouragement! There is one especially big hill on the race - Gorilla Hill - and



it was so packed with people on every side you had to squeeze to the middle to run, but the cheering was so energizing I didn't even notice we were on a hill! Not only was I able to run and finish my first half in 9 years, I had my best time ever, 1:40:52, and loved every minute....ok, maybe except a few in mile 10 when I was realizing how many more hills OKC has than Lubbock!

I have loved this new season of running, not just the OKC Memorial half marathon, but also the WTRC monthly races and community, and feeling like I can improve and be a stronger runner, having more fun now, in my 30's, than I ever was before! Overall, it was a great course, great atmosphere, very well organized, and really made you feel a part of a bigger group of runners! I would highly recommend it if you're looking for a race that isn't too far, is a little bit of a challenge over our flat Lubbock roads, and is a lot of fun.

**Emily Newcome**

This was very sacred run for all the lives lost in the OKC bombing. The 3 of us agreed we wanted to run a double somewhere out of state this year. We agreed and we set out to run the Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon. The week before we left I was

diagnosed with cancer. So, with me having cancer the run took on two meanings for us. I completed a 5k on Saturday and half marathon on Sunday.

**Sheila Price**





The Oklahoma City Marathon has been on my list of races to run for a while, but the timing just never worked out - until this year and I sure am glad it did. Cowtown had always been the largest race I had run, but OKC definitely compared to it with over 25,000 runners participating in the events across the weekend. Speaking of, I had just finished Cowtown a few months prior and finished with a time I was happy with considering it had been about 4 years since I ran a full marathon, but I wanted more. My friend Carol had just finished her first half marathon at Cowtown as well and is from the OKC area so we decided on a little bit of a whim to sign up for the OKC weekend together. That's what started it! We put in lots of miles together, some of which were tests and others that felt easy-peasy. Leading up to the race, the pre-race jitters of course kicked in, but I think they were eased a little because we volunteered to help with the kids marathon the day before. We were "Safety Net Runners" in bright orange shirts and ran alongside the kids to make sure they didn't stray off course (by the way, those kids are fast!!). This served as a nice shake out run and lead right into race day!

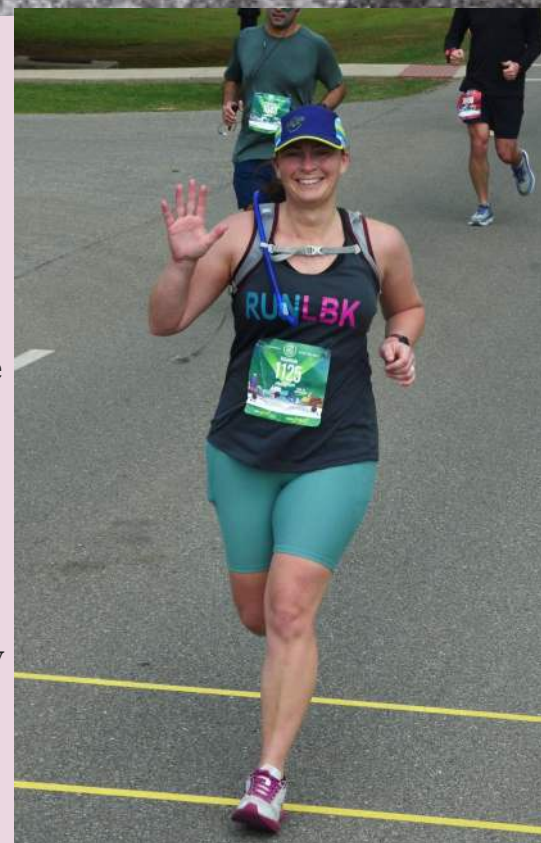
The marathon course was well-planned out and had a good amount of entertainment along the way. It seemed like every time I got a little tired, I would turn a corner and there was a GIANT gorilla and people dressed in banana costumes at the mile 7 "Gorilla Hill," oversized sloth-heads blowing bubbles and dancing a luau, or a line of 15 blow-up dinosaurs with megaphones cheering you on. The support was nothing like I had seen, not to mention live music along the course.

Now, I started this race knowing miles 21-24 had a very, very long gradual hill -- of course, the hardest miles of a marathon, why not add a long hill! Keeping that in mind, I went into the race with a goal of running a 4:30:00 which is a solid 20 minutes off of my Cowtown time just two months prior. This was my A-goal, I always have a backup goal too....that was a 4:40:00, which seemed manageable. I'm constantly doing math in my head while running a race so I started banking time earlier in the race to make up for that dreaded miles 21-24. By mile 8, I calculated that I had banked enough time to hit my goal and was actually about 8 minutes ahead of schedule! The course was tough. I remember saying out loud, "You've got to be kidding me!" at one point when I took a turn and there was ANOTHER hill looming ahead. I felt like there had been more up-hills than down-hills by far and started hearing a few others say things like, "Oklahoma City is flat until you run this race!" These comments made me chuckle and at least made me feel like I wasn't the only one thinking this.

I was thankful the majority of my training miles were spent with great company running the hills at MacKenzie Park in Lubbock. It really prepared me to tackle that last bit and the support along the course still didn't waiver! I cruised in at 4:29:50 according to my watch and a big 'ol smile on my face! I had hit my A-goal!! And to top it off, Carol had run a personal record in the half marathon too!

Overall, the OKC marathon exceeded my expectations. It was a fantastic race. A couple of pros for me were: distance from Lubbock made it easy to make the trip over the weekend (a little over 5 hours one-way), great support, lots of runners, water stops every 1.5 miles, good food, expo was easy to navigate and had some great booths, and the weather was perfect running conditions (about 50 degrees at the start and 65 at the finish). A few cons for me were: a little pricey because we signed up after price increases, large start corrals that made the first 3-4 miles difficult to navigate.

When asked if I would run it again or recommend it to others - definitely! But make sure you train for those hills!!





I was invited to run the Oklahoma City marathon by a friend who has run over 20 marathons. My friend had heard me say over and over that I wanted to run my first marathon, but I wanted it to be meaningful & special. When she told me about the Oklahoma City Marathon, I researched it and it was a perfect match for what I was looking for.

I remember I was in high school when the Oklahoma City bombing happened in 1995. Although the "Run to Remember" honors those affected by the OKC bombing, the experience of this event also celebrates life! There were so many people -- 13,000 plus runners, many from different parts of the country, maybe even different parts of the world -- that came to the event and you could feel the UNITY within. ❤️

The course was extremely motivating! There were people involved nearly every mile of the marathon -- high school bands/drum lines, neighbors in their neighborhoods handing out food & drinks, bands playing music and people singing, children holding up signs and cheering runners along the way. It was a very fun experience and I am planning on running it again next year!

Thanks again for the opportunity to share my experience! I appreciate it very much!

*Jennifer Salas*



I just have a few things to say about the Oklahoma race. It was very beautiful and I felt like it was a West Texas Running club race because everybody was so welcoming. I

highly recommend going to the memorial museum and touring that because it was very impactful. The race itself was beautiful and I just absolutely loved it. They did a great job and organizing it.

A couple of things with this race for me was supporting my friend Sheila, who is going through her second bout with thyroid cancer as well as my mom having her own issues with cancer. Also, just running because it's an outlet for me and wanted to show support for my friends. I think it's important to do these kinds of things and not let life stop you because you will regret it. Sheila and I ran both races side-by-side!

*Liana Garza*





Here is my story of why I ran the OKC half marathon.

About 5 years ago I could regularly run 3-4 miles on any given day. The most I had trained for was a 10K and it was so painful that my fiancé and I decided we were not going to run anything farther than 4 miles, ever. My focus with fitness used to be HIIT and I was an instructor for HIIT. Then it turned to rhythmic cycling and I went through instructor training for that. Now I teach at Pure Barre.

Long story short, I altogether quit running, thinking I could just run three miles whenever I wanted. Last October, I went for a 3 mile run and was humbled when I found out I could not even finish a mile. It really upset me, and I was fixated on getting my mileage back. So, I reached out to my friend, Riannon. She soon became my running coach, running partner/accountability buddy, and close friend. I tossed out the goal of a half marathon, which we trained for and did in February in Fort Worth - the Cowtown Half Marathon. During the last mile of that race I didn't feel super well and, although I was so happy to finish and meet my goal, I wanted to give it another go. So we signed up for the OKC Memorial half marathon while we were still in Fort Worth. I was excited to keep going and I wanted to do even better in this race.

My second reason for signing up is because I am originally from OKC. My family lives there and I grew up there. I remember the OKC memorial marathon, not from the running or fitness world, but because this memorial is a huge deal to OKC. The race takes over the city every year -- in the best way. Everyone in OKC knows what it is and why it is done. The city comes together for this, and I was so excited thinking about the possibility of being a part of this. My parents were working downtown the day of the bombing; friends and family all have their own stories of that day as well. It is an event that truly affected everyone. And now it is a memorial that brings the city together.

How the run went --

I was excited to run on streets I recognized and considered my old stomping ground. When I lived in OKC I did not run - ever. I was so surprised by the support of the crowds. It made me so proud to be from the city. The energy and support was like something I have never seen. Every mile had a fun theme to it - most notable of course is Gorilla Hill - which was a line of people dressed as bananas and gorillas. I felt so encouraged that I was drawn to emotions many times in the race. My mom and sister came out and supported me and cheered me on from the sidelines. Since I live so far away from them, and they have not been able to be a part of my running journey, this meant the absolute world to me. The race was wonderful, the weather was perfect, the race did not have any notable huge challenges. I would recommend this race to anyone and I would love to do it again. At Cowtown I felt like I was just trying to survive the race and get to the finish. At OKC I was able to enjoy it, take it in, and I felt so good about the race I ran - and hit a new PR.

My next half marathon will be the USA Women's Marathon in Dallas in October. Needless to say, running has become a huge part of my world now.



**Carol Coleson**



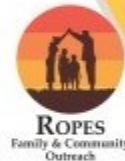
## ROPES FAMILY AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

9th Annual



# RUNNING THE ROPES

## 08.05.23



- MILE** • GUN START: 8:10 AM  
• \$25 REGISTRATION FEE
- 5K** • GUN START: 8:00AM  
• \$25 REGISTRATION FEE
- 10K** • GUN START: 7:40 AM  
• \$25 REGISTRATION FEE

## ROPESVILLE, TX

REGISTRATION AT [WWW.ROPESFCO.COM/RUN](http://WWW.ROPESFCO.COM/RUN)

CONTESTANTS **MUST** REGISTER BEFORE AUGUST 1ST TO RECEIVE A T-SHIRT  
ALL YOU CAN EAT PANCAKE BREAKFAST FROM 8 A.M. - 11 A.M. - NON-RUNNERS \$7.00

*Just an encouragement to make plans to run this event! Ropesville is just a few miles away from us toward Brownfield. The run is fun but the best part is the pancake breakfast afterwards. Quite a few WTRC members run this each year.*

*This race is the week before the WTRC HOT Dam Race so is a good opportunity to stretch your legs as you get ready for HOT Dam.*

*See you at Running the Ropes!*

### Links to register:

The one mile is: <https://tms.ezfacility.com/OnlineRegistrations/Register.aspx?CompanyID=6094&GroupID=3424411>

The 5K is: <https://tms.ezfacility.com/OnlineRegistrations/Register.aspx?CompanyID=6094&GroupID=3424376>

The 10K is: <https://tms.ezfacility.com/OnlineRegistrations/Register.aspx?CompanyID=6094&GroupID=3424341>









Find out about upcoming events and receive race registration reminders each month. (No more than two texts per month.)

Never Miss a Race  
Registration Deadline Again!  
Sign Up for Text Alerts.



 @WTRunning

 West Texas Running Club

## Come Run With Us!

WTRC races are found at [www.wtrunning.com](http://www.wtrunning.com)



### WTRC Members —

We have 7 more races left:

*Firecracker Run, HOT Dam, Shallowater Stampede, Red Raider Road Race, Buffalo Wallow, Turkey Trot, and Toys for Tots Cross Country Run.*

**So.... plenty of time to earn more points toward the series standings!**

Be sure to plan ahead which race you will volunteer for so you will be a part of the Challenge Series.

For the [rules of the Series](#) and for the [current Challenge Series Standings](#) go to:

<https://wtrunning.com/challenge-series-standings-info/>

Bottom line — run as many races as possible (3 qualifies but more is more fun!) and volunteer for at least one race (when you volunteer you are not running that particular race). For our club to work we need help during each of the 13 races — the “jobs” are not difficult and you will get to see the race from a whole new perspective! It’s fun to see the “guts” of the race :-)