

AURA NEWS

Arkansas Ultra Running Association

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Mt Magazine

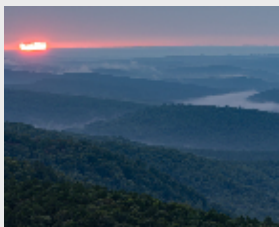
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From the President & Editor



Hello fellow AURA Members!! I know it is unlike me to be long winded, but I have a lot to share with you this month. I promise to be as pithy as I can with each topic.

After the fog cleared, we had beautiful weather for most of the Mt Magazine run. Nick Dvorscak and Chantel Pennicott from NWA won the 18 miler.

Jonathan Dorris of Batesville and Natalie Woody from Greenbrier were 1st and 2nd in the 12 mile race. After most had already left, Todd Hennessey and Jennifer West toughed it out to get their first finish and the Iron Will award, enduring a little rain at the tail end. Congratulations to all who finished & welcome back to Ashley O'neal who has returned to running after a long recovery from an injury.

The Catsmacker has a way of bringing out a lot of road runners. The biggest group this year, outside our club, was the Little Rock Road Runners and boy they came to have fun! After the race, they ripped the bandaid off and were the first to jump into Lake Sylvia and encouraged others to join. Katie presented awards fit for Kings and Queens to Chris Roberts of Beebe and Laura Arnold of LR in the Cat. Kenneth Broyles of Sherwood and Shelli Chuck of LR were our winners of the Kitty. Ms T and Wesley Leach got to join us and we were so happy to have them with us again! Tom Avery carried the flag for Team RWB for the duration of the Kitty. We had a huge number of people who stuck around for the cookout, UTS awards and club meeting. Thanks to all who joined us and to all who volunteered. Special thanks to LR Hash House Harriers for cooking and slinging aids. We love and appreciate LRH3 for all that they do for our club!

Paul Turner and Katie Helms spent many months preparing to host these stellar events, donation based events, giving up a lot of their time so that we could have fun on the trails. Thank you both for your volunteer service and dedication!

~Happy Trails - Stacey Shaver-Matson~

Annual AURA Board Meeting

Held Annual at the End of the Ultra Trail Season

Here's What you Missed ~ By Stacey Shaver



AURA's needs for the coming year:

*Volunteers -

We encourage each of you to commit to volunteering or finding a volunteer (a family member, friend, or coworker) to help with just one race. If we all commit to this we may not move mountains but we can certainly relieve a lot of stress for our aid station captains and race directors. The earlier you sign up the more stress you can relieve. A side effect of inviting a friend, family member or co-worker that often occurs is that they fall in love with trail running and changes their lives forever. That was certainly the case for me 15 years ago. My dad came to help at one of my races and now he is addicted to the sport.

*Aid Captain Needed at the Arkansas Traveller 100 -

Laura Babbitt has been our captain at the Turn Around aid station for several years but this year it looks like she will be running the race -Yay! The first runner comes through this station at ~2:05pm and the last runner is expected ~10:20pm. We have an online volunteer sign up for volunteers to help you at this station. As a thank you, you get a free entry in the Ouachita Trail 50. If you are interested in being our captain and want to know more about what is involved please call or email [Me](#). We would love to have you join the AT100 team of leaders.

*Trail Maintenance Help on the Lake Sylvia Trails -

The ink is still wet but our club has officially adopted the trails at Lake Sylvia State Park. There is so much potential for these trails as the trails lead to some beautiful vistas. The trail needs to be maintained year round. If you are able to help out and do some lopping or weed eating just contact [PoDog \(Robert Vogler\)](#) and he will let you know what area most needs attention. You will receive trail work points if you are in either of the trail series.

*My Volunteer Duties-

I think most of you are well aware that I wear many hats for the club and serve in several volunteer capacities and have since 2014. Although individually each of my duties are not overwhelming or terribly time consuming, collectively they add up and my family feels that it has invaded our time together. In order to have more time to fill my role as a Mimi I needed to pass on a couple of duties. At the club meeting Laura Babbitt volunteered to take over the club newsletter and she will begin next month. After ten years of keeping you informed and up to date on all things AURA and sharing tips and tidbits this is my final club newsletter. Don't worry, you will still get to hear my tips on potty paper disposal and how the number one rule of trail racing is "Don't Get Dead" at trail briefings and with my occasional news submission. Laura does an excellent job with the newsletter for Saline County Striders and will take on this new role with the same kind of care and detail. Laura was also voted to serve as Vice President for the AURA Board of Directors, which means she will also oversee the 2024-25 Ultra Trail Series. Please reach out and thank her for taking on these new roles.



AURA's Accomplishments for 2023-24 and Changes Ahead:

*AURA Awarded For Trail Work in the Ouachita Forest

Aura received an award this year for out trail work in the Ouachita Forest. The award was presented by the US Forest Service. George and Podog do a lot of work on our trails and we are extremely grateful. Many of you also contributed by participating in a trail work day. Maintaining and protecting our trails is important, so thank you for your contribution!

*ABF Historical Markers - Now A Reality

Speaking of protecting our trails, We raised enough money to place historical markers on the Athens Big Fork Trail. It has been a long, tedious process involving a lot of research, interviews, paper work and red tape, but we are finally at the finish line and have approval from all entities involved. We aren't far from the physical placement of the trail marker. We then can shift focus to getting mile markers placed on the trail. This was only made possible because of the financial contributions made by many of you. It is because of you, these markers, and the extensive research that the Athens Big Fork Trail will be protected for years to come.

*Issues With Alcohol And The Impact on Future Events

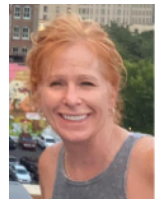
We had a few issues in last season's trail series with excessive drinking both on course and at aid stations. To address this we tightened up policies and some events no longer allow any alcohol at aid stations. If you are running impaired on one of our race courses you may be asked to ride the sad wagon back to the finish line. If this happens, please do not argue with race officials, as they are just trying to keep everyone safe. We really want volunteering to be fun but the safety of our runners will ALWAYS come first. So please, whether running or volunteering be responsible and remember that your actions can have a much wider impact on others, on our events, and on our relationships with our land managers.

*New Race Directors

Shawn Sellers will direct the Hot Springs National Park run. He shadowed George Peterka, who directed that race eight times over the last seven years. After working with Shawn during his interim as Vice President I know we picked the right person and he will do great things with that event.



Last fall I asked Bea Mickelson to consider taking over as director for the LOViT 100. After time to contemplate and consider the full scope of this job, she agreed. Anyone who has run this event has experienced her attention to detail and great care for every runner at the aid station that she ran for many years. She has the full backing of the LOViT board and we will all strive to continue offering a quality event that directly benefits the LOViT trail system.



Mandy Ferguson and Brad Taylor will be taking my place as directors for the Athens Big Fork Trail Marathon in 2026. I will direct the race for my 8th and final year this January. I can hear the gasps. I promise, it was not an easy decision to give up my baby but in my heart I know it is the best thing for that race. Mandy and Brad both live in the area and train on that trail and the roads around the course on a regular basis. They will know when and where the trail needs attention. They will also be able to make meaningful connections with that growing community.



Much appreciation to all of these wonderful souls for stepping up to serve in such a big way! You can thank them by supporting them. Sign up to run or volunteer. This club and the events we host are for you, our community and your opinion matters to us. Feel free to reach out to any one of our [board members](#) if you have concerns or questions.

***New Race Added to UTS LITE**

The Northwoods Mullet Run in Hot Springs was added to the LITE series. May 2025 will be the fourth year for this event and they do a fantastic job of making sure the runners are safe and well cared for while on their course. Traci Berry is the director and Steve and Susan Adkison, who volunteer for a few of our races, are heavy handed helpers with this event. We love to see new races that focus not only on hosting a great event but also on improving and protecting our beautiful Arkansas trails.



***Safety For Our Female Runners**

As the times change so do our policies. This year we adopted an RRCA order of protection policy that will help us to better protect our female runners from predators/stalkers. Safety for our runners is one of our highest priorities. Whether male or female, if you ever have issues that you feel needs addressed, in regard to your safety please reach out to a board member.



***Donations**

After each of our races we donated our profits. The beneficiaries were to a couple of high school track clubs, several state parks, a national park, a state recreation area, a volunteer fire department that serves in the Ouachita National Forrest, HAM radio clubs who volunteer their time to help ensure your safety, and directly to communities that serve us and the trail systems that we enjoy.



Rest assured, the money that you donate when you run one of our donation based races an a portion of the money you spend on entry fees at any of our paid races always goes to a worthy cause that in the end directly benefits YOU the runner. I don't know about you, but when I sign up for an event, it is always nice to know where my hard earned money goes.



We're More Than A Club, We're A Community

AURA Ultra Trail Series Kings & Queens

2023-2024 Season

2023-2024 UTS-Lite

- Overall/Open:
 👤 Bryan McCullar
 👤 Teresa Taylor
- Master:
 👤 Jim Tadel
 👤 Shannon Wiley
- Grand Master:
 👤 Andy Messenger
 👤 Sheri Nichols
- Senior:
 👤 Dale Powell
 👤 Debbie Rigsby
- Super-Senior:
 👤 John Fowlkes
 👤 Dottie Rea

2023-24 UTS	UTS LITE Winners	UTS LITE Winners	UTS Winners	UTS Winners
Overall				
Master				
Grand Master	 (not in attendance)			
Senior		 (not in attendance)		
Super Senior			No participants/winner in this category	

2023-2024

- Overall/Open:
 👤 Daniel Arnold
 👤 Laura Kearns
- Master:
 👤 Randall Bright
 👤 Kimmy Riley
- Grand Master:
 👤 Stan Ferguson
 👤 Lisa Webb
- Senior:
 👤 Alan Hunnicutt
 👤 Chrissy Ferguson
- Super-Senior:
 👤 Mary McDonald



Gift cards to Fleet Feet of Little Rock were presented to Jim Tadel of Monticello, John Fowlkes of Greenbrier and Shannon Wiley of Fort Smith for running EVERY RACE IN THE SERIES!! That is some serious dedication. Way to Go!!

Upcoming AURA Events
And
Volunteer Opportunities



June 8 2024 - May 17, 2025

Our UTS and UTS Lite Series is becoming increasingly popular as runners compete not only for the crown of Queen or King but against themselves to see if they can complete the challenge of reaching High Mileage or the challenge to running them all!!

**2024 - 2025
AURA
Ultra Trail
Series**

Registration Link - Be sure to click on the correct year

**new this year to the LITE series is the Mullet Run. AT100 Pumpkin Patch Captains Susan & Steve Adkison are heavy handed helpers at that event.*

June 8th

7 am in Cotter, AR

*Formerly ABUC but hosted by the same great folks, Rusty & Jake. They kicked off the 2024-2025 AURA Ultra Trail Series with this is a new twist on the 6, 12, or 24 hour race format. Everyone had a really fun time!

Results -pics & stories will be shared in the next edition of the club news.

1st Race in the Full UTS



July 20th - July 21st

7pm in Perryville at Camp Ouachita hosted by Sharon & Tina
Come Howl At The Moon While We Party All Night

Registration & Race Info

Emil Sharon or Tina

Sign Up To Volunteer

1st race in the UTS Lite & 2nd race for the Full UTS



August 17th

7am-1pm at Ferncliff Camp hosted by Noelle Coughlan



This loop course is a bit challenging for some. Without challenges we can't grow as runners. So come test your mettle at Ferncliff Camp. Bring a chair, swim suit, and towel and plan to stay for the post race fun!

Register Today**Volunteer & Earn High Mileage Points**

*This a great opportunity for FULL UTS participants to earn points towards High Mileage since it isn't part of the Full.

2nd Race in the UTS Lite

Tentatively Scheduled for Saturday, August 24th

***pending permit approval**

7am at Mt Nebo State Park



Tom always brings the fun with a run that offers stunning views and a post run cookout. Please bring a donation for this free/donation based race and a side dish, fruit, or dessert to share. Don't forget a chair so you can sit a spell and commune with us. Let's face it, ain't nobody talking while climbing back up that mountain! Lots of good food and great conversation after though!

WE WILL MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE CLUB FB PAGE AS SOON AS REGISTRATION OPENS.

3rd race for both the UTS & UTS Lite

33rd Annual Arkansas Traveller 100 October 5-6

33 years, yep we are that experienced and we are a Western States Qualifying race!

This event is great for a seasoned runner to PR and a wonderful event for your first hundo. Our volunteers do a fantastic job of caring for and motivating our runners. They all go above and beyond to ensure you make it to that finish line. Have you ever wondered, "Could I do it?" Well there is only one way to find out!

An added bonus is that you will find plenty of people to train with this summer. You can find group runs most weekend on our [Facebook page](#). If you are worried about getting lost, Chris Baldwin, our volunteer coordinator will usually send you a GPX of the route upon request.

Register Now - Price Increase July 5th

Be a Trail Angel & Volunteer

*Great opportunity to rack up High Mileage Points for your volunteering efforts. 30 potential hours to earn points.

4th race for the Full UTS

Lake Sylvia Recreation Area Changes

First, in case you weren't aware, Lake Sylvia Recreation Area is a State Park. With this new status comes some improvements and changes. The first was to find a new park superintendent, Aaron Presser. He and Officer Brittany Thomas have been working hard out there. Those who attended the Catsmacker may have noticed the new playground and pump track going in. That will be complete as soon as the ground dries enough. The walking path near the Trailhead parking lot will undergo remodeling as well. They also received grant money to upgrade the campground. They plan to add at least ten additional RV sites as well as adding water hookups. Very soon, if you wish to camp there, you will need to register online. They plan to have the online registration system live by the end of June, if not sooner.

When camping at Lake Sylvia or anywhere in the forest, please follow the rule in regard to moving and utilizing firewood. Please read- Firewood for campers because all it takes is one of these beetles to start major damage in a new location. The U.S. Forest Service is working to save nearly 200 acres of pine trees in west Arkansas after an Ips infestation. The infestation begins on the shores of Lake Ouachita and runs north-northwest towards the town of Story. Ips beetles impact public lands, threaten important habitat and pose a hazard to forest users. If you live in this area and suspect Ips beetles are on your land you are encouraged to contact the Arkansas Department of Agriculture - Forestry Division [AR Dept of Agriculture - Forestry Division](#).



2025 QUALIFYING RACE

LAKE SYLVIA RECREATION AREA



Mount Magazine Trail Run



Nick Dvorscak - 2:32:59

Tommy Brennan - 2:41:24.

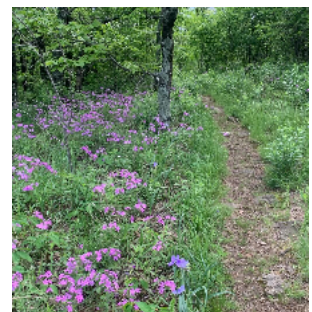
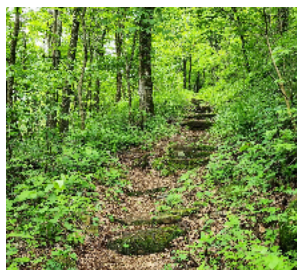
Laura Arnold -3:15:06

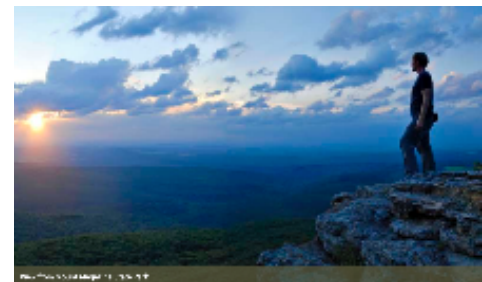
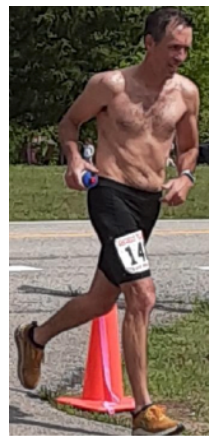
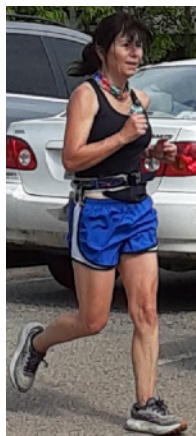
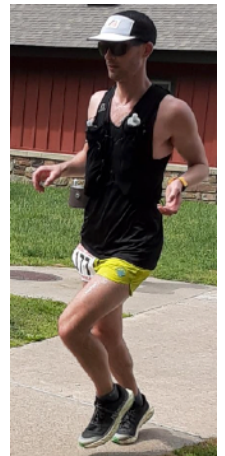
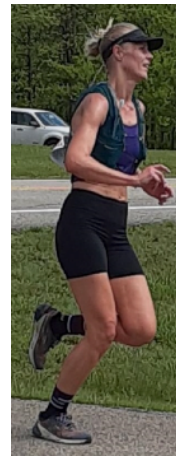
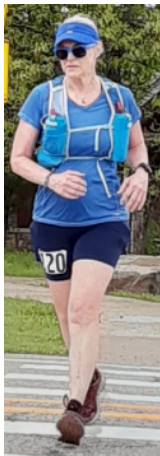
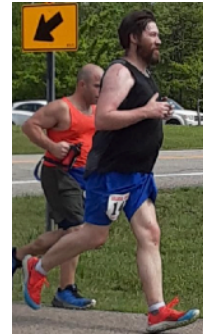
Chantel Pennicott - 2:37:17

Male Master

Female Master

Overall Winners - Pictured with each winner is Race Director Paul Turner of Conway





Miss the race? Go check out [Mt Magazine State Park](#) this summer. It is a gorgeous park with lots to do.

Runners got a kick out of getting to wear Arkansas Traveller 100 bibs!

*We don't let much go to waste. Glad we could entertain you with our efforts to be green.

CATSMACKER



KITTY WINNERS -
Kenneth Broyles 1:30:00
Shelli Chupik 1:46:28

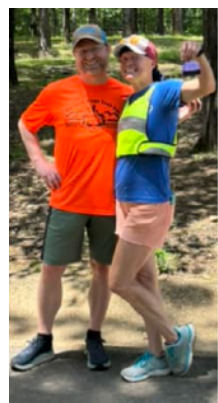
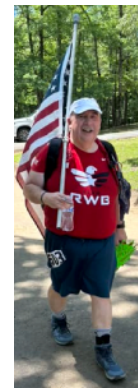
RD Katie Helms pictured with each of the winners

CAT WINNERS -
Chris Roberts 2:28:06
Laura Arnold 3:01:24

Rebecca Blaylock's sweet daughters were our youngest volunteers, who help at a few AURA events.

Thanks to all who volunteered!

Thanks to all who stayed for the awards!





The Extra Mile- by Stacey Shaver

This is a space dedicated for community updates. If you have news to share about your life, whether it is a new birth, marriage, a move, a big accomplishment, or an illness or injury, this is the place for that. Our club is a little bigger than just state wide and as our community grows, I try to find ways to keep us better connected. So, send us an email with updates, stories, etc. and let us congratulate you, cheer you on, or send you encouragement.



Please welcome our newest club member- Riley Colin McDonald. He was born May 7th after an early delivery and some complications. Thankfully he is now home and doing well. His parents, Julia and Caleb McDonald are both club members from El Dorado and are always good to step up to volunteer when they aren't running. In fact, a very pregnant Julia spent all day helping with the Ouachita Trail 50 just weeks before delivering this sweet little nugget. Please send them your congratulations!!



Club member, Ken Myers just underwent aortic heart valve replacement surgery on May 9th. He made it through like the champ he is. He is home and doing well with his recovery. Like Julia, Ken also volunteered all day as a drop shuttle driver for the OT50 just weeks before his scheduled surgery. He has a long road of recovery ahead but he is optimistic and we can't for him to be on the other side of this and back on the trails with us!



Long time club member, Cliff Ferren of North Little Rock, was diagnosed with prostate cancer. After having his prostate removed the cancer is still there so he will need to go through radiation treatments this summer as well as continue his cancer meds. He was finally feeling spunky enough to join us for a run at the Catsmacker and he has helped at numerous races this past UTS season, in spite of not feeling the greatest. He plans to make it to as many club races as he can this year. Be sure to give him a hug or a high five the next time you see him.



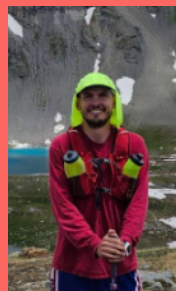
The Arkansas Traveller 100 is a Western States Qualifier and we always love getting to cheer on club members for this historic event. This year we have three Arkansans and one of our club members from Texas who made it through the lottery system and will be running WSER on June 29th. We wish you all the best of luck. May your journey be smooth!



Ashley Gramza, of Little Rock, got to jump start her WSER journey. She spent Memorial Day weekend running 80 miles over three days at the Western States Preview training runs. She had a great time running on the course and meeting new people.



Alex Staten of Fayetteville.



Erich Washausen of Fayetteville



Greg Sisengrath of Allen, TX

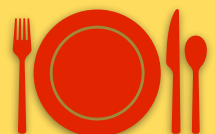
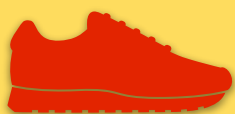
RETREADS MONTHLY MEEETING

Hello All, the first Wednesday of every month is RETREADS Day. What is a RETREAD? Could be a retired runner. Maybe not. Could be a runner who wants to eat out in the company of other runners. All are welcome.

We are currently meeting at Homer's Restaurant, 9700 West Rodney Paraham Road. We have the private room reserved for 11:30 a.m. If you plan on coming, it is important that you contact me the day before as our

location is subject to change. At some time soon Homer's is scheduled to move to the old Franke location also on Rodney Parham. Or, we could decide to spend the summer at 2 Rivers Park. Right now as I write this, Homers is the location. So email me at CHRLYPYTN@GMAIL.COM if you've not been to RETREADS before and not on my notification list.

Thanks, Charley and Lou Peyton



AURA BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 2024-2025



President, Stacey Shaver-Matson
(also Race director for AT100, OT50 & ABF)



Vice President, Laura Babbitt
(also Race Director for Sunset Lake Endurance Run)



Treasurer, Katie Helms
(also Race Director for Catsmacker)



Secretary, Vickie McDonald



Trail Manager, Robert (Podog) Vogler



Website, IT, Equipment Manager, Stan Ferguson



RRCA Arkansas State Rep, Jerry White



Website, IT, Trail Maintenance, George Peterka