

AURA NEWS

Arkansas Ultra Running Association

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From the Editor

October was a big month for our club with two races and two additional hosted events. These events were made possible thanks to a whole lot of people working together.

Big thanks to Thomas Chapin for 5 years of hosting the Traveller 100. He stepped up to take the reins at a very important time and we are truly grateful for his hard work and dedication. We also want to thank him for ensuring that the race not only continued but continued in the spirit in which the founders intended. I have seen first hand the many months, days, and hours of work it takes to make this race an amazing experience for the runners, not to mention the amount of personal space in your home to store equipment. You and your family have a long history with the race and it is a beautiful thing to see them helping you each year in a very big way. Our thanks to them as well.

A huge thank you to the MANY VOLUNTEERS who came out and worked for hours upon hours to feed, care, and tend to the runners. You made a lot of people very happy and no doubt made all the difference for some!

George Peterka does so much for our club including race directing and he did a fantastic job of hosting the Hot Springs National Park Run. It is always a fun event. Thank you, George!

Much appreciation to PoDog for taking the time to teach proper trail maintenance. We look forward to another opportunity to learn new skills from you..

I look forward to seeing you all at our next event, the Sunset Endurance Run! Let's go burn off that Thanksgiving pie!

-Peace, Love, and Trails-
Stacey Shaver-Matson



Upcoming AURA Events



Sunset Lake 6/12/24 Hour Endurance Challenge

Hosted by the Saline County Striders
November 26-27

[Click Here to Register](#)



LOViT Trail Marathon

Saturday, December 4th
8am Shangri La Drive
Mt Ida

Phil Carr - Race Director



[Click Here For Information](#)

Athens Big Fork Trail Marathon

Big Fork Community Center

Saturday, January 8th

The race is full but you can still come join the fun and camaraderie. We can always use some extra help at the start finish with:

- *Registration
- *Runner Tracking (aka taking bib #'s and finish times)
- *Little Missouri Aid Station with captain, George Peterka

Email me if you are available to help: mverunnergirl@gmail.com



[Click to Order Shirt or Hoodie](#)



Ouachita Switchbacks

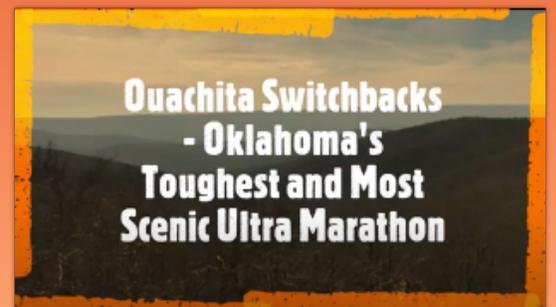
50k & 25k

Saturday, January 15th

[Click Here To Register](#)

Those strong enough to finish Both ABF Marathon and the OT Switchbacks will receive a special award!

ARE YOU TOUGH ENOUGH?



A JOURNEY IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE

by

Pete Ireland

Maurice Robinson

Pete:

The 7th annual Race for the Ages, directed by Sandra Cantrell, was held from September 9-12, in Manchester, Tennessee. Five of us from Central Arkansas made the trek to Manchester for the race. Maurice Robinson, Lou Peyton, and Kim Fischer were all making their 6th appearance. Don Preston was making his 4th ARFTA start. This was my 7th time there. My goal was to make the short list of people 80 and older who had ever, anywhere, completed 100 miles in less than 48 hours. For those not familiar with the event, it is a multi-day race in which participants are given as many hours as they are old to run or walk as far as they choose to or are able by race end at noon on Sunday. Those 40 and under are given 40 hours. The intent is to give older runners a chance to better compete with younger runners. The course is a one-mile certified, paved loop which includes a lengthy out-and-back section. Although relatively level, it is not a fast course as there are several 90 degree or greater turns.

Maurice:

The race is normally held on Labor Day weekend, but this year, the annual Bonnaroo Music and Arts Festival, usually held earlier in the year in Manchester, was moved to that weekend because of covid. ARFTA was forced to reschedule to September 8-12, 2021.

We had no assurance that entries would be opened for the event because of the pandemic. However, I planned to train and be ready if the opportunity occurred. In early February I started seriously doing more of my beekeeping activities and more farm type work to build body core strength. I started water aerobics in late March to build core strength and gain flexibility. On the 6th of June I was notified by RunSignUp that I had been confirmed to enter ARFTA. Did I mention that my 57th wedding anniversary was the 11th of September? All I could do was to approach my wife, Norma, discuss the difficult situation and ask her if I could go to ARFTA. When I did, she looked up at me and pleasantly said, "Go run your race." Believe me I am blessed. Lou Peyton also wanted to go to ARFTA and ride to and from Tennessee with Pete and me.

Pete:

Last year I came in with a plan for a sub-48 hour 100 miles. But, as somebody once said, "Everybody has a plan until they get punched in the mouth." By late the first day I had developed a lean that became progressively worse. Runners lean is an odd phenomenon that rarely occurs before age 65 and seldom in distances less than 50 miles. I first was aware of my leaning when I saw a photo of me approaching the finish line for my 10th Traveller 100 finish in 2006. I had a distinct lean to the left, though I was not aware of it at the time. By 2008 it became so bad I dropped at 95 miles with almost 2 hours left. I could no longer walk a straight line (For only the third time in this race I had a pacer and she was more concerned with my health than my finish so convinced me it was time to pull the plug.). For the next several years I never did a race longer than 50 miles and lean was never an issue. What causes the lean? Some people believe it is electrolyte related, or perhaps a muscle weakness/imbalance. It has also been suggested the problem may be neurological. Some people develop a lean but it never always gets worse and they are able to keep going. For others, it is eventually the end of the line.

Maurice:

Pete started at 3:00 a.m. Thursday morning, I started at 5:00 a.m. and Lou started at 7:00 a.m. The other Arkansans started hours after us. Staying motivated, optimistic and continuing to move forward relentlessly, while hurting, was the key to putting up a lot of miles. It helps to have been in this situation before and to have pulled myself through the valleys and back to the mountain tops. Although I might be hurting, often I meditate while running, especially at night. I ponder a large range of subjects. ARFTA is also a very social event. With a little help from our fellow runners we can enjoy running great distances.

By 11:30 p.m., Thursday I had completed 56 miles and been on the course about 15 hours. It was time to rest. I had 3.5 hours deep sleep and an hour for some body maintenance. I went back to running Friday morning. We Arkansans called the Hogs at race central after all the runners had started. That felt good. By midnight Friday, I had completed 100 miles, a big milestone for anyone. Countless times I thought to myself, "Keep good vertical posture! It will keep me running more efficiently and I will not be as likely to lean too one side." Runner's lean has been a problem for me in some recent races. I have gotten so weak in the back that it was impossible to stand upright without a lean.

Pete:

This year I worked more on my back and core strength, hoping to prevent, or at least delay the lean and be able to get a sub-48 100 miles. Things started off well enough, easily reaching the 50 mile point well under 18 hours, including meal breaks. But the lean to the left was starting. Things quickly went downhill from there. At 50 miles I was on track for 58 to 60 miles by midnight, but by 55 miles the lean had become so bad it was upsetting my balance and slowing me down. It was difficult to walk straight and my back was hurting. Hoping a few hours of rest would revive things, I stopped about 11:15 Thursday night. The next morning things were not much better.

A couple of lengthy mid-day rest periods on Friday lying flat on my back in the warmth of the day helped. By then my sub-48 100 mile goal was out of reach. By taking a 10 minute break to lie on my back every mile or two my back continued to cooperate fairly well for several hours. But that made for slow progress. I stopped about 10:55 Friday evening with 81 miles.

Maurice:

Back onto the course after Friday midnight, I ran another 3 miles and quickly realized that it was time for a little more rest. I laid down at 2:00 a.m. Saturday and slept well for 4 hours. Was that enough sleep to repair my body?

At 6:30 a.m. I began the Saturday portion of my journey. It did not go well. I was stiff. Fatigue and stress made it hard to digest my normal food. Our meals were provided from Cracker Barrel and served at 6 hour intervals at 6 and 12 on the clock, but I ate only a little of them. Until early afternoon I consumed breads, crackers, chips, nuts, peanut butter, bananas, meats, etc. to meet my calorie needs. I used my electrolytes and the Sword sports drink that was provided at the aid station. I stayed hydrated. Late in the day I had to go to a wider variety of liquids and gels. I was able to do only 29 miles during my 'all day' Saturday run. It was my slowest day. I decided to rest and hope for a good Sunday morning run. I laid down at 8:45 p.m. and slept well for over 5 hours.

Pete:

For the first few miles on Saturday morning things went okay. My legs were fine, but soon I felt I was leaning in the opposite direction. That lean gradually became worse, even with breaks, and by mile 95 it again was difficult to even walk straight. Rest breaks lying on my back would buy me a half mile with limited lean or pain, but that was all. After a lengthy break following mile 98, I decided to get the last two miles done without a rest. That proved challenging. On the last mile I had to stop every 50 yards or so, put my hands on my knees and wait. If I stopped without doing that, I would have to stutter step to keep from falling over. That was the longest, slowest, and possibly most painful last mile ever for me. By then, late Saturday afternoon, things had stopped being fun and I turned in my timing chip.

From my experience this year, it looks like muscle strength/imbalance is not necessarily the most significant factor. I also was taking additional magnesium. So, for now at least, the cause of my lean remains undetermined.

Maurice:

I went to work Sunday at 2:45 a.m., using only gels, bananas, Boost, fruit and berry juices, Sword and water. For running, I actually use bulk gels and always mix in about 20% honey that my honeybees provide. It's the best! As I began to run that fourth morning, I felt rested and healthy. I had no worry. I was happily running with athletes from 30 states. Many were legends of ultrarunning. I knew what I was into and what I needed to do. So, I ran 26 miles that morning averaging under 18 minutes per mile. The last 4 miles were punishing because the lean had found me. I was leaning at least 15 degrees to my left. My 161st and final lap was a personal best distance. I was hurting, but I was very happy. I felt elated. I was strongly emotional, especially when two other ultrarunners eased up beside me and ask if they could run with me as I finished my personal record lap. We crossed the finish line. I had outrun my past. My trophy was a string of tears that flooded my eyes and covered my face at the end of that final lap. It was my 15th run of 100 miles, or more.

When an old man travels out of state and completes a 161 mile run/walk, perhaps it should be documented and put into his case file. My previous experience there no doubt helped. I am thankful for the opportunity, at 79 years and almost 10 months of age, to be able to go out for a long weekend and run beyond six consecutive marathons. I am blessed as a senior runner and I hope to be a good example to others.

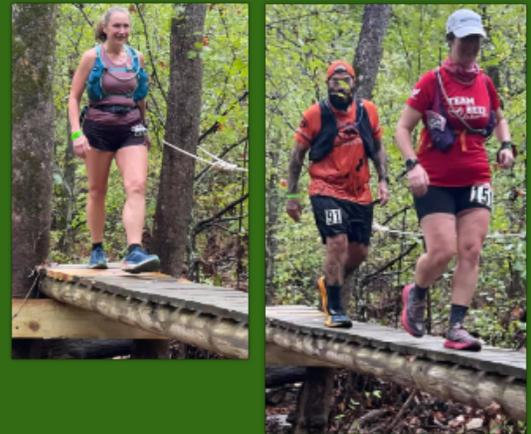
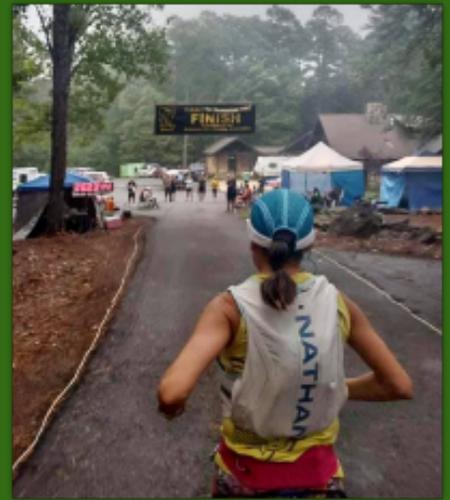
Pete:

In addition to Maurice's PR of 161 miles, and my 100 miles, Lou got 110 miles, Kim got 102, and Don joined me with 100. The overall winner was Michael Koppy, age 71 from Minnesota, with 200 miles. He previously won this race in 2018. Second place, and first female, was 49 year old Aneta Zeppettella from Ohio with 195 miles, breaking Liz Bauer's female record of 188 miles set in 2017. More than once I referred to her as the Energizer Bunny as she just kept going and going.

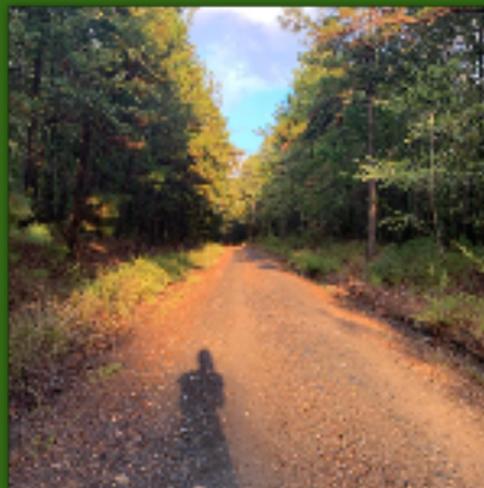
Arkansas Traveller 100



30th Annual







**MUCH APPRECIATION
TO
OUR AMAZING
VOLUNTEERS**



Hot Springs National Park 18 Mile Run



TRAIL MAINTENANCE GROUP

ROBERT PODOG VOGLER, AURA TRAIL MANAGER,

If you want to join the group for future learning opportunities [email. PoDog](mailto:PoDog)



Arkansas Traveller Volunteer Picnic



Laura Kerns was presented with a silver buckle for placing first female at the 2021 Arkansas Traveller 100. In addition she was presented with a plaque for also being the first Arkansas female to finish. Stan Ferguson was presented with a jacket for his 10th Traveller finish. Aid station captains were presented with a special gift. Thomas also gave special gifts to those who have been helping with the race, in a big way, for many years some who have even volunteered in some capacity for All 30 Years!

We are extremely grateful to our volunteers, who serve the runners with great care and enthusiasm. We really do have the best volunteers around!

Pictured with the RD, Thomas Chapin: Laura Kerns, Stacey Shaver, Kim Fisher, Stan Ferguson, Paul Turner, and Robert Vogler (aka Podog)

AURA MEMBERS

Welcome new members to the AURA Family! We look forward to seeing you at future events!

As Always Feel Free To:

- *Send me your race/volunteer photos for the newsletter
- *Send me your race or training stories I am also happy to edit if needed
- *Share the AURA love by sending the membership link below to anyone interested in giving trail running a try
- *Email me or any board member if you have any questions or concerns

UTS & UTS LITE PARTICIPANTS

If you have volunteered at any AURA event in this years Ultra Trail Series and you want credit toward the High Mileage Award then please email the race you volunteered at and your hours to me at mverunnergirl@gmail.com

[Click Here To Register or Renew Your Membership](#)

[Click Here To See If You Need To Renew](#)

[Click Here To See Events In The Ultra Trail Series](#)

