

# SOUTHWEST

# Strides

FALL 2021



*Letter from the president*



## Random Thoughts...

**WELL, what a year it has been!** I find it simply amazing we are now in December and trying hard to focus on the last 12 months but it's all coming up as a total blur! Is it just me or do you wish you could run as fast as time has gone in 2021?

Ok, now that I am showing my age by talking about how time has flown and my vision being blurry, please allow me to continue by mentioning a few milestones your club has accomplished in the last twelve months! First and foremost, the city of Naples trusted us by granting permits for every GCR race we held in the city in 2021. This is huge because while much of the country was still under strict COVID guidelines we were able to provide city leaders with a COVID Safety Protocol Checklist that kept our race participants as safe as possible while at our staging area and on our race courses. Runners and walkers alike appreciated this as everyone wanted and needed to be outside as this was a way to ensure proper procedures were followed by our Board of Directors and volunteers. We thank you, our members and friends for continuously supporting our events as we continue to support local charities including our own, Gulf Coast Runners, a 501C3 non-profit.

Another significant and amazing accomplishment this year was being able to provide scholarships to graduating high school seniors. It is never a foregone conclusion that we will always have enough funds in our Youth Development Fund in order to award much needed scholarships to deserving student athletes. This last year was one in question as we did not have an abundant source of funds due to lower race participation and donations. Yet, thankfully several donors stepped up and wrote large checks along with hundreds of smaller donations from race participants we were able to provide \$50,500.00 to 27 Collier County high school seniors! This proves where there is a will there is a way!

Miraculously, 4,300 runners and walkers toed our 2021 Thanksgiving Day 5K Race! The significance of this is the fact that our homeless shelter, St. Matthews House is the beneficiary of the race proceeds. It was a beautiful morning and we give thanks to you our members and all participants and donors!

While I could go on about all the good things GCR has done this year I would like to mention a new event we put on called 'GCR Legends and Tales.' This was a great idea by our member Susan Falkenstein who participated in a similar event up north. This 'members only' party gave people an opportunity to share not only their favorite or most poignant running stories but also allowed some of our long-standing members of this 45-year-old running club a chance to share early memories of GCR events and members who have passed or moved on. Other than a few long winded, yarn spinning stories it turned out to be a great, catered evening at the Monterey clubhouse! (Thank you Bob and Lisa Carney)

This leads me to remembering two very important club members who left us this past year. We lost Rosemarie Silverman and Mark McGarity. 'RoJo' was and still is the woman behind the God father of Naples running, Perry Silverman. She supported Perry and GCR with great enthusiasm for the last 40 years and we miss her beautiful smile at every race and potluck dinner!

Coach McGarity played a major role in shaping thousands of students lives not only in the sport of running but also in life. He touched so many young lives that void will never be filled. Godspeed Rosemarie and Mark.

Lastly, for the first time in GCR history we have over 1,200 club members! For a relatively small community we have one of the largest running clubs in the country! I wish to thank you for being a member of Gulf Coast Runners and I look forward to seeing you on the road and trail in 2022!

*Mitch*

# 2021 HAS BEEN QUITE A YEAR FOR SNIP COLLIER

We opened up our first low-cost clinic in Collier County, on Davis Blvd in Naples. To date this year we have spayed/neutered 1,182 dogs and cats, up from 754 in 2020 when we did not have our own clinic. We have also fixed 270 cats under our SNIP Families for Ferals TNR Program and spayed/neutered 223 dogs with our bus transportation program. The SNIP Clinic has enabled us to make an even bigger impact that we could have imagined. The clinic has been so successful that we are currently working on a capital campaign to raise money for a second SNIP Collier Low-Cost Clinic in Immokalee, FL, where the need is greatest. We are already working on the site development plan for this larger campus, which will also include a surgical center and educational program. As SNIP has grown, our mission is still to control overpopulation, so that otherwise healthy animals are not euthanized. However, we have been so successful since Tom began his spay & neuter initiative in 2015, that we are now expanding our mission. The SNIP Collier mission is to end the suffering and euthanasia of cats and dogs in Collier County, FL through spay and neuter, and affordable medical and preventative care.

In addition to the work we do in the clinic, we are still out in the field every day helping animals in need. This includes 155 animals that were transported as strays to Collier Domestic Animal Services, pregnant moms, or moms and puppies, and bringing them into a foster program with our partner Gulf Coast Humane Society in Fort Myers, fighting for proper enforcement on cruelty, neglect and breeding, and educating the community about how to properly care for their pets. In addition, we had multiple special rescues this year of animals who were in very bad condition. We took each one in under our Helping Paws Medical Fund, got them all of the medical care and TLC they needed, and eventually played matchmaker and found forever homes for each one of them. Just recently we helped two very special animals. Iris is a sweet little kitten who was found as a stray in pretty bad shape, including a badly infected eye. We rescued her and one of our incredible volunteers, Tricia, fostered her. Iris required months of care before she was well enough to have her eye removed. Iris is now a foster fail and is healthy, happy and home with Tricia and her family. We got a call in October about a dog hit by a car. Through our network of volunteers, we got her to our clinic as quickly as we could to stabilize her. It was determined that she had multiple pelvic fractures and a hip out of socket. With the help of the SNIP Collier Helping Paws Medical Fund, Penelope had hip surgery and is recovering in foster care with Tom and doing amazing. She even has a meet and greet coming up for a forever home.

SNIP is doing big things and we couldn't be making the difference that we do without the help of our supporters, just like Gulf Coast Runners. GCR has been an incredible partner since our inception in 2015 and just hosted our 6th Annual SNIP Collier Memorial Day 5K. We thank you for your unwavering support as we fight to end the suffering and overpopulation of dogs and cats in Collier County.





# Thank You



Thank you for your support. Because of generous and caring people like you, we are able to provide much needed services to the dogs in Collier County that need our help the most.

SNIP Collier is a 501c3 not for profit organization dedicated to providing spay and neuter services to the most impoverished communities in Collier County, and also educating people on responsible pet ownership. Our goal is to end dog overpopulation in Collier County. We are funded fully by private donations and it's because of your support that we are able to make a difference.

Guys,  
Thank you for everything that you do to support us!

Tom Welser  
Treasurer

Sean and the GCR Team,

Thank you for this amazing opportunity and scholarship! Gulf Coast Runners will forever hold a special place in my heart through my education and beyond! Can't wait to see what the next few years will bring!

With much appreciation,  
Margaret [Signature]

Mitch:

We can't thank you, the board, and all the members of Gulf Coast Runners enough! Of the twenty three entrants from the Justin's Place program, we had multiple first time 5K participants. One in particular made his mom cry when he told her he had completed the race. He's also lost 45 pounds through a new, sober life, balanced with running! Thank you so much. We will continue to see you at the finish line. *Mat*

Gulf Coast Runners Scholarship Committee,

I am so grateful for the support of this loving community in my growing years. Thank you so much for not only the generous scholarship but also for many years of unbelievable local events. GCR exposed me at a young age to the amazing running community and I

quickly caught the bug. I intend to focus on pole vault at USNA, but I will never forget the wonderful experience of distance running and will begin longer races again after college. Thank you again for being a terrific part of my childhood. Wherever I end up, I hope to be involved in a similar community.  
-Michele Evans

Mitch:

You have been an inspiration with your support. Thank you for helping us adapt quickly and serve so many people in their time of crisis.

You are our community hero!

Thank you and Gulf Coast Runners for your continued support of St. Matthew's House and healthy living! All the best.  
*Matt*

Your friends at St. Matthew's House

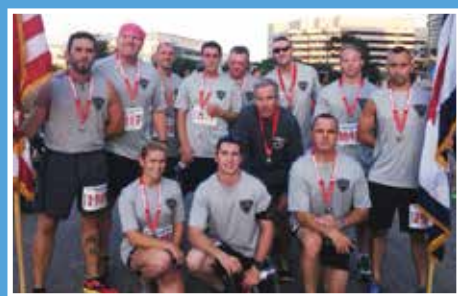
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# GULF COAST RUNNERS NEWS

Since our last board meeting, Gulf Coast Runners have been extremely busy connecting with the community. We are assisting elementary running programs, brainstorming and updating our website, introducing our Runner Of The Week program, supporting a local running coach's sneaker drive for Venezuela, and preparing our youth team for the FLYRA State Meet in Lakeland on October 30th.



As mentioned in the board meeting, phase 3 of our educational coaching series focuses on assisting elementary schools implementing a running program. Two elementary coaches have reached out to GCR requesting assistance. Everglades City's running coaches, Melissa and Jill, sent a wishlist and requested funds for items such as pedometers, water bottles, t-shirts, and trophies/award medals. Melissa was excited to receive a \$200 check from GCR, as well as, 40 Tropicool water bottles, 50 elementary sized Summer Run For Fun t-shirts, and 50 refurbished 2021 July 4th medals. Naples Classical Academy also received a \$200 check to focus on their elementary running program.



GCR's tech guy, Brian, is working with Chris Millamena to update the club's website. The goal is to get the updated website running before the end of the year. Chris has requested the assistances from board members on their area of leadership. If you get a chance, swing by Naples On The Run to meet Chris and check out the website in progress.

Contact: [chris.millamena@gmail.com](mailto:chris.millamena@gmail.com) or 646-895-0263.

Please submit the below requested information to Chris via email.

**President bio and head shot:** Mitch

**Vice Pres. bio and head shot:** Jake

**Treasure bio and head shot:** Sean

**Youth Development tab (Youth Vision Statement):** Tammy and Justin (Chris has bios and head shots)

**Volunteer tab bio and head shot & information:** Dawna

**GCR written history and old photos:** Tom

**GCR Scholarship tab:** Mitch & Tammy



The country of Venezuela is going through difficult times and sneakers are hard to come by. As a result a local physical education teacher went to social media asking our community to donate new or slightly used sneakers. Her goal was to collect 50 pairs of sneakers. GCR and Naples On The Run donated 15 pair of slightly used sneakers to the cause.



We have rolled out our new GCR Runner Of The Week program (ROTW). Each week the youth coaches collaborate and select two middle (each gender) and one high school runner of the week. We announce the winners on Mondays' via social media. Each winner will receive a GCR t-shirts. Studio A. D. Architect firm has graciously offered to be our sponsor. Please check out and follow the GCR Youth social media pages on Facebook and Instagram.



The GCR Youth Team is wrapping up the XC season at the end of this month. We have several athletes representing GCR at the state meet. The team is composed of 8 different middle and elementary schools in Collier County. Our student volunteers, Brad Malick-Beltran, Tara Watkins, Amelia Jones, and Jack and Owen Marshall have done an amazing job assisting the youth team. There is no doubt these GCR Ambassadors will be our future scholarship winners.

## **THE BODY ONLY ADAPTS IF THE MIND ALSO ADAPTS**

Think of a long run, and all the benefits we hear about from an aerobic and metabolic perspective. Where a long run is essentially like plugging those benefits into a robot with no control computer (brain). Assuming that there is a direct 1 to 1 relationship. A 15mile run for example equalling the exact same response no matter what. When in reality this couldn't be further from the truth.

Of course peripheral changes at the muscle, increased vo<sub>2</sub>, better fuel economy, etc etc are helpful, but if the driver (brain) of the car (our body) can not replicate this, have we made the improvements we think we have? If we have trained our brains to always be thinking in the future towards an end result are we limiting our ability to be present in the moment and ensure we make the gains we want? The answer is yes, but how do we go about making this connection happen? We do this through increased focus, being present in our training and racing. Spending less time checking out mentally and just “checking the box” so to speak in training.

Focus is difficult and is a skill for those who are able to focus well for long periods, but it is absolutely trainable. For example this makes me think of F.A.S.T. running, which stands for focus alignment stability and timing. Picture a field full of Kenyan elites jogging around at 10-12min miles for an hour or more with intense focus while not talking. These same runners will do much faster training runs and intervals of course, but they see the value in eliminating distractions and increased focus on their movement. Even with fewer external distractions it is difficult to quiet the distractions in your own mind, but with practice this skill improves greatly. Think of this like lifting weights for your brain, every rep counts. Another example that hits home for many runners is focusing on the end result, finishing, finish time, a new PR, or qualification of some kind. This focus on the future is training your brain to do just that, focus on the future. In the event when the most important thing would be being in the moment we lack the ability to find that focus and may think of things like what will happen after the event or the people around us rather than the best way to manage your current situation skillfully. I am guilty of this and often find my mind wandering during races. Not sure how it started, but for some reason I sing the Fatboy Slim song line “Right here, right now” on repeat and it brings me back to the present. After a minute of the annoying repetition I can usually forget about previous thoughts and get back the task at hand. Whatever works for you is great, but start practicing now and you will be pleasantly surprised at how much you can improve your focus and ultimately your racing.

Skill acquisition, motor skill learning, or better sports specific movement have been shown to be directly connected to and improved with sleep. Specifically on the same day as the training occurred. Getting a good night sleep after a key training session where you were present and focused will absolutely make you a better athlete faster. Using external cues works better than internal cues in most cases when we are trying to move better, more efficiently. An example of this is thinking of punching a hole in a sheetrock walk behind you with your elbows as you run, rather than an internal cue like moving your elbow to a certain place. Another way of thinking about this is cueing and outcome rather than the movement itself. We all know the saying that running is 90% mental and 10% physical. Now we know there are simple and effective ways to work on the mental piece that we can do in almost every training session, and make those things stick. It all starts with what we choose to focus on, and what we choose to focus on becomes our reality.

Happy Training!



**Aubrey Aldy**  
*Gulf Coast Runners Run Coach*  
*USATF Level 1 Coach*

**The speech you never heard** on Thursday night at the GCR event Legends and Tales. 29 years ago, I moved to Naples with my wife & 2 children. I didn't have a job and I didn't know anybody. I did have a house & I was a runner.

George Dondenville was the first person I met upon moving here. Ron Avola was the second. "On the Run" was my first running shoe store experience. It was my go-to spot to order my Nike shoes, size 14/15. George is the one that named me "Big Dave"... It must've been because of the shoes. My uniform was no shirt, beach shorts, Smith sunglasses... running shorts were just too short for me.

I started helping Bill Marshall set-up & tear down most races.. some I also ran. I was working with George setting up the finish line cones and coolers for water. Can you believe twenty years ago our water source came from hose bibs attached to buildings?!

I was a fast runner... 29:31 for a 5 miler and 21:20 on a Firecracker 5k. Fran Fidler, Mark McGarity, Gary Batcher, Ted Zelman, Coach Kramer (Estero) were my competitors each race. Mark McGarity was the man I never could beat.

I am especially proud how the club has supported the Adopt a Road program. I encourage someone who hasn't had the experience of walking down Golden Gate Parkway when the sun is rising in the

East, on a quiet Saturday morning, zeroing on a piece of trash, and removing in from the green grass... there is no better feeling. Coffee & bagels to follow.

I am especially proud of our commitment to the Drug Court Program. They help US and we help THEM. I encourage you to reach out to a participant at the next race. They will be wearing a blue shirt that says "Drug Court Works". Also let Judge Janice Martin know that she is loved by GCR, Naples, and her participants.

I want to close this on my respect for Mitch. He holds the bar high. We (Board Members) are all trying to keep it there. GCR is my life for 29 years.

Peace & Love,  
Big Dave



# What's new with Coach Moo....An introduction to Elevate Elite - High School Groups

HS group training - This summer I assembled a group of some of the better returning high school cross country runners in the area. I did so through my coaching and training group Elevate Training, as I do not coach any one particular high school. I focused on the elite boys in SWFL, and specifically those that were the #1 runner on their team by some margin. (I'll explain why this need is far less among girls in paragraph #5 below).

Our group met one or two days a week prior to mandatory HS practices, with the remainder of their training presumably happening with their voluntary HS off-season training. Our main focus was implementing "running specific strength training" and proper off-season workouts, at paces that would provide maximum adaptations. Gone are the days of doing "easy, slow mileage" day after day, replaced by science that shows various intensities need to be satisfied within their training plan at all times of the year. (Examples would include hill sprints, strides, comfortable tempo running, time trials to dial in their pacing, strength training, and soft surface running, etc.).

My vision was to implement the style of sharing the workload by running in groups of like abilities. Just like NAZ elite, Tinman Elite, Brooks Hanson, etc. the Elevate Elite athletes were sometimes charged with the duties of pacing, while at others learned to "settle into getting comfortable being uncomfortable" and locking into another's cadence. A main principle kept reemerging.... "a shared mindset, while sharing the workload."

Every coach and parent loves the kid on a high school team who "does it to stay in shape for \_\_\_\_\_", me included! However, being amongst others who live, eat, breathe, and recover the same way as you is another level of motivating. It stimulates the athlete who desires deeper knowledge, analysis and a breakdown of the day's workout and data. The science behind the training is often of high interest to this level of runner. We are beginning to understand the "whys and hows" to apply throughout the entirety of their running lives. Some would like to take running to the next level by competing in college, others see themselves not competing beyond the FHSAA years but taking part in competitive local events (5k's, half marathons, etc.)



I quickly want to return to the point I made above. Why is the focus on the high school boys? Well, because the best high school girls ALMOST ALWAYS have a strong pack of runners at their disposal.... The boys team! This allows my female runners a plethora of people to key off throughout their daily training regimen. In fact, in the late 90's my high school in Ohio had a girls HS state XC champion (Briana Shook, later the American record holder in the 3000m steeplechase). She trained among our boys pack frequently, and she routinely realized the benefits of this group training. This has been happening for ages, and I believe is happening all around our country. This is what I believe is missing among high school boys, and one of a few reasons for my implementation of this new group.



I strongly advocate that the "best of the best" consider this as an option as they advance their careers and key in on running as their main pursuit. Racing against your Garmin watch in practice can only take one so far. If someone across town (no matter what school) is able to help you lift your performance while simultaneously lifting theirs, it is a win win! The days of "grinding in isolation" are unnecessary and becoming outdated. It is my hope that by creating a group that works together, I can have a small part in making individual runners who return to their teams primed to perform.



New trends can often face criticism or have doubters, but I believe I am on the right side of the issue. Working together to make a stronger product, then having it play out on race day..... that's the exact kind of thing the East Africans have been doing for decades. It does not detract from the athlete, but rather adds the fitness, passion, and vigor to power themselves and their team to do great things. I plan to assemble a track group once the cross country season ends. If you know a high school athlete who may qualify or have questions regarding the group, please reach out.

Not runners, but athletes who run!  
Coach Justin Moomaw  
Email: [elevatetraining@yahoo.com](mailto:elevatetraining@yahoo.com)  
USA Track & Field certified - level 1  
Elevate Training - Head Coach  
Gulf Coast Runners - Board of Directors





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# /////// GCR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

It's been a busy summer for the GCR Youth program. The club offered multiple running opportunities for all levels of runners. **The Summer Run For Fun** provided free track & field sessions every Monday, GCR/Elevate held two running camps, and the GCR Summer Miles club met twice a week. Not only were the coaches on the track or trails, but we also collaborated and organized the inaugural GCR Middle School State Qualifier XC Meet, created the framework for phase 2 of GCR Coaches Summit, and planned the fall XC youth season.

**The Summer Run for Fun** Program at Naples High was a huge success. Runners from 3 - 13 years old competed in a variety of track and field events. The crowd-pleaser 50-yard dash, with the youngest of the squad, captured the hearts of everyone present. Watching the runners' determination through facial expressions and tiny leg turnover was a joyous sight. The long jump was another popular event. Sean Nolan's shouts of encouragement echoing down the runway boosted the efforts of the incoming jumpers. The most popular of all the track events was, as always, the 100M dash. The excitement could be felt at the staging area as the coaches organized heats by age group. Approaching the starting line, runners looked to their left and right, sizing up their fellow runners. Often their laser focus on the competition resulted in some failing to hear directions such as, "Stay in your lanes for the duration of the race." The event starter, Mitch Norgart, announced the three-command start "Runners take your marks. Set. Go!" The kids shot-off beelining towards the finish. Some took the straight-line approach and others zig-zagged down the track. As the runners passed the finish line, they heard Jake Hester praising in his southern draw, "Great Job"

making each finisher strut a little taller. Most rewarding of all was the positive atmosphere this event created. Parents clapped and encouraged not only their kids but everyone else's as well. The older competitors found themselves on the track rallying the younger runners with phrases, "You can do it!", "Pace yourself" and "You're almost there." They were also rewarding success with high fives and fist bumps. At the end of the night, kids departed the track soaked in sweat, tired, and feeling good.

This event couldn't have happened without the volunteers. Thank you to all board members and student volunteers who came out to help! Special thanks to Mary lamurri for taking pictures and posting them on social media, and Todd Borden for covering the final practice.

**GCR's Summer Miles** session for middle schoolers with Coach Howard took place at various locations throughout our community. These summer sessions helped the runners transition from elementary to middle school cross country. Sometimes it's difficult convincing the younger runner who sees themselves as a shorter distances competitor that they will be successful at longer distances. However, with each practice, the runners gained confidence and slowly changed their mindset. Coach Howard carefully crafted a workout plan for these runners, gradually increasing their mileage, teaching them tempo and speed workouts, and introducing bodyweight strength training. By the end of the summer, the athletes no longer doubted their ability to run longer races. All participants confidently tried out and made their school's cross country team. Some even advancing to the varsity lineup as sixth graders.



# SPRINTING AHEAD

by GCR Board Member and Youth Programs Director & Coach Tammy Loux

The popular **Elevate/GCR summer running camps** quickly reached maximum capacity selling out both sessions. Coach Justin Moomaw set out to empower the squad to learn the importance and implementation of a summer workout cycle. His crew was seen running at a variety of locations throughout the city of Naples. Each location provided a significant lesson for the runners whether it be the surface, elevation, or type of workout. Coach Moomaw challenged his runners physically and mentally with the goal to boost confidence and ignite the passion of each participant for the Fall XC season. After improving their fitness and increasing their running I.Q., it will be exciting to see the fruits of this training unfold in the Fall XC season.

The work for the GCR youth development didn't stop with the running camps for children. One of our summer planning focuses was to provide resources for our local middle school running coaches including public, private, and charter school programs. We rolled out the framework for Phase 2 of our **GCR Distance Running Coaches Summit** to be held on September 9th at Naples On The Run. This educational series is designed to assist all coaches and running programs with resources and best practices from our USATF and RRCA Certified Level 1 coaches.

Another focus of the youth development program was planning the **1st Annual GCR Middle School State Qualifier Meet**. Coach Don Howard agreed to take the role of race director in this new endeavor. Our first goal was to find a venue meeting our vision of providing a realistic cross-country terrain. We found the perfect location at the old Golden Gate Golf Course, now a community park. Collier County Parks and Recreation didn't hesitate to grant us access to host our meet. We continue our organizational efforts and look forward to seeing our vision of a Collier County State Qualifier realized on Saturday, September 25th at 8:00 AM at the Golden Gate Golf Course County Park.

As you can see, we have been busy ensuring running opportunities for youth runners of all ages. These programs wouldn't be possible without the support of our community, the GCR Board of Directors, and most importantly, all who have paid entry fees to take part in any GCR race. The proceeds from most of our races go directly into the youth development fund, which provides the financial backing to deliver these quality programs for our youth.



# Shalane Flanagan ☆ The Role Model



The running community was elated this year when Shalane Flanagan decided to return to running marathons. And run marathons she did. Due to covid, the world's six major marathons aligned in a six-week succession. Shalane set a goal to do what no marathoner had ever done, run all six majors in six weeks! (Berlin, London, Chicago, Boston, Tokyo, and New York). As if this wasn't impressive enough, Shalane ran Chicago on Sunday and posted an even faster time the next day at Boston. Her last marathon of the six was NYC, where she ran the fastest of all, finishing 2:33:36. Wow! Shalane is the poster girl for emotional resilience. It's not surprising that she is one of the most decorated athletes in the sport of running. Her most notable accomplishments include Olympic medalist, World Champion, 2017 New York City Marathon winner, and now, six major marathons in six weeks.

Shalane's contribution to the sport is far-reaching. After winning the 2017 NYC Marathon, little girls dressed up in her iconic pose at the finish, holding an American flag. Gulf Coast Runners has our own Shalane, the daughter of Cassie Barone. When asked why she named her daughter after Shalane, Cassie replied, "Shalane Flanagan has always been outspoken about women's health and values team over self." But Shalane is so much more than a runner. She is paving the way for young girls and women across the globe. Her cookbooks, co-authored by Elyse Kopecky, encourage athletes to take a hands-on approach to nutrition by eating healthy foods, thereby, most importantly, improving performance. These books provide a safe, non-threatening avenue to open dialogue with young athletes, mostly young girls, about eating for athletic gains.

After retiring from professional competition, Shalane became an elite running coach for Nike, in a field with few women coaches. Shalane, the entrepreneur, has turned her passion for running into her brand. As an ambassador to the sport, her brand is fueling athletes, paving the way for women in coaching, and inspiring athletes of all ages.



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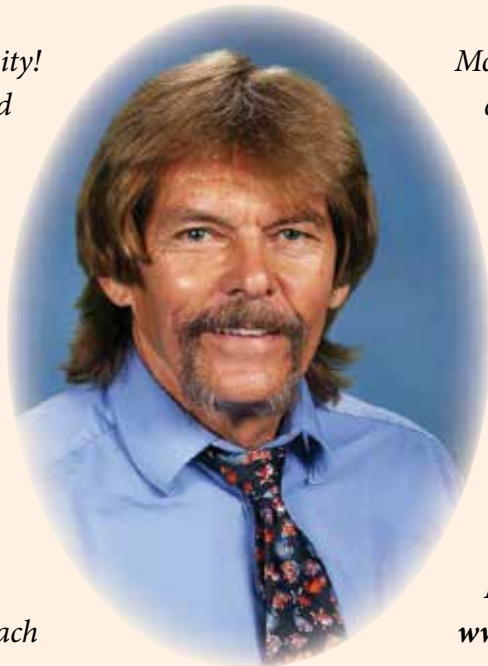
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 **Remembering Coach Mark McGarity** 

*We lost a pillar of the running community! Coach, teacher, mentor, husband, friend and GCR Board member Mark McGarity passed away last summer yet he left behind a wonderful legacy of dedication to the youth of Collier County!*

*Mark dedicated his entire adult life to mentoring kids in being the best they could be! His enthusiasm and love for people was palpable and the positive effect he had on everyone is amazing!*

*A perfect example of this is the Coach*



*McGarity Marco Hill Run which Mark helped create 43 years ago! The proceeds of this race now benefit the youth of Lely High School through the Coach McGarity Scholarship Fund!!*

*Mark leaves behind his wonderful wife and companion, Lisa who continues to support his lifelong endeavors, wholeheartedly!*

*You may contribute to the Coach McGarity Scholarship Fund by going to [www.mcgarityfoundation.org](http://www.mcgarityfoundation.org)*

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## Events to Celebrate, Inform, and Fund the Paradise Coast Trail

*By Michelle Avola-Brown, Naples Pathways Coalition*

Naples Pathways Coalition has several events coming up to help further our mission to create a safe, walkable, and bikeable community and build the Paradise Coast Trail.

NPC and our consultant team at Kimley-Horn will be hosting a public meeting on January 26, 2022, to share information and potential alignments of the Paradise Coast Trail and receive feedback from the community. The meeting will be held at River Park Community Center. Please stop by between 4 and 7 pm. If you can't make it, we will also have a virtual option to view the presentation materials and provide input online. We are just past the halfway point in the feasibility study, and it's getting very exciting!

If you haven't yet heard, the Paradise Coast Trail will connect Naples, Ave Maria, Bonita Springs, and other areas within and beyond Collier County with a safe, 70 mile, 12-foot-wide multi-use pathway, that will be separated from the road. It will expand transportation options, improve health and wellness, reduce our carbon footprint, and provide an inviting destination to experience the Paradise Coast's unique beauty on foot or bike.

On February 5, 2022, we will be hosting the first Paradise Coast Trail Community Celebration at Baker Park from 1 to 4 pm. This will be a free event for the public with lots of fun for children and adults. Some planned activities include a bike rodeo, children's 1K fun run, bounce house, splash pad, park, and games. Kids can bring their decorated bikes and win a prize in our bike decorating contest and parade. For adults, there will be several tasty food choices, cornhole, a pet parade, giveaways, and more!

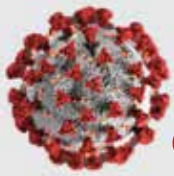
The vendor expo will provide an excellent opportunity for non-profits and businesses to showcase the services and products they provide to the community, offer fun activities for children and adults, and give away treats and treasures to make the day even more memorable.

There are numerous sponsorship opportunities for non-profit and corporate partners to engage with the public and highlight your brand while supporting the Paradise Coast Trail. To get involved or learn more, please email [Michelle@NaplesPathways.org](mailto:Michelle@NaplesPathways.org).

Our third event for the season is the 16th Annual Naples Bike Brunch at Lowdermilk Park on March 13, 2022. Bring your family and friends to enjoy the Gulf breeze and a light breakfast before starting on a 62, 40, 20, 10, or 5-mile ride. Local bike shops will be on-hand to help anyone with a flat, and well-stocked rest stops will keep every rider fueled and hydrated. Lunch will be catered at the finish, and participants can relax in the beer garden, win raffle prizes, and soak up the beauty of the beach during the after party. Register here: <https://bit.ly/BIKEBRUNCH22>

Naples Pathways Coalition is a 501C3 non-profit advocacy group dedicated to improving the safety of pedestrians and cyclists and works to protect and provide equal access for vulnerable road users. We hope you mark your calendar and join us for all three of these fun upcoming events! For more information about these events, to volunteer, or learn about sponsorship opportunities, please email [Michelle@NaplesPathways.org](mailto:Michelle@NaplesPathways.org) or call 239.777.7718.





# COVID19.....AND ME

*Update*

by Dawna Holowell

Greetings GCR members! I wanted to give you an update on my health since the last newsletter. I am a COVID Long-hauler. I was diagnosed by my cardiologist with pericarditis (fluid around my heart) and atrial fibrillation. I was facing heart issues along with brain fog and fatigue. Since this virus is new and it affects people differently, it was very hard to come up with a game plan with my PCP and Cardiologist. My PCP and I researched as well as reached out to online support groups trying to figure out how to cope and address the symptoms. I was scared if I would ever run again and more importantly would my health ever return. Depression and anxiety reared its ugly head during this time.

Hopefully my last cardiology appointment is in November to see how everything is progressing. So far, my cardiologist is happy with the progress. My PCP and I have changed my supplements and my diet has changed. I see my PCP monthly and we are doing blood work every 6 months to track any changes. My body has definitely embraced the change in my diet and the addition of supplements. I am now on an antihistamine diet. The brain fog is gone. I am finally firing on all brain cylinders. The fatigue is still there but is getting better. The biggest concern my PCP and I is my weakened immune system as I have been antibiotics 3 times since July. I try to listen to my body and rest when I feel run down. If that means missing a dinner with friends or a friends wedding, I am putting my health first. As really good friends told me when I had to cancel on attending their wedding, "Health is most important. If this decision is looked back on as a vital step in your overall recovery then its worth not being at the wedding."

I started doing job/walk intervals 3 days a week. At first I was so disheartened as my jog was pitiful and how long it took me to recover from a 30 minute workout but Coach Aubrey Aldy kept telling me to not stop that I needed to keep moving and to not look at the time splits. I have good days and I have bad days; however, the bad days are getting less and less. I am learning to listen to my body and giving myself grace. If I need to take a rest after a workout, I will take it. I am not being lazy or out of shape, I am recovering from a disease my body fought and won.

I am not sure if I ever will be back to normal again but my outlook my health and running is different. I use to take my health and running for granted. They both are not. My health is in my hands and I have to protect it. I have to make decisions which some people may disagree with nonetheless I have to be an advocate for me. I also have the privilege to run at any pace my health allows me to do so. I hope one day I will get back to where I was at prior to COVID but for now I will embrace my interval training runs. I want to thank all my friends and my ADE and GCR family for support during the past months as I have dealt with this. Your encouragement and support have mean so much to me.

I am a propionate for sharing my story with people as I do not want people to suffer in silence (if you have COVID or have ongoing symptoms you are not alone) and to help educate people on this. A person is not out of shape or unhealthy to suffer these symptoms. The fatigue is still something I have never encountered before. All I know is that I will keep moving, being my own advocate for health, make plans for running events, and continue being the GCR Volunteer Coordinator!

## *Remembering Rosemarie Silverman*

*One of the best examples of there being a great woman behind a great man would be Rosemarie Silverman ..... yet never behind Perry, but shoulder to shoulder she stood with him by his side supporting him for over 55 years! Sadly, we lost 'RoJo' a few months ago at the beautiful, kind, wise age of 89, but she leaves behind a wonderful legacy of giving of herself to this community and her husband!*

*You see, Perry has been the 'godfather' of running in Naples for over 40 years. He race directed the NDN Half Marathon for three decades and self-admittedly could not have accomplished what he did without Rosemarie by his side. With Rosemarie's help, Perry turned not only the Naples Half Marathon into one the finest in the country but also took Gulf Coast Runner's to a new chapter of staging world class racing events but also kept GCR a 'hometown' club with Bagel Runs, Potluck dinners and many opportunities for runners to make friends in this small, beachfront community called Naples!*



*Rosemarie pitched in wherever and whenever she was needed. On race day, she collected 3x5 index cards from finishers at the finish line and organized them so Perry could announce the overall and age group winners. For years, at the Half Marathon pasta party she checked in registered runners and collected \$10 from those who were not! Don't even think about cutting the line! She will catch you and make you pay tenfold!*

*Rosemarie Silverman is a powerful, nurturing woman with a kind heart, quick wit and nose for BS! I know this because she saw me coming from a mile away and while she was 'on to me' (in a good way) she always treated me fairly, sternly but with the smile and heart of a beautiful, Sicilian woman who loved life, her family and most of all, Perry!*

*I suppose she was the Godmother of Naples running!*

*Godspeed RoJo !*



## GULF COAST YOUTH TEAM: Track and Field Season

By: Tammy Loux, GCR Youth Coach & Board Member

As we close the chapter on other great GCR youth track and field season, we have much to celebrate. Even though there was not a track available for a lease due to Covid-19, GCR decided to continue the youth track program at Fleischmann Park. The coaches were up to the task and felt confident they could meet the demands of a track

team without a physical track.

In February our elementary track program launched, meeting on Monday and Wednesday's at Fleischmann Park. As parents started to feel confident about being together outdoors, our program started to grow, and increased in size further when the middle school phase started in April. Over the past 4 months, our runners and throwers competed in 6 meets across the state from Ft. Myers to Miami; celebrating PR's, winning medals, and gaining valuable experience as they prepared for the FLYRA State Meet at Bradenton's prestigious IMG Academy. The elementary season standouts included Khloe Wilder, Miah Beckman, and Lila McGown (Elevate).

Sixteen runners and nine throwers achieved state qualifying standards and were a part of the GCR Youth Track and Field team competing in the FLYRA State meet. Even though GCR is a running club, it has embraced field events providing support through throwing coach Meghan Leiti. Interestingly, for several years the GCR team has had more throwers qualifying for the FLYRA State meet than any other club in the Florida.



### FLYRA STATE MEET

Our runners, clad in neon blue singlets with vibrant orange lettering, glowed as they ran on IMG's blue track. The first race of the morning landed GCR's Lila McGowan on the podium for her performance in the elementary 1500m. Throwers Cloelle Altaratz and Eva Horsman also found their way to the stage for discus. Miah Beckman's mental toughness and gazelle legs landed her on the platform for the 400m. Our girls 4x800 relay team made the rostrum as they impressed GCR fans with a stellar performance even though they ran in a slower heat, giving credence to the strategy of "Race against the clock". Finally, Tara

Watkins and Jack Marshall masterfully stole the show in their last middle school competition as each landed on the podium twice for outstanding races in the 800M and 1500M.

#### ALL STATE PODIUM GCR ATHLETES

5th **Tara Watkins** 1500m (5:00.41)  
4th **Tara Watkins** 800m (2:24.46)  
5th **Jack Marshall** 1500m (4:24.01)  
7th **Jack Marshall** 800m (2:08.01)  
4th **Miah Beckman** 400m (1:06.21)  
8th **Lila McGowan** 1500m (5:34.85)  
6th **Cloelle Altaratz** discus (91'5")  
8th **Eva Horsman** discus (89'44")  
8th **Nicole Higgins, Isabella Kelly, Matea Zwack, and Adeline Dumont** 4x800m (10:50.16)

#### State Qualifiers

**Shot Put:** Peyton Hefflefinger. Chloe Jones Leina Laine Mackenzie Leiti

**Discus:** Brady Clark Robinson Luizes

**100m:** Isaiah Allen 100M

**400m:** Hale Caulder Edwons Octa Stanley Saintout Johnny Ruggiero

**4 x800** Cameron Bates, Maddie Brendel Addie Gurick, Madison Bates

**4 x800** Todd Beltran-Malik, Reece Lolly, Luke Brewer, Logan Bartlet

**1500m:** Khloe Wilder 1500m.

This program is all about our young members, but I would like to take a moment to thank the coaches for pulling off a great season without having an appropriate facility. We applaud your resourcefulness and your commitment to the GCR youth.

**Youth Coaches:** Don Howard, Justin Moomaw, Tammy Loux, Kevin McDermott, and Meghan Leiti







## LIKE TO VOLUNTEER? You are always welcome!

Volunteering for GCR can be fun and rewarding. There is a job for everyone! For more information on volunteering contact

Dawna Holowell  
dholowell@me.com or (407) 257-4988

## SPONSORS WELCOME

We have race sponsorships starting as low as...\$250 per race. Sponsor more than one race and get a discount!

For more information on race sponsorship contact:  
Mitch Norgart  
mitch@gcrunner.org

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- Sean Nolan, *Treasurer*
- Holly Kistler, *Membership*

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- Steven Gust
- Andy Holland
- Dawna Holowell  
*Volunteer Coordinator*
- Tom Kepp
- Dave Levesque
- Tammy Loux
- Brian Marler
- Justin Moomaw



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Submit electronic articles, photos or out of town racing to [mitch@gcrunner.org](mailto:mitch@gcrunner.org). This is your newsletter, feel free to contribute.

**Thank A Volunteer!**

We could not do any of this without them.

New volunteers always welcome.



**THANK YOU**

**FOR BEING A GCR MEMBER!**



**APRIL 2021**

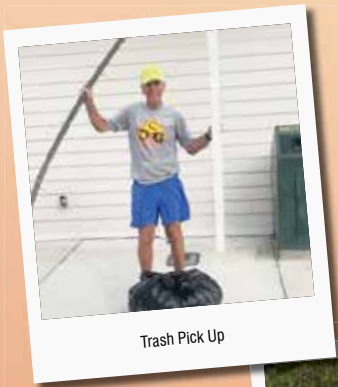


# SOUTHWEST

## Strides



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Trash Pick Up



FFCF Labor Day 5K



GCR Middle School Invitational



GCR Middle School Invitational



GULF COAST  
**RUNNERS**  
NAPLES FLORIDA



FFCF Labor Day 5K



October Dash n' Dine



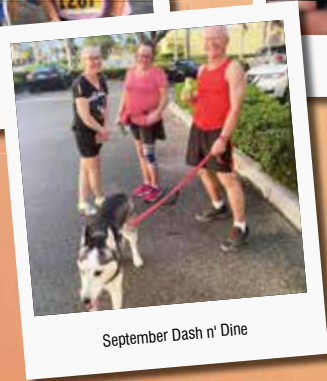
October Dash n' Dine



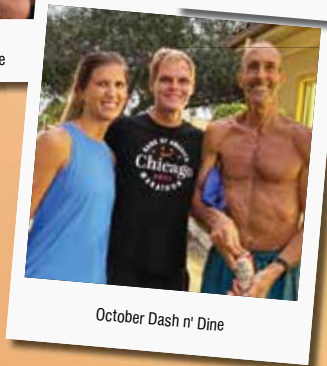
GULF COAST  
**RUNNERS**  
NAPLES FLORIDA



September Dash n' Dine



September Dash n' Dine



October Dash n' Dine



Trash Pick Up