

HVR Course Guard Training with HPD Officer Tory Keltner
April 28, 2011

• Thank you for volunteering! The Helena Vigilante Runners and Montana Historical Society are very grateful for your assistance in the 2012 Vigilante Mile & 5k. Last year, we had a very helpful course guard training with the Helena Police Department, and notes from that meeting are included below. We hope that the following instructions will assist you in helping us to create a positive and safe race experience. Thanks again!

Pat Judge, race director, 459-5838, pljudge@bresnan.net

- if possible, course guards should bring the following items to their location:
 - bright orange vest that will set you apart -- contact Pat
 - stop sign if available -- contact Pat
 - cell phone
 - for emergencies, call 911
 - for other incidents requiring police assistance, call 442-3233
 - to communicate with “race headquarters,” call Jeff Thomas at 443-6120
 - notepad & pen
 - write your location at the top, so if there’s an emergency, you can reference it
 - basic first-aid kit
 - a couple of bottles of water & granola bars, for yourself or for runners in trouble
 - a race map that you can show motorists, to help explain what’s going on
 - a small flashlight that can be waved at motorists to get their attention early on

- volunteers should be at their posts by 9:00 am -- Todd Younkin will “pre-sweep” the course to check-in with the volunteers and make sure everything is ready to go -- it’s a good idea to travel to your location before race day and orient yourself -- make sure you know where “North” is, and familiarize yourself with nearby landmarks (such as the Capitol, Governor’s mansion, hospital, etc.) -- this will help you if you have to give a report to a police officer about an incident (e.g. “the vehicle is proceeding North on Sanders toward Safeway”)

- two tall cones should be waiting at most every intersection -- when the lead cyclist is visible, the cones should be dragged into the roadway to block traffic from coming onto the race course (i.e. you should block the streets that are perpendicular to the race course) -- most of the traffic will probably be coming from “outside the perimeter,” but there will definitely be cars coming from within as well -- vehicles should also be discouraged from traveling along the race route itself (i.e. parallel to runners)

- stand in the middle of the roadway where you are most visible, but also be sure to have a “safe place” identified that you can go to, to protect yourself

- when runners become visible within a half-block, stop each vehicle and, if possible, talk with the drivers to explain the situation -- thank them for their patience in waiting, or explain alternate ways to get around the perimeter of the race, or -- if there is a break and you do allow them to pass through -- places where they can expect to be stopped again

- when stopping vehicles, use the sign (if you have one) and also hold up your other hand prominently, in the universal stop gesture -- in general, use big gestures when directing traffic -- we have 10 signs, which should be enough to cover the busiest intersections (make sure you pay attention to your sign -- if you can see “STOP” they are looking at “SLOW” :)

- during breaks between runners, don’t allow a whole horde of cars to rush through -- it’s better to stop each vehicle and speak with the drivers

- runners / walkers have the right-of-way in this event -- the safety of the pedestrians is paramount
- be pleasant, but not a pushover -- you may need to be assertive -- don't hesitate to call the police if a problem develops -- write down the license plate if possible, and a description of the vehicle
- early on a weekend day, we shouldn't have too many problems -- Helenans are used to races, and are generally pretty supportive -- but realize that from their perspective, this is not their top priority and it represents a bit of an inconvenience -- for our short, somewhat small race, the delay should be minimal even if they have to wait for the whole field to pass by (officer Keltner put it in the context of a typical train crossing)
- if you encounter a lost child, or other person in need of aid by the police, try to take down their name, address, phone number, and date of birth
- know the route, so you can help ensure that race participants stay on course -- each race consists of a single, counter-clockwise loop -- this means that participants will generally be on the left side of the road, in accordance with the general "rule of the road" whereby runners & walkers are facing any potential traffic
- seasoned course guards Todd & Steph Younkin emphasized the following points:
 - stay alert at all times! motorists may be coming from all directions simultaneously (don't get caught up in watching the race)
 - try to get their attention early -- avoid surprising them
 - communicating with people helps a lot
- following the race, cones should be dragged off the street & onto a corner, where they will be picked up -- vests and stop signs should be returned to "race headquarters" at the Capitol
- Again, thank you for your help! We're looking forward to a fun and successful event. Please contact Pat if you have any questions -- pljudge@bresnan.net, 459-5838