

Patsy Cantor Our New President

It was near the end of the dreaded 15 mile Bays Mountain race that I witnessed the real Patsy Cantor. Like everyone else I was ready for it to be over and then I saw Patsy. She had stopped to help Rick Stanley who was suffering from leg cramps. It shouldn't have been a surprise, for her life's calling is working in a nursing home where she gives help and hope to those who too often have been abandoned and forgotten. The following is Patsy's account of her life and running experience. As you can see, it hasn't always been easy, and she didn't even mention her time being homeless. We should be honored to have Patsy as our incoming president.

Patsy's Story

In response to your questions about my running story, I guess I can respond that I'm just an average runner and always have been. I enjoy running at night more than anything, or early morning when it is quiet and dark. I ran in the dark for 20+ years in the military but it was far from quiet; singing and chanting everywhere we went. I especially like days with snow, it's pretty, makes everything quiet, and it means that it's cold enough so that I don't sweat. You would think being raised in southern Louisiana that heat would be my thing but it isn't. I love living here in East Tennessee and couldn't go back down south to live.

I ran my first official 5K on Thanksgiving morning in 2004 just a few months after a divorce. It is still one of the hardest runs I've ever done, downhill switchbacks on a single track trail in the pouring rain wearing comfortable but definitely not running attire. It was the beginning of a whole new life and it probably saved my mind in that difficult time. Since then there are too many races to count. I ran my first marathon this year. Again I picked and awful steep muddy trail run. What was I thinking? I just wanted to see

if I could do it, in preparation for the race I really want to run this coming year, the 44th running of the Marine Corp Marathon. My lucky number is 44! I think I can do it in a much better time than the first one of just under 6 hours, that is if my knee will cooperate. I trained for 16 weeks last time, this time I'm doubling it in hopes I can increase mileage gradually enough to avoid injury.

When I was a kid I played many sports; basketball for 8 years, ran track for 6 years, and volleyball for 3 years. At my senior athletic banquet I received all district honors in only one sport, volleyball, and I'm 5 foot 3. I never played sports in college. I decided over time that I enjoyed solitary sports more than I did team sports which is probably why I returned to running. AND I love the track club! Where else can you find people just like you that don't judge you by your finish time but by your effort? I hope the track club is around for a very long time. It's one of the nicest things I've found anywhere.