

Western Reserve Trail Running Newsletter

Monthly Newsletter

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November 2009



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2009 Race Series Final Results

Peterman and Blackford Top 2009 Series

The Run with Scissors, held October 25, marked the end of the 2009 Western Reserve Trail Running series. David Peterman and Star Blackford led all others after ten events in the year-long competition. Twenty-seven runners

'Tis the Season for Trail Running

The leaves have fallen, the cold air is pushing in, and once again, our trails beckon us to get out there. I hope you had the opportunity to enjoy the fall foliage over the past month on the trails, the 'smell' of fall, and blowing leaves. For me, I had the privilege of immersing myself in the beauty of Oil Creek State Park on October 10/11 for the Inaugural Oil Creek Trail Runs, only two hours west of us in Pennsylvania, and cross my third 100-mile finish line in 2009 and in my life. It certainly is the most beautiful...and short time of the year.

The 2009 Race Series has come to a close with the running of the Towpath Marathon and Run with Scissors Double Marathon and Marathon in October. That means that we have our winners and it is time to give out some awards! For the results, look to the left for Lloyd Thomas' summary. For the awards, we will be celebrating at the Winking Lizard in Peninsula on Saturday, December 26th after the Water Falls group run. Full details later in this newsletter.

WRTR is on Facebook! Join our group and get connected! This is a great way to get real-time updates on Series events and get connected with other trail runners in the area. Race announcements, registration openings, and event photos are just a few of the reasons to join the group. Just search for "WRTR" or "Western Reserve Trail Running" and join us! Over 125 have already joined!

Planning your 2010 calendar? Most of the Series Races for 2010 already have dates set and some have opened up registration. Check out the "Registration Update" section on the lower left side of this month's newsletter for all of the 2010 dates and applicable links.

Looking for a fall trail marathon? Don't miss out on the [Inaugural Bobcat Trail Marathon](#) *this Sunday* at Burr Oak State Park! Be a part of the inaugural event and a race in the 2010 WRTR Race Series! Over 135 runners have already registered and more are expected given a great fall forecast this weekend. Be sure to say "Hi!" when you pick up your packet and organic race shirt on Friday night!

Happy Trails, everyone, and I'll see you on the trails!

Nick Billock, WRTR Newsletter Editor
e-mail / blog

Local Trail Runner Spotlight: Star Blackford

[Star, where do you call home, what do you](#)

Star Blackford

earned the participant award by completing five out of the ten races in the series.

FINAL RESULTS

At the outset of 2009, the WRTR set forth its purpose:

The purpose of the Western Reserve Trail Running (WRTR) race series is to promote a regional competition, wide participation in the sport of trail running, foster volunteerism, and to recognize the annual WRTR series champions.

Given that over 1,000 runners participated and finished a WRTR series race and that we witnessed a greater awareness for race volunteerism, we are happy to report on a successful year of trail running in N.E. Ohio. It is our hope that the points system struck a balance between distance and placing as well as rewarding those who volunteered at one of the events. We hope this tradition of competition continues in the years ahead.

Check out the December newsletter for a closer look at the 2009 WRTR series.

WRTR Awards Celebration

Mark your calendars! The 2009 WRTR Race Series has come to a close and it's time to celebrate the year together and kick off 2010.

What? Awards Celebration: Series awards, participant awards, food, and spirits!

Where? Winking Lizard in Peninsula, OH

When? Start arriving around 11am and awards presentation will begin at Noon. Before the awards, join us for an annual celebratory group run

do for a living, and give us a snapshot of your family: I was born in Arizona, grew up in Buffalo, NY and have lived in Columbus for the past eight years now. I'm a huge fan of Ohio - until we retire, I really can't see being anywhere else. My husband Darris and I don't have kids quite yet, but our three legged chocolate lab Sunday keeps things lively, and our two cats calm them back down.

Where you raised up through your grade school years running or did you start running "seriously" sometime later in life? I try so hard not to regret things, but one of those lingering regrets is that I didn't run during school. As a matter of fact, I'm pretty certain I failed the state physical fitness test! I was working as a lifeguard at a lake the summer between my sophomore and junior years of college; there was a 1.25 mile running path around it. I was bored with the gym and television cardio "workouts" so I decided to try running. The first week, I could only get around the lake one time before severe oxygen debt was knocking at my door. I added little by little, and within a month I was doing 5 miles six days a week. I capped off the summer with my first 10 mile run, just to say I did it. The rest, as they say

When did you first run your first marathon and fall in love with distance running? So I had tried to train for a marathon on my own a couple of times, and I always ended up falling off the train around 12 miles. Then, I was working at a coffee shop during grad school, and a co-worker who also ran started talking about how he'd always wanted to run a marathon. We trained through a Buffalo winter and I made my "debut" at the Buffalo Marathon in 1998. I cried at mile 23 and said never again. I signed up for my second one a week later. I was a "normal" marathoner - 2 or 3 a year - for a couple of years. Then I met Darris at Pittsburgh in 2000 and started on a whole new journey

How were you introduced to the trails? Normally, runners have no idea about the trails unless someone invites them out or convinces them to try them out just once. What's your story? Oh, my story is an AWESOME one. My husband was running the inaugural Burning River with a back injury. He had been building up to it for an entire year - half of his childhood was on the course. He had adjusted his stride early to compensate for the back problem, and his legs and back were trashed early. I asked at Happy Days if any extra pacers were lingering around - someone told me I should do it. I was NOT a trail runner - nor was I interested. I immediately began referring to the course as "torture terrain." But by the time we popped out of Glen's, I knew something new was calling me. Within two days, I knew I was doing Burning River the next year. I canceled my plans to do Ironman Wisconsin with two of my girlfriends and haven't regretted it a moment. Not only was that night with Darris one of the best things that ever happened to our marriage, it was the very beginning of a whole new stage of my running.

What has become your favorite trail race and why? I'm such a novice - when I did BR100 in 2008, it was only my sixth real trail. I dove in fast. I love the BT50K because it's some of my favorite trail. I loved the Mohican 50K just because it's sadistic. But I've really found a "home" in the 100 mile distance, so overall, I'd have to say Burning River. The last 18 miles of Laurel Highlands were awesome, but too much suffering to get there!

How has 2009 been on the trails? 2010 outlook? 2009 was a great

dubbed the Water Falls Trail Run, starting at 7:30am from Lock 29, only steps from the Winking Lizard. This group run will visit Blue Hen, Buttermilk, and Brandywine Falls and will stop for group photos along the way. Last year, over 70 runners joined in the fun. Pictures from last year's run.

RSVP: on Facebook, do a search for "WRTR Awards" and you should find the event and please RSVP there. If you are not on Facebook, please let Nick know if you'll be at the Winking Lizard for lunch and the Awards Celebration.

A Few Notes: the room adjacent to the bar area has been reserved to us and seats 50 people. Many more are expected which means we will end up overflowing into the surrounding bar area. Just mention you are with the large running group when you arrive and you'll be seated...no earlier than 11am, please. Order and pay on your own! Also, if you want some WRTR gear, bring some extra cash!

Gear Spotlight: Traction Control

by Nick Billock

Mud, snow, and ice...they're all going to be faced over the next 5-6 months. Being prepared to handle the greatly reduced traction can help increase your fun and success on the trails.

There are essentially two main ways to increase your traction in addition to the aggressive tread on your trail shoes or minimal tread of your road shoes: "slip-on" devices that go over and under your shoes and a do-it-yourself approach.

Off-the-Shelf Options

Yaktrax: When you run with

year for me - mostly because I'm still discovering a brand new passion and seeing these huge gains in time, confidence and skill on the trails that are so exciting. And come on, I PR'd by almost an HOUR at Burning River even after adding on an extra six miles. I discovered great new trails, got my butt handed to me at Laurel, and had an amazing 107 mile day in August.

I'm hoping 2010 holds a new adventure for Darris and I (see question 1) - but I'm entirely optimistic about the years on the trails ahead.

Outside of a race going on, where do you normally run on the trails and with whom? Being in Columbus makes it a bit tough - so we try to make it to Mohican or Buckeye once every 3 - 4 weeks in the winter, and every other weekend in the summer. So I think most of the audience reading this knows my "crews" - Rob Powell, Ron Ross, Terri Lemke and Michelle Bischel at Mohican; and depending on the weekend, the Akron/Northeast Ohio "regulars" on Buckeye. We never fail to meet the warmest, most open people on the trails - I think most trail runners have become friends after 3 or 4 hours!

What is it about trail running that is special to you and keeps pulling you back out to the trails? Is there a deep-rooted passion?

I could really wax poetical about how the trails have changed me - as a runner and as a person - over the past couple of years. The trails are TEACHING me - quiet things. There's a piece of me that's started becoming on the trails. The trails are the only place or time in my life that I've been able to be truly patient - I let the trails come to me instead of fighting them, which is a good metaphor for pieces of my life. I also feel a deep spiritual connection out there, to the God of my understanding as well as to the earth. I'm very religious in the traditional sense - I have to get subs for my Sunday School class for some of the Sunday races - but on the trails, I just feel the PRESENCE of a higher power; the calm, quiet, peacefulness of my faith and that connection to the earth - breezes, the sound that the fall leaves make, the reflection of summer sunlight on a water crossing. Don't get me wrong, though - I'm running out there, running HARD and intending to get faster. But there is definitely something out there that I don't find on my road runs, a way of stopping the constant demands of the world to just EXPERIENCE the world. I love how stripped down trail running is. I love how it keeps me humble and how certain climbs can just stop me in my path. I love that I still have so much to learn and discover. I guess that answers whether or not it's a passion!

Anything else you want to add, Star? YES!!! I can't say thank you enough to all of the volunteers that make all of our adventures possible. Keep the spirit of the BT50K alive and give it back once in awhile! Look for me to be doling out the hot chocolate at Winter Buckeye this year!

Giving Back

Last month, we featured how WRTR gave back monetarily to our local park systems. That generated a lot of positive discussion and the

Yaktrax, every step you take places hundreds of biting edges in direct contact with the ice beneath your feet. Yaktrax create a solid, secure grip by way of their patented SkiLock coil system, made of a specially treated steel. As you step, each tiny SkidLock coil presses downward, becoming embedded into the ice below. As you transfer weight onto your foot hundreds of Skidlock surfaces squeeze into the ice, providing you with stability in all directions: forward, backward, and side to side.

Kahtoola MICROspikes: This grippy, durable, slip-on traction system features strategically placed stainless steel spikes connected to a dynamic flex-chain with a tough elastomer shoe harness. The unique "microspike" chain adjusts itself to grip nearly any surface - from ice and packed snow to wet rocks, concrete, and scree. Extremely durable, MICROspikes require no special buckles or straps.

Do-It-Yourself

Last year while preparing for the Winter Buckeye Trail 50K (now the Winter Run for Regis), I decided to spend \$1.70 buying sheet metal screws, and make my own traction device out of a pair of 300 mile Keen trail shoes. To help others, I made a video and published it to my blog. [Here's that post with the video.](#) An update since I made the video, I removed the center screw because I didn't like the "feel" of that screw under my foot. As far as performance, we had nearly a foot of snow on the trails on race day with temps that topped out at 22F. Thanks to the screws, I was able to run the downhills like it was soft dirt in the middle of the summer. I will wear them again at this January's Run for Regis.

Here is [Matt Carpenter's website](#) that I referenced before going out to get the screws and installing them. Watch my video and read

question was raised about how the specific WRTR events give back. Here's a snapshot of a few races and what their main beneficiary is:

Winter Run for Regis: In 2009, \$2000 went to the Regis Scholarships, \$500 to the CVNPA (Cuyahoga Valley National Park Association), and \$1468 to the Fisher House. The only funds remaining are those enough to secure next year's park permit.

Buckeye Trail 50K: In addition to all of the volunteer hours that were required to participate, \$250 was donated to the Buckeye Trail Association and \$250 to the Cleveland Metro Parks.

Muddy Paws Trail Races: \$6,280 to the Humane Society of Greater Akron.

Green Jewel 50K: In 2009, \$250 to the Emerald Necklace Endowment Fund (Cleveland Metro Parks)

Burning River 100: In 2008, \$5000 to the CVNPA and again in 2009. Also in 2009, \$1000 to both the Cleveland Metro Parks and the Metro Parks serving Summit County.

Forget the PR 50K/25K: In 2009, it's inaugural year, \$2000 went to Galion Girls Softball. In 2010, all proceeds from the 25K will go to WRTR and from the 50K, again to Galion Girls Softball (6 to 18 year old summer programs).

YUT-C (Youngstown Ultra Trail Classic) 50K/25K: this event is the main event for NEO Trail. Club profits are used for trail maintenance work and support for their free/unofficial FA events...about 3 each year. Other contributions: Bridge built in Mill Creek Park ~\$500 and donation to American Cancer Society Ultra Run Fundraiser \$200. NEO Trail also captained and manned an aid station at the Burning River 100 for 2 years. They continue to maintain trails in Mill Creek Park, blowing leaves, clearing downed trees and will be working on some drainage issues.

Towpath Marathon: All proceeds from the event benefit Ohio Canal Corridor, an organization that has been actively developing and participating in a variety of events and projects to preserve, promote and educate the public about the area surrounding one of Northeast Ohio's most valuable resources - our park system along the Ohio Canal.

Run with Scissors Race Recap

by Race Director, Roy Heger

Nearly seventy runners toed the line for the 5 AM cross country style start of the Run With Scissors Marathon and Double Marathon. A number of runners also took advantage of the early start option leaving Ledges Shelter at 4 AM. Forty three were registered to run the Double but only twenty two would complete it.

In the Marathon, 21 year old Jake Draa was the first runner to make it back to Ledges Shelter with a time of 3:47:00. Second place in the Marathon was hotly contested with Michael Patton edging out last

this site and you'll be all set!

years 60k winner Patrick Fisher. First time trail marathoner Suneel Apte was the first male masters runner to finish. Ten time Mohican 100 finisher T. J. Hawk won the grandmasters men with a very strong top ten effort.

Beth Woodard was able to best the woman's field with a solid 4:58:00 despite being lost for quite some time on the Perkins/Riding Run loop. Looks like Beth will be looking for a headlamp in her Christmas stocking this year. Burning River 100 standout Dawn Malone was first masters female.

Medina's Denise Flores was the top finisher of the grandmasters females with a solid fifth overall in the women's division.

The Double would prove to be a battle of attrition with half the runners opting for the shorter Marathon distance at the turn around. Dave Peterman dominated the race after an early race spill on the way to Pine Hollow. Last year's winner, Rich Henderson relentlessly perused Peterman all day. Rich was able to draw within 8 minutes of Dave at one point. The hills took their toll and the gap widened to 19 minutes by the finish. Henderson's second place would win the grandmasters men's title going away. Rick Bechtel bested the masters men with his 10:19:00 finish.

Loudonville's Terri Lemke was first woman to finish the Double Marathon in fifth place overall! Ageless Tanya Cady ran off with second place in the woman's race as well as the grandmaster's award. Her spirited turnaround speech will be the stuff of legends!

Thanks to all the hardworking volunteers the run went off with hardly a hitch. Their efforts were rewarded at the finish line with great food provided by Chef Bill Bailey. Rachel Robertson provided sport massage to finishers and the Band "Lake Effect" provided the tunes. Thanks also to Co-RD Shannon Fisher, she makes it look as if I know what I'm doing.

Towpath Marathon Race Report

by Vince Rucci

In a day and age where most runners are looking for the big show, the Towpath gets us back to basics and quietly brings 2,000 runners together between the marathon, half marathon, and 10k. As a committee member, sponsor, expo vendor, and participant I get to see everything unfold. This year was my 5th time participating in the Towpath Marathon, which fails in comparison to Roy Heger and Paul Lane who have run the marathon all 18 years. Runners keep coming back or seek out this event because of its unique characteristics, such as it being the only marathon held within a National Park. This year the participants experienced perfect temps and conditions for running. There was no doubt that it was going to be a great day.

I have the luxury of living within 10 minutes of the Boston Store, so my attitude is laid back and low pressure the morning of the Towpath Marathon. I know I want to run fast and perform well, but for some reason this event does not get me all worked up as other events.



Thoughts flow through my head of what could be and how well I might do, so I become consumed with my strict regiment and rituals of race day morning. I keep telling myself that this is the Towpath Marathon and it is no big deal, but my brain keep circling back to wanting to place in the top 3 overall. One last time I review the results from previous years, and I know what it will take to get what to happen. If one runs 2:50 or faster they will most likely finish in the top 3 and have a chance to even win the race. Oh crap, what have I done? Now I realize that this race is becoming a big deal! I try to backtrack and talk myself into making it simple again. No taper and having paced the 3:30 group at the St. George Marathon the previous weekend, there is no reason to stress. The mantra continues on my drive down to the start: "This is a low key event and it is all about having fun...if you are not going to have fun today then turn the car around and go back home." I arrive down at the overflow parking lot for the Boston Store and do a final all systems go check. The marathon starts about a ½ mile north of Boston Mills Ski Resort, while the half marathon and 10k start at Brandywine Ski Resort. This allows for the participants to get spread out before reconnecting on the Towpath. Once I arrive at the starting line, I am greeted by many of the usual suspects. Greg Dykes, Dave Peterman, and Ron Ross to name a few. We exchange pleasantries, which are most of the time not pleasant at all, and each of us has that same confused look as to say: "Why we are going to do this to our bodies again?" Yet we are there and ready to run. We take to the line and as soon as the National Anthem is over, the RD Tim Donovan starts the race. Now it is time to test the waters with the other participants. Got to make sure it is not too hot or cold so I hang with the leader through the first 3 miles. Clipping off 6:10's was going to burn me so I decided to let him go and settle into my own pace. After all, that is what running is all about...running your own pace! By mile 10 I found myself in 4th place and feeling strong I kept my pace under control. At the half marathon split I was at 1:23 and still sitting in 4th place with no one in sight. It is a lonely stretch back from Lock 29 to the Boston Store, so I kept pushing forward knowing that this was going to be the most difficult part of the race. I cruised through Boston Store and the crowd there was great. I did not hear or look to see who was there, but I could feel the energy. Heading north from this point is great because you get to see the half marathoners coming back towards you. There are even some half marathoners that you need to pass, which is not a bad thing when you have been running solo with no one around. As soon as I reached Station Rd. Bridge, I was passed by another participant, which bumped me back into 5th place. Starting to feel low, I kept telling myself to just hang in there and finish the race strong. Another mile later I saw the person who had passed me earlier walking so he made an easy target. Ok, back in 4th place and still cruising along.

Registration Update

Winter Run for Regis

- Sunday, January 17, 2010
- SOLD OUT!
- Wait List available

Green Jewel 50K

- Saturday, March 6, 2010
- Registration now open

Fools 50K/25K

- Sunday, March 28, 2010

Forget the PR 50K/25K

- Sunday, April 18, 2010
- Registration opened Nov. 1st!

Muddy Paws Trail Races

- Saturday, July 10, 2010

Buckeye Trail 50K

- Saturday, July 17, 2010

Burning River 100 Mile Endurance Run

- Saturday July 31, 2010
- Registration now open

YUT-C 50K/25K

- Saturday, September 18, 2010
- Registration now open

Towpath Marathon and 1/2 Marathon

- Sunday, October 10, 2010

Run with Scissors Marathon+ and Double Marathon+

- Sunday, October 31, 2010

Bobcat Trail Marathon

- Sunday, November 7, 2010

Race Calendars

100 Mile Race Calendar

Coach Weber's National Ultrarunning Calendar

Jason Robillard Ultra-Marathon



Approaching Red Lock, up ahead I could see one of the guys who was in the lead pack. Telling myself to be patient and not to get overly excited I keep him in my sights. Wait a minute...is he starting to walk, too? Now was the time to settle down and think about how to approach this situation. I now devise a plan for every time I see him walk I drop my pace down to almost a sprint. The final time I see him walk I fly right past him to move into 3rd place. Now there is just 5k to go to the finish. Need to hold on because one never knows if there might be another one suffering worse than you at this point. Looking down the trail the leaders are out of sight. Maintaining my pace I can feel the others behind me, since I too have a target on my back. With less than a 1/10th of a mile to go my friend Jim Christ yells out that someone is coming for me so I crank it down one last time and cross the finish line in 2hrs 51mins for 3rd overall! Damn that was hard and yes it hurt!

Western Reserve Trail Running, Inc. is a nonprofit organization registered in the state of Ohio. The organization's first event was the 2007 Burning River 100 Mile Run held on August 7-8, 2007. Our mission is to promote trailrunning in the Northeast Ohio region through the development and management of new events (races, fun runs and training runs) within local park systems and municipalities. Questions?: contact info@wrtr.org

[Calendar](#)

[Trail Runner Magazine Race
Calendar](#)

[ultraRUNNING Magazine Race
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[OhioOutside.com Race Calendar](#)

WRTR Race Series

[WRTR Series Rules](#)

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