



# THE MELROSE RUNNING TIMES

JANUARY 2021

## CONTENTS:

- President's Message
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
- Running during the Pandemic
- MRC Racing Series
- Recent events and Activities

# President's Letter

Hello MRC,  
I'm pleased to introduce to you the next  
Melrose Running Club Board of Directors:

President - Jim Carson  
Vice-President - Regina Curran  
Treasurer - Andy Nagelin  
Secretary - Matt Sazama  
Website Administrator - Jim Carson / Lois  
Parker Carmona  
Membership Coordinator - Nick Lamberti /  
Lesley Moss  
Newsletter Editor - Bobby Taylor  
Apparel Coordinator - Marty Hergert  
Events Director - Mary O'Connell / Steph  
Lawson  
MRFW Race Director - Thuy Dang  
AoMH Race Director - Brian Slater  
Race Treasurer - Mike Sikkema  
Diversity Committee Director - Kristi Taylor

I'd like to thank those that are continue to serve  
on the board, I appreciate the efforts given to  
guide the club as it continues to evolve.

I would also like to thank those leaving the  
board this year. Liz Tassinari who has  
selflessly volunteered on the board, not only as  
a past-President of the club but most notably  
as the long time Race Director of the Melrose  
Run For Women. Derm Cahill for his year as  
president of the club, a unique and challenging  
year to serve. Julie Smith Galvin for her years  
as PR coordinator. Liz Hecht, Haecha  
Donnelly, and Rebecca Hughes, last year's  
event directors who planned many events,  
unfortunately few that could actually be held.

This year's board will see Regina stepping in  
as Vice-President, Thuy inheriting the Melrose  
Run For Women, and Mary and Steph joining  
as events directors, Bobby Taylor agreeing to  
be the newsletter editor, and Kristi Taylor  
volunteering to lead the Diversity Committee to  
promote diversity, equity and inclusion in the  
Melrose Running Club.

The upcoming year will not be "back to normal"  
for the club, but I've challenged the board to

think of ways to reinvigorate the sense of  
community we love about our club.

We'll continue with our Virtual First Tuesday  
Zoom calls each month, our weekend group  
runs, and the MRC running photo contests.  
Stay tuned for other creative ideas to give you  
a chance to lace up your shoes, grab your  
mask, and go for a run with your MRC running  
buddies virtually or in-person.

You may ask why the focus on continuing  
some group events during a pandemic while  
skipping others. We've been trying to focus the  
events on things we can do as a group broken  
into smaller controlled sub-groups, and avoid  
ones that focus on sharing food and drink like  
Sunday Long Runs. When we meet as a group  
you'll likely still run with your running buddy or  
two, or maybe you'll run alone, but fostering  
the sense of running as part of a community of  
runners is valuable and worth encouraging.

The Melrose Running Club was founded as a  
social running club. While it takes effort to  
safely socialize in the current environment, it  
can be done, and there is value in it. Some of  
you have met your best friends in the club, and  
a few have even met their current or future  
spouse at MRC runs. By continuing to meet as  
a group we give other runners the opportunity  
to develop future friendships. Who knows, your  
next close friend might be waiting to run with  
you at a club run.

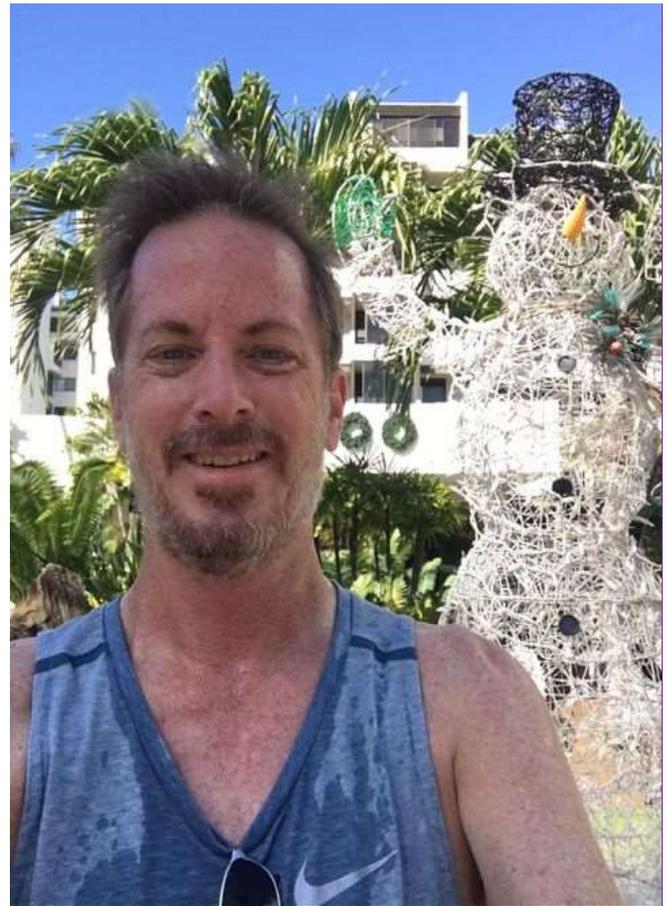
Another important aspect of meeting as a  
group is safety. This year we've seen news  
stories where people have encountered  
shockingly unsafe situations while running  
alone. When deciding whether or not to run  
with the MRC please consider that running in a  
group is not just something you do for yourself  
but your presence provides security for others.

Finally by meeting as a group we have always  
provided the encouragement to get up and run  
farther, faster, or more regularly. At times we  
all need that encouragement to run the extra  
mile, push the pace, or return from an injury.  
The path from Walk-to-Run to that first 5k, 10k,  
half or full marathon is paved with supporting

words from fellow runners. The energy of a running club can be infectious in a good way.

While we'll have to take extra precautions and run following all of the safety guidelines, running as a group is something worth continuing. We all are familiar with the physical benefits of staying active and fit, and must not to overlook the mental health benefits of connecting with others as we share a run. Again, it's important to keep running as a running club.

In the spirit of increased communication with the membership of the club you should see one or two e-mails a month from the MRC board, including an edition of the MRC Newsletter. If you are on Facebook join the Melrose Running Club group to keep up with what your fellow MRCers are up to. We will continue to evolve how we do things, with everyone's safety in mind, throughout the year. If you have any feedback to share feel free to reach out to an MRC Board member and each other as we navigate into 2021.



As we roll into the New Year, thanks go out to Regina, Marty, Mary and Steph for their efforts to keep the club going through club runs, apparel, and events.

Stay safe and keep running!  
Jim



# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

You may or may not know that MRC created a Diversity and Inclusion committee this past fall. The board has crafted the below purpose statement and we are looking for members to join the committee so we can start addressing how we as a social running club create a space that supports diversity, equity, and inclusion for our members and the communities we run in.

In accordance with MRC's charter to make a positive impact on our community through the sport of running, the club designated a board member position as the Diversity Committee Director. The MRC's Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee is a committee consisting of the Diversity Committee Director as chair and 4-7 other club who volunteer and/or are selected by the committee chair.

The purpose of the MRC's Diversity and Inclusiveness Committee is to:

Document areas, whether explicit or implicit, in which club members may be excluded or discriminated against due to their ethnicity, race, country of origin, religion, income, gender, sexual preference, disability, health status, etc.

To this end, they should seek answers to:

- What means should the MRC Board have for feedback on diversity, equity, and inclusion from our membership?
- How will we continue to be aware of and assess diversity, equity, and inclusion issues that may arise over time?
- How can we examine and report on the diversity of the club in comparison to the demographics of surrounding communities (not limited to Melrose) or another reasonable standard as defined by the committee?
- Although the club is open to all, does the MRC actively encourage diversity and inclusivity of membership?

- What aspects of our runners' experiences and enjoyment of running or inclusion in club activities have been overlooked or excluded?
- What barriers or issues are there for runners from other backgrounds, races, ethnicities, abilities, etc.?
- How could the MRC reasonably address barriers or challenges that may limit club diversity, equity or inclusion?
- Any other issues that arise naturally through efforts of the committee

Through these questions and others, as they arise, the committee will recommend a specific and preferably measurable action plan to improve diversity, equity, and inclusiveness based on issues found through members' feedback or diversity analysis and begin a plan to address

- What initiatives are necessary to address documented issues?
- How should we measure ourselves as a club in terms of diversity and inclusion?
- What resources (people, processes, funding, etc.) and changes are required for recommended actions?
- How will we implement and track actions and outcomes?

If you are interested in joining the MRC Diversity and Inclusion Committee please send an email to [kristitaylor@melroserunningclub.com](mailto:kristitaylor@melroserunningclub.com) or

# Racing during a Pandemic

"It is extremely important to protect oneself and other people. This needs to be a community effort with family, extended family, friends, and neighbors all doing their part."



board@melroserunningclub.com Talk to almost any runner during 2020 and inevitably you will hear how anxious they are to race in person again. In some areas of New England we have started to see a return to in person racing over the past few months despite COVID cases, deaths, and hospitalizations all steadily rising nearly everywhere in the U.S. So, as we start attempting a return to normal please draw on expert medical advice from the CDC and from your state and local public health agencies. Know what's going on in your community. The [CDC has a listing of all State Health Departments](#), which is a quick and easy resource to help you find information for your community. Also, let us all remember to be respectful of others while out for a run.

Regulations and guidelines from governments and health experts regarding COVID-19 are constantly evolving, so too are best practices and advice for runners and walkers. Below are the recommendations that RRCA continues to offer when considering that next run or race:

- Don't go out for a run or walk if you are feeling ill or have flu-like symptoms.
- Do practice social distancing - ensure appropriate spacing between runners; the current recommendation is at least six to eight feet of separation.
- Do respect community regulations if parks, tracks, and multi-use trails have been closed due to over-use during stay-at-home orders.
- Do run single-file, not two abreast unless there is ample public space to do so. Don't force others off of a sidewalk or trail by hogging the space.
- Do alter your route or time of day you run if you find it too crowded to ensure appropriate social distancing.
- Don't spit or "nose rocket" your nose in public – bring along tissues or a small towel or a good old-fashioned hanky if you need to get rid of some snot during your run/walk.
- Carry your own fluids and avoid contact with public water fountains.
- Do wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after using a port-a-john. As [NPR](#) reminds people, prepare for limited access to public restrooms or water fountains.
- Don't share towels, food, gels, or any other item if you run or walk with family or one close friend.
- Do tactfully remind others you see out on your run to practice social distancing if you see groups of 3 or more.
- Do use sidewalks where available in your community. Most communities have ordinances requiring the use of sidewalks by pedestrians when available. Do not create unsafe driving situations for emergency

vehicles by running down the middle of a road. The last thing the medical community needs right now is to treat avoidable accidents and injuries.

As a club we are also taking guidance from the same resources and to the best of our ability are following these simple suggestions as restrictions ease around the U.S.:

- Be prepared for a slow phase-in of return-to-activities in your community. Keep in mind state officials may say one thing, while your county or city officials may say something else based on local conditions. This is not like a fire drill where everyone will get an "all-clear," "return to normal" directive in May.
- Take your time to work with local officials to understand when you will be allowed to host group runs and produce your race(s). You may find that communities will start to allow for small group gatherings of 10-25 people before allowing events over 100 people. This may present an opportunity to implement some small, controlled group runs to test updated sanitation efforts to implement at future events and larger group runs.
- RRCA, in Partnership with CARA, has issued [Operational Preparedness Plans for Group Runs](#) which running clubs can adapt to local considerations.
- As a running community leader, do everything you can to maintain/improve the nationwide example of runners being responsible while promoting physical distancing during the return to outdoor group fitness/running.
- If you have utilized paper sign-ins for group runs for safety reasons, now is the time to move to digital options, such as Google forms for sign-ins. Utilize a QR code that people can scan for easy access to an online form for checking in, signing a group run waiver, and sharing emergency contact information.
- Plan, plan, plan - utilize the "[Looking Forward: Guidelines for Events](#)" for helpful tips. The guide, as of May 3, includes small case studies of recent events utilizing new

procedures for physical distancing and sanitation.

- Update your waivers if you do virtual runs. For all events and group runs you will host post-pandemic, we recommend addressing Covid-19 and other diseases in your waiver moving forward.

## MRC Racing Series

In person racing continues to be challenging or canceled for most communities while others have already started holding events (Lookin' at you New Hampshire peeps). We all know the B.A.A has decided to once again postpone the Boston Marathon and many other major races and familiar favorites followed suit. However, The MRC Racing Series continues!

January was pretty much a wash out. Our usual local races were cancelled and there wasn't much going on across the country.

This year we will have more 5K and 10K races and few half marathons.

This will allow everyone to collect points and have a chance to finish at the top. I realize that not everyone likes to run half marathons even if there is a cool prize.

We need a few half's so people can get into the 2021 Virtual 100 Mile Club. Otherwise people would be running a race almost every week.

To give everyone options, there will be several 5K and 10K races each month. You can run as many or as few as you like.

Some will be virtual and may be in another state. Most of the virtual races I have selected sponsor a good cause that I hope some people will be interested in supporting.

Believe it or not, there are several in-person races in February!

The Super Sunday 5 Miler and 5K in Kendall Square is the first! There is a Melrose Team and six people have already signed up! (Keep an eye on their website for updates because at this time the City of Cambridge and State of Massachusetts still prohibit this size gathering).

There is also a Super Sunday 4 Miler in Bedford, NH which you can run in-person or virtually.

In the Mardi Gras theme we have the King Cake Virtual 5K and 10K from February 6 through 16th.

The next three races in February are out of state virtual races which support cancer research or benefit families effected by Autism.

That's it for now but we'd love to hear your suggestions for events you'd love to see added to the racing series. If you have recommendations please let us know!



## MRC Touchless Relay, contests, and upcoming events

Since the onset of the restrictions due to the COVID-19, Jim and others have been working hard to keep us all connected and continue to find creative and safe ways for club members to connect. We had a virtual half marathon in April, an amazing scavenger hunt challenge over the summer, many different photo contests throughout fall and the holidays, and my personal favorite the first ever MRC Touchless relay. On November XX MRC hosted it's first "Race" since everything shut down back in March. It was a beautiful day for a run and 3 teams of 9 MRC members lined up to see who could complete the most laps around spot pond between sunrise and sunset. Team captains Jose, Bobby, and Jim had a virtual school yard draft to select their

team members from the run (virtually of course)...It was amazing to get together with club members again after so a long hiatus. The winning team was able to complete 13 loops around the course before the sunset and we all had a ton of fun!! Below are some of the photos from the day, a big shout out to Jim for organizing a great event and to all the participants for making it a freaking blast!! Be on the lookout for more events posted on our social media pages.

Please follow our new Instagram page @melroserunningclub and use #melroserunningclub when posting to Instagram so we can follow you too!

