

THE MELROSE RUNNING TIMES

MAY – SEPTEMBER 2024

MRC CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF WALK TO RUN

MRC would like to extend a very big thank you to long time club member **Nick Lamberti** for 25 amazing years of Walk To Run! This year marks Nick's last year as he hands the program to the next generation. This hugely successful program, which has positively touched the lives of hundreds of local residents and club members, would not be the same without Nick's enormous efforts, can-do attitude, and infectious, positive outlook. MRC is extremely lucky to have Nick! — Paul Ormond



MRC'S TRADITIONAL WALK TO RUN GRADUATION PHOTO AT MARY FOLEY PARK, JUNE 25, 2024

BY NICK LAMBERTI

The 2024 Walk To Run (WTR) class marked the 25th year that the Melrose Running Club has offered this unique program. Conceived in 1999 by Jackie Doerrer-Mullen, MRC's first club President, the 10-week program is offered each year starting in the last week in April and ending at the beginning of July. Created to capitalize on the public's interest in running following the B.A.A. Boston Marathon run in mid-April, MRC's WTR program is designed to turn a 30-minute walker into a 30-minute runner by the end of 10 weeks.

Following the first year, I took over the program, making some modifications to adopt the approach developed by four-time Olympic Marathon qualifier and renowned running coach, Budd Coates, as well as the first woman officially registered to run the Boston Marathon in 1967, Kathrine Switzer.

"I loved the accountability the program provided. The camaraderie I had with my group and support from the running club made getting started much easier than on my own!" – Ann Marie O'Neill

Each week the running intervals are increased steadily to transition from mostly walking to all running by the end of the program. After each run, the runners convene at the Knights of Columbus for a post-run lesson on an important running topic. This year, the first week featured a shoe clinic conducted by club member **Joe Terranova**. Week two was a stretching clinic led by club member and yoga instructor **Lois Parker Carmona**. Other weeks covered breathing, apparel, and diet as well as an injury prevention workshop conducted by Fitzgerald Physical Therapy Associates. Corresponding articles are posted on the MRC website.

Since its inception in 1999, more than 700 area residents have participated in the MRC Walk To Run program. Average class size is usually between 40 and 50 participants with the largest class of more than 75 participants in 2009.

Currently, there are approximately 38 club members who joined MRC through the WTR program, including club member **Janet Murphy** from the very first WTR class in 1999! This year, 21 participants graduated from the 2024 WTR class.

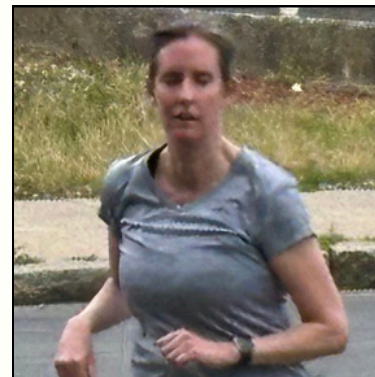
Special thanks to all club members who have assisted over the years as escorts, including: Hank Murphy, Dan Slattery, Jose Viveiros, Lynda Field (2007), **Paul Ormond** (2008), **Liz Hecht** (2009), **Judy Dolan** (2009), **Haecha Donnelly** (2009), **Keith Lordan** (2012), **Valerie Smith** (2013), **Mary O’Connell** (2013), **Thuy Dang** (2013), **Andy Williams** (2019), and many, many others.

Special thanks, and deep gratitude, to **Lesley Moss** who has become an integral part of the WTR program since she graduated from the program in 2011. Known for her “Don’t forget Week 11!” rallying cry, Lesley has become instrumental in organizing club volunteers who act as escorts and leading the Saturday morning WTR runs, as well as becoming the program’s biggest cheerleader. Since I’ll be stepping down this year, the MRC Walk To Run program will be headed up by Lesley Moss, as well as current MRC president, **Marty Hergert** starting in April 2025.

“I am so grateful for the walk to run program! Discipline is not my forte, so doing this as part of a group with great guidance each week was a huge help. The whole club was so welcoming and encouraging. Thanks to everyone for all the support! I’m looking forward to doing some races!” – Corey Mann



ABOVE: BRIAN LIU-CONSTANT COMPLETES HIS 5K RUN AT WTR GRADUATION



LEFT-TO-RIGHT: 2024 WTR GRADUATES PATRICIA SALAMEH, JIM DONOHUE, AMY STOMIEROSKI, AND AMY WILLIAMS

FUN RUNS AND SERIES RACES

BY MARK ROSENBLUM



START OF THE LYNN WOODS XC SHORT RACE KICKED OFF BY THE TRADITIONAL COWBELL

Many club members occasionally like to run races to challenge themselves, to socialize with other runners outside of the club, to explore other towns and trails, and for a host of other reasons. Racing is not on everyone's agenda, of course, nor should it be. Running itself offers many rewards, and our club has rich opportunities for socializing with like-minded people.

That being said, perhaps some of you are new to running and haven't ever done a race. Or, have raced previously but don't do so as much anymore for personal reasons.

If so, you may not be very familiar with so-called "fun runs" and series races, both of which offer low-key, low-cost, and less- or no-pressure events. You can participate just as a training run or run as hard as in a regular race if you wish and get a timed result. Results may or may not be published. They may appear just on the host club's website. These events are a backbone of the running community and are a great opportunity to branch out from your usual routine. They can also be a stepping stone to more formal races if that is your goal.

Within MRC, most fun runs and series races do not count towards club race miles. The results will not get listed on our club website's "Home" and "Race Results" pages, and thus won't count towards the "100 Mile Club." Which brings up the following question: Which races count for race miles, and why?

Which races count for race miles and why?

Races that qualify for recognition on the club website must meet all the following:

- The race must require registration.
- The race must require a fixed race fee and more than just a nominal value.
- The race must be timed.
- Results must be available online.

Fun runs often don't require registration and are either free or have a small suggested donation. Series races usually meet the registration criterion but usually have only a small suggested donation or fee, typically just \$2.

These guidelines are informal in that they are not codified in club rules but have come to be standard practice and have been implemented uniformly for all members for many years now.

Jim Carson explains a historical reason for setting up these guidelines. Prior to this becoming standard practice, some club members would run a regular series as one of their weekly training runs, accruing mileage easily and getting an advantage over other club members in tallying yearly race miles. **Lois Carmona-Parker** adds, "Many race series run the same exact course every week where someone could potentially accumulate a bunch of PRs and that isn't a level playing field with the person who is working as hard but taking on races that have different challenges." Thus, the preceding guidelines were set in place to provide a dividing line between races

where most participants would likely put in solid competitive efforts — having registered and paying a standard race fee — versus other types of races where participants may or may not run as hard. A line needed to be drawn somewhere.

Some series races do meet the criteria for club recognition as they have a more limited duration and more substantial registration fees. One example is Greater Lowell Road Runners' new Tuesday night Angry Chicken summer race series, which consists of eight races between mid-June to mid-August, all on the same 2.62 mile course, with a \$10 registration fee per race.

Nearby Fun Runs and Series Races

Mystics Run the “Q” (Wakefield, 5K) — Year-round, Wednesdays, 6:45 pm, \$2. This series is the one best known to many MRC members and a good one to know, given its close proximity. This is a weekly club run for the Mystic Running Club and open to the public. Course is a very flat loop around Lake Quannapowitt. Register in-person starting at 6 pm in the parking lot for The Lakeside Inn, 595 North Ave. These races attract a smallish group totaling 20-30 runners in better weather. You can see a Strava map and prior results here: <https://www.mysticrunners.com/>.

The D5K (Danvers, 5K) — Year-round, Wednesdays, 7 pm, free. The next closest fun run series is in Danvers starting in their downtown area. This one has some slightly rolling shallow hills but is still relatively flat and fast, and there isn't too much traffic along the interesting course. Extremely informal. Just show up, run, and give your name when you finish. Appears to get a consistent 20-25 runners each week. <https://danvers5k.com/>. Note: they have a fun one minute YouTube animation about the race you can find here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d1KWNWScArE>.

No Rest for the Wicked (Salem, 5K-ish) — Year-round, Thursdays, 6:45 pm, free. This race is mostly attended by members of the host Wicked Running Club. This race is also extremely low key: show up at the southeast corner of the Salem Common and write your name on the clipboard passed around. After crossing the finish line, identify yourself to the timer and get your place/time. Recently has only been getting 5-10

runners: thus, not a lot of company along the route. However, Salem is a unique setting in the Boston area and the course includes both historic and scenic stretches. Course is short of a 5K at about 3.07 miles. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/norestforthewickedsaalem/>

Lynn Woods Summer XC Series (Lynn, three distances each week between 1.5-6.5 miles). End of May – end of Sept., Wednesdays, 6:30 (6 pm starting mid-Aug.), \$2 suggested donation. This race series started back in 1970. Called an XC series, they are actually trail races, starting at the Great Woods entrance to Lynn Woods. There is a kids race of 1.59 miles (but open to all ages) which is out and back along a carriage road. The Short and Long routes vary each week, with the Short ranging from 2.2-2.8 miles, and the Long is 3.8-6.5 miles. Routes can vary from wide carriage roads to technical single-track trails. Very popular, with a large number of regular participants. Each race typically attracts 30-70 runners. A great opportunity to try out trail racing, or to train for more formal trail races. <https://lwrn.org/>

Fudgcicle Series (Tewksbury, 5K) — Jan.-Feb., Saturdays, 8 am, \$2 donation. The Fudgcicle Series (intentional spelling to avoid trademark violations) started in 1976. This provides yet another very flat 5K loop course opportunity, starting at Tewksbury HS. Among the few race opportunities at this time of year, which makes this series very popular in spite of the sometimes frigid conditions. During this past winter (admittedly milder than most), most weeks averaged 120 runners. The final week's race is a twosome race where your and your teammate's times are combined and prizes awarded across several categories. Some runners regularly head over afterwards to IHOP for breakfast. <https://www.glrr.net/fudgcicle-5k-series-2024/>

Woburn Summer Fun Runs (Woburn, 2.4 miles) — Five weeks from mid-July to mid-Aug. 6:40 pm, free. This is another multi-event fun run, which starts at the southern end of Horn Pond. First off for the night are two short kids races: 0.4 miles (ages five and under) and 0.8 miles (6-12). The adult race begins at 6:40. These races are run the old-fashioned way: show up, run, grab a numbered popsicle stick indicating your place handed from a volunteer as you cross the finish line at full stride,

then head over to the timing table at your leisure to tell them your name, age, and town. Course runs clockwise around Horn Pond, including an easy dirt trail section around the lagoon. One short hill; otherwise flat and fast with great scenery. The adult race gets 20-40 finishers; the kids races are also well-attended. https://woburnma.myrec.com/forms/6583_fun_runs_2022.pdf

There are also some 5K fun runs closer to Boston. As these are a bit further away for most of us, I won't detail these, but simply list them below and you can look them up if interested:

- **The Bur-run** (Somerville) <https://www.srr.org/monday-night-burrun>
- **Danehy Parkrun** (Cambridge) <https://www.parkrun.us/danehypark/>
- **Jamaica Pond Parkrun** (Jamaica Plain) <https://www.parkrun.us/jamaicapond/>

Additional reasons to consider fun runs and series races

As seen above, there are a good number of local fun runs and series races to try, to see if you like them and occasionally add one or more into your running schedule.

While these won't count for club race miles, there are several reasons for doing these, in addition to your regular training runs and formal races:

- Low cost opportunity to race (typically \$2 or free)
- For new runners, see if you like the idea of doing an occasional race
- Simpler logistics (easier or no registration, often easier parking, less need to arrive well in advance of race start, sometimes "bib-less")
- Low key, fewer people, less intimidating
- Test yourself when coming back from injury
- Can do as training tempo runs
- Test out a different type of race (e.g. XC/trail) to see if you like it
- Opportunity to run in other towns and meet runners from other clubs and communities
- Regular routes for most series allow you to easily assess progress

- If you have young children who want to try racing, these are good, inexpensive ways to do so, with some series having shorter distance options targeted especially for kids
- 5K distance races are regularly available for a challenge throughout the year, even at times when there are few (if any) regular races on the calendar.



FINISHING THE 5K FUDGCICLE SERIES WINTER FUN RUN IN TEWKSBURY

SUMMER PARTY

BY PAUL ORMOND

Perfect weather PLUS scores of hungry (and thirsty...) runners EQUALS one blow-out awesome summer party on Saturday, August, 3, 2024! A huge THANK YOU to this year's organizers: **Mary O'Connell** and **Gayle Antoniou**! Mary and Gayle were assisted by Mary's husband Mike along with **Caitlin and Joshua McCleary** and **Maria Canino**. **Nick Lamberti** picked up the delicious food catered by Blue Ribbon Barbecue in Dedham while **Regina Curran** coordinated the ever-important porta potty. And did someone say dessert? MRCers had their choice of dozens of selections. After all, runners need their calories and they all can't come from beer.



ABOVE: MRC MEMBERS AT THE SUMMER PARTY
TOP RIGHT: LYNDA FIELD, MARTY HERGERT, VALERIE SMITH, AJ DRUMMOND, AND GAYLE ANTONIOU
BOTTOM RIGHT: JIM CARSON, DAN SLATTERY, AND MATT KERTON

LEFT TO RIGHT: MARIA CANINO, CAITLIN MCCLEARY, JULIE SMITH-GALVIN, MARY O'CONNELL, THUY DANG, AND JOSHUA MCCLEARY



PRESIDENT'S LETTER 2024

BY ANDY NAGELIN

Thank you for the opportunity to lead the Melrose Running Club as your president. This club means so much to me and I know it means a lot to each of you as well. I have been a member of this club since 2008 and have watched it grow to over 200 members and this year we had 260 active members. While some of this growth is due to the increasing interest in running, I think a lot of it has to do with the nature of our club. We are a friendly, welcoming group, and runners of all levels find a running home and new friends among us. The interest in running gets people to show up, but it's all of you that keep them coming back!

Our Walk To Run program has been very successful and each year more of these new runners return as active club members. Some have taken on leadership positions and even led the club as president (for example, **Derm Cahill**). **Nick Lamberti** has retired after directing the Walk To Run program for the past 25 years! His dedication and hard work has established a strong program that will be a continued success. As president, one of my goals will be to foster this success.

Let me welcome and introduce you to your new board members. **Ed Miller** will be your new Vice President. Ed has been with the club for almost three years and is a very active runner. In addition to all the local races he has run in 2024, he also ran the London and Berlin Marathons this year! Ed will also be managing the Melrose Racing Series in 2025. **Paul Locke** will be your new Secretary. Paul has been with the club for over 12 years and has been active with the club in many volunteer positions. **Barry Petzold** joins the board as your Events Director. Barry joined the club in 2005, lived on the west coast for several years and recently returned to Melrose.

Barry will be very busy, so please help him out when he asks for volunteers. I appreciate everyone who has stepped up to join the board, and everyone who has continued their service. The club is run by volunteers and we couldn't do it without all of you. We are still looking for a Race Director for the Melrose Run for Women. If you are looking for an opportunity to serve the club and be part of a legendary race event, please see me. We will be here to help you build on the great success **Thuy Dang** created.

I look forward to continuing the MRC traditions that Marty re-established and added over the past two years. We are USATF certified again and I'd like to encourage more members to participate in track workouts and competitive events. **Keith Lordan** gave us the first ever Halfway to St. Patrick's Day party, and hopefully we will have many more. **Lesley Moss** and Marty brought back the Chili Cook-Off which was a lot of fun. While we continue our races and social events, perhaps there is an idea of yours that would be fun to try?

Here are the goals I want to pursue:

- Get more involved in local races as organizers, volunteers, and participants.
- Grow our volunteer work with the BAA at all four of their races.
- Participate in plogging or other trash pick-up activities, perhaps with the Friends of the Middlesex Fells or the Keep Melrose Beautiful group.
- Actively move away from using plastic. We should stop using plastic cups and avoid creating plastic waste at our events.

I'm looking forward to another great year for the MRC and to working with all of you to create great experiences for everyone.

MRC BOARD

President: Andy Nagelin

Vice President: Ed Miller

Secretary: Paul Locke

Treasurer: Scott Noddin

Membership Coordinators: Lesley Moss & Marty Hergert

Events Coordinators: Barry Petzold

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion: Yvonne Liu-Constant

Newsletter Editor/Media Coordinator: Paul Ormond

Apparel Coordinator: Maria Cavero

Race Director MRFW: [Open]

Race Director MHNC: Brian Slater & Mark Rosenblum

Race Treasurer: Julie Smith-Galvin

Webmaster: Jim Carson

Email: board@melroserunningclub.com