

Dear Vigilante Runners,

July 3, 2018

People tend to assume that running, for all its health benefits, wreaks gradual havoc on your body. The typical story involves a long, losing battle with a creaky joint or stubborn ligament. “How are your knees?” is often the first question I get from well-meaning friends and family. But progress (or lack thereof) doesn’t move in a straight line.

My running career has proceeded in fits and starts, punctuated by typical overuse injuries, but whenever I return after a long break (say, a Montana winter), it’s like reuniting with an old friend whose sense of humor hasn’t changed. Last spring I found myself dusting off the cobwebs at Vigilante Stadium, thinking back on years I’ve run every week, and years I’ve hardly run at all. Having just overcome a bout of plantar fasciitis – and still fearing the next hard-to-pronounce affliction after another sedentary winter – I decided to set a goal and recommit to running. Finding renewed motivation in the routine and camaraderie of the Tuesday workouts, I missed only one, and posted my fastest mile since high school. Determined to maintain my progress, I kept running consistently this winter for the first time ever.

The Helena Vigilante Runners is an incubator for this kind of renewal. Whether it’s your first day out in years or your last workout leading up to a big race, the Vigilantes are always welcoming, encouraging and good-humored. There is simply no substitute for training regularly with a group of supportive people who offer encouragement, empathy, and sound advice. Whether checking in on that elusive and ever-changing “race pace,” or simply commiserating with other runners at an end-of-phase party, HVR makes running in Helena more fun and rewarding.

This year, HVR is once again offering an amazing lineup of events:

- **Junior Vigilantes.** Under the expert guidance of Jesse Zentz, the Helena Vigilante Youth Cross Country and Track Program continues to be popular and successful. The roster now includes roughly 100 young athletes, with a schedule that includes state, regional, and even national competitions.
- **Helena Elementary Area Track (HEAT) Meet.** This annual track & field meet for Helena’s 9, 10 and 11-year olds has proven incredibly popular, year after year. Thanks to Sean Connolly for inventing and overseeing this celebration of youth athletics!
- **Mount Helena Run.** One of Helena’s signature running events for many decades, the 9-kilometer Mount Helena Run marked its 42nd anniversary with another great race in 2017. In attendance were numerous members of the Burgess family – all relatives of Ben Burgess, the winner of the original 1916 event. Race director Erik Makus is laying plans for another beautiful 1,300-foot climb up Mount Helena on September 22nd!
- **Helena Sun Run.** The Sun Run is a 5-kilometer run and 1-mile walk and bicycle parade to support clean energy solutions in the Queen City. Conceived by Shiloh Hernandez, this event aims to support solar energy systems and awareness in Helena, and has so far raised more than \$25,000 for solar panels at the Lewis and Clark Library,

Holter Museum of Art, and Carroll College. This year's event will take place on October 6th!

- **Montana Cup.** Helena captured three of the four team titles at the 26th Montana Cup in Billings last year! The Helena bus is already reserved for this year's race, which will take place in Great Falls on October 27th. Under the fearless leadership of Pat Judge, Team Blue will again be ready to compete!
- **Speaking of Running.** In January, HVR kicked off this year's lecture series with a captivating presentation by Jason Mohr, member of the only NCAA cross-country team to ever win nationals with a perfect score. On July 19, Bill Schneider will discuss "Fifty Years of Running in Helena" at the Lewis and Clark Library. Thanks to Joel Harris for organizing these fun and interactive discussions!
- **Community Involvement.** In addition to sponsoring events and workouts of its own, the club provides input and assistance to other community partners. In the last year, HVR members have weighed in on local trail plans and the new athletic facility proposed by the Helena Regional Sports Association. HVR members also regularly help out with community events like the Governor's Cup.

But none of these opportunities are possible without the support of our members. As one of the few "dues-free" running clubs out there, HVR relies on voluntary contributions once a year to cover expenses for events, programs, equipment, website, insurance and more. Please consider making a \$50 contribution this year. Those who donate at least \$50 will receive this year's commemorative long-sleeve technical shirt featuring the Vigilante logo and a listing of classic Tuesday-at-Noon workouts, PLUS two pairs of Vigilante socks! Donations are tax deductible and may be mailed to HVR (P.O. Box 663, Helena, MT 59624), brought to a Tuesday workout, or submitted online using the new "Donate" button at <http://vigilanterunning.org/sample-page/supporting-hvr/>. Treasurer Ann Seifert will provide a receipt for tax purposes. On behalf of the HVR board and membership, thank you for your past and future support!

Please donate this year and join us for a workout or event soon. No matter where you currently fall on the running spectrum, from hesitant to over-achieving, there is a place for you among the Vigilante Runners of Helena.

Sincerely,

Jason Brown and the HVR Board of Directors:

*See next page to preview shirt & socks →*

