



Helena Vigilante Runners, Inc.

Promoting health, fitness, and community through group training runs, races, and events in the greater Helena area.

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June 22, 2019

Greetings Vigilantes, and Happy Birthday!

In January, Helena Vigilante Runners (HVR) celebrated its 10-year anniversary as an officially incorporated entity. We have YOU, our members, to thank for the many successes we've had along the way. Since our last update 12 months ago, Vig has been busy! Here are some of the more notable activities and achievements:

- HVR hosted the 51st edition of "The Augúst—Montana's Second-Oldst Footrace" at the spectacular Tenmile Creek Park. The new "trail run" format attracted the second-largest field ever, and raised \$1,200 for area high school cross-country teams.

- Later that month, under the leadership of board members Beau Downing and Jason Brown, HVR rolled out "Thursday-at-5:45 Trails" to complement "Tuesday-at-Noon Intervals." Now members have TWO opportunities to run together each week, with the addition of this fun and convenient after-work option showcasing Helena's world-class trails.

- In September, 65 runners accepted the challenge of racing up and down 1,300 vertical feet in the 43rd annual Mount Helena Run. Board member Erik Makus deserves credit for his outstanding work as race director, four years running!

- The 4th annual Helena Sun Run saw record turnout, including a throng of enthusiastic Carroll College students eager to see solar panels on their campus center. The event raised \$7,850 toward a 38-kilowatt system, which was installed and energized late last fall. Many thanks to our irrepressibly energetic and optimistic board member and race director Shiloh Hernandez!

- "Team Blue" competed admirably in the 27th Montana Cup Cross-Country Championship in Great Falls, capturing both the men's and women's master's team trophies and missing the men's open title by a single point. Helena also had two individual champions (Jesse Zentz in the master's division, and Jonah Fisher in the junior division). In 2018, with the retirement of race founder Ray Hunt, HVR stepped up its role in the administration of this classic Montana event.

- In November, HVR staged the USATF Junior Olympic Cross-Country State Championship (JOXC) for the first time. An impressive 167 participants representing six Montana communities competed at Bill Roberts Golf Course. The event also included a 5k "Vigilante Fall Classic" race for adults. HVR Youth Director Jesse Zentz expertly orchestrated the meet, which had been held in Bozeman for many years.

- Jesse also deserves credit for spearheading the major rebranding of HVR's youth programs. "Helena Novas XC TF" officially came into existence on February 18, 2019, with approval of the logo and singlet designs the following month. A committee of board members, parents, coaches, and young athletes settled on "Novas" as the perfect name to celebrate Helena's "bright young stars." A 4-by-8-foot Novas stadium sign appeared next to the Vigilante sign just in time for the Divisional track meet in May. The Novas program is exploding in popularity (100+ athletes!).



• And speaking of youth track, board member Sean Connolly welcomed 133 determined athletes to the 7th Annual HEAT Meet this May. The weather cooperated, the kids competed hard, and the smiles were infectious!

HVR is eager to build upon these programs, but relies on essential support from its members to do so. The first way to help is to volunteer at one or more Vigilante events each season (but only if *not* participating—running is always the first priority!). Volunteering is a truly fun and satisfying way to give back to the sport we all love.

Second, while there is no charge to be a member of the club, we do ask for once-a-year donations during our summer fundraising campaign. This year's fundraising target is \$6,000, and donors at the \$50+ level will receive a highly stylish and super comfortable Vigilante jacket (see below) as a token of our appreciation.

Thank you for participating in the club, and for all you do to support the cause!

Sincerely,

The HVR Board of Directors:

Patrick Judge (President), Jeff Thomas (Vice President), Sarah Urban (Secretary), Ann Seifert (Treasurer), Julie Ackerlund, Jason Brown, Sean Connolly, Beau Downing, Joel Harris, Shiloh Hernandez, Erik Makus, Christy Stergar, Emily Thiessen, Lila Thomas, Jesse Zentz

***The 2019 promotional item is the stylish and comfortable Vigilante jacket, available in men's and women's sizes (XS, S, M, L). It's our way of thanking our donors at the \$50+ level. Wear it with pride! (Note that Sport-Tek men's sizes run big, so be sure to try it on first. You will likely want to size down.)**

