

New Year,
New Running,
New Goals



THE
STARTING LINE
48 Years of Running NEWSLETTER



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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

First year as JTC club president has been busy and rewarding

By Doug Tillett

It has been a fun and exciting year for me as the president of our club. I love running – just running – in a way that I really can't explain. I wish I could run all the time but I'm not able to do that. Due to age and injury, and other time demands, there is a whole bunch of other stuff I must do instead of just running.

Honestly, it takes a lot of time just to be the president of JTC Running. It's so interesting and entertaining to be closely involved with the things the club does.

One of the big things we have done recently involves the creation of a new running and bicycling park on Sunbeam Road near the intersection of Craven Road. It's called Aterro Recreational Park and is being built on and around a former landfill. The park is big and the mountain is high, around 65 feet. (See Fran Ruchalski's story and photos on Pages 6-8.)

There is a local group named SORBA (Southern Offroad Bicycle Association) that attracts large groups of volunteers on Saturdays to build bicycle trails. It's amazing the number of people who labor at Aterro Park to create trails for offroad bicycles and now a running trail, too. We made a whopping donation of \$85,000 for SORBA to buy a skid-steer loader and an excavator to clear and maintain the trails.

A lot of work needs to be done and more money will be required to buy the materials to create the trails, but in the end, we will have the most unique and awesome trail to run and race on, away from traffic and in a park that used to be a landfill. The view is amazing at the top.

The bicycle trail is already open on weekend days so you can go there to check it out. The address is 4520 Sunbeam Road.

Another fun JTC thing that got me involved was the Half Marathon Training Class which started in September and finished up on Nov. 21, in enough time for class participants to run the Thanksgiving Half Marathon. The training class met twice a week, on Tuesdays at the YMCA on Riverside Avenue and at various places on Saturdays for a long run.

I signed up as a participant because I'm the president of the club so I thought I should do the class to see how it works. I doubted my ability to finish because of an injury this past year, but I made it. I became the pace group leader of the last group, running 45 seconds then walking 45 seconds, which comes out to about a 15-minute pace. I was The Sweeper. We left no runners behind.



The class leader was Scott Gleason who kept guiding us, encouraging us and cheering for us. I appreciate Scott for the support and help he gave me so that I could finish the class and make the distance. I'm glad I've gotten to know him and have him as a running friend.

Coming up next, we will have the JTC Running Gate River Run Training Class. Our class leader, our coach, will be Sharon Langieri. She has a deep understanding of competitive running and has embraced the intricacies of being a coach. She recently completed the RRCA Coaches Training Class and will receive her certification. You'll love her as our coach.

The **nine-week class will kick off Thursday, Jan. 4**. The kickoff is the only Thursday class – all the others will be on Tuesday and on Saturday. Registration will be open soon (or might already be) on the JTC Running website under "events." Our class is economically priced, fun to run and worth your while. Please join us and make your Gate River Run better than ever.

The final race of the year is JTC Running's The Last Gasp on Dec. 31. That's right – The Last Gasp is the last race on the last day of the year. It's at Jacksonville University at 2 p.m. and is way hillier than you'd think a cross-country race in Jacksonville could ever be.

And it's cheap! Only \$15 to run the race, get a sweatshirt and enjoy the post-race awards ceremony on campus, where we present lots of awards, give you food and beverages, and everybody loves it. Sign up at jtcrunning.com, go to events and click on Last Gasp.

And that's not all! On **Saturday, January 27, it's the Winter Beach Run**. It's a great gauge for you to use to see how your Gate River Run time might end up being. It's 10 miles on the sand at the beach and we also have a 5K. It starts at 2 p.m. at low tide. It's so fun because you don't know what you're going to get.

I've run some Winter Beach Runs that were so cold, I had to run as hard as I could to keep from freezing. And I've run some Winter Beach Runs where there were attractive young people in stylish swimsuits walking along the beach where we are racing. What's it going to be like on Jan. 27? Sign up now and join the fun!

Lastly, remember the **Gate River Run. It's Saturday, March 2**. Sign up for the race. Volunteer and enjoy the GRR even more. Register at gateriverrun15K.com. Be a part of the largest 15K race in the country. It's the USATF National Championship, as well as the USATF-FL State 15K Championship. You don't want to miss it. See you there.

EDITOR'S LETTER

Coach Sean's advice may help me finally learn to play the guitar

By Marilyn Young

I originally had a different column for this edition of The Starting Line, but I ditched it after reading Sean McCormack's column. I think Coach Sean's column on Page 14 is a great read for anyone, whether they're a runner or not.

And it's especially timely as the new year approaches and we make resolutions that include goals that we may struggle to reach. Part of that may be because we don't know how to reach a goal, especially if it's something major. Or as Sean calls it, the big, lofty long-term goal.

For him, that big goal was running a sub-2:30 marathon. Sean's first marathon time was 24 minutes longer, so it was indeed, as he called it, a lofty goal. But because he set attainable shorter-term goals along the way, he stayed focused on the end goal. And he reached it.

I'm betting most of us have those lofty goals, where we keep saying each January, "This is the year I'm going to do it." For me, that goal is nowhere near as physical as Sean's, but it's something I've been wanting to do for at least 30 years. I want to learn how to play the guitar. The good thing is, I already have a guitar. In fact, I have three.

I received one many years ago as a going away gift from my team at an Indiana newspaper when I left for another job. They had patiently listened to me spout my hopes and dreams of learning to play several times during my time there.

I bought a guitar a few years ago that came with instructions (both on paper and on video) and everything I needed to learn how to play, according to the commercial. However, the purchase was missing something huge: patience. So, both boxes are stashed away in a closet.

And I bought one that was autographed by Kenny Rogers, my

favorite singer and lifetime crush. If you're too young to know who he is, I'll give you a hint with lyrics from one of his most famous songs: You've got to know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em. Know when to talk away and know when to run.

That guitar is strictly for display purposes, but the other two are just sitting there waiting for me to start setting those shorter-term goals on my way to something big and lofty.

The two biggest issues keeping me from reaching my big, lofty goal are an inability to read sheet music and a lack of patience. The first barrier can be addressed by learning to read music. The second is something I inherited from my mom, who inherited it from her father, who inherited it from his father.

But right now, Coach Sean's column is making me believe I can do it. Make sure to give it a read and think about what big, lofty goals you want to reach.

Upcoming stories for 2024

As I begin to think about next year's newsletters, there's one thing I know for sure: I want and need your help in sharing stories about our members' love of running and how it enhances their lives. I also want to show how the club and our members make the community a better place.

For the January/February edition, let me know what your running goals are for the year. Are you training for your first Gate River Run or ready to tackle your first marathon? Are you trying to set a personal record in a particular race? How are working toward those goals? Please send your responses to me at storiesbymarilyn@gmail.com by Jan. 7.

I also want to showcase not only how JTC Running's philanthropic efforts make Northeast Florida a better place, but how members are helping their cities and neighborhoods by volunteering. Since April is National Volunteer Month, I want to hear how you and your families have been donating your time to help others. Maybe you're volunteering at an animal shelter, tutoring children in an after-school program or delivering meals to people who no longer drive. Please email your stories and photos to me at storiesbymarilyn@gmail.com by Feb. 28.

Have other ideas? Shoot me an email.

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You can now easily renew or change your membership, and sign up for Club events, on the 'Wild Apricot for Members' app available for iPhones and android. Download and log in with the same email and password you use for JTCRunning.com.

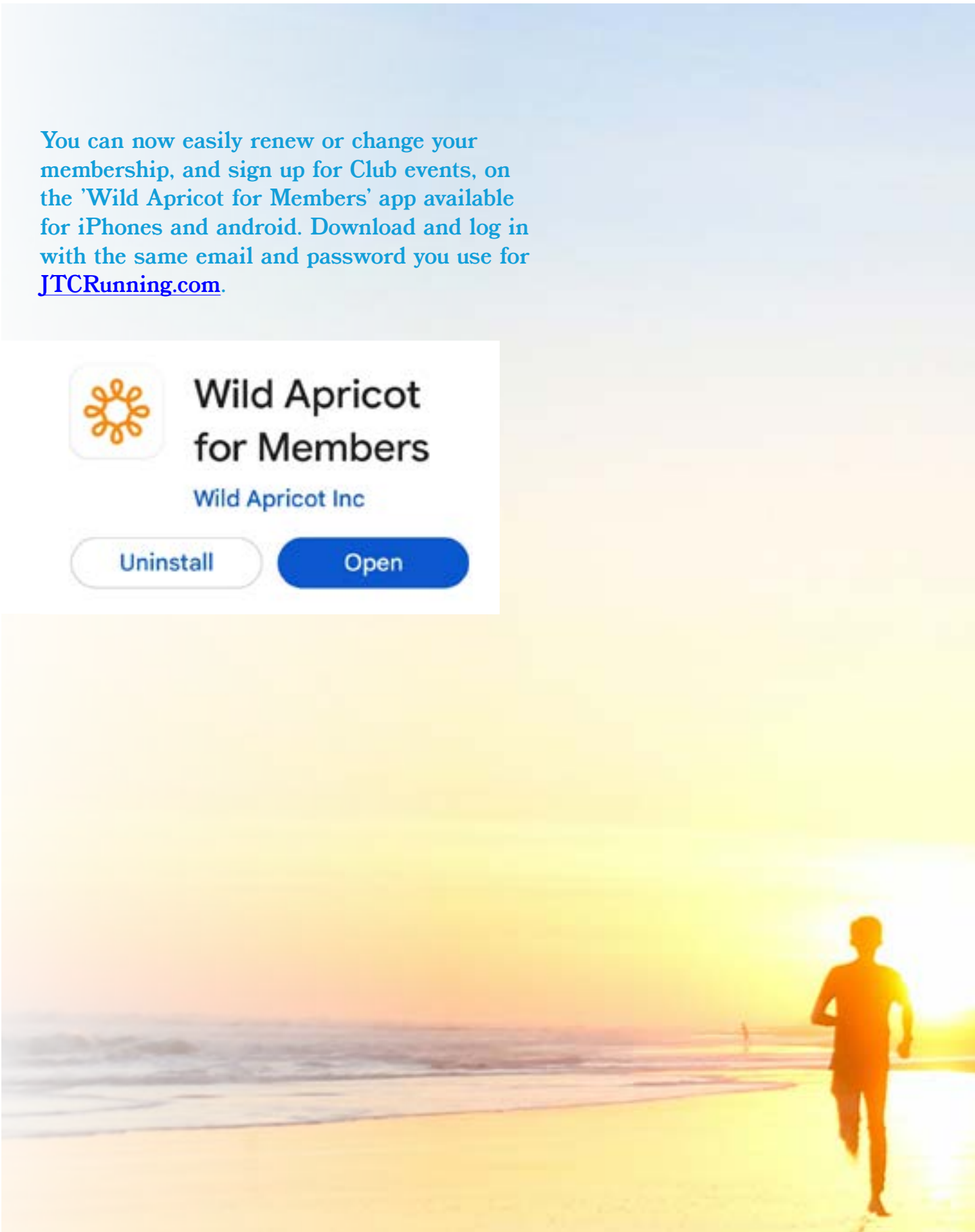


**Wild Apricot
for Members**

Wild Apricot Inc

Uninstall

Open



‘We wanted to build something here that was super cool’

JTC Running donation supports running and biking mecca in Jacksonville

Story and photos by Fran Ruchalski



On a soggy November afternoon, several people gathered to check out the transformation of what was once a construction landfill on Sunbeam Road (that was also a golf course that never was) into a unique outdoor recreation destination for mountain bikers, runners and walkers.

The Jacksonville Chapter of the Southern Off-Road Bicycle Association (SORBA Jax) has signed a lease with property owners Jeremy Hill and John Thornton for approximately 100 acres that will be converted into biking and running trails with elevations rising to 65 feet.

Other plans for recreational amenities at the Aterro Park site at 4520 Sunbeam Road, include a dog park, market, pickleball courts and an Airsoft facility.

The JTC Running Club made an \$85,000 donation for the purchase of earth-moving equipment to SORBA Jax for the construction of a 3.1-mile (5K) running trail at the park.

The trail will be six feet wide and made from compacted crushed lime rock. The trail will include both open and

shaded areas as well as three bridges. Trail planning has begun, and clearing is expected to take approximately six months to complete.

“We are proud to partner with JTC Running on this new trail system,” said Todd Addicott, president of SORBA Jax. “Both of our organizations provide healthy recreation, fellowship and fun for all ages and skill levels, and this initiative will certainly deliver on that promise.”

Plus, there’s the cool factor.

“We wanted to build something here that was super cool that was going to involve the community and allow the community to have a great recreation area in the middle of Jacksonville,” Addicott said.

The organizers are working with the state’s Greenways and Trails program to connect the area with other trails and recreation areas throughout Florida.

JTC Running President Doug Tillett is excited about the partnership with SORBA Jax and what the project will bring to Jacksonville.



“We support the vision ... to create a multiuse recreational experience where runners, walkers and cyclists can all gather for healthy activities on a 65-foot hill here in Jacksonville,” he said.

He said people have told him they’re happy to be able to run on “a unique piece of land in Jacksonville without having to worry about traffic and cars. A place dedicated just for us.”

City Councilman Joe Carlucci said the project will be a future destination for folks from throughout the Southeast. “These trails for the bikes and runners are a benefit to the community and will encourage people to visit the area,” he said.

Doug Alred, owner of 1st Place Sports, thanked the organizers for bringing to life his vision for what it could be:

a public space for people to come out for recreation and enjoyment.

After the donation was announced, people got to take tours of the property to see the projects under way. To say this new venue doesn’t look like Jacksonville would be an understatement. There’s already a three-mile mountain bike loop and some running trails ready for use. In addition to the 3.1-mile running trail, a 10-mile bike trail is planned for the facility.

Construction will continue for the next year or so. Addicott estimates they’ll still need to raise \$250,000 to do all they have envisioned. But look for both organizations to host events there in the near future.



New & Returning Members



Richard	Amell	Kari	Ebeltoft	Andy	Marello	Emily	Wagener
Daniel	Ashworth, Jr.	Adam	Estanislao	Matthew	McLaughlin	Barbara	Werner
Ramsey	Banga	Wendy	Evans	Cameron	Moore	Justin	Wiggins
Randy	Barnett	Bob	Ferne	Carol	Motycka	Jeanie	Wilson
Steve	Beard	Lindsey	Finnegan	Don	Murray III	Robert	Wood
Daniel	Benz	Clare	Fullerton	Joe	Nagy	Mark	Woods
Janet	Bezinque	Mario	Garces	Jennifer	ONeal	Bruce T.	Zewicke
Eugene	Biala	David	Garrett	Jeff	Palmer		
Joe	Bowman	Fred R.	Gaudios	Aileen	Peck		
Mary	Bowman	William	Gillespie	Nathan	Powell		
John	Brantley	Hal	Gilreath	Mills	Ramseur		
Daniel	Brower	Ken	Glover	Stig	Rasmussen		
Adrienne	Brown	Mark	Goetz	Emily	Raymor		
Barbara	Bruns	Katherine	Gold	Dee	Robertson-Lee		
Heidi	Burgess	Jacob	Gordon	Jay	Robinson		
Jacob	Campbell	Tom	Graham	Kathy	Roos		
Susan	Chadwell	Nancy	Hamrick	George	Royal		
Tracey	Choulut	Angela	Harris	Michael	Ruby		
Eryn	Compaan	Dennis	Harrison	Joseph	Sanoguet		
Amiee	Cords	Daniel	Hofacker	Eve	Schlotthauer		
Adam	Cross	Bruce	Holmes	Michael	Schoenfeld		
Tom	Custer	Jonathan	Hooper	Erich	Schwarz		
Jabari	Davidson	Steve	Hunt	Amber	Slimp		
Mamie	Davis	Laura	Janssen	Erin	Smith		
Irvin Michael	De Guzman	Nick	Kaleel	James	Speed		
Donna	Deegan	Meghan	Kennedy	Erika	Spencer		
Tim	Deegan	Peter	Kotchen	Denise K.	Stern		
Elisabeth	Diamond	Sharon	Langieri	Dawn	Sumner		
Jan	Dimond	Hope	Lattin	Kelly	Treadaway		
Stephen	DoRego	Erlinda	Lopez	Ben	Van Male		

10 questions with Jennifer DeSantis

Age: 45

Occupation: Personal trainer, running coach and “Nanny” to an adorable 6-month-old girl who happens to be my niece

Family: No kids or pets. Blessed with two amazing parents, one sister (husband and kid) and two brothers (and their families)



How long have you been a member of JTC Running?

I believe 10 years

How and when did running become part of your life and how has it changed it?

I played sports in high school but I wasn't the most “athletic.” When I graduated college and started teaching elementary music in Virginia, I lived with a high school friend who was a “fitness junkie.”

She dragged me along to the gym and I started running for 10 minutes on the treadmill thinking I was pretty amazing to knock out one mile and still be walking!

I was sharing this incredible achievement with the PE teacher at my school and she nicely told me that I should aim for 30 minutes of cardio. Who wants to run for 30 minutes??!! Somewhere that led to a 5K, 10K and then let's sign up for the Marine Corps Marathon (because that'll be fun). And my love for running began!

Running helped me lose weight through nutrition. I had to learn how to fuel my body for that sport and in turn, I lost some weight and developed a passion for fitness.

How does running impact your mental health?

Running has become an outlet for me. I can clear my head or talk through problems while hitting the pavement. The biggest impact running has brought are the runners I crossed paths with people who are now some of my dearest friends. Those long, sweaty, strenuous miles lead to amazing conversations and lasting friendships both on and off the pavement.

Where do you find motivation on days you don't feel like running?

This is a great question and there are days where I don't find the motivation. What does work for me is reminding myself that this is not a chore, but a gift that God has continued to grant me.

I know how I'll feel after I warm-up and when it's over, and that feeling is worth fighting for. I don't allow myself to feel guilty because there are some days where I just can't, but instead I tell myself how disappointed I'll feel later and I don't want to disappoint myself.

It also helps to put your running/workout/swimming clothes ON because when you're dressed, you're more likely to get out there!

What do you look for in a running partner or do you prefer to run alone? If the latter, why?

There are times when I need a solo run, but I definitely prefer the company, as I need the motivation and accountability sometimes!

I've had some amazing training partners who provide the push when I need it and give me the grace when they know I need it. Someone who won't make me do all the talking because I need to breathe. But someone who is willing to listen to me ramble when I need to get something off my chest.

I like running with someone who can push the pace a bit so I can try to keep up!

What is your favorite race and why?

I don't really have a favorite race that I run each year. I love the challenge of the Gate River Run and the post party. I love the Chicago marathon because the spectators are amazing and it's my PR (personal record).

I love the Thanksgiving half because it starts the holiday with a nice calorie deficit and you're running with so many of your friends. I love Joe's Jog 5k because it's in memory of one of my students and raises money for Pediatric Cancer research.

10 questions with Jennifer DeSantis

Do you listen to music, podcasts or something else while you run. or do you prefer to run without headphones? Why?

I laughed when I read this question because those who took the JTC training classes when I was the coach know how I feel about this! I prefer to not run with music. On the rare occasions that I do, I only use one ear bud and keep the volume low. I have seen too many runners have headphones in (including the ones that sit outside your ear) with the music so loud that they cannot hear those around them or cars!

When you're so focused on your music, you miss the conversations with those around you and what is happening around you. I am not against others running with music because I know the benefits of music (former music teacher) but I would caution against having headphones in both ears and/or music at a high volume.

I'll step down from my soap box now.

How do you reward yourself after a great run?

Hot coffee and a gluten-free breakfast.

How do you work in time to run while on vacation or business trips, or do you take a break?

I view my workouts as "meetings," so I schedule them on my calendar. I do give myself grace if I need to move them or skip them, but I usually try to get up early so I can knock it out so I can be present and enjoy the vacation. It does help when most of your travel lately is for races or fitness conferences – the workouts are included!

Where is the most beautiful place you've run?

I ran a marathon in Boise, Idaho. Amazing views, perfect weather, hated the course ... but that's for another interview!

What other activities do you take part in to stay healthy?

I am a personal trainer, so I am a big proponent of strength training. I train with Camp Gladiator and usually work online with a trainer, as well as take advantage of the yoga and stretching classes.



10 questions with Jennifer DeSantis



10 questions with Jennifer DeSantis



COACH'S CORNER

Reach your big-idea goal by hitting shorter-term goals along the way

By Sean McCormack



To me running without a goal or goals is like trying to steer a ship without a rudder.

Most importantly well-crafted goals provide the motivation that is an essential ingredient to keep a runner focused and inspired. More specifically, I have always been a believer in having that big, lofty, long-term goal that is your ultimate accomplishment.

It could be five or 10 years out in the future, or even longer. For me, after I had established myself with a foundation, it was to someday run a sub 2:30 marathon. I had no specific timetable or endpoint in mind, but after running my first marathon in 2:54 I figured this was a lofty goal that would take a number of years to achieve.

What it did, however, was provide me with a general roadmap of some of the things I needed to accomplish to eventually achieve the goal. Thus, it revealed some shorter-term goals that, if achieved, would bring me closer to achieving my ultimate goal.

These shorter-term goals became to run a sub 15:30 5k, and after accomplishing that, to run sub 15 minutes.

By speaking and training with accomplished runners, I understood the principle of training my neuromuscular system to run at a faster pace than what would be required to reach my marathon goal. So, in summary, my big, lofty goal set the table to develop specific shorter-term goals that would set me up for success.

The benefit was that it kept me focused, motivated and inspired, which is absolutely essential for any serious training plan. So, my advice is to follow this type of process. Develop a “big idea” goal based on what would be the ultimate achievement for you. Then start to formulate a plan that includes a few specific shorter-term goals that are stretch goals but at the same time realistic.

However, it is critically important that these shorter-term goals, if achieved, move you closer to your big idea goal. This will ensure you will remain motivated, focused and through achievement ... inspired to continue.

A final thought: You should always consider adjusting for any pitfalls or setbacks. As we all know from running, they usually pop up at some point. In this case, try and keep your big idea goal but adjust your shorter-term goals as required.

This may mean a longer road to achieve the big idea goal but being realistic and flexible will allow you to recenter your expectations and stay on track.

If you have any questions about this column or general training questions, email Coach Sean at seanmichaelmccormack@gmail.com

Save the dates for JTC Running's first track meets in 2024

By Bob Jones



JTC Running is pleased to announce two open track meets for early 2024. The first track meet will be **Saturday, Jan. 20 at Bartram Trails High School**. This meet will be running events only and initial plans include races in the 110/100 hurdles and 100-, 200-, 400-, 800-, 1,600- and 3,200-meter distances.

There will be separate heats for male and female runners, except in the 3,200-meter race. This event will be professionally timed, with results and awards provided at the event.

Our second track meet, which will be field events only, will be on **Saturday, Feb. 10 and will be held at The Bolles School**. Initial plans include competing in long jump, triple jump, discus, shot put, high jump and pole vault events (separate male/female heats).

This will be a competition, not a clinic. However, we do plan to have staff familiar with each event to provide a demonstration, as well as ensure safety. This will be a good opportunity for young athletes to try a field event.

Both meets are community track meets and open to all athletes of all ages. We will have age group awards for each male and female event. Both track and field meets will be free to those who register at least three days prior to the day of the track meet (same day registration will be \$5). More details, including registration link, are available on JTCRunning.com.

We look forward to seeing everyone at these first two track meets in 2024. We are still working on dates for our JTC Running summer track series. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to Robert Jones at bob90porsche@gmail.com or call him at (859) 801-5998.

The positive connection between running and your mental health

By Hubert Keen



A friend recently sent me an article from the public media with this title: “Running could ease depression as much as medication, study finds: Extend the treatment arsenal.” Other articles appearing in the general media over recent weeks also offer insights on the positive effects of running, and physical activity more generally, for mental health.

We assume that running is good for our health, but what does the research literature say about the relationship between running and mental health? The news is mostly good.

Beginning especially in the 2000s, emerging research revealed positive effects of running and physical activity on mental health. A 2022 review in the *Journal of the American Medical Association-Psychiatry* analyzed 15 studies comprising over 191,000 patients, with a minimum of 5,000 in each study. The review concluded there were distinct mental health benefits of running and physical exercise on mental health.

An interesting outcome of this body of research is that the positive effects are evident at low levels of physical activity, levels even lower than the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s recommended 150 minutes per week

of “moderate-intensity physical activity.” The results are encouraging and, as suggested in the headline of the article cited above, the “treatment arsenal” might be extended. Running may be better than antidepressants for some. However, individuals with depression should always consult with their physician to decide upon treatment.

Most of the studies involved large populations of older adults. However, one interesting short-term experiment with 48 “unathletic” individuals between the ages of 18 and 33 used running regimes and outcomes measured by psychological analyses and MRI brain scans.

The experiment demonstrated significant improvement in psychological assessments of mental state, as well as increases in volume of the hippocampus region of the brain. In fact, the hippocampus, which is the site of long-term memory retrieval and spatial body memory, has been shown in numerous studies to undergo significant volume increases in runners.

If small amounts of running are good for mental health, does this predict a linear and positive relationship in which more is better? The information is not entirely good in this regard, on two aspects of running.

First, the JAMA-P review, cited above, concludes that less than an hour per week of moderately intensive exercise leads to rapid gains in mental health, and the positive trend seems to continue up to about 2.5 hours per week of moderately intensive activity. After this level no significant gains are demonstrated. So, more is not shown to be better.

The second negative indication is that development of a "running addiction" is generally considered to have negative mental health consequences.

I must express an important caveat: because of the variability of individuals, even substantially demonstrated outcomes of research may not necessarily apply to you. As a scientist, I am especially wary of placing too much emphasis on two aspects of the research cited above.

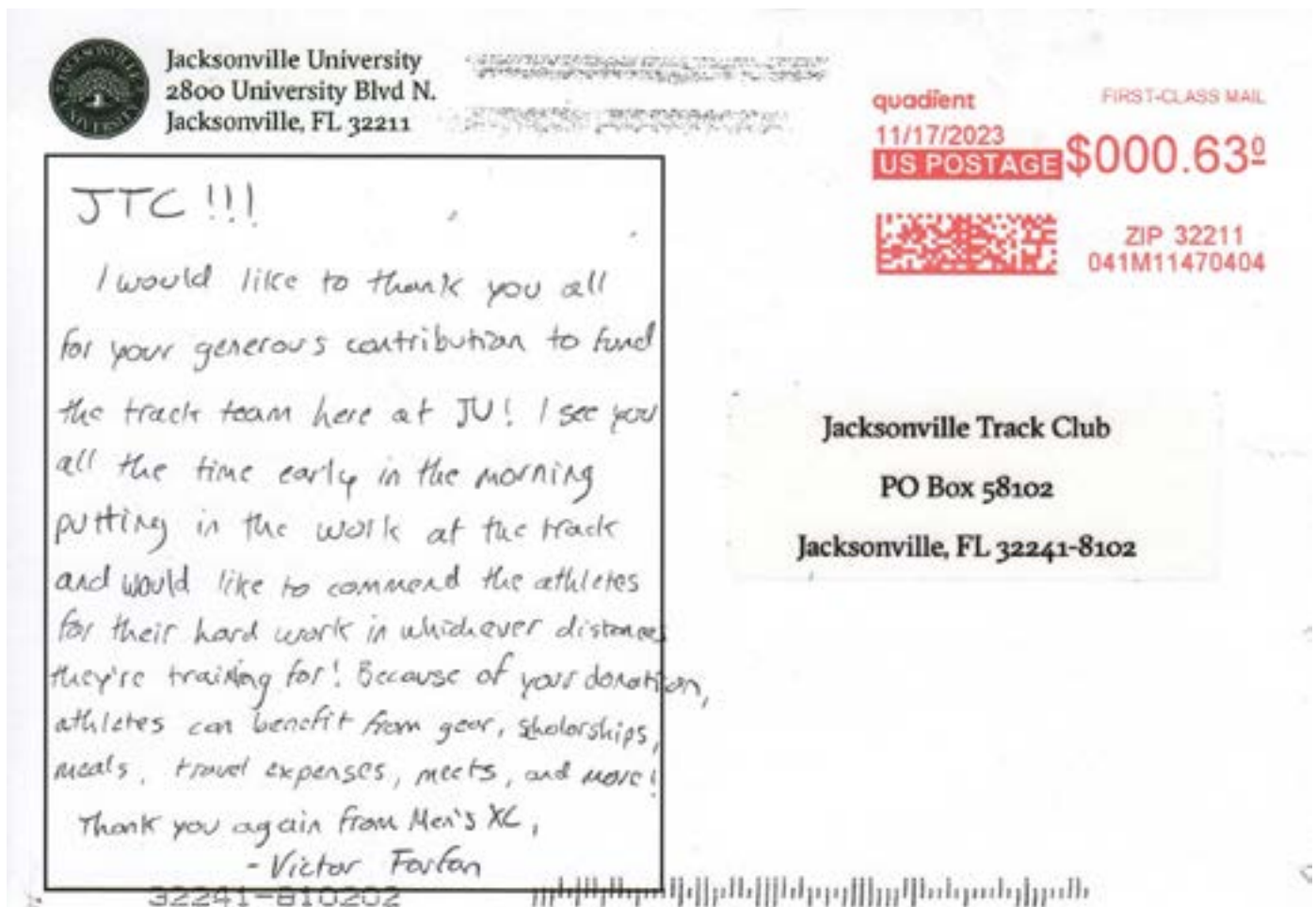
First, the "more is not better" conclusion is preliminary and quite uncertain regarding the upper limit of running exercise that leads to good health.

And second, although advances are being made in research on the relationship between running and changes in the brain, for instance size of the hippocampus, the practical implications of this are still unknown.

This article has examined existing research on the relationship between running, and physical activity more generally, and mental health.

In a future article, I will examine the very interesting recent research on the relationship between running and general health outcomes.

Special Thank You



Here's what you actually need to do for recovery

By Rob Coltman

Coltman and Baughman Physical Therapy



As we runners gear up for marathon season here in Jacksonville and the intensity of training increases, the importance of recovery becomes a super-hot topic of discussion and something that most runners want to integrate into their training.

Proper recovery can make the difference in succeeding with your most ambitious endurance goals versus getting injured at Week 6, so it's obviously important. But there are so many questions that we as PTs and coaches continuously get asked by athletes about recovery during their performance journeys, and there really are so many myths and misconceptions about it.

How important is recovery? How much do you need? How little can I get by with? What do I need to buy to get better recovery? Can nutrition help? Perhaps most importantly: What actually is recovery? We as PTs feel that in order to best benefit from recovery, it's really helpful to sort all of this out.

What is recovery?

This seems like an easy answer, but it's really not. Does recovery just mean rest? Does it mean reduced/improved muscle damage physiologically? Does it mean reduced soreness? Does it mean improved ability to train during the next workout? It would be easy to answer "yes" to all these questions because we want all of these things, but really, these are all separate, based on science.

For example, just because soreness is reduced or even performance being better for the next workout, doesn't necessarily mean that muscle damage has actually been reduced by a recovery technique. So, if we really want to answer the question of what are the things that help improve recovery, we really need to know what we are trying to improve and what we need to improve.

The basics are the best

For long-term training success with steadily improving performance, less injury risk and ultimate race performances, we need to define recovery physiologically.

Recovery is a return to an ideal physiological state with a balance between repair and adaptation processes in multiple areas. These areas include microtrauma repair and strengthening of muscles and tendons, glycogen replacement, restoration of normal hormonal balance and reduction of inflammation. So, if we are going to choose the best recovery plan, we need to integrate the recovery strategies that best address these physiological factors.

Fortunately, the best recovery strategies for this are actually pretty basic and easy. They are so basic and easy that often they are discounted as unnecessary, and other, sometimes expensive, gimmicks are used instead because they are cool, and everyone is using them, and perhaps because of good marketing.

Everybody reading this knows all the items that I am talking about. They are things like dynamic compression boots, electrical stimulation machines, trigger point balls, foam rollers, massage guns, even massage chairs, etc.. And before folks get offended by me calling these items gimmicks, I want to say that these items can have their place, which I will explain.

Based on science, and really common sense, the best strategies to integrate into training for physiologic recovery are as follows. I call these the Recovery Big 4, which are:

Sleep: The appropriate amount of sleep is probably the single most important factor in training success and racing performance. Of all recovery activities, this is the most powerful thing we can do to restore microtrauma repair and strength of muscles and tendons, restoration of normal hormonal balance and reduction of inflammation.

Active recovery days: Active recovery days, or easy days, during the training schedule are vital to stop the physiologic damage of training and reduce inflammation, yet still bring vast amounts of blood flow and vital nutrients to damaged tissues. One may think a day off is better, but if done easy enough, the recovery effect is far greater with active recovery than with a day off. These can even be a walk.

Warm up/cool down: With our busy lives, it's very easy to cut these out, but don't! The pre-workout easy warm up helps us cause less tissue damage during the workout and the post-workout easy cool down does the same that the active recovery does immediately following the workout to

get started. Again, these can even be a short walk pre-post workout.

Nutrition: Proper nutrition and nutrient timing (what to eat immediately following training sessions and throughout the day) is vital to physiologic recovery.

All of these address recovery as defined in physiologic terms and addresses each of the components of this mentioned (microtrauma repair and strengthening of muscles and tendons, glycogen replacement, restoration of normal hormonal balance and reduction of inflammation) and are by far the most important things to do for effective recovery.

The "gimmicks" I mentioned have very little science behind them to affect the body physiologically beyond just reducing post-exercise soreness. Keep in mind that too much use of a foam roller, trigger point ball or massage gun can actually increase muscle and tendon breakdown after workouts.

Even the very popular (and expensive) dynamic compression boots and electrical stimulation that have been proposed to help to increase blood/fluid circulation while sitting on a couch, compared to sitting on a couch without these items on, have nowhere near the circulatory/physiologic effect of a basic 5-10 minute walk. The walk is far more powerful to address all the things mentioned above and is thus far better for our definition of recovery.

Our recovery plan

So, when we are choosing from all the things that we could do to recover well within our training plan, we should always choose the Recovery Big 4 first. If reducing muscle soreness is a priority (understanding that reducing soreness does not always mean improving things physiologically), then you can use the items like foam rollers, etc. And if the time and money allows for dynamic compression/electrical stimulation, again its priority should be far below the Big 4.

If you have any questions about recovery and/or have an injury due to not enough of it, please contact us at Coltman and Baughman Physical Therapy. We have locations in Jacksonville Beach and Nocatee.

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Weekly Training Runs

Sunday, 6:30 a.m., Mandarin: Various locations and distance. See Facebook page at www.facebook.com/pg/JaxSundayRun/posts/ No Facebook account necessary

Sunday, 6:30 a.m., Atlantic Beach: Atlantic Boulevard and First Street. 5-10 miles.
Contact: Linda White, cell (904) 662-4928
whitelindab@bellsouth.net

Sunday, 8 a.m. Jax Trails Group Run:
Visit Jax Group Trail Running on Facebook

Tuesday, 5:35 a.m., San Marco: Southside United Methodist Church 5-6 miles. Different pace groups from 7 to 9 minutes. Contact: Kelli Howard, (904) 333-9208 text or cell

Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., Baymeadows: Wicked Barley on Baymeadows. Close to 1st Place Sports, 3.5 and 5 mile routes. Enjoy great food and beer afterwards.
(The Wicked Road Warriors)
Contact: Steve Sassa, (904) 860-0053

Wednesday, 5:30 a.m., Bolles School: Track Interval Training, (JTC Running Members)
Contact: James Bryant, jebjay@att.net, (904) 629-8110

Wednesday, 5:30 p.m., Bolles School: Track Interval Training (JTC Running Members)
Contact: James Bryant, jebjay@att.net, (904) 629-8110

Thursday, 6:30 p.m., Springfield: Various locations in the historic neighborhood, see Facebook group Springfield Running Group for weekly route.

Friday, 5:40 a.m., Mandarin: Beauclerc, Forest Circle, 7.5 miles.
Contact: Paul Smith, smithfccj@hotmail.com
(904) 982-3730



Disclaimer on Weekly Workout Sessions:

The Wednesday morning and afternoon sessions at the Bolles School are sanctioned by JTC Running and open only to registered members. Information on all other sessions is provided as a courtesy only. JTC Running does not sanction, manage, or insure these workouts.