

FOOTPRINTS

*THE NEWSLETTER OF THE HOWARD COUNTY STRIDERS
VOLUME 46, No. 2 — April 2021*



The Howard County Striders running club is an incorporated non-profit organization dedicated to promoting lifetime fitness through running. An active member of the community, the Striders is one of the largest, most involved clubs in the mid-Atlantic area. We sponsor or support many types of activities, including high quality race events, group runs at least three times a week, weekly series runs, and many activities to promote youth running in the community.



Mid-Maryland 50k – March 7, 2021

FROM THE EDITOR

Michelle Pelszynski, managing editor, newsletter@striders.net

Cover Photo: Scenes from the final curve of the 5.2-mile loop at Bullseye Running's Mid-Maryland 50k. Everyone was happy to be out and about at a live race, even the dog!



It's Spring and while this usually means our Striders are off to the races racing, this year feels different yet hopeful considering what we all have endured over the past 14 months. COVID-19 vaccinations are now available to anyone over the age of 16 years old here in Maryland, and smaller races have been able to offer in-person options like the Mid-Maryland 50k!

While virtual races have certainly kept us motivated, creating and crushing goals, and have allowed us to virtually connect with one another – I know we are ALL ready to be back at in-person events, seeing each other LIVE and celebrating our victories!

As the weather changes and we start to see more of each other, health and safety precautions are still strongly encouraged! Make sure you read all the way through this issue to learn about the good news. Hint, hint: it's in the Letter from the President.

The Striders training programs are in full swing with all the proper precautions and have been a tremendous success. Thank you to our volunteer coordinators, coaches, and participants for making it possible!!

As always I encourage all of you to share your stories! Please send them in to Newsletter@striders.net and feel free to include photos.

Stay healthy, and be kind - to others and, more importantly, yourself!

Michelle P.

Next issue of FOOTPRINTS is scheduled for July 2021. Til then, breathe deep and run light.

WHEN WILL IT BE SAFE TO RACE AGAIN?

Submitted by Amanda Loudin, The Half Marathoner, 3/17/21. Reprinted with permission of author.

Probably not until we reach herd immunity, but some race directors and runners are (cautiously) trying out small events – plus 7 stunning half marathons in Ireland.

Like most runners, Maryland-based Dave Krause, had not participated in a live race since February 2020, when he finally lined up for one a couple of weeks ago.

He had run two virtual races over the past year, but as any runner will tell you, there's nothing like the real deal. When local event organizer Bullseye Running announced a return of its annual 50K, Krause decided it was time to give racing a go again.

A combination of factors led to his resumption. “Until recently, I haven't felt comfortable being around people in any type of social or gathering environment,” he says. “Given the small number of people at the event, the fact that participants would have a mask, and that it was outdoors in the woods all helped.”

Additionally, Krause knew there was a nearby competing 10K event that would draw other runners away from this one. Also, there were no areas on the course where runners would be running toward each other, and Krause would be carrying all his own supplies. In addition, he had received one dose of vaccine prior to the race, lowering his COVID risk.

Krause falls in line with the sentiments of many runners when they consider how and when to get back to racing. A Running USA survey showed that 94 percent of runners were unable to participate in planned races in 2020.

Some 66 percent of survey participants, however, plan to be back in 2021 once a local event is available. Like Krause, an additional 20 percent want a vaccine before they return.

While situations will vary from one location to the next across the country, it's likely that most communities will have some live racing in 2021.

Every runner is different with what makes them comfortable in returning, but if you're on the fence, what factors should you consider? Is it ever safe to return to racing before we've reached herd immunity? Not surprisingly, opinions cover a wide spectrum.

Race day

Phil Lang is the race director for the Bullseye 50K that Krause participated in. It was the first race he's executed since last year. One of his first considerations in putting it on was checking with local gathering restrictions.

“The limit for outdoor gatherings in our county increased to 250 a couple of weeks before the race,” Lang explains. “The parks and rec department asked if we wanted to try to hold the event, so we decided to give it a shot.”

In a normal year, the 50K would have involved between 325 and 350 people racing, but Lang put a limit of 200 on this year's event, a combination of individuals and relay runners.

He staggered the start times and had 75 masked runners begin 30 minutes before the 25 relay team runners. He called runners to the start line just three minutes before go time, and had no post-race activities.

All of these steps fall in line with the guidance Running USA has assembled for those considering a return to a new normal of racing. "Expect that traditional festivities will be heavily limited or non-existent," say the guidelines. In addition, it adds that runners should come prepared to "BYOW" or bring your own water.

Lang drastically changed the food and water protocols for this year's 50K. "We usually have a smorgasbord at the aid stations but not this year," he says. "We sent emails warning that runners should bring their own."

Other recommendations from Running USA include limited packet pick up, having participants sign social contracts agreeing to the rules of the race, such as mask wearing or staying home if sick, and social distancing at the race site.

Is there such thing as safe?

Not everyone agrees that now is the time to try racing again. David Nieman, PhD, biology professor and director of the Human Performance Lab at Appalachian State University, says he would personally not toe a line just yet.

"I consider us in a transition zone right now," he says. "We're still quite limited in the number of vaccinations and we're not even close to herd immunity."

Nieman says that, to his way of thinking, there's no real way to mitigate risk in a race environment at the moment.

"I get the pain everyone is feeling from not racing, but this is a high-risk activity in groups," he says. "If you're downstream from someone, their high ventilation is coming your way, and if it contains virus, you're putting yourself at risk."

When you add in masks, time trial starts and small attendance numbers — as many races getting off the ground again in 2021 are doing — Nieman still shakes his head no.

"We know that four out of 10 people with COVID are asymptomatic, and with heavy breathing, the virus is spewing all over the place," he says. "If you're running behind someone, it's just too risky."

The pandemic has demonstrated that opinions on safe activities are all over the place. At the end of the day, everyone will have a different comfort level when it comes to returning to racing. CDC guidelines, local restrictions and vaccination status should all play a role in your decision making.

After the Bullseye 50K, Lang says that all the social media posts and emails that crossed his path were positive and that everyone paid attention to, and followed, the new protocols.

“It seems to me that those who are not comfortable with events won’t participate, but those who are will follow the rules because they know we can’t continue if they don’t,” he says. “I hope everyone remains cautious and responsible so that other events can take place.”

Krause doesn’t have any other live events planned at the moment, but was pleased with his first return to racing: “I think Bullseye did about as much as they could have done to keep people safe during any type of live event.”



Submitted by Clarese Astrin, social@striders.net

The Striders have been working with Feet First to come up with virtual social events, and looking ahead with the hope of having in person events in the near future! We have so many ideas that we can’t wait to share!

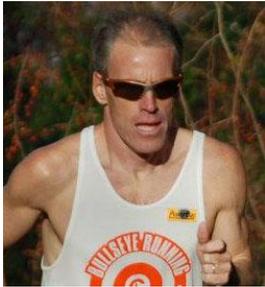
We had our first partner event in February - a “chat & shoe” during which Feet First shared information about four new running shoes that were recently released. It was a great interactive event, and Surena King won a new pair of shoes, provided by Feet First, in the evening’s shoe raffle!

In March, we hosted a Ladies Night In event with Feet First, which we introduced the new Brooks sports bra styles, and gave advice about fitting. We also heard from the Strider F.I.T. coordinators to learn about that great program.

We are looking forward to future events, and hope that we can socialize in person soon. If you have an idea for an upcoming social, feel free to reach out to social@striders.net! Keep your eye on the Striders Facebook page to stay in the know as events come up.

YOUTH PROGRAM UPDATE

Submitted by Coach Phil Lang



This Winter some high school kids resumed preparation for whatever was coming next. No one was sure if there would be any indoor track meets or even if the high schools plan to have a XC season in late Winter and early Spring would even happen. A new indoor track facility in Virginia Beach had some meets and a few kids decided to take advantage of the opportunity.

On March 6 at the AAU High School Elite Indoor Nationals Jaylen Myers was 22nd with a time of 24.83 in the 17-18 boys 200, Brooke Birkhead was 15th with a time of 2:38 in the 17-18 girls 800 and 15th in the 1500 with a time of 5:25, Mary Gorsky was 4th with a time of 2:27 in the 15-16 girls 800, Kendall Phillips was 7th with a time of 2:02 in the 17-18 boys 800 and 5th in the 1500 with a time of 4:12, Jakob Werdell was 17th with a time of 4:24 in the 17-18 boys 1500 and Agathe Yabit was 14th in the 17-18 girls long jump with a jump of 4.67 meters. What a great opportunity to get a competition in on the indoor track!

A few others made their way to beach on March 12-14 for the AAU Junior Olympic Indoor Nationals. Ethan Aidam was 3rd in the 15-16 boys 1500 with a time of 4:18 and 4th in the 3000 with a time of 9:15. Joey Raudabaugh was 3rd in the 17-18 boys 800 with a time of 1:57 and 3rd in the 1500 with a time of 4:03. Eian Butler was 24th in the 17-18 boys 800 with a time of 2:04. Aiden Neal was 2nd in the 17-18 boys 3000 with a time of 8:36.86. Baidy Ba was 1st in the 17-18 boys 3000 with a time of 8:36.36 while establishing a new meet record. Baidy, Eian, Aiden and Joey won the 17-18 boys 4x800 relay and set a new meet record with a time of 7:54. Five young men, eight races, ten medals, two meet records and lots of smiles!



So many coaches have worked with these kids from many different high schools over the last several months and now that they are finishing up their high school XC seasons and getting ready to start their track seasons we are seeing that their hard work has paid off. Best of luck the rest of the year!!!

Pictured on the left: Joey Raudabaugh, Baidy Ba, Aiden Neal, and Eian Butler.

Pictured on the right: Ethan Aidam.

UPCOMING STRIDER RACES

Submitted by Hafiz Shaikh

Spring Hops 5K

Spring Hops 5K scheduled for Sunday, April 25, 2021 and registration is open. We need 25-30 volunteers to put on the race. Please consider coming out to Red Sherman Brewery

Race webpage: <https://www.striders.net/spring-hops>

Volunteer sign-up:

<https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/1057022693819310081/false#/invitation>

Women's Distance Festival

The Striders' goal is to hold the race in June; however, the race will not take place at Howard Community College. Alternative sites are being developed.

RRCA 10 Mile Challenge

The Striders are working with the Howard County Police Department and the Community College to hold the race in September. We will share race details sometime during the summer.

TRAINING PROGRAMS UPDATES

Submitted by Rachel Sanborn

Next Steps training programs are off to a great start in 2021! Our 10k/10mile combo program started in March and the fabulous F.I.T. (Females in Training) program starts in April! Thank you to all our coaches and coordinators!!

Keep an eye out for registration for our summer programs: Next Step Half/Full and Next Step Zero to Weekly!

If you are interested in coaching either of these programs please reach out to Rachel Sanborn at rachel.sanborn@striders.net. To learn more about coaching check out our Info Session: <https://www.striders.net/training>.

Note: All safety protocols will be in place as mentioned below.

WELCOME 14 NEW MEMBERS SINCE 10/1/2020

Submitted by Cecilia Murach, membership@striders.net

Blair Beal	Mary Carole Jorgensen	Eli Snyder
Kaylee Beal	Tonii Khaled	Gabi Snyder
John Brass	Hannah Menendez	Jacob Snyder
Joan Chall	Julie Nichols	Nick Snyder
Victoria Glose	John Suess	Elena Talanova
Lauren Gastafson	April Snyder	
Cate Jorgensen	Conner Snyder	

If your Strider membership is up, please visit the Striders website to renew! We are hopeful for more events in 2021 and we want to make sure you are aware of them and receive the appropriate discount to those that offer that option.

WE OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Submitted by Phil Lang

It DOES take a village! We hope to see your name added to this Wall of Gratitude in the next issue!

We recognize that not all volunteers listed below are Strider members but we love you nonetheless! And if we inadvertently missed you in this issue, please [let us know!](#)

	Youth Program	FOOTPRINTS		Youth Program	FOOTPRINTS
Clarese Astrin		♥	Pattie Laun		♥
Rene Alonso		♥	Greg Lepore		♥
Bill Brown		♥	Amanda Loudin	♥	♥
Zack Dickerson	♥		Mack McLain	♥	
Debbie Ellinghaus	♥		Greg Orlofsky	♥	♥
Mark Gilmore	♥		Phil Rogers	♥	
Nick Kohout	♥		Brian Sivitz	♥	
Tiffany Lang	♥		Faye Weaver	♥	
Phil Lang	♥	♥	Michelle Weaver	♥	
Vicki Lang	♥				

BOARD BLATHER

Submitted by Bill Brown, secretary@striders.net



The HCS Board meets once a month to discuss club business. What exactly is club business? The newsletter's latest addition, Board Blather, is a quarterly recap intended to answer that very question.

2020—Fourth Quarter

I could start this edition by saying “Happy New Year” since this is the first Blather highlighting the work of the Board in 2021. As we look back at this first quarter I want to say thank you to those who have transitioned off of the Board and welcome as people start new roles. Speaking of new roles, I am now serving as Vice President but still acting Secretary and Pattie Laun is our new Secretary but Acting Treasurer. If you are interested in learning more about how you could become our new Treasurer, please reach out to me or Cecilia. Just when you think we could have run out of “firsts” for this Pandemic Year, we hosted our very first virtual Membership Meeting. We had outstanding participation from the Club using a Google Survey in order to vote on the Budget, elect the Board of Directors and receive feedback from you, our members. We then hosted a Facebook Live event to share the results and award prizes to those who participated.

As we continue to navigate this Pandemic, the Board has switched gears as we plan for the return of more in-person races and training programs. The Hibernation to 5K, our first in-person training program, kicked the year off and successfully navigated new procedures to ensure everyone's good health and safety. Because of this success we have also scheduled the 10k/10m Next Steps, F.I.T. and Next Steps Half/Full. We have continued planning for the Women's Distance Festival and Spring Hops. Our big news for this quarter is the return of the Bagel Run 7am Group Start, which has been on hiatus for over a year. The Board adopted guidelines from The Chicago Area Runners Association (CARA) and Road Runners Club of America (RRCA).

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Cecilia Murach, president@striders.net



Dear Striders,

Spring is finally here, and it seems it has come with some hope for reopening and a return to activities for our club! Many exciting things are happening, and I would like to mention a few:

So far in 2021, we have been able to host Next Step Programs Hibernation to 5K, and currently the 10K/10M program with limited number of participants and safety precautions in place. Due to Howard County Recreation and Parks restrictions on track use to High School team sports only, our permit to access the track for training programs was revoked – but, thanks to the creativity of our coaches and the flexibility of our participants, training has continued on the paths and roads! I want to commend our coordinators, coaches and participants for their dedication, enthusiastic participation and adherence to the safety protocols that have been put in place. We are looking forward to the F.I.T. program starting soon, and Half/Full Marathon program this Summer! Please join me in thanking Rachel Sanborn, our Special Programs Director, who has been spearheading the training program efforts, as well as coordinators Rene Alonso, Bill Arbelaez, Bill Brown and Faye Weaver. Additionally, I want to thank those who attended the Facebook live Coaches & Coordinators information session in March, and expressed interest in coaching and coordinating our Next Step programs!

For our club races, you might remember we were able to test the waters in November 2020 with a small, safe, Run through the Grapevine. We are so happy to be able to do that again for Spring Hops 5K coming up on April 25! Currently, we are also working with the County to gain permit approval to have the Women's Distance Festival in June, and the rescheduled RRCA 10 Mile Club Challenge in September. Additionally, our fingers are crossed that the Weekly Series will be returning soon, too! More to come on all of this – stay tuned on social media and keep an eye on keep your emails.

Finally, what we all have been waiting for, the announcement of a return to group runs! We are so pleased to be able to say that government restrictions being eased, together with vaccination availability and your safety procedure compliance, will make it possible for us to officially restart the Bagel Run! We will be officially returning to group runs with a special celebration on Saturday, April 17th. To allow for less crowding in the Bagel Run course, and take part of the 42nd Anniversary celebration of Feet First Sports, members will be able to run the traditional Bagel course, or the Feet First “Store-to-Store Challenge” and for those who complete the challenge will receive the traditional Feet First free anniversary shirt (while supplies last).

Our terrific Vice President Bill Brown has spearheaded the Board's effort to put together some safety guidelines for our club as we return to group runs, which we are asking all our members to please abide by. There are a few things I would like to highlight. First, **water will still NOT be provided**, so please, especially as the weather continues to warm up! Second, **physical distancing and mask wearing will still be in place at the start** – try not to congregate in front of the Swim Center entrance to allow CA patrons to enter and exit, and please attempt to spread out as much as possible. Third, if you can, **try to continue to stick to your pandemic “running pods.”** I know it is tempting to want to mingle with those you haven't seen in a while, but physically distance if and

when you do. We still want to be socially responsible and make sure that we are not contributing to the continuation of the pandemic, so please be safe and use your common sense. Finally, **please do not come to a group run if you are feeling unwell at all**, or if you think you may have been exposed to COVID-19. And of course, assess the risk to you personally of attending a group run, and do not participate if you know you are in a higher risk category or have any reservations about group runs.

Howard County Striders Group Run Guidelines*

The following advisements and expectations apply for all HCS group runs:

- Do not participate if you are feeling sick or ill, and or have a fever, or if you have been in contact with someone unrecovered from COVID-19.
- Persons from high risk groups for COVID-19 complications should consult their physician before participating.
- Do not engage in traditional forms of physical contact (hand shakes, high-fives, hugs, partner stretching, etc.).
- Do not engage in close group pictures/selfies. Always maintain social distance guidelines.
- Don't spit or "nose rocket" your nose in public – bring along tissues or a small towel or a hanky if you need to get rid of some snot during your run/walk. If you must spit, do so away from people and areas that will have foot traffic.
- Do not share personal items, such as hydration, energy gels, towels, etc.
- Participants are encouraged to wear a face covering. Masks or face covers should be required anytime persons cannot maintain social distance, or if local guidelines require.
- Howard County Striders will not be providing water on the Bagel course therefore participants should self-carry personal hydration (bottles/packs).
- Avoid gathering in a location that may cause conflict for others in the area, including businesses, customers, and residents.
- Never block entryways, sidewalks, trails, or access to bathrooms or fountains. Ensure that others have room to get past the group while maintaining social distance guidelines.
- As runners gather in their groups, they should maintain at least 6-feet of distance from each other.

**These guidelines are adapted from The Chicago Area Runners Association (CARA) and Road Runners Club of America (RRCA).*

One final warning I would like to add. If you do participate in the Bagel Run, keep your eyes out for the Volvo/Toyota Camry Lady on Running Brook. Several members have reported that she has reappeared again in the last few weeks. Please, if you do encounter her and are harassed by her and her vehicle, call 911 and stay on the spot to report it. I know this will inconvenience your run, but police have stressed to us that they are unable to do anything about these attacks unless the runners impacted stay on the scene, call 911, and wait until police arrives. If you are able to take a video or photo of the incident, even better! But please, please call 911 and wait on the scene. We hope that by reporting incidents, something can be done by police, before a tragedy happens. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

I want to end by thanking every one of you for your tremendous support, patience and compliance throughout this pandemic. The signs we are seeing of reopening are very hopeful, and I, like you, want to see them continue! Please know that, in all the decisions the Board has taken, we have

always prioritized the wellbeing and safety of our members, with a deep respect for the community that hosts us. We ask for your continued patience as we move forward. Much is still uncertain and progress may not always be linear, but thank you once again for trusting us to keep you safe as we slowly return to club activities.

I'm really looking forward to seeing you out on the roads very soon!

Stay healthy and run strong,
Cecilia Murach, President
Howard County Striders

2021 STRIDERS LEADERSHIP Board of Directors



2021 Board: Cecilia Murach (President), Bill Brown (Vice President), Pattie Laun (Secretary and Acting Treasurer), Caroline Bauer and Mark Buschman (Racing Team), Clarese Astrin (Social), Melinda Krummerich (Weekly Series), Hafiz Shaikh (Special Races), Rene Alonso (Communications), Rachel Sanborn (Special Programs), Greg Orlofsky (Youth Programs & Junior Striders).

Vacant: Membership & Volunteering, Treasurer