



Helena Vigilante Runners, Inc.

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

PO Box 663

Helena, MT 59624

www.vigilanterunning.org

November 12, 2019

Greetings Vigilantes,

A heartfelt thank you to you, our members, for another successful and exciting season! Despite some notable challenges (including the weather!), the Vigilantes rallied to make 2019 another year filled with accomplishments and memories. Here are a few of the highlights:

- the rebranded "Helena Novas" youth program reached even greater heights of popularity (150 in track, 65 in XC) and performance
- the 16th season of Tuesday-at-Noon workouts averaged 40 Vigers per week
- in just its 2nd season, the Thursday-at-5:45 trail runs hosted 30 workouts
- the 7th annual HEAT Meet attracted 133 youth, and had great weather!
- the 52nd Augúst Trail Race again raised \$1,200 for local high school cross-country programs
- the 44th Mount Helena Run continued its upward swing in attendance, with 73 finishers enjoying ideal fall racing conditions
- the 5th annual Sun Run raised \$15,000 in match-funding for solar projects at Helena's new elementary schools
- the 2nd annual Junior Olympics State XC Meet drew 165 young runners!

We at "Vigilante World Headquarters" are continually humbled by the energy and positivity of our group, and hope you feel the same!

As we plan for 2020, the board is committed to carrying these established programs and events forward, while also looking for new ways to innovate. Toward this end, we recently completed a review of club governance policies, and approved a new set of Bylaws for the organization. The original Bylaws were adopted in 2009, and hadn't been updated since. The new Bylaws were modeled largely after the template provided by Road Runner Clubs of America (RRCA), of which we are a member.

The major focus of these revisions was to enact clearer membership rights and responsibilities. For example, for the first time, the membership will be directly electing its board of directors (after a nominating period open to any member in good standing). This change will make the club more democratic in nature, and also conforms to the standard approach used by most member-based non-profits, including other RRCA clubs.

Also for the first time, the club will assess regular membership dues (collected through runsignup.com), again in accordance with the typical practice of member-based non-profits and RRCA-affiliated clubs. This is an important change that deserves some explanation.

Thus far, the club has been able to operate on a "free-membership" basis, relying on optional donations through the summer fundraising drive. For a number of reasons, the board feels this system is no longer ideal.

Not everyone is aware that the club incurs costs for every member on its rolls (insurance for group workouts, etc.), but only receives support from a portion of those members. Of the 200+ subscribers to "vig", about 80 participate in the fundraiser, and at varying levels (e.g. the five largest donations account for fully one-third of all dollars raised). While HVR will continue to gratefully accept larger donations from those who can afford them, moving to a system whereby everybody chips in a modest minimum seems to us more equitable.

The initial dues established by the board will be \$25 for a 12-month rolling individual membership (Helena Novas fees will continue to be collected separately).^{*} This amount was arrived at after reviewing dues assessed by HVR's peer-group clubs, both in Montana (Run Wild Missoula, Yellowstone Rim Runners, Big Sky Wind Drinkers) and elsewhere (Bloomsday Road Runners Club, Team Run Boise, High Plains Harriers, Pikes Peak Road Runners, etc.).

In addition to helping make all of our programs and events possible, your new membership will come with the following benefits:

- **commemorative Vigilante gloves to the first 100 to renew!**
- subscription to the "vig" listserv
- RRCA membership, newsletter, and insurance coverage
- 30+ Tuesday-at-Noon interval workouts, "Vig credits" and Centurion Club
- 30+ Thursday-at-5:45 group trail runs
- 15% discounts on race registrations for:
 - Governor's Cup (thank you BCBS!)
 - August Trail Race
 - Mount Helena Run
 - Sun Run
 - XC Fall Classic
- club socials
- merchant discounts, starting with 10% off at Universal Athletic

We hope you find these changes worthwhile and reasonable, and that we can continue to count on your support as a member of the Helena Vigilante Runners. Thank you for participating in the club, and for all you do to support the cause! If you have any questions, please let us know.

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

**Applications for "financial hardship waivers" will be considered by the board on a case-by-case basis.*