

SINCE 1980



PAGODA PACERS

ATHLETIC CLUB

Reading, Pennsylvania

We are a club devoted to physical fitness, athletic competition, health and fellowship.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Good Morning Pacers,

A lot of news this month. Let's start off with a successful couple of Shiver races in the series. I am writing this letter a day before the third in the series and am hoping that I can run it without being washed down the street. Sue has promised me it will be fine.

Going on to the Bowling event, we had a couple of weeks ago. We had a great turnout with a lot of Pacers we do not see too often, with their families. After the event I got a lot of members that said they did not know if they could bring their kids. I cannot think of any of our social events that are not kid and family friendly. We will be having Wallyball before this newsletter come out, it is always well attended.

Now for some big news. Most people do not realize that there is an executive committee that is supposed to oversee the club. During the time I have been a member it has not been that active. Most decisions have been made at the general monthly meetings. This has caused some problems. With the meeting getting larger every month, trying to get 50 members to agree on anything is tough. Example for at least 5 years if not longer we have been trying to stop sending out the hardcopy newsletter to people that do not want it. Never happened. Every change that comes up at meetings seems to deteriorate into a shouting match and nothing get accomplished. For all the sociability we have everywhere else, the meeting sometimes get loud.

Now the RRCA [Road Runners Club of America] through which we get our insurance, and which is our national running club, is giving us a solution. In order to continue being a member of this organization and receive all their benefits, they are requiring that we follows some basic organizational guidelines. All that they are requesting are basic common sense changes that we should have made years ago. Some we will be making in the next couple months some we will continue to work on throughout the year.

The first change is to go to an elected Board of Directors. Our present Executive Committee consists of all former Presidents up to 30 members on the committee. They are on the committee till they die. Kind of like our US Senate. The new board will be elected for 2 years, and must go off for a term after 6 years. This will allow for some turnover on the Board. We will be looking for member candidates for this board at our March meeting, if the Bylaw changes pass. You can run for any of the new positions by getting in contact with me or coming to the March meeting. We will have a vote at the April meeting for all the new officers. More on this process is available later on in this newsletter. We are also asking

(continued on next page...)

March 2018 UPCOMING EVENTS

3/8/18 Monthly Membership Meeting
Thursday 7:00pm (dinner served at 6:30)
 Blind Hartman's Tavern
 2910 Pricetown Rd., Temple
Speaker: Jill Zelinski, nutritionist

3/11/18 Shiver by the River #4 & Banquet
Sunday 11:00am—5K and 10K
 Jim Dietrich Park, 4899 Stoudts
 Ferry Bridge Rd, Muhlenberg Twp.

GROUP RUNS

Start Time: 6:15pm Wednesday

March 7, 2018

Run: Mohnton Playground
 E. Wyomissing Ave. & Walnut St., Mohnton
Eat: Mangia!
 322 E. Wyomissing Ave., Mohnton

March 14, 2018

Run: Bartram Trail - Kernsville Dam Trailhead
 25 Kernsville Dam Rd., Hamburg
Eat: The Westy Bar & Grill
 279 W. State St., Hamburg

March 21, 2018

Bring a New Runner Night
Run: Nolde Forest - Mansion Parking Lot
 2910 New Holland Road, Mohnton
Eat: Mimmo's Restaurant
 290 Morgantown Road, Reading

March 28, 2018

Run: Rustic Park
 Hay Creek Road, Birdsboro
Eat: Italian Delight
 113 E. Main St., Birdsboro

SAVE THE DATE

5/26/18 - Charlie Horse Trail 1/2 Mar.
 6/24/18 - Run for the Ages 10K
 8/5/18 - Grings Mill Run 5K & 10K

FROM THE PRESIDENT, CONT'D.

to stop the hard copy newsletter in 2 votes and asking that all race directors sign a conflict of interest form.

I am hoping that in the future that the Board of Directors can guide the club in making changes, while the final voting is still made at the general meeting. We are hoping this will eliminate the arguing about minor issues, so we can work on making the club a better experience ahead. There will be 9 Positions open on the board so your chances of getting on are good if you are interested. We will be voting the same way we do for governmental elections. All names will be on the written ballot the top 9 vote getters will be elected. The actual voting will happen at the April meeting. Nomination will end April 12. This is all new to us so try and work with to make this a better club.

WELCOME NEW PACER MEMBERS!

Doug Metcalfe
Brian Lahmann
Gabriel Batdorf

BEAT BEETHOVEN 2018

NEW COURSE!!

MORE DOWNHILLS AND FLATS THEN EVER BEFORE!

CALLING ALL RUNNERS and WALKERS!!! Mark your calendars!!!! **APRIL 29, 2018!!!** Catch the Beat...we have a great day in store for you...**the 7th Annual "BEAT BEETHOVEN!"** 10K/5K Run will take place on the beautiful campus of Alvernia University in Reading PA. Finally, construction at Alvernia and Angelica Park has allowed us to run down those hills!

The starting gun (10 am) will be the downbeat of a one-hour, free concert by the 120-member Reading Symphony Youth Orchestra and your challenge is to finish the Race before the music stops. We also have a 1-mile Fun Run/Walk in place for kids and adults alike. The \$25 fee (pre-registration April 14th) is an appreciated contribution to the Reading Symphony Orchestra—one of the nation's oldest and most highly regarded music organizations. It is about to enter its 105th Season. The registration fee includes a high-tech, wicking **"BEAT BEETHOVEN!"** T-shirt, gift bag, and post-race gathering of friends with multiple awards and refreshments.

The wheel-measured course winds through through the Alvernia campus, the adjoining Angelica Park. All surfaces are either macadam or groomed gravel. Online registration available Pretzelcitysports.com.

Shiver by the River

Thank you to the 256 runners and the many volunteers who braved the rain for Shiver #3. Ah, but the hot soup never tasted better!!!

Shiver#4 will be held March 11th. As always, we need more volunteers for this race. Specifically, we need 3 or 4 people willing to take results off of the board, so that the race directors can calculate results as soon as possible. We also need the usual help for parking, registration, on the road, at the finish line, clean up, water stop and within the house (serving soup, constantly filling the snack baskets, and keeping the bagel table full). Anyone helping with registration should arrive at Jim Dietrich Park between 9:00 & 9:30; anyone helping during the race should arrive by 10:30; either way, look for one of the race directors and we can find something for you to do.

The awards ceremony will be held immediately after the 4th race, at the Temple Fire Company, 4963 Kutztown Rd, which is about 3 miles from Jim Dietrich Park. This is the same location as the last couple of years. We are looking for more door prizes. If anyone can donate personally, or secure a door prize, please bring it to the 4th race or to the March meeting. To be eligible to win a door prize, simply complete the survey at the awards banquet. A cold buffet will be served shortly after noon, followed by door prizes and then the awards. Due to the costs associated with the party, we will follow the guidelines we established a few years ago.

The party is FREE to everyone who has either:

1. Finished 3 or more races in this year's series – please bring your race number from the 4th race to the party, it will be your ticket for free entry. We will place an additional label on the back of your number which will indicate your eligibility.
2. Assisted with any of the races.
3. Paid for the series.

We will be charging all others (including Pacers who do not fall into one of the above categories), a \$10.00 fee to help cover some of our costs.

Remember, to help us maintain accurate results, DO NOT COMPLETE ANOTHER REGISTRATION FORM if you already ran this year. If you paid for the series, registration is in the front room of the house. If you are paying race by race, we have a number for you at the 'single race registration' table in the 2nd room. If you have not previously registered for the 2017-2018 series, registration is at a different table, also in the 2nd room.

Thanks for all the support we have received and hope to see many of you at the Shiver, either running or volunteering!!

Sue, Kelsey & Georgine

RACE RESULTS

Email Results to Race Results Coordinator Karen Rule at raceresults@pagodapacers.com

Robesonia Chocolate Frosted Buns 5k

11	Dale Wiest	21:13	3rd M50-59
34	Aaron Kreider	25:39	

Shiver by the River- Feb 5K

6	Kyle Gery	18:16
7	Mark Andrus	18:34
9	Jon Durand	18:43
10	Dee Koutsourais	18:49
15	Curt Minnich	19:55
25	Lamar Foley	21:53
50	Jason Glass	24:46
56	Katie Frederick	25:00
63	Ann Gery	25:49
79	Meredith Rotz	27:32
83	Mark Mazurkiewicz	28:11
95	Jeff Snook	29:48
106	Larry Drogo	30:33
107	Karen Sinnen	30:35
121	Matt Arner	32:27
144	Catherine Durand	35:44
147	Charlie Crowell	36:53
148	Judy Anttonen	37:27
167	Whitley Cook	47:27

Shiver by the River- Feb 10K

7	John Mark Stoltzfus	40:52
15	Raine Fussner	45:20
16	Jeff Fussner	45:35
21	Melissa Oswald	47:24
38	Donna Ornosky	52:29
39	Katie Thomas	52:34
43	Mike Ranck	53:17
45	Kelly Miller	53:43
57	Blair Hogg	56:16
63	Janine Beidler	57:14
64	Joanne Patti	57:15
69	Steven Holgate	59:59
78	Mike Reese	1:02:05
80	Barbara Raifsnider	1:03:57
81	Julia Hager	1:04:27
87	Rose Hagy	1:19:04

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Mountain Mist 50K

58/320	Steve Maguire	5:57:00	
68	Beth Auman	6:05:00	1st F35-39
82	Brett Lynch	6:10:11	
100	Brandon Beane	6:23:13	
151	Chris Fisher	6:52:48	
152	Ken Seale	6:52:53	
165	Ryan Watts	7:00:12	
178	Tamara Pokrywa	7:07:41	
200	Jen Seale	7:14:26	4th F45-49
210	Jim Demsko	7:18:56	
213	Eric Delahaye	7:20:16	
293	Julie Hoch	8:03:06	
294	Katie Frederick	8:03:09	

Omitted from previous results

Oley Valley Classic 10 miler

Julie Hoch	1:27:13	3rd F 30-34
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GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

Date: February 8, 2018

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: Blind Hartman's Tavern

Speaker introduction: Kelly Kline Carr, local attorney, spoke about whether or not clearances are needed for volunteers at events, especially those with runners under the age of 18, or even for when the occasional under-18 runner shows up for a Wednesday night run. She opined that clearances are not required. The guidelines for needing a clearance: 1st criteria - adult volunteer (only adults need clearances); 2nd criteria - volunteer is responsible for the welfare of children and has direct contact with children. What 'responsible' means is the volunteer is acting in lieu of a parent, providing care, supervision, or control; 3rd criteria - the contact is regular and repeated, and integral to role as a volunteer. Kelly said that our involvement as volunteers directing race activity does not rise to this level, nor does allowing someone under age 18 to run with us without a parent. Visit the web site: www.keepkidssafe.gov for further details.

Treasury Report - Shaun Luther—the report is different this month. It is a list of checking transactions since 1 Jan. The club is at 102% of having operating funds on hand.

Races:

- **Mt Penn Mud Fest:** None
- **Charlie Horse:** Kyle Gery, ordered plaques to put on awards. Requested assistance. Mike Gallen said he would help.
- **Run for the Ages:** Caroline Hill - they are seeking sponsors
- **Grings Mill:** None
- **Blues Cruise:** None
- **Oley Valley Country Classic:** None
- **Kris Kringle:** None
- **Shiver by the River:** Sue Jackson, the next race is on Sunday, really needs help with volunteers, since co-directors have some other commitments. Race next month is the big one. Needs door prizes for the lunch. Dave Gallen recommended an e-blast to get the word out.
- **Jr. High Cross Country:** None

Race director comments: Jon Durand - directors met and went over advertising and social media items. Caroline Hill offered the VanScoy conference room to facilitate creativity in this group.

Committee Reports:

Social Committee: Larry Drogo—Bowling, last Friday. A successful event, and it cost about \$250. Wallyball will be within

the next few weeks.

- Annual picnic: Caroline Hill will not book Cacoosing for the event. What picnic will be, still TBD.

Communications Committee: Beth Auman, no update. Jon Durand: has credentials for Instagram and twitter. Facebook, he asked for 'worker bees' to spread out some of the responsibility of posting

- Newsletter—due to proposed changes in bylaws, it will still be sent to everyone this month

Community Service—Phil Lechner

- Sunshine fund: 8 people have had something sent to them this month

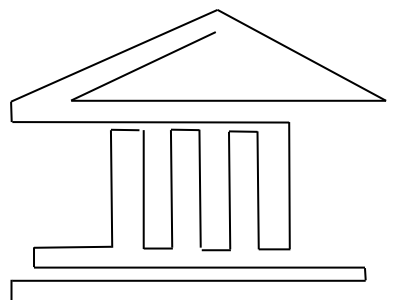
- Charity run, February 21st benefitting women's shelters and Safe Berks, "anything a woman or child could use" Phil splits up donations between the two agencies. Also looking to support "Dress for Success," clothing for women going to work interviews—decent professional attire for people going to job interview, etc.

Charity Committee - Scholarships—Beth Auman—applications are up. Deadline is Feb 28, results announced in April

Membership—Dave Gallen, RunSignUp has been "phenomenal," membership is up 15%. Very pleased with the results and ease of use.

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Group runs: Phil Lechner--recent bad weather conditions have kept participation down, but that's ok, because runners should exercise some discretion.

New business:

Larry Drogo and Shaun Luther--per our insurance agency--Road Runners Club of America, the club must meet some additional attestations to keep our tax exempt status under their umbrella:

- Race directors must sign that they do not have a conflict of interest with any races they direct, e.g., the race director can't have a t-shirt business that supplies the t-shirts for their race.
- The Treasurer must have financial and criminal background checks.
- The club must create an elected board of directors (eventually serving 2-year terms) to replace the current executive committee
 - 9 board member positions open, in two categories:
 - 5 people will be elected to serve in a 6-month term
 - 4 people will be elected to serve an 18-month term
 - To run, must be a club member in good standing for at least 12 months
 - Anyone interested in running (if the changes are approved) should forward his/her name to the club president, Larry Drogo.
 - Purpose of the board is to make decisions to bring to the at-large meetings

Executive committee recommends that the club stop mailing hard copies of the newsletter

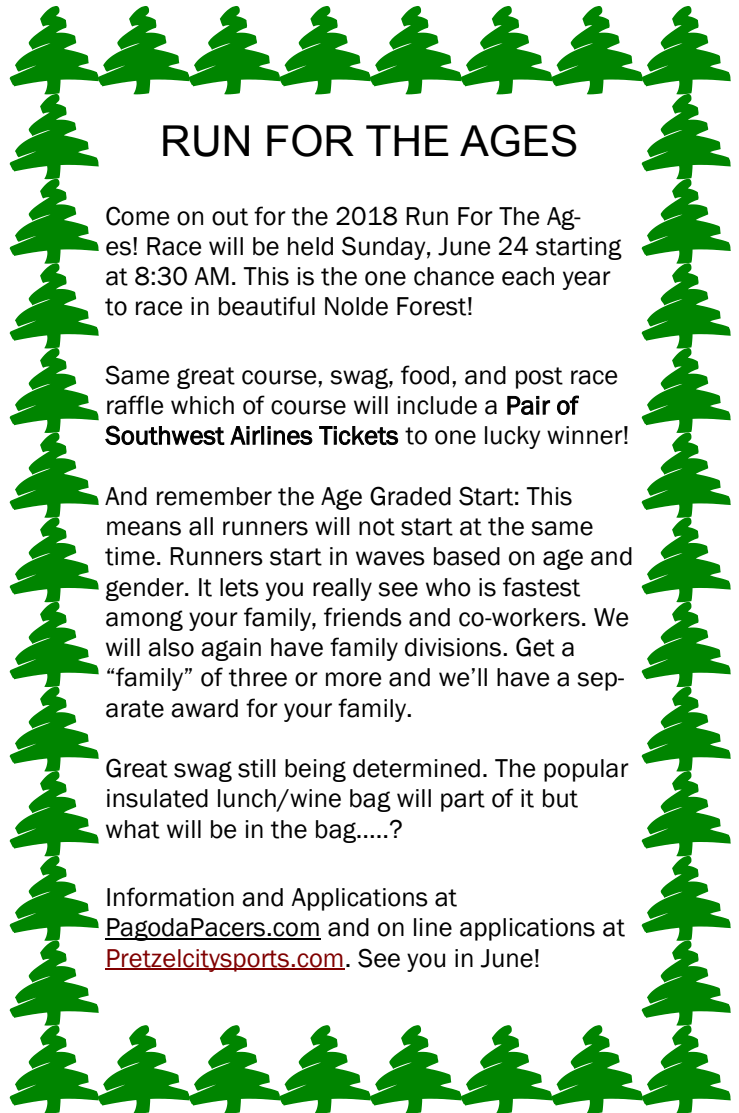
- Immediately stop sending to anyone who doesn't want it (as indicated in the membership renewal application)
- Eventually stop all hard copy mailing
- Replace with digital format with emails and links in the web site
- Savings of \$6000 anticipated

Voting on these by law changes will be next month in March,

- If approved, elections will be held to elect members of the board

Elaine Cook--Frozen Knights 5K, an excellent cause; high school runners could also use gently used cold weather running gear.

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## RUN FOR THE AGES

Come on out for the 2018 Run For The Ages! Race will be held Sunday, June 24 starting at 8:30 AM. This is the one chance each year to race in beautiful Nolde Forest!

Same great course, swag, food, and post race raffle which of course will include a **Pair of Southwest Airlines Tickets** to one lucky winner!

And remember the Age Graded Start: This means all runners will not start at the same time. Runners start in waves based on age and gender. It lets you really see who is fastest among your family, friends and co-workers. We will also again have family divisions. Get a "family" of three or more and we'll have a separate award for your family.

Great swag still being determined. The popular insulated lunch/wine bag will part of it but what will be in the bag.....?

Information and Applications at [PagodaPacers.com](http://PagodaPacers.com) and on line applications at [Pretzelcitysports.com](http://Pretzelcitysports.com). See you in June!

Because your **MAIN FOCUS** is the miles ahead of you... **NOT WHO MIGHT BE** behind you.

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## PACER BOWLING NIGHT...



## Proposed Changes to Pagoda Pacers Bylaws:

In order to meet our requirements of the RRCA and keep our insurance the following bylaw changes are being requested by The Executive committee.

1. All race directors and officers of the club are required to sign conflict of interest forms. Form Number A1.
2. Due to the cost of the printed newsletter and going to a digital format, the club is recommending changing the bylaws to reflect the following:
  - A. Stopping all sending of printed copies to all members who have checked that they no longer want the printed copies as soon as possible.
  - B. Going to an all-digital format as soon as is reasonable, for the personnel to work out any bugs or complaint that may arise.
3. There will be a Board of Directors formed consisting of 10 members.
  - A. A president of the board; this will be whoever the present [elected] club president is. The president runs all board meetings but is non-voting unless a tie-breaking vote is needed.
  - B. Up to 9 board members, each to serve a 2-year elected position.
  - C. Upon election of the board of directors, the Executive committee will be disbanded.
  - D. The details for the board are attached [See right column].
  - E. Since we are already started into the year and just starting up, all 9 members will be elected this year. 5 members will serve what is left of a one year term and the other 4 will serve what is left of a 2 year term. This will allow elections for board members each year. The Voting will take place on a written ballot for all positions with the persons receiving the highest number of votes on the ballot being elected. For the first election a person may run for both terms but may only serve on one seat.
4. A. The board is the governing authority and has oversight over the management of PPAC affairs. It carries out the purpose for which the PPAC is organized. This general mandate includes, but is not limited to: setting PPAC policy, financial oversight, strategic planning, fundraising, legal oversight, determining and monitoring the PPAC's programs and services, elevating the PPAC's public image, supporting the President, and reviewing his/her performance.
  - B. The board sets policies on all disputes and grievances.

As we move forward this year we will continue to update the bylaws, to bring us up to date with 2018. These changes will be advertised to the upcoming newsletter. All Positions on the Board will need to be nominated at the April meeting and will be presented for a vote at the May meeting. The president's position will follow this same format in November; election nominations will be taken in October.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

A quorum of the general membership present at the Annual Meeting of the Membership elects nine people to serve as the PPAC Board of Directors as follows:

### **Club Officers**

The president appoints the club vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary.

### **A. Board responsibilities.**

1. The board is the governing authority and has oversight over the management of PPAC affairs. It carries out the purpose for which the PPAC is organized. This general mandate includes, but is not limited to: setting PPAC policy, financial oversight, strategic planning, fundraising, legal oversight, recruiting candidates for board service, determining and monitoring the PPAC's programs and services, elevating the PPAC's public image.
2. The board sets policies on all disputes and grievances.
3. The president may delegate to specific officers, employees, and committees the powers provided for in these by-laws.

### **C. Elections.**

1. Alternate-year elections. The nine board members are divided into two groups for election in alternate years:
  - a. Group 1: Four members
  - b. Group 2: Five members
2. General rules.
  - a. All nominees for board positions must be members of the PPAC, and have been a member for a consecutive period of no less than 12 months.
  - b. A board member may serve in only one board position at a time.
  - c. A board member may accept a nomination and run for election to another board position without resigning.
3. Terms of office.
  - a. The term for all elected board positions is approximately two years, defined as follows: the term begins on the first day of the calendar month following the initial election and lasts until the comparable day two years hence, when the next convention is held. For purposes of term limits, such terms are considered to be precisely two years.
  - b. At the start of each term for each calendar year, the president will appoint the secretary and the vice president to serve in such appointive positions for a period of one year. At the end of such period, the president will again appoint the secretary and the vice president.
  - c. An officer or director may be reelected to the same office or to a different office. However, a person can serve as president for a maximum of only three elected terms.
  - d. Consecutive years of service on the board cannot exceed six years.
  - e. After the maximum allowable period of service just described has been fulfilled, there is a mandatory period of being off the board for at least two years before an individual is again eligible to serve on the board.
4. Nominating Procedure.
5. Election process. At the annual meeting, each open position will be on a written form with the number of candidates listed on the form and advertised in the previous

newsletter. At the end of the meeting the 4 or 5 (Depending on year) candidates with the highest number of votes will be appointed to the board.

**D. Board meetings.** Robert's Rules of Order govern the proceedings of all board meetings, when not inconsistent with these by-laws.

1. The board holds at least four regular meeting each year, as called by the president. Additional (special) meetings may be called:
  - (a) by the president, or
  - (b) at the written request of at least one-third of the board.
2. Each board member is notified in writing of the time and place of a meeting at least ten calendar days prior to the meeting.
3. Quorum. Five board members are a quorum for the transaction of business. The act of the majority of those present and voting is binding.
4. Board members may attend a meeting by telephonic or similar equipment by means of which everyone participating in the meeting can hear each other. A board member participating in a meeting by this means is deemed to be present in person at the meeting.
5. The board may act without meeting in person if consent, in writing, setting forth the action so taken, is signed by all of the board members. The consent must show the board member's signatures.
6. The board, on rare occasions, may need to act quickly on an issue that normally requires a vote by the PPAC general membership. A special meeting of the general membership at such times may not be feasible due to the short notice, expense, etc. Under such circumstances the board may act on the issue. After acting, the board must inform the general membership within seven calendar days.

**E. Vacancies.** No vacancy created by the resignation of a board member may be filled until the resignation has been submitted in writing to the president.

1. If the office of the president becomes vacant, the vice president may choose to become president to fulfill the unexpired portion of the term. The vice president must decide within seven days after the vacancy occurs. If the vice president declines the position, the vice president convenes a special meeting of the board to elect a person to fulfill the unexpired portion of the term. The meeting must take place within 30 days after the vacancy has occurred.
2. The president fills any vacancy in other board positions with an eligible person, although the board may, by majority vote, overrule any particular choice. That person fulfills the unexpired portion of the term.

### **F. Removal from Office.**

1. As determined by a 2/3 vote of the other board members, an officer or director may be removed from office for:
  - a) missing two consecutive regular board meetings without an excuse approved by a majority of the board;
  - b) illegal (unlawful) activity; or
  - c) not carrying out or fulfilling the duties of the position.
2. The appointed secretary or vice president may be relieved of his or her respective duties, and a different member assigned to those duties by the president, although the board, by majority vote, may overrule any particular choice.

## RUNNER PROFILE: BROOKE SCHELL “One Tough Mother”

by Matt Brophy

Originally from Shoemakersville and a graduate of Hamburg High School, Brooke Schell currently lives with her husband Steve near Krumsville, PA, about 15 minutes east of Hamburg. (She can see her road from Pulpit Rock on a clear day and visualize just how far she has to run to get back home.) She works for Air Analysis LLC, her husband’s air quality testing company, and the position allows her a great deal of flexibility for her training, which she has dramatically ramped up over the past year.

Schell has two sons, and she is clearly very proud of both of them. Trevor, a young homeowner, works for a tire service company and serves as volunteer firefighter for Shoemakersville. Derek, a recent high school graduate, is playing in a Junior Hockey Program in Illinois, improving his skills as he hopes to get recruited by a collegiate program.

There are also two dogs in the family: Hunter (Steve’s dog), a real survivor at age 16, and Maddie, an 11-year-old rescue whom Schell has had since she was a puppy. “Maddie and I fell in love with running together,” she explained. Now that Maddie is too old to accompany Schell on runs as often, she has been feeling her absence poignantly while out on the trails. The solution was to have Maddie’s paw print tattooed on top of Schell’s foot—this way Maddie will always be with her when she runs.

After speaking with Schell, it’s easy to see how important family is to her. Before sharing any of the details of her race experience at the 2017 Devil Dog 100-miler—where she was the 2nd overall female finisher—she spoke at length of her deep gratitude for all her family who came out to the race, including her parents, as well as those who have supported her all along the way, since her first marathon back in 2005.

Schell remembers announcing her plans to run that first marathon to her family, thirteen years ago, and seeing the shock register across their faces. “But once they got over the shock,” she told me, “everyone was very supportive.”

Part of the surprise may have come from the fact that, at that point, Schell didn’t have a long history as a runner. In fact, when

she was younger, she saw it as more of a chore. She recalls dreading the 4-mile runs she regularly had to perform for field hockey practice during her college days at Lock Haven University.

After having her boys, though, she started running in order to lose weight, and training for a marathon seemed like a great way to stay motivated and do some good. She hooked up with the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society’s *Team in Training*, which empowers individuals to raise money for cancer research while training to reach their fitness goals. Schell met her goal and completed her first marathon in June, 2005, at the Rock-n-Roll Marathon in San Diego.

It was a year *after* this accomplishment that Schell’s mother was diagnosed with leukemia, which of course reaffirmed her commitment to the *Team in Training*’s fundraising efforts. She ran two more marathons with the organization: one in San Francisco, 2006, and then back in San Diego in 2010.

It wasn’t until 2014 that Schell made the switch from running roads to running trails, and she credits Donny Mengel for helping her make this transformation. Mengel invited her to join him for hill repeats at Port Clinton one day. Impressed by her ability and toughness, he told her, “You’d make an awesome ultra runner.” Modestly, she replied that she couldn’t imagine charging up all those hills on long trail races, but Mengel explained that it’s pretty normal to walk the longer and steeper climbs, and that she could make up for it on the descents.

Not long after this, Schell fell in love with trails and the trail running community. The slower pace and longer weekend runs seemed to open up more space for conversation and deeper bonding with her fellow trail runners. Even at races, she noted, the spirit of mutual support seemed to be just as strong, if not stronger, than the spirit of competition. She felt like almost every weekend, at a race or a group run, she would meet someone new out on the trails. This sense of community and interconnectedness fueled her motivation. What had once felt like a chore was now a reason to spring out of bed in the morning and get the most out of each day.

Despite all this bliss, Schell’s first ultra was a pretty brutal experience. In 2015, at the HAT 50k, she landed funny on her foot about 7 miles into the race and began to feel some rather intense pain. Even though this unfortunate accident happened rather early in the race, she was determined to battle through the injury, gritting her way through the next 24 miles with what turned out to be an “avulsion

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Brooke (right) with April Zimmerman at World's End Ultramarathon 50K in June 2017

fracture." The best moments of the day were standing in the icy water at the creek crossings, letting the coldness temporarily numb her broken foot. (Schell ran HAT again last year, and experienced bad cramping due to the heat and humidity. She thought about quitting, but stubbornly marched on. If a broken foot hadn't stopped her, neither would some cramping.)

Last fall, Schell completed 100k (62 miles) at the Labor Pain 12 Hour Endurance Trail Run, with just seconds to spare on the clock. This accomplishment gave her the confidence boost she needed to tackle her first 100-miler at the Devil Dog Ultras in Triangle, VA. While she put in a ton of miles getting ready for this race, when you talk to her, she tends to give all the credit to other people: her husband, who was understanding about all the time she needed to devote to training; Dan and Tanara Govern, who invited her to join them for intense, early-morning workouts; Mike Ranck, her sagacious and inspiring coach; her chiropractor, who helped her rehab a poorly timed back injury; Brian Stones, April Zimmerman, and Donny

Mengel, who trained with her and crewed for her; and her family, who came out to cheer for her on race day.

A 100-mile race in December means a lot of time in the dark, and Schell remembers her imagination playing tricks on her as the exhaustion and sleep-deprivation began to set in. At one point, she thought she saw a carousel horse on the course, which then somehow morphed into a beaver. (Turned out to just be a log.)

As she made her way into the final aid station, at mile 92, she saw her husband, parents, and her son, Trevor. Schell was ready to be done, not sure how she would eke out the last 8 miles, but when Trevor—who is typically rather reserved when it comes to showing affection—reached out to take his mom into his arms, she was overcome with emotion. (In fact, she got a little choked up just telling me about it, and yeah, I got a little choked up listening to her! He must be so proud of his bad-ass mom!) She knew that if she could just shuffle through those final miles, there'd be a lot more hugs waiting for her at the finish line.

It was a pretty grueling finish, but as she made her way to the end, she heard Mike Ranck yell to her, "What's 100 more yards when you've run 100 miles?" She finished in just over 28 hours—good enough for 2nd female overall!

Schell is grateful to the Pagoda Pacers for connecting her with so many great runners, including Donny Mengel, her "trail husband," who first got her hooked on ultras. While it's hard to make it to Wednesday Nights, since she lives on the outskirts of Berks, she loves getting together for group runs on the weekends: "It's like running with family." She also enjoys volunteering at races when she can, especially to encourage and support new runners. She remembers being like them not so long ago.

So what's next for this tough mother? She plans on competing in the 2018 PA Triple Crown race series (Hyner 50k, Worlds End 100k, Eastern States 100-miler), and one day, maybe, who knows, she'll get back into road racing and try to qualify for Boston. Beyond that, she's up for any new challenge.



Brooke with her pacers, coach, crew, and family at Devil Dog 100 in December 2017.

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