

President's Message



The Boulder Road Runners turned 41 years old this month. Take heart my fellow BRR friends, the sky is not falling and we will come back stronger than ever!!

The Boston Athletic Association announced this week that the Boston Marathon has been postponed until the Fall of 2021. Will the Boulder take place on Memorial Day 2021? When will we get back to actual racing?

These are questions which we currently don't have an answer for and could just be another negative we have to deal with. But as runners we are eternal optimists, I can beat everyone in my age group!! I will run the best marathon ever!! If I do lots of speed training I will get faster and won't get injured!!

We can begin by attending the First Monday Virtual Happy Hour on 11/2/2020 at 5:30 pm and share some fellowship with other BRR members. Click [HERE](#) at 5:30 on Monday.

In this newsletter is an extensive interview with Rich Castro, the founder of BRR and president for a period of over 20 years! Some of his story I knew from other BRR members and a conversation I had with Rich the first night I joined the BRR and attended my first meeting, but much was new information to me. Take the time to read his story, I actually read it twice because he accomplished so much it was hard to comprehend.

Rich was and still is a competitive runner, to the aggravation of some of our current members who have had to compete against him. He was a coach at CU, established the first CU Women's XC Team, was a road racing consultant to Nike, a weekly column writer to the *Daily Camera* on running, established the Sunday Fun Runs, organized and directed numerous races for competition and charities, established the summer track series, organized various events to encourage BRR member participation, including a running camp, group track workouts, pot-luck dinners, volunteerism, and established the First Monday monthly meeting!!!

Whew!!! I am out of breath just writing this!!!

We can take a lead from Rich about what it takes to appeal to the running public and how to build and maintain membership.

Everyone knows that the environment for establishing events in Boulder today can be a trying endeavor, just ask Lee Troop, but with diligent effort many of the things that Rich did for the BRR can still be done today.

Until we get past the COVID-19 pandemic we are limited by what we can actually do at this time, but as I have stated to athletes I coach, a goal without a plan is just a wish.

So this is the goal. Go back to some of the things that Rich did to establish and build the BRR, like weekly track workouts, specific weekly group runs in addition to the Sunday Fun Runs, coached training

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DON'T MISS IT!

Virtual First Monday
Click [HERE](#) to join the Zoom
get-together
November 2nd @ 5:30 pm
(BYOB)

Boulder Road Runners

PO Box 1866
Boulder, CO 80306
www.boulderroadrunners.org



President's Message, *continued*

programs, not just for the Boulder Boulder but for other races, pot-luck dinners and other gatherings in addition to the monthly First Monday meeting, establish some free or charity short distance races to solicit participation from the Boulder running community for potential membership in BRR.

That's the goal, this is the plan:

Once we can safely gather again I will volunteer my services as a coach for the Boulder Boulder Training Program and others that we might establish. I am calling on other coaches in the club to step forward and help with establishing a weekly track session and at least one weekly group run open to the public and sponsored by

the BRR with drinks and food after or at a local restaurant.

To accomplish all of this it will require active participation from members. We are now soliciting nominations for the Board of Directors and even though we can't meet in person at this time the current board has continued to work on behalf of the BRR.

The most profound thing I gleaned from the article about Rich is his reference to his college coach who inspired his athletes "to be a part of something bigger than yourself,"

Are you ready to be a part of a bigger BRR?

—Will Dillard, President

ALPINE BANK BOULDER THANKSGIVING DAY FUN RUN IS HAPPENING IN-PERSON FOR 2020!

Due to COVID-19, the 2020 Alpine Bank Thanksgiving Day Fun Run, will be moved to the Boulder Reservoir and will meet all CDC and Boulder County Health guidelines, and it is only open to Colorado residents! You can read our race information and event safety guidelines [HERE](#).

Unfortunately, the event will be capped at 175 participants, with 15–20 participants in every wave, going off every 5 minutes. Waves will be set up from the fastest runners, to families that want to walk, and this year's event will be 4 miles and not the traditional 5K.

For those that don't feel comfortable with our proposed safety guidelines, we are offering a virtual race component as well.

We all know that Thanksgiving Day is about celebrating with your family and friends and the many positive aspects of our community, but 2020 has been a tough year for many. As we think of those less fortunate, race proceeds from this event will be supporting Boulder's Harvest of Hope Food Pantry. We are also asking all participants to kindly donate non-perishable packaged and canned foods on the morning of the event and at other locations during the month of November.

Registration for this event opened on Monday, 9/28 at 9am, and is being done on a first-come, first-served basis. We apologize that for this year's event, we will not be able to accommodate everyone.

[REGISTER HERE.](#)

85%
SOLD OUT



Boulder Road Runners, Inc.

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2020**

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If Life Is a Balancing Act, Why Am I So Darn Clumsy?

from Coach Will Dillard

NBphotostream, FlickrCC



That's the title of a book written by a friend of mine, Dick Biggs, a motivational speaker. Since we are dealing with unprecedented times we need to talk about balance. As I have stated in other columns everything in your life affects your training. In addition to the physical and mental stresses of training we have to add the additional stress of family, work and now the virus!

If you have small children many of them are now doing online classes and in many cases this requires additional time and attention. How are you supposed to run for stress relief while dealing with so much stress? If you have a stressful job or have to drive in rush hour traffic this is additional mental and physical stress.

When you have too much stress in your life it can contribute to physical and mental fatigue. Your body doesn't distinguish between fatigue caused by your job or family and fatigue caused by training, all it knows is fatigue.

In previous columns I talked about setting identifiable, quantifiable and attainable goals. In order to do this you need a plan that not only includes your time commitment for training but also your time for work, family, and yes, even relaxation and recovery. In our drive to be our "best" we sometimes do what is "worst" for us. Without the proper balance of all the stressors in our life eventually something has to give, and usually that is an injury or chronic fatigue.



If you monitor your Morning Resting Pulse (MRP) each morning before you get out of bed this will give you a good indication of your stress and fatigue level. If you are trying to train during these difficult times and you are carrying a lot of stress this can have a negative impact on the benefit of the training.

There is a story that goes around the Internet about putting rocks in a jar. Starting with big rocks, adding smaller and smaller rocks, then finally adding sand until the jar is "full." The moral of the story is that you have to take care of the "big rocks" in your life first, otherwise you won't be able to get them in later. You have to identify what those big rocks are. It might be family and children, or it could be work. Since few of us have the luxury of having a sponsor for our athletic ventures our training usually becomes the "sand" we add at the end

that has to fit in and around all the other "rocks" in our lives.

So look closely at the stressors in your life and find the balance you need to be your best at all of your ventures including your training. Without sounding like I am soliciting business, this is where a coach can help to be sure that the training time you do have is used to the maximum benefit without overtraining. I have stated before that "under-resting" is the same as "overtraining."

See you at the races...

Coach Will

As a sidebar to the story about the rocks, after everything has been added and the jar appears to be full, you can still add liquid to the jar. The moral being there is always room for a beer!!!!

Benefits of More Activity

Keep moving to live longer.

from Dr. Gabe Mirkin's Fitness and Health e-Zine, September 6, 2020

In the largest study so far of accelerometer-measured physical activity, 96,476 healthy men and women in Great Britain (mean age 62 years) wore wrist accelerometers for one week and were then followed for an average of 3.1 years (*Nature Medicine*, Aug 17, 2020). During the follow-up period, 732 deaths occurred. The people who were more active had a lower risk of dying, and adding intensity to their exercise increased that protection.

The accelerometers measured energy usage in kilojoules per kilogram per day (kJ/kg/day). The researchers divided participants based on their total energy expenditure and the intensity of their periods of exercise, and found that:

- Those who averaged 20 kJ/kg/day through active exercise were a third less likely to die compared to those who averaged 15 kJ/kg/day with at least 10 percent moderate intensity activity. The difference between those two groups was equal to a 35-minute daily walk, with an extra two minutes at a brisker pace.
- Those who averaged 30 kJ/kg/day were half as likely to die, compared to those who averaged 15 kJ/kg/day. If 30 percent of their exercise was moderately intense, they were only a quarter as likely to die. In other words, those who walked for an hour day, half of which was done at a moderate pace, reduced their risk of death by more than 50 percent.

In another study, researchers reviewed eight studies using accelerometers to follow 36,383 adults, 40 years of age and older, for six years. They found that exercising regularly in adulthood, regardless of intensity, was associated with reduced risk for early death, while sitting for more than nine hours was associated with increased risk for premature death (*Brit Med J*, August 21, 2019). The risk of death



Alastair Norcross

Intensity: Kyle Hubbard at one of BRR's track meets last summer.

dropped progressively as light physical activity increased up to five hours per day and moderate activity increased up to 24 minutes per day.

- light activity included walking slowly, cooking and washing dishes
- moderate activity included brisk walking, vacuuming or mowing the lawn
- vigorous activity included jogging or carrying heavy loads

Lack of physical activity increases a person's chances of suffering a heart attack, while a regular exercise program helps to prevent heart attacks (*Eur Heart J*, 15 January 2019). Not exercising regularly also worsens diabetes (*Cardiopulm Phys Ther J*, 2013 Jun;24(2):27–34).

Benefits of Intense Exercise

Richard A. Winett of Virginia Tech reviewed 106 journal articles and found that intense exercise can benefit health, prevent disease and prolong lives (*Innovation in Aging*, July 26, 2019;3(4):1–15). If you are trying to lose weight, intense interval training may help you lose more weight than slower continuous training. A review of 41 studies involving 1115 people shows that people who have limited time to exercise will gain more health benefits from short bursts of intense exercise with short rests between each interval compared to continuous training (*Brit J Sports Med*, Feb 14, 2019;53(10)). Ideal sports for interval training include running, fast walking, cycling and weight lifting. However, intense exercise can increase risk of injuries.

My Recommendations

Each day that you spend not moving your muscles weakens your heart, so you may eventually die of heart failure. When an obituary says a person died of “natural causes,” that often means the cause was heart failure, usually because they spent their last months or years moving very little or not at all.

A key to prolonging your life and preventing disease is to keep on moving. Your skeletal muscles circulate blood to your heart, and when you contract a muscle, it squeezes blood vessels near it to pump increased amounts of blood back to your heart. Your heart responds to the extra blood by contracting with greater force that makes it stronger.

Even if you don't have a specific exercise program, it is healthful to keep on moving for a large part of each day—and harmful just to sit all day long. Mow your lawn, wash your dishes, make your bed, vacuum your house, go out for walks and participate in activities that keep you moving your arms and legs.

Reprinted courtesy of Dr. Gabe Mirkin. More of his articles can be found on his website, www.drmirkin.com/.

MEMBER PROFILE

RICH CASTRO

Rich's Very Rich Running History

from Jeff Dumas

Jeff emailed a series of questions to Rich. Here are Rich's responses.

You are a California transplant. Where were you born and what was it like growing up there?

I was born into a poor hard working Mexican family in Pomona, a city in southern California about 30 miles southeast of Los Angeles. My parents came to the U.S. from Mexico as young children and we worked the crops as a family growing up. Not quite two years old, my life took a sudden change when my older brother died from Tetanus. As the oldest male in our ethnic culture you are given more responsibility and more is expected of you. I have nine siblings, five surviving brothers and three sisters. Our school year was spent in the southern California but we traveled north during the summers to harvest mainly prunes.

I understand that you started running early. When did you start running and what got you started?

La Verne, the small town I grew up in, was a hotbed for track & field and home to "Wheaties" Bob Richards, Olympic Gold Medalist in the pole vault in 1952 and 1956 and three-time national decathlon champion. He spoke at our school assemblies and started a local program called Junior Champs. Track was so popular we would choose up sides and run 440 relays during recess—and we had access to a grass track starting in fifth grade. Because I was too small for most other sports, track was a good fit.

After eighth grade, we moved to northern California and settled in Morgan Hill, a very small town just south of San Jose. I was invited to try running on the "lightweight" XC team and it became my conduit for making friends and fitting into my new high school. So I ran XC and track for all four years at Live Oak High School and I earned a varsity letter starting as a

sophomore. In XC, I was a consistent fifth and sixth man on our team and ran a sub 2-minute 880 my senior year. In 1964 our XC team went undefeated until we reached the highest level possible in our state where we finished third among schools 3-4 times our size.

[Note from Jeff: In California there are no "divisions" in high school sports. The state championships are awarded to the top school, regardless of student body headcount.]

I also understand that you ran all four years at college. Where was that, what events did you run and how did you do?

After high school, I knew I wanted to keep running so I enrolled at La Verne College and became the only member of my extended family to go beyond high school. La Verne is now a Division III University, a member of the SCIAC conference and a cluster school with the likes of Whittier, Cal Tech, Claremont and Pomona. At the time I thought running three miles at the collegiate level might be too tough, but I joined the XC team anyway and became the "third man", later becoming "first man" and team captain for two years. Being a very small track team, we were encouraged to try any and all events, so I did, running everything from the two mile to the intermediate hurdles just to score a few team points. My senior year, I focused solely on the sprints and ran some solid small college times. Our relay team broke all the school records and we got to run in some big meets like the Mt. SAC Invitational and the Long Beach Relays. My finest moment might have come with a 100 yard dash victory at Cal Tech, where I ran 9.8 on a slow dirt track, reportedly



Rich starting the anchor leg in a mile relay at a La Verne College.

the fastest time ever recorded there. That season I anchored our 440 relay team to a third place at the Claremont Relays in a photo finish where I closed in on two Olympians anchoring for Pepperdine and Cal State-L.A. My senior season ended when I finished fourth in both sprints and in both relays at the conference finals—and my dream to reach the NAIA Championships in Bozeman, Montana was done.

After college, you found your way to the CU campus in Boulder (by way of Morocco!). How did that happen and what was your career like as a Buff coach and administrator?

My college coach, Roland Ortmyer, was my mentor and the reason I became a coach and Peace Corps volunteer. We did our language and cultural training for the Peace Corps in Morrison, CO before I was stationed in Tangiers, Morocco. That was my first introduction to Colorado, and when I attended a track meet at CU while in Morrison, it gave me the opportunity to meet the head coach Don Meyers.

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Left to right: Rich with the first CU Women's XC team, 1976; calling out splits at a race; with Mary Decker.

After the Peace Corps I wanted to go to graduate school and I was accepted at CU in the fall of 1971 to pursue a master's degree, where I focused on Exercise Physiology and did my thesis on sprint starts, comparing the standing vs. crouch start in trained and untrained athletes. I signed on as a graduate assistant with the track program, while teaching P.E. activity classes and taking a full academic load, so I was pulling 18-hour days. Given charge of the sprinters and hurdlers, I worked with some of the fastest men on the planet at that time. CU runners Cliff Branch and George Daniels (from Ghana) were featured on the cover of *Track & Field News* that year and the CU 440 relay team ran a 39.4, outdoors. It was an incredible opportunity for a young coach and one of the most amazing and educating periods in my life. In 1973 after completing my degree with an emphasis on exercise physiology, I was hired as the Intramural and Club Sports Director at the newly opened CU Rec Center. My supervisor wanted to keep good relations with the Athletic Department so he encouraged me to keep working with the track team.

In 1975 the Rec Center was tasked with implementing Title IX and six new women's collegiate programs. My supervisor informed me that in addition to my duties and work with the men's track team, I would be creating the first CU women's collegiate XC and Track programs in the fall of 1976. We had a great start at CU and did quite well nationally when we added a young lady named Mary Decker.

[Note from Jeff: In case we have forgotten, in her day, Decker was the world record holder in the mile, 5,000 meters and 10,000 meters—in addition to having set no fewer than 36 U.S. national records at distances ranging from 800 meters to 10,000 meters. Decker was the first woman in history to break 4:20 for the mile. Decker's 1974 U.S. high school 800 meters record stood for 43 years—and her 1980 U.S. record in the 1500 meters stood for 32 years!]

After working with the track programs until 1978, the workload at the CU Rec Center had quadrupled and so I became a full time administrator. That decision was a financial one since coaching paid next to nothing.

[Note from Jeff: If he wanted to make a buck, Rich should have been a football or basketball coach!]

And, what was the bridge between coaching at CU and forming the Boulder Road Runners?

During the summer months, I dropped into a fitness class at the North Boulder Rec Center and I started fielding running questions and requests to join me at my personal workouts. The folks that started joining me on a weekly basis at the Centennial Jr. High track became the nucleus for the Boulder Road Runners. I had already run in track meets in the area and had joined the Denver Track Club and the Rocky Mt. Road Runners, spent two weeks at the '76 Olympic Trials where I got a better idea how elite distance runners trained *[Note from Jeff: And did some recruiting for the CU women's team on the side!]* and was exposed to the Oregon Track Club. All this gave me the impetus to

create a local club for the everyday runner. I wanted to call the group the Boulder Harriers, after the Gateshead Harriers, but no one knew what a "Harrier" was at the time, so I settled for "Road Runners."

[Note from Jeff: How about the "Boulder Hash House Harriers"?!]

And, what was it like being poised right on the leading edge of the sport's phenomenal growth in popularity?

The 70's were interesting times for the runners in Boulder, myself included. One afternoon while working at the CU track office I walked an up and coming runner named Frank Shorter and his wife-to-be Louise. Frank was inquiring about using the CU indoor track as he was getting ready to run the Pan Am Games in Cali, Colombia. Frank and I are the same age, both born in the month of October of 1947, and we would later find that our careers paralleled each other's as we carved out our niche in the running community. Frank sparked an interest in altitude training coming on the heels of the Olympic Marathon trials in Alamosa in 1968 and the Mexico City Olympics that year. I kept dabbling in various running events, participating in sprints and middle distances at local track meets and even doing a decathlon. In the mid 1970's, I started hanging out with the local distance runners trying to augment my running education. One thing I can tell you is that running became my bridge builder and I forged some lifelong friendships, in part thanks to the

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MEMBER PROFILE: RICH CASTRO



Left to right: Rich with the Frank Shorter Racing Team, posing for the *Daily Camera* before the 1980 Bolder Boulder; Rich trying to save his legs before the start of the 1979 Bolder Boulder, he had directed a race in Sterling that morning—if the BB hadn't gone off at 2 pm he wouldn't have made it.

incredible support of the University of Colorado, who saw my involvement with the running community as a "Town and Gown" opportunity.

[Note from Jeff: for you youngsters, during the Middle Ages, in university towns (such as Oxford and Cambridge) the students, in "gowns" were distinguished from the townsfolk in their work-a-day attire.]

The list of opportunities afforded to me is amazing even to me when I look back at it over the decades. It started with The U.S. State Department requesting my assistance at some track clinics in Mexico City prior to the 1975 Pan Am Games and then the State of Colorado asked that I do the same with our "Sister State" of Minas Gerais, in the city of Belo Horizonte, Brazil.

[Note from Jeff: Colorado's Sister State of Minas Gerais borders on and is just to the north of the state of Rio de Janeiro, site of the 2016 Olympics.]

Lifelong friendships start out in interesting fashion sometimes. In 1978 I was approached by the promotions department for Nike in the person of John Gregorio, who paid me a visit. I had recruited John while he was in high school when I worked as a grad assistant at my undergrad alma mater, La Verne. John went to junior college first and ended up at CU where he became an All-American.

[Note from Jeff: Gregorio was a three-time All-American and would follow Rich into the Colorado Running Hall of Fame, in 2015].

He liked what I had done at CU and in Boulder

and asked me to work as a road racing consultant for Nike and its newly created stable of sponsored athletes. This opened countless doors for me and the BRR that I founded in December of that same year. I still stay in contact with many of the runners I encountered in those early years including my first collegiate recruit Cindy Eich, who would later do the tax returns for the BRR. I still play poker regularly with Jack Ford who helped with our BRR incorporation papers and tax-exempt status in the State of Colorado.

[Note from Jeff: If Rich were to run road races like he is alleged to play poker, then I'm pretty sure that he "shorts the course" whenever possible.]

And, what was it like during the early days of the Boulder Road Runners?

I also noticed that despite everything that was happening on the running scene, the local paper the *Daily Camera* was not really giving it much coverage. So I took it upon myself to offer them a weekly running column and, since it was free, the Sports Editor Dan Creedon agreed. He later learned that folks were lining up to put their ads next to my column, so he offered to pay me to keep the pipeline open. It was my weekly column where announced the formation of a new running club, along with a calendar of local running events and my weekly set of running tips.

Contrary to popular belief, I was not our first club president. I wanted to mentor and advise the club and keep my options open.

I nominated a local masters runner, Pearl Mehl, who also happened to be a parliamentarian and she knew how to run a meeting. We created a complete slate of offices to be filled and Tom LeMire and I volunteered to work with our "Sunday Fun Runs" and road race series. In 1977 I tried to help the Colorado Track Club with fund raising, so I organized the Run for the Roses 15K. It had almost 3,000 runners in 1978 and might have been the largest in the state at that point. Other early BRR-backed races were the Boulder Memorial Hospital 10K, Half Marathon and Marathon and the Nike High Altitude Challenge. The following summer we started doing our track meets as a sidebar to our weekly track sessions, which at first were for club members only, but soon became public by popular demand. Over the next five years, we continued to add more track and field events to this ad hoc arrangement.

[Note from Jeff: To the point that it evolved into the widely attended BRR Summer Track Series of today.]

Could you please tell us about your long racing career, particularly about your participation in USATF events as a BRR runner?

I have always been enamored with team competition and inspired by my college coach "to be part of something bigger than yourself." That's why I created the Boulder Road Runners, that and the fact the distance crew training in Boulder at the time was much faster than I ever hoped to be. Jumping in feet first, I signed up

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MEMBER PROFILE: RICH CASTRO



Left to right: "Mr. CU Intramurals," honoring 35 years of service; member of the 2009 Class of the Colorado Running Hall of Fame; Volunteer Appreciation Medal from the 2018 Boulder Thanksgiving Day 5K.

the BRR for the Nike National Club 10K Championships held on Fiesta Island in San Diego in 1980. We were severely outclassed as there were only two clubs not made up of sponsored world and national class runners, but we had a fun trip. The other group I was working with at the time, the Frank Shorter Racing Team, entered three full teams that all finished in the top five. The idea of bringing runners together with shared common goals really appealed to me, so I created the first major road races in Boulder and the first marathon, along with providing race management support to other local running events. My long running BRR support for the Boulder Boulder started in 1980, but in 1978 I had already started the Columbine Mile Marathon for the local elementary school—and it still continues as the oldest public school event in the country. All the other races I organized, such as the CU Kickoff Classic and Rocky Mountain Shootout have gone by the wayside.

[Note from Jeff: Darn, the Shootout was such fun running in a cross country meet on the Buff Course with hundreds of college runners. Even if it was more than a little embarrassing!]

Yes, please tell us more about these local running events and how you got your start (and inspiration) to organize them.

I often get asked about the many events I created over the years. Much of what I organized is directly linked to my undergraduate education. I mentioned that my coach Roland Ortmyer was my mentor but he was much more than

that. He saw something in me that I never could and always encouraged me to explore, be creative, and look beyond my horizons. He did more for me than anyone else in my life. He gave me the ultimate compliment when he nominated me for my college Hall of Fame. Because of his mentoring, I tripled the size of the CU intramural and Club Sport programs in my first two years, trying to provide a fun athletic opportunity for all students. Intramurals gave me the opportunity to introduce offbeat activities such as inner tube water polo, ice broomball, six-foot-and-under basketball, ultimate Frisbee and dodgeball. With running I did the same thing, starting with a Meet of Miles, The 100 Mile Relay, an indoor 24-hour relay, Couples races, predict races, and various theme running events. I already mentioned that I came to CU as a graduate assistant in track & field and also a fellowship in the Physical Education to be an instructor. Coach Ortmyer already had a connection at CU via his nephew Steve Ortmyer, who served as an assistant football coach under the Athletic Director Eddie Crowder. I never knew what exactly transpired, but CU did everything it could to help me get to Boulder and support my efforts.

And, how was your own running progressing during this very busy time in your life?

My running-related career has been blessed with some wonderful and memorable opportunities, both as a participant, as a coach, organizer and spectator. I learned a lot from my evolution as a runner and I pride myself in

never asking an athlete to attempt a session I hadn't already tried—that and the range in my performances. I clocked a 10.63/100m and a 2:41 marathon. In all, I ran a total of 18 marathons—including three at Boston. My best time in Boston was a 2:49 in 1979. The 2:41 was my time at the Paul Masson Marathon in California.

[Note from Jeff: The Paul Masson Marathon must have been the 1979 national marathon championships. I ran in the San Francisco Marathon in the national marathon championships in 1983. Comparing our times, I'm proud to say that Rich only beat me by less than an hour. Hey, it was a hot day!]

A knowledgeable observer would say I should have focused on the middle distances with that type of speed, strength and work ethic. I could easily recite some of my best performances, but what I remember most are those bus rides in high school coming home from meets, the odd conversations in a van during the Hood to Coast Relay, the laughs we've shared during training sessions and feeling of self-satisfaction with a shared triumph in winning a national age group team championship.

[Note from Jeff: Rich is far too humble here. Those of us who have run with Rich on the BRR teams know him most fondly as "Capt'n Castro"—as he recruits the team members, helps with logistics, sees that they are properly suited up and in the starting box when the gun goes off. I ran with Capt'n Castro at the USATF XC Team Nationals

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Left to right: Club XC National Championships, Van Cortlandt Park, NY, 2004; and Charlotte, 2010.

in Spokane in 2008 (in a blizzard), in Charlotte in 2010, in San Diego in 2011, and in Boulder in 2015—and in each of these very competitive races, Capt'n Castro's teams won the gold!

And how did your competing affect your coaching, and vice-versa?

I might not have evolved as coach or organizer in the same manner if I knew only one perspective. Nike took me around the world and gave me a chance to facilitate the efforts of dozens of athletes when they came to Boulder and when I worked as a liaison at the 1984 Olympic Games in L.A. I have worked with athletes who ran world records, won national championships, won major road races but most importantly became great friends with so many of them as well. I have worked with the sons and daughters of those same athletes which to me is the ultimate compliment as we come full circle. As a competitor I have run in several major competitions such as the World Masters Championships, the Boston Marathon and numerous international road races. But it's the people and places that make for the lasting memories.

So, back to the Boulder Road Runners, what was it like to have served as the club President for so many years?

As the BRR President for over 20 years, I tried to create opportunities for everyone through a variety of activities. In our very early days, I hosted a running camp at Devil's Thumb Ranch

and tried to make it affordable, fun and all inclusive (meals and lodging provided as a promotional favor by the resort). We had weekly group workouts, track and road sessions. We often used Boulder High School, the CU track and the North Boulder Rec Center. We had Sunday group workouts and I tried to get "professional runners" together with regular club members at Pot Lucks and post-run refreshments. I endeavored to get the club involved with the community at large by helping with charity races and events. For instance, we began hosting Thanksgiving Day events right from the start in 1978 and always worked with charities along the way. Sometime in the 1980s, we started collecting food and then it became a formal event for Community Food Share. And, I still work with the Harvest of Hope and worked at the food bank for the first three years of their existence. We also put together several other unique charity events such as Runners Appreciation Night, the Sneakers Ball, and the 100 Mile Relay challenge against the Oregon Track Club.

To promote BRR volunteer participation, I would provide airfare and lodging in Mazatlan, Mexico for our top volunteers where I put on an 8k a road race on the Martin Luther King Holiday weekend. I also got the club some great deals on running gear and shoes and always made sure the both our local sponsors and volunteers felt appreciated. Through the years countless individuals stepped up to volunteers their

time, efforts and skills to make the BRR the success it became. I would mention a few but I know that I would leave someone out so let's say I accomplished what I did through the joint efforts of many, many individuals.

[Note from Jeff: Basically, just take a look at the BRR membership roster and you are looking at Rich's list of volunteers!]

Some of our early traditions grew into permanent establishments. My "team meetings" at the Walnut Brewery grew into our First Monday club gatherings. "The Nut," as we affectionately referred to it back then, hosted our 25th anniversary celebration and helped foot the bill. Later, I believe it was around 2004, when Larry Avery and I had a conversation about gathering at their brewery just off Arapahoe to help promote their beers. Free beer is a great draw. The Walnut Brewery was offering us a great discount but couldn't beat free!

[Note from Jeff: And of course there's more to that story. Larry Avery has been a longstanding member of the BRR and was (and is) a nationally competitive runner for his age group in both the half and full marathon!]

And, in that regard, can you tell us about hosting the USATF XC Championships in Boulder in 2007?

When the late Bill Roe, who later became USATF President, called me in 2003 and asked for

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Left to right: Jenny Barringer Simpson after winning a race in Heusden, Netherlands on her first international trip in 2007—she donned the BRR singlet after the race as a thank you to the club for their support; the 2015 Club XC National Champions in Boulder.

my support of the newly established club XC championships, I immediately signed up the BRR and we fielded master's teams and continued to participate regularly through the years. When we hosted the USA XC Championships in 2007, I retired early *[Note from Jeff: Early? After 34 years!]* from CU and became heavily involved. Drawing on club support we provided the funds for the age-group team champions and the BRR became the only club in history to field a team in each and every masters age-group category. There are so many things that the Boulder Road Runners enabled me to accomplish. I always tried to create activities that were sustainable and affordable through sponsorships and local support.

[Note from Jeff: the 2007 USATF XC Championships held at the Flat Irons Golf Course here in Boulder was an "event for the ages." Those of you who participated or observed will recall how the crowd of spectators, estimated to be almost 10,000, overwhelmed the available parking and mobbed the perimeter of the race course. Many men and women competitors in this remarkable event went on to run in the Athens Olympics, shortly thereafter. Without a doubt, the success of this great adventure was due largely (if not entirely) to Rich's organizational skills, leadership and hard work. There has never been a USATF XC championship meet like it!]

Oh, I should also mention that we provided

financial support to several graduated CU runners who participated in international competition. The NCAA does not allow athletes to travel to international events at the expense of their respective schools—so Mark Wetmore and I discussed using funds that the BRR raised via the CU Kickoff Classic and the summer track meet series. The NCAA quickly approved the arrangement, so we sponsored Jenny Barringer Simpson on her first international travels. Jenny thanked us by hosting the BRR in one of the luxury boxes at the 2011 CU homecoming football game where her many running achievements were acknowledged on field in a half-time ceremony. I gave up my spot in the box for a high school runner named Slipper Jones, a neighbor of Ron and Connie Harmon who was one of Jenny's biggest fans. Slipper went on to West Point and graduated with honors and is currently serving as a 2nd lieutenant.

[Note from Jeff: I'm pretty sure that I remember Slipper. If so, I noticed that for at least ten minutes, she had been staring at Jenny from across the room with a shoe in her hand. Clearly, she wanted to have Jenny autograph the shoe—but seemed too embarrassed to ask. I interceded and brought her over to Jenny—who promptly signed the shoe, and they chatted away. However, if I'd known that Slipper was going to attend West Point, I would definitely have had second thoughts. I ran track and cross country at Annapolis!]

Please tell us what it was like when you were inducted into the Colorado Running Hall of Fame in 2009.

My induction into the Colorado Running Hall of Fame was a very memorable occasion and wonderful acknowledgment for my work with the BRR, CU, the Bolder Boulder and my running career in general. I have also been recognized by the Boulder Historical Society as a pioneer and by CU with the Robert L. Stearns Award. All of this leads back to my college coach Roland Ortmyer who insisted that I not thank him for his help but to pass it on and give back to my sport.

[Note from Jeff: Okay, Rich has mentioned Coach Ortmyer many times, so who exactly was this dude? Well, for starters, he was a four decade football coach at La Verne—where he earned national fame for his personal commitment to the school's athletes, their education and their mission in life. In fact, Sports Illustrated stated in an article featuring Ortmyer that to simply label him as a coach, "is like praising Picasso for knowing the primary colors." And, of course, as Rich makes clear, Ortmyer was an inspiration to more than just the school's football players!]

What is your current (COVID-19) training regime and what are your racing goals for the future?

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Left to right: Club XC Nationals in Spokane, 2018; the Castro family at the Bolder Boulder finish in Folsom, 2007: Greg, Rich, Patti, and Antonio.

With the challenging situation this pandemic has presented us with, I gave up meeting my running group and learned to enjoy my solo runs and come up with activities that keep me fit, engaged, and enthused. I ride an Elliptigo almost daily, walk with my dogs on the trails, and run structured sessions three times a week. I started running with my iPod—something I never thought I would do—and programmed it to give me splits and distances to keep me focused while enjoying my personal playlist. Like most other runners I have tried virtual races and run some decent times but they are not as satisfying as my last race was in February at Washington Park, where I won my age group at the Super Bowl 5K and supposedly set an age group course record. I really wanted to give the mile another shot after running 6:37 last year at the Pearl Street Mile where my teammate Rick Katz nipped me by less than a second. But in-person racing will have to wait for a while and I am very disappointed at missing the cancelled USATF National Club XC Championships scheduled for Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, since it is one of my very favorite venues. Staying active on a daily basis, I subscribe to the “use it or lose it” theology.

[Note from Jeff: Stay healthy Rich! The USATF has just announced that the 2021 Club XC Championships will take place in Golden Gate Park!]

Lastly, let's not forget all the help that you (and the BRR) received from your very involved partner, Patti. Please share the story of how you met Patti. Also, please share some insights as to her important role in the BRR. You might also want to mention your two sons, Antonio and Greg, who have done so much for the Boulder community, running and otherwise.

Running became my avenue to explore the world, forge new friendships. It also served as an introduction to my wife. Creigh Kelly invited me to his shop in southeast Denver to do a talk on running in May of 1979. A young lady named Patti Jonas asked me a few questions and I invited her to join us for our next track session at the CU track the following Tuesday. We shared a meal that evening and you can guess the rest. She moved to Boulder the following year and we were married in August of 1981, following a pre-nuptial fun run that featured special numbers printed by Nike, the men in the wedding party were outfitted with Nike footwear, and we were married by the local running priest, Fr. Terry Ryan.

[Note from Jeff: Terry Ryan was an accomplished runner too. He participated in the 2007 USATF National Championships sporting the BRR singlet—and won a spot on the podium.]

My two sons were born into the club and it became interwoven with our family fabric. Both boys have pictures with tiny baby Nikes hanging on their cribs at the hospital. The kids' events at the BRR events came into being because our boys wanted to participate and couldn't run as far as the adults. The best advice I ever got about introducing my children to running was “let them see you having fun with running.” They both ran track and cross country at Boulder High and both ran at CU and are still active as fit young men.

Antonio lives in Boulder and works for the Boulder Valley School District, focusing on first graders and special ed and bilingual students. Greg lives in Boulder and was in marketing until the pandemic hit. Both remain active and fit with 30+ consecutive years of running the Bolder Boulder.

The one person that made much of this possible is my wife Patti, who kept the household going while I traveled the world and was busy putting on an event on every holiday except Christmas. Understanding my passion for what I was doing made for a good partnership and she once told me that when we first met she marveled at all the directions I was going and seemingly all at once.

[Note from Jeff: So, Patti knew from the get-go what she was getting herself into!]

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