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INTERVALS

Merrimack Valley Striders Newsletter

Welcome to the April issue of Intervals.

In this Issue

- || [MVS Spotlight on Marcie Butler!](#)
- || [CHICAGO by Bernie Zelitch](#)
- || [THE HISTORIC COURSE OF THE BOSTON MARATHON by Steve Seide](#)
- || [EAT TO RUN, RUN TO EAT by Christine Decubellis and Amy Dalton](#)

In Other News

[The next races in the MVS 2011 Super Iron Runner Series](#)

[James Joyce Ramble](#)
10K Sunday, May 1, 2011 @ 11:00 AM
Dedham, MA

[The Medical Center 6K](#)
Sunday May 8, 2011
@ 9:30 AM Nashua,
NH

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MVS Spotlight on Marcie Butler!

10 Questions with ...Marcie, Merrimack Valley Strider

Hometown: Methuen, MA

Club Committee(s): Stridette, Feaster Five, 4th(3rd) of July Race, Merchandise

Role(s) as a club volunteer: Stridette, Feaster Five tee shirt captain, 4th of July water stop captain

Interviewed by Amy Dalton

1) How long have you been running and what made you start?

I have been running since High School at Presentation of Mary Academy. I started running because I wasn't very good at softball, but I could run the bases like nobody's business. Recognizing my lack of softball talent my coach suggested I go out for cross country and track. Also I grew up in Falmouth, MA, watching the Falmouth road race inspired me to run!

2) How long have you been running with MVS?
3 or 4 years.

3) What is your running sneaker of choice?
Saucony Kinvara, lightweight and fashion, I am a happy girl!

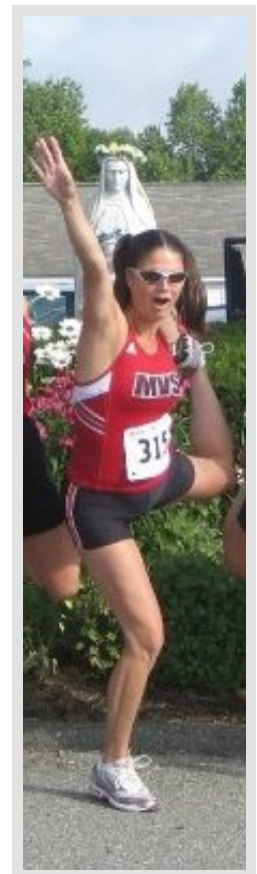
4) What race if any are you currently training for?
Boston Baby!

5) What is your proudest running moment?
My first race, the Falmouth Road Race and Running Boston 2008 and 2009 and having my 2 boys and parents on the sidelines.

6) What keeps you motivated?
Food and bikini season.

7) If you're not running, what are you most likely doing?
Chasing after my two boys Moose and Squirrel .

8) Running with headphones - definitely or no way?



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Depends, not usually on short runs but on long races I run with one ear bud in and one ear bud out. I believe that you always need to know what is going on around you. You never know when a lady with a bright orange double wide stroller will try to pass you :)

9) Favorite pre-run meal?

My pre marathon meal:

1 egg sandwich

1 cinnamon raisin bagel

1 container of home fries

4 munchkins and an OJ and a water to wash it down.

10) Why do you run?

I run because I love it. I run because it makes me a more agreeable human and a happier Mom.

CHICAGO by Bernie Zelitch

Minutes before the starting gun at the Chicago Marathon last Oct. 10 I should have been visualizing myself as king of the world.

Instead my visualization was of a vulnerable 59-year old running his fourteenth-- and perhaps last-- marathon. Thoughts skipped seven months back. There I was, typing an email on the commuter train pulling out of Boston's North Station. With no warning, I dropped my laptop and slumped over. Technically, I was dead.

Only 8% survive a cardiac arrest, almost always with brain damage. But at 1:10 p.m. March 3, 2010, I was blessed with perfect timing. The 36 degree air had slowed my metabolism.

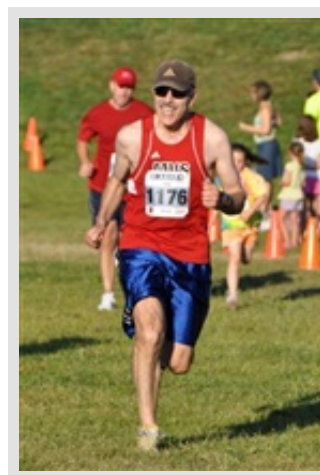
Passengers and commuter rail staff stopped the Haverhill line just as the brakes released. Boston EMS paramedics tore up the Southeast

Expressway in four minutes when seconds really mattered. The Boston Marathon was weeks away and my body was resilient from months of hard training. And Massachusetts General Hospital, the home of leading heart surgeons and techniques, was in the neighborhood.

The first responders later described the scene to me. One paramedic searched for my identity in my backpack. Reading my Boston Marathon training schedule, he said, "This guy runs more in a day than I walk in a month!" A few feet away, his buddy applied shocks and pushed my top right rib so hard it snapped. My heart jump started. Under the guidance of Mass General, the team lowered my body temperature about 8 degrees to help with my brain's recovery and whisked me still unconscious to the emergency room.

They had saved my life. But after a few days of an induced coma, doctors woke me up with low expectations for my mind. I looked around and tried to make sense of the people standing over me. There was my wife Karen, parents, children and friends. Son Sam and sister Helen live in Chicago, my parents live in Connecticut and friends Jayne and Bruce live in New Jersey. What brought these people here? And why was I in bed attached to tubes?

It's hard to say who was more surprised, me when told I had a cardiac arrest, or the doctors and visitors finding I was back to my normal self.



Actually, my family now laughs at some initial obsessions: would I be able to run the Boston Marathon next month and if you love me could you get some dental floss?

One week after my heart attack, I was ready for a quadruple by-pass. Miraculously, I suffered no damage. On the contrary, I left with a better heart than when I came in.

And the doctors said there was nothing I should have done differently. I'm not a smoker, I eat and exercise well and I have been trim for many years. I have a relatively rare heart condition which probably could not have been known before that day. My heart's electric timer can shut off when an artery wall has certain kinds of build-up. Yes, I would probably be able to run marathons at some point. "Just make sure the people you used to beat, beat you," said my cardiologist.

My family, who suffered so much through my crisis, thought differently. A return to endurance training was so uncomfortable a topic that we dropped it.

There was more perfect timing during my rehab. I was alive with the New England spring coming on and I had my loved ones around. Fellow runners sent their support with cards and flowers. I was full of joy and gratitude. I missed being in great shape so I walked ten miles a day to restore mind and body. Love, robins returning from the winter and Beethoven were what mattered.

Thoughts returned to marathoning. I had signed on to the Chicago Marathon in January. Back then, it was going to be an excuse to see my son, sister and brother-in-law who live out there. Out of the hospital, the plan was to make the trip but not the run. I graduated to a fast walk and then a wobbly jog. I thought about spending \$135 for the Chicago Marathon and not even getting the T-shirt.

Was I being greedy? Foolish? Against all odds, I regained life and mind. Marathoning was one of my guardian angels and exercise was part of the prescription against recurrence. But against all odds my family regained their father, husband, son and brother. It was their right to have their own strong emotions and not relive their fears.

My wife asked: couldn't I just run half-marathons? That is a different sport, I said. You can't fake a marathon. She said how about a slower pace, like 12-minute miles? Staying on my feet that long would kill me, I said.

So there I was in Grant Park crossing the starting line, the only one of 45,000 runners with a race plan negotiated with family and doctors. I would work on a 9:10/minute mile, one minute slower than my recent personal record. The deal was if anything seemed wrong at any point I would have the willpower to quit then and there-- forever. Finally, my family would camp at Greektown, mile 18, as my referees. If they saw anything wrong they would stop the fight.

From the start, buildings played tricks with my GPS but by mile 10 I was convinced I was on schedule. I focused on form until I was comfortable. I liked that the course is as flat as Lake Michigan and each of the 29 distinct neighborhoods enjoyed showing off their personalities and pride.

Knowing it would heat up later, I sought the shade and elbowed for extra water and minutes.

I spotted my heart balloons at mile 18. My 10-year-old daughter Becca was taking a video as I approached. I stopped and chatted for a few minutes. They said I looked strong and when I look back at the video replay, my self-commentary would be, "looks pretty strong, like he's going to beat his goal."

(Which I did at 3:56, good enough to qualify for Boston 2012.) Karen gave me the good-to-go, and I returned to work.

A neighborhood block party rocked the street just before the bridge into Chinatown. The DJ cued up the Beatles' "Here Comes the Sun." It was an instant memory of being 18 in my parents' kitchen and hearing it first come over the radio. Somebody at WYBC, the Yale University station down the road, knew somebody and smuggled in an advance copy. I remember calling my high school girlfriend, also listening in her kitchen, and we shared our delight with the song. Now, 41 years later, I sang along as if I were the show. Tears came. Young runners shot me looks. Some read my T-shirt thanking Boston EMS and Mass General for my life. I don't know what they thought.

The sun heated up. I prepared to coast in, satisfied.

THE HISTORIC COURSE OF THE BOSTON MARATHON by Steve Seide

It's been one heck of a winter by any standard and by far the most severe in my nine years – at "times" it was reminiscent of my home state of Minnesota where I think winter was invented. For those of you running Boston – there is a good chance your character has grown, the elements have challenged you.



You've endured the snow and narrow roads, the cold, wind and ice and everything else that comes with the preparation - so congratulations!

The historic course starts on Main Street in the rural New England town of Hopkinton and follows Route 135 through Ashland, Framingham, Natick, and Wellesley to where Route 16 joins Route 135. It continues on Route 16 through Newton Lower Falls to Commonwealth Avenue, turning right at the fire station onto Commonwealth which is Route 30. It continues on Commonwealth through the Newton Hills, bearing right at the reservoir onto Chestnut Hill Avenue to Cleveland Circle. The route then turns left onto Beacon Street continuing to Kenmore Square, and then follows Commonwealth Avenue inbound. The course turns right onto Hereford Street then left onto Boylston Street, finishing near the John Hancock Tower in Copley Square.

As I write, the sun is out and the temperature is in the low fifties – this is Boston Marathon weather. It's time so - let's break down the course and determine our strategy.

Miles 1-5: It's easy to go out too fast. Between the excitement of the start which has your adrenaline pumping and the downward elevation it's easy to get lulled into thinking that this is a great opportunity to put some time in the bank – this is a fallacy. Take a look at all the chatter and high fiving going on – replay this picture around mile 18 or later - save your energy. This first 5 miles descend does not continue.

The next five miles are rolling, nothing really big – the elevation undulates about 50 feet up and down. A good opportunity to make sure your rhythm is in check. If it's hot you can get cooled off as you run by the Natick firehouse. The crowds will be thinning out – the excitement will be transitioning to seriousness.

The elevation is now rolling a little more. You have the excitement of the girls screaming at Wellesley College – you'll notice many runners exhibit an adrenalin rush – save it. The highlight of this segment is crossing the half

way mark. Check your pace – remember effort wise it's not half way.

You have conserved and saved your energy for this segment – this is the where the Newton Hills begin. I hear people talk about 3 hills – I disagree, at mile 16 you ascend up out of Wellesley across highway 128 after a nice descent. This will take some energy - then you'll turn at the Newton firehouse for hill number 2 – a little after 19 you will ascend hill 3 – this is why you stayed conservative early on. Not a lot high fiving at this point.

The second half now begins – the last of the hills concludes at Boston College and mile 21. As you descend the hill the Citgo sign becomes a welcome sign. Only five miles to go – see the overall descent below, it doesn't really feel like a descent to me. This stretch is always challenging and depending on your early running can be everything from exhilarating to a Bataan Death March. You'll follow the Green line for the next few miles.

Almost done – the crowds are really large now – this helps. By Fenway Park, through Kendall square then up Commonwealth before the turn to Boylston – that last stretch down Boylston seems to take forever, but it's almost over – all that preparation, when you cross the finish line you're not the same person. Only 2 weeks until the next Grand Prix – I think I'll go easy.

EAT TO RUN, RUN TO EAT by Christine Decubellis and Amy Dalton

Get your onion goggles out, you are going to need them for this months recipes.

Onion Dip by Christine Decubellis

2 large yellow onions - like Vidalia when they're in season - sliced and coarsely chopped
4 Tbsp butter
1/4 cup vegetable oil

1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
1 tsp salt

4 oz cream cheese
1/2 cup sour cream
1/2 cup mayo

Combine oil and butter in medium to med high heated pan. Add onions- cook slowly stirring occasionally. Add cayenne pepper and salt. Cook until onions are caramelized (turn a golden brown) - this will take 25 minutes or so. Take off heat and let cool.

Mix together cream cheese, sour cream and mayo. Add onions. Season to taste if needed. Serve with chips - I like Cape Cod reduced fat potato chips - mmmmmmm

Onion Soup by Amy Dalton

Oil
1 1/2 lbs onions, sliced
5 cloves of garlic, pressed
3 cans beef broth
3/4 can wine (use the beef broth can to measure)
1 tablespoon sugar
1 tablespoon butter



In a heavy pot brown the onions in a little oil.
Add the rest of the ingredients.
Cook on medium heat for about 20 minutes.

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