

Club Newsletter

January, 2012



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- Races – Feb 26th Jones Group Realtors 10 miler

Please send any comments & contributions for the next newsletter to
LisaCroninPlume@gmail.com

MVS General Meeting

Date & Time: Wednesday January 25th, 7:30 PM

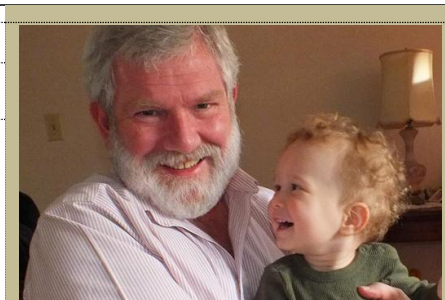
Location: Salvatore's Restaurant (Sal's), Lawrence

Guest Speaker: Awards Ceremony!

MVS Member Spotlight

Name: **Dave Leonard**

Home Town: North Andover



Basics: Home Town, Years Running

I grew up and spent the first 30 odd years of my life in Abington, on the South Shore, before moving to North Andover. I started running just before moving here as the result of a two-week business trip to Charlevoix, Michigan. At the beginning of my trip I could barely run 9/10 of a mile, but at the end, I ran 3-1/2 miles with a friend. I was hooked. That was 1981.

Why do you run?

At first, it was doctor's orders. I had PVCs that started shortly after I began my running. I thought they may have been caused by running. After a stress test, the doctor asked how often I ran. "Three days a week", I answered. He said "Give me five." I did, and the PVCs went away.

Later, I ran for the challenge of always getting myself to do better. I've always tipped the scale on the high side of where I should be, but I still managed to qualify for four Boston Marathons.

These days, I run for fitness, but mostly, I run for the enjoyment and friendship I have with my training partners and the Striders.

What do you wear for shoes? How often do you change out your shoes?

I used to be very anal when I first started running. I had a spreadsheet that tracked every run; date, distance, time, course, weather, etc. I also tracked the three pair of shoes that I wore; a low, medium and higher mileage pairs. I kept a running tally of the mileage of all the shoes. When the miles started approaching about 500 miles on the high mileage pair, I'd retire them and introduce a new pair into the mix. This gave the shoes two days to recover and dry out if necessary. These days, I seldom wear a watch and have no idea how many miles on a given pair of shoes, but I still cycle through three pairs of shoes. I now replace the high mileage pair by how they feel. Because I still have two lower mileage pairs of shoes in the mix, I think the shoes tend to last much longer.

Long time ago, I became hooked on Asics Gel GT IIs. I bought up every last pair I could find. It took me a while to finally find a brand that satisfied me physically and mentally. I never wanted to go through that again, so now I try and keep a couple of different brands in my mix of three pairs. However, you can usually find New Balance, Asics, or Nike.

What is your favorite distance for a regular/fun run?

If I had to guess a distance for a regular run, it would be 5 or 6 miles. Long enough to feel as though I had a good workout – but not so long that I couldn't repeat the distance the next morning. For a fun run, I'd say it used to be between 10-15 miles. I've been known to do several longer runs during the week with different friends who were training for a marathon because I could and because I enjoyed it.

Do you race?

I've always raced against myself. For years, I enjoyed racing against a couple of other club members. I've completed the USATF-NE Grand Prix series for a number of years. I've actually run more races in 2011 than I have in quite a few years. My times aren't what they used to be, but yes, I still race.

My favorite distance has been really a range of distances, from 10 miles up to 30K. I have lots of fond memories of some races between those distances. They're long enough that you have to be in decent shape to complete the distance with a good time and you had to plan ahead and run a smart race if you were going to finish with a great time. If I had to choose a single distance as my favorite, it would probably be 10 miles. There aren't many races at that distance any more. Although you didn't ask, my least favorite racing distance is 1 mile. I've only raced that distance once, but I've never felt so completely spent after a race.

My favorite race of all time would be the Vision 5K in Boston in 2007. It was the first real racing test for me after dropping 40 pounds. The race was managed by DMSE, and at every corner, there was someone I knew who cheered me on. At 54, I placed 1st in my age group. A couple of weeks later, I placed 3rd in my age group at the Plaistow Old Home Days 5K. Perhaps 5Ks should be my favorite distance!

Do you have future running aspirations? Or what are your running aspirations for the next year?

I've had some health setbacks, so I am happy just to be able to run right now. I'd like to become more consistent with my daily runs. I believe if I can do that, everything else will fall into place. I enjoy participating in the MVS Super Iron Runner race series, and enjoy the camaraderie with my fellow Striders. I've also signed up for the Will Run For Beer series this

year. There are MVS hosted runs; Jaime's Pub Run Series, and a few other runs/races thrown in for good measure.

Headphones – Yes or No; If Yes – what is on your current playlist?

Headphones are a definite no for me. I tried them years ago, and found I preferred tuning in to the run and my surroundings much more.

MVS: Why did you join? How long have you been a member? What is your favorite part?

One of the first races I ran after moving to North Andover was the Eagle Tribune 10-Mile Challenge that was hosted by MVS and held in May. My brother-in-law had run it several times before, and I beat his best time the first year I ran it. He figured we both could use some improvement and guidance if we were going to get better, so he signed us both up with memberships for the Striders. I've been a Strider since. My children both participated in the MVS Youth Program, and running is still a big part of their lives to this day. So, I believe I've been a member since 1983.

There have been so many positive Strider events that it is difficult to narrow it down to just a few. Years ago, during the Mount Washington Road Race Weekend, we would stuff as many Striders as we could into 3 or 4 condos at Nordic Village and make a Strider weekend out of it. Same for the "Not P to P Relay", more formally known as the Lake Winnepesaukee Relay. We'd take over hotels, the NASWA Resort, Bear Island... for the weekend. Everyone would play hard, run hard, and party hard...

My most memorable part wasn't a Strider event, but if I hadn't been a Strider, it wouldn't have happened for me. That was being part of the TREK USA Team and running across the country from San Francisco to Boston in May 2004 to raise money for children's charities.

The best part of being a club member, however, is the long-time friendships that have been established with my Strider family, and the new one that may start tomorrow.

What is your favorite blog? Running and other?

I spend too much time on the computer as it is, between work and Face Book. I really don't have a favorite blog, though I do try and read Coach Kristina's Mother Running Rampant often. My favorite non-running blog would be the one I started for my son when Geoff was deployed to Iraq in 2005 and resumed when he was redeployed in 2010 (armygeoff.com).

What is the funniest story you'd like to share about yourself? (Running or not)

As I mentioned previously, I've trained with friends for their marathons and enjoyed doing long runs for the heck of it. One very warm May Sunday, I was going to do a long run with a friend who was training for the Vermont Cities Marathon. This was to be her last long run and it was probably a 20-miler. It was her course so she was going to put out water for us. She would often reuse Gatorade bottles, soda bottles, etc., and partially fill them with water since there were only the two of us. The run was going great, but as I said, it was warm. At each water stop, we'd take turns drinking first. At the penultimate water stop, she drank first, and we both noticed the water was fairly warm. Still, it hit the spot. At the last water stop, it was my turn to drink first. I should have noticed the telltale "ppffftt" when I unscrewed the top, but I must have been too thirsty. I quickly guzzled a few sips, when suddenly everything exploded in my mouth, down my throat, and came back up and out my nose. It was warm soda water!! She had mistakenly grabbed a half-filled bottle of soda water from the fridge. I was choking, coughing,

and spitting up soda water as she apologized over and over. Finally I stopped and we had a good laugh out of it. We still laugh about it to this day, but I've often wondered; what if she got to take that first sip?

Welcome to 2012...now go find yourself!

By Tom Licciardello

In the first month of every new year, tradition holds that we should make resolutions that will make us happier, smarter, fitter, thinner, richer, and more content than the year through which we just passed. Runners may add to that list fewer injuries, run more miles, and run faster race times. History usually proves that lofty goals made without adequate thought or conviction quickly die on the vine. Old habits are hard to break!

In 1989, Stephen R. Covey published his seminal self-help book, "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People". Selling more than 15 million copies in 38 languages, it has been touted as one of the most influential business management books of all time. It also happens to be top my list of self-help books.

So, what does a business management book have to do with running?

The unique approach of "The Seven Habits" is centered around the concept of looking "inside-out", that is, figure out who you are first. When you understand your values, principals and goals, decision making becomes easier. The very first of the seven habits is "Be Proactive". Here, the challenge is to take responsibility for your choices and the consequences that follow.

We are all different, and I would never presume to advise another runner how to approach this task, but I can tell you about my approach to Habit #1 in the New Year.

The task is to define how I would like to see myself as a runner and the commitments I am willing to make to achieve that vision:

- **Athlete** - I am willing to commit the time and energy required to define myself as an athlete - one who does more than health maintenance exercise.
- **Competitor** - I will commit to the best performance I can muster in training and competition.
- **Self-Awareness** - I will commit to recognizing and acting upon those areas of training that require special attention, especially if I would rather ignore them. Flexibility, Diet, and Core Strength lead the list.
- **Embrace New Challenges** - I will commit to accomplishing a new challenge every year to keep the passion for sport high. Triathlons and Obstacle races will supplement my running.



- **Pay It Forward** - I recognize the wonderful impact running has had on my life. I will commit to helping others, especially my grandchildren, recognize and enjoy the lifetime joy of being an athlete.

Now that I know how I would like to see myself in 2012, goal setting becomes more specific, actionable, measureable, and likely to succeed. The next step is the tough one. How do I fulfill my self-described vision? Here is a sample of my list:

- **Great Coaching** - Sure, I've been running for a long time, but self-coaching can be dangerous. Sometimes we expect too much from ourselves, and sometimes we expect too little. A good coach can create a training plan, a great coach can make sure it challenges without injuring. Fortunately our running club has Great Coaches who are reminding me to patiently work my way back to being a competitive runner. Thank you, Kristina, Scott 1&2, and Sharon!
- **Great Strength Training** - Ask any top tier runner if the only training they do is running, and you'll quickly find that core strength training is an integral part of their program. Again, our running club has a strength training coach in Sharon Johnson who does a great job. All of our coaches are valuable resources for advice, and I also use P90X and the newly released P90X2 strength training programs. I especially like the new version as it employs dynamic exercises that are perfect for runners.
- **Great Release** - I continue to be an advocate of massage, but I simply can't get an appointment frequently enough to address some of those persistently tight muscles, especially the ITB, hamstring, and hip flexors - all very common issues for runners. The "foam roller" is a great additional option. Employing the technique of Myofascial Release, the use of applied pressure to knotted muscles, by using the foam roller is a wonderful way to supplement massage therapy, and I can do it every day.
- **Great Yoga** - Another important part of my plan is weekly yoga. I have tried many variations of yoga, including Bikram (hot) Yoga. They all have been very helpful, but, for me, some classes are too rigorous. I have that bad combination of lack of flexibility and a competitive nature which often leads me to trying to do a stretch that I really have no business trying...ouch! I have found a great instructor in Ryan Miller who teaches Kripalu Yoga at Off Season Sports and PT on Monday evenings at 7 PM at a special MVS rate of \$10/session. It is a much more gentle approach that fits well with the typical runner who can't put his foot behind his head! The added bonus is that it is an hour of utter relaxation.
- **Great Fun** - The family that plays in the mud together is a happy family. My favorite training partners - my wife, Lyn, and daughters, Amy and Crissy - and I have found the wonderful world of obstacle racing. Races such as the Warrior Dash and The Spartan Race have given us an opportunity to employ running, strength, and playing in the mud all at the same time. It's great to hear my wife and kids use terms like "Aroo!" MVS now has teams signed up for many of these events.
- **Great Diet** - Two big ideas here. First, because I married the right person, my diet will continue to focus on primarily non-processed foods. The more natural, the better. The second big idea is the result of a persistent cold that hung on through the end of the year. During the holidays, I noticed that when I had a glass of wine or a beer, my cold returned with a vengeance. It seemed that while my resistance was down, alcohol had a severely negative impact on me. I suspect that it also has a negative impact when my resistance is up, but I just don't notice it. The lesson for me is that I am committing to a significant reduction in alcohol consumption. The occasional social imbibing is fun, but I

will spread those occasions out a lot more than in the past...at least until the Jaime's Pub Run Series starts again. Then, we'll see.....

So, there you have it. The basis of my 2012 planning is in place, it's manageable, measureable, and takes into account my specific weaknesses and strengths. Soon, I will have to commit to more events throughout the year, but I will make sure they fit my vision of who I am and who I want to be.

I hope you can discover the real you and make 2012 a great year. The best way to get motivated? Grab those running shoes (if you wear them) and head out the door for a mind clearing run.

Election of Club Officers

By Lyn Licciardello

At our November 30th general meeting, MVS elected officers for 2012. More than eighty-five people attended the meeting.

This year, of the four club officers, two have agreed to stay on and two have decided to retire.



Al Pappalardo, President



Our President, Al Pappalardo, was Vice President in 2008 and rose to the position of president when the seat was vacated mid-year. Al has been our leader and "The Face" of MVS for three and a half years, and has decided that he would like to retire from this position for 2012. Al is co-chair of the Merchandise Committee, and sits on the Development/Finance Committee and Operations Committee, as well as handling day to day club business. He promises that he will remain just as active in 2012, including assisting with some of the Treasurer's tasks. MVS has thrived under his gentle leadership, and we are all so grateful to him for the work he has done, and the work he will continue to do.

Bob Lennon, Vice President



Bob Lennon, our Vice President and member of the Development and Finance Committee, returned to the Executive Board after a few years of raising his daughters through their busy school years. He has taken the job of Vice President seriously, and handles tough problems when needed, while being an active, friendly and welcoming MVSer. Bob agreed to run for Club President.

Deb Vaccaro, Secretary



Deb Vaccaro, our Secretary, has indicated that she would like to retire from her position. Deb has been so generous in volunteering her time and expertise to her position, as well as being on the Membership Committee and the Operations Committee. A self-described "non-runner" when she first joined, Deb has made incredible strides in her running, and has leapt from non-runner to half-marathoner in just a couple of years! We sincerely appreciate Deb's hard work and dedication to the position of Secretary.

Martha O'Brien, Treasurer



Our Treasurer, Martha O'Brien, has graciously handled the club's budget and accounting for three years. We always tease her that the position is actually called "Treasurer for Life". It is a time consuming job that can only be handled by someone with professional skills, and she has generously agreed to continue in the position for 2012. Martha is one of only two Striders who completed our whole series of 14 Races this year, and is an MVS Super Iron Runner!

Alan St. Germain



Alan St. Germain is a key player in just about everything MVS does. He is on the Membership Committee, and is very active on the Website Committee, being one of three people who post photos on the website for a week, every third week, as well as many other tasks. Alan has been an active and indispensable member for many years. If something needs to be done, Alan is sure to be there first to volunteer. Alan generously agreed to run for Club Vice President.

Charmaine Hickey



Charmaine Hickey has been a member of MVS for many years, but has become a very active member in the past year. I doubt there are many people in this room who do not know her, and love her as well! She has volunteered for just about everything that has come up since the spring, being especially helpful with the Jaime's Runs through summer and fall, and hosting a beautiful run at the beach in the summer. She kindly agreed to run for Club Secretary.

A heartfelt "Thank You" to all 2011 officers. Clearly, no one knows how much time and effort they have put into your positions, but it is appreciated by all. Thank you to all those who agreed to take on these positions for 2012.

The slate of officers proposed by the Board was:

- President: Bob Lennon
- Vice President: Alan St. Germain
- Secretary: Charmaine Hickey
- Treasurer: Martha O'Brien

They were elected by a unanimous voice vote, to a large round of applause!

Running the MVS Iron Runner Series

By Martha O'Brien
January 2012



What is the MVS Iron Runner Series?

The MVS Super Iron Runner Series has been set for 2012. This is a series of 14 races built around the USATF-New England's Grand Prix Race Series of 7 races. MVS adds 7 local races of 10k or less to encourage members to participate in the racing experience.

Whether you are a short, medium or long distance runner of any pace, these races provide an opportunity for MVSers to run a race and know that there will be a group of club members there supporting each other making the event a lot of fun.

Why participate?

Having fully completed last year's MVS Super Iron Runner Series, I would like to share my own reasons for participating in the series.

First, this series meant a lot to me last year as I struggled to regain some running consistency after two years of injury and sporadic training - for others it might be a great time to try their first race.

The best reason for participating is definitely to enjoy the camaraderie of other MVS members at the race. I have been running since about 2003. When I joined MVS in 2004 I was amazed at the support and encouragement I received from both MVS and the running world in general. Now, at each of the series' races, you can be sure that this same support and encouragement will be there for you no matter your place in the race. I will never forget the group waiting for me at the end of the Kerouac 5k as I limped in near the end. It made the effort to go to the race and finish it well worth it.

Also, I used the race series as incentive to keep my running consistent. It is so easy, especially at this time of year, to miss days of running. Using the races as goals helps to stay in or even get in running shape. This was the case for me after two years of being injured. Signing up for a race provides a powerful incentive to stay focused. I will write more on this in the next issue.

And finally, depending on the number of races completed, you can earn some fine looking MVS clothes, with a minimum of five completed races.

When is the first race?

The first race will be the Jones-Town & Country 10 Miler in Amherst, MA on February 26th. This is also the first USATF-NE Grand Prix race, but don't let that put you off from going to the race. I will never be competitive with the top runners but that doesn't mean I can't be in the same race as they are. That is one of the best things about running. I also find that most of those runners are very supportive of anyone out there racing and I enjoy being around anyone who loves to run and race.

This is a challenging course, with a long hill at mile 3 and a dirt road section which may be icy depending on the weather. Even though it is not an easy course, it is all on rural roads so vehicle traffic was not much of an issue and it is a very scenic route. I completed this race once (in 2009) on a snowy, sleety day. As the race was part of the MVS series that year, there were many brave MVSers out there which certainly helped calm the pre-race "why am I here's?" Hopefully the weather will be nicer this year, but even under those conditions, I found it to be well run and the race volunteers to be very friendly. The expo and food after the race were very well done also. This is a good race distance and challenge to help assess fitness, especially if you plan on running half or full marathons in the spring. It is a long ride so carpooling may be an option to make the day easier.

Hopefully many of you will get out and enjoy some (or all!) of the races over the year. Racing can be so much fun, no matter your level of experience or pace, especially with a group of MVSers in the mix!

Please don't forget that you can earn credit for a race by volunteering to support MVS runners as well as by running the race.

All the details are on the website. Happy running!

Coaches Corner

Go Slow to Go Fast: The logic behind the negative split

By Kristina Pinto
January 2012



If there's one lesson that MVS runners learn from their coaches, it's the importance of pacing a negative split, or starting at a conservative effort in order to run the second half of a race or workout faster than the first half. When it comes to your performance and goals, a negative split is your best bet for a positive run. A lot of runners don't know why this approach works, and the answer can be summed up with "Bank energy, because you can't bank time."

Why does the body work that way? Why wouldn't you bank time to pad your race when you get tired later? The idea of banking time seems intuitive, and the idea of running from a pace deficit tends to make runners very nervous. When it comes to distance running, though, storing energy to tap later in a race will get you a much more successful outcome than storing minutes on the clock that you'll cash in when you have no more energy left. Here's why:

Think of the energy systems in your body like a furnace. A furnace needs fuel to run, and if it burns through its fuel inefficiently by operating too fast, the system will konk out and fail to generate energy. Your body--the furnace--starts generating energy by burning through its carbohydrate fuel and eventually getting to the point where it starts burning through its fat. When the energy demands on the body aren't too high and you're getting enough oxygen to your cells, it can generate a lot of energy from fat for a good, long period of time. If the energy demands are too high--such as by running too fast at the start of a workout--the body cannot take in enough oxygen, cannot burn fat, and you hit the wall. Your pace slows exponentially, and more often than not, you'll eat up that time you banked earlier. So start your race by effort, about 10 seconds per mile slower than your goal pace (for a marathon), and you'll have plenty of energy to run faster late in the race. Happy running!

Cook's Corner

Chickpea & Spinach Stew

Contributor: Denise Illsely
January 2012



A hearty meatless meal - enjoy on its own or served over whole wheat couscous or brown rice.

Weight Watchers Recipe (7 Points Plus Value)

Prep time: 16 min
Cook time: 22 min
Serves: 6

Ingredients

2 tsp olive oil, extra-virgin
2 small uncooked onion(s), chopped
1 tsp table salt, divided
2 clove(s) (medium) garlic clove(s), minced
2 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground ginger
15 oz canned diced tomatoes, packed in their own juice, undrained
45 oz canned chickpeas, rinsed and drained
10 oz fresh baby spinach
2 Tbsp water
1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
1/4 cup(s) cilantro, fresh, chopped



Instructions

Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-low heat. Add onion and 1/2 teaspoon salt; cook, stirring frequently, until softened, about 10 minutes. Stir in garlic, cumin and ginger; cook for 1 minute. Add tomatoes and their juice, and chickpeas; stir to combine and mash chickpeas slightly with a potato masher.

Using tongs, toss in spinach and sprinkle mixture with water; cook, covered, until spinach is wilted, tossing mixture once half-way through, about 5 to 10 minutes. Stir in lemon juice, cilantro and remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt.

Yields about 1 cup per serving.

Notes

Turn up the heat options:

- Throw in 1/4 teaspoon cayenne to turn up the heat per Denise.
- Throw in ½ - 1 teaspoon chipotle pepper per Lisa

Make it more 'stew like'

- Throw in ½ liter veggie broth

Let us know how you like it!

Cross Training Corner

Building a Stronger Core

by Lisa Plume & Scott McGrath
January 2012



Introducing a new section to the MVS Newsletter, Cross Training Corner is a place for each of us to try out new exercises to keep us fit on all levels.

(NOTE: We are not certified personal trainers – just friends trying to share what works for each of us.)

This month's newsletter focuses on the basics to building a stronger core with **Plank**. Plank is one of my favorites – and there are probably twenty things you can do with it - but today we are start with a basic plank and a few variations.

Plank will work your core, shoulders and arms – so you get a broad range of results from a single basic pose.

Start by holding the pose for 30 seconds. Work up to 2-3 minutes.

Keep in mind the following:

- Arms should be shoulder distance apart.
- Press your hands actively in the floor, fingers spread.
- Shoulder blades move down along the spine, and firm them into the back.
- Pull the navel in and up slightly.
- Your body should be in a straight line (no drooping or popping up the butt.)

Child Pose is a great way to end a session of plank.

Position Options – Plank can be done on your hands or on your elbows.





Plank Variations

Ready for more? Add the following to the mix...

- In & Out Arms
- In & Out Legs
- Up & Down Arms

In & Out Arms

From Plank Pose on your hands (not elbows), move your right arm out about 4-6 inches, move your left arm out the same distance, then move back to the original position right then left. Repeat 10 times with right arm lead, then 10 times with left arm lead.

In & Out Legs

From Plank Pose (hands or elbows), move your right foot out 4-6 inches, move your left foot out 4-6 inches, then move back to the original position right then left. Repeat 10 times with right leg lead, then 10 times with left leg lead.

OK – ready for more?

This one is definitely tougher, and can be hard on my shoulders, so ease into it...

Up & Down Arms

From Plank Pose on your hands, move down to your right elbow, then move down to your left elbow. Then move back up to your hands, right then left. Start with 3-5 repeats on each side.