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“You know, this is a race, right? Shouldn’t you get going?”

Sunday, March 24, 2013

That was the advice of an 8 year old volunteer to 2 “ultra” runners who were lingering at our aid station. It was an “ultra” (50k) trail race on Terrapin Mountain yesterday.

For “ultra” events (greater than marathon distance), the aid stations are well stocked with high calorie foods to fuel the runners in such a grueling event. In addition to the distance (30 miles in this case), the change in elevation is significant. It’s a MOUNTAIN!

My daughter (Hayburner on SP) was the station captain and organized our team of 10 volunteers who ranged in age from 6 to 65 (me). She’s a veteran ultra runner, but not participating this year. We were all first time volunteers.

We were all set up before the 7 am start. It was about 24* but a beautiful sunrise.



That’s my daughter and granddaughter on the right.

Notice that along with water and sports drinks, bananas, oranges, sandwiches and crackers, there was an ample supply of candy and cookies, chips, pretzels and goldfish. Aid stations must provide other necessities as well for an endurance race like this – bandaids, aspirin, even toilet paper.

It was also our job to record each racer’s number and time as they ran by. When you’re out in the forest, it’s important to confirm that no one has disappeared from the course.

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The runners came by our station twice at 7.2 and at 13.3 miles. The last person checked in at 10:45. By the time we packed up to leave, it was still below freezing. The runners still had 17 miles to go.

It was a very cold 4 hours for us even when wearing lots of layers but a wonderful experience. Ultra runners are the happiest, friendliest people. Everyone thanked us for coming out to support them and they all seemed to be having such a good time.

As for the 2 recipients of the 8 year old's advice, they laughed and accepted her concern in the spirit in which it was offered.

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DR1939

What a fun thing to do.
3003 days ago



KELLIEBEAN

What a great experience. Thanks for sharing.



3004 days ago



-SHOREIDO-

Loved this blog! It provided a great "prep" description" Kinda like being there along with ya feeling.

Loved the "You know this is a race" humor too!!!
Thanks for sharing!!



ginny
3004 days ago



CELIAMINER

Volunteers are golden! We put on a walking event each year that has a 42K distance one day and a 32K distance the next (in addition to 5/10/20K distances). It is SO hard to get volunteers, and the long distances have relatively few people, so the volunteers can go a long time between passing participants. Thank you for being among those willing to make it a good day for the participants.

3004 days ago



AUSFAM

Great post! Looks like an awesome event to volunteer for--I can't imagine running in the mountains: so beautiful, yet so challenging! :)

3004 days ago



GINIEMIE

Sounds like you have some runners responding. I think it's great that you and your family do this, especially when it is so unbelievably cold for a race.

Nice pic too!



3004 days ago



SLIMMERJESSE

Wow, setting up early in the cold temps - that's real dedication from a volunteer! Very cute photo.

3004 days ago





CD5500762



3004 days ago



SOPHIEDO13



Those 8 yr olds !! Out of the mouths of babes. Glad you had a fun time.
3004 days ago



WILSONWR



Sounds like a great experience for both the participants and the volunteers!
3004 days ago



SLENDERELLA61



What a great blog!! Thanks for vounteering and being one of those people who makes events like this possible. Happy Running!! Spark On!
3004 days ago



CD4501477



Whew, makes me tired just thinking about it.
3004 days ago



ANNIEONLI



So cool!!! Wish I had the support on my little 5K yesterday!!!



3004 days ago



COCK-ROBIN



Great story!
3004 days ago



ONEKIDSMOM



If it were not for volunteers we would not be able to have distance events. Thank you and your daughter and granddaughter for giving back!
3004 days ago



BIGBEAROHYEAH



Great story thank you for sharing!
3004 days ago

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