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## My virtual motivation

*Friday, November 13, 2020*Voted Featured Blog Post  
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This is a quilt I made for my daughter many years ago. When she was a college freshman, she ran her first marathon at the urging of her older sister. She won her age group and her time qualified her to run the Boston Marathon. That was 1990. She continued distance running and each year her time qualified her for Boston. However, she did not travel to compete there until 1996

1996 was the 100th anniversary of that iconic race. There were 44,000 participants.



She had run track and cross country in high school, but was never a team "star" Yet she liked it and kept running on her own. Her longest race before her first marathon was 10 miles.

I accompanied her to Boston in 1996 – a memorable experience for both of us. Afterwards I decided to make this quilt of some of her race T-shirts. I began with the motto from her HS cross country team:  
"The Race is Not Always to the Swift...but to Those Who Keep on Running"

I included the logo of her gym at Virginia Tech where she met her future husband while they were both pumping iron. The final addition was the logo of the 100th running of the Boston Marathon.

My last blog was about my challenge of decluttering. This quilt is not part of it. Karen already has it. It's all about the effect of her experience on me.

When she joined her HS team, I decided to see how far I could run. I had always been active and fit – walking, biking, aerobics and a gym membership since she was a baby. Anybody remember Spa Lady?

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My attempt at running lasted exactly 15 SECONDS. Karen encouraged me and helped me to improve by baby steps. Run 15 seconds, walk 4:30 and repeat until 30 minutes. Add 15 seconds to the run interval each week and decrease the walk accordingly. It took 6 months but I ran my first 5k in 30:30. You always remember your “first time,” right?

I never did get much faster and certainly never won anything, but I did collect a lot of race T-Shirts.

I thought one day I might make a quilt for myself and saved several of the prettiest, most memorable ones. Most I just wore every day after work to workout or to relax at home.

Then a strange thing happened. As the years went by and I kept running, suddenly I was winning age group awards. There were ribbons, medals, mugs with the race date, a terrific beer stein and even trophies. After retirement I added more and displayed them.

Remember I had never won anything in my younger days. I joke that these are my “longevity awards.” They are now part of my “clutter”



Covid put an end to racing as well as our travels.

I did continue to run minimally to keep up a basic level of fitness.

Local races are always done for charity. Sparkers Slenderella and Onekidsmom blogged about participating in some virtual and socially distanced events.

OK, I can compete virtually – mostly with myself. Why not?

The organizers even sent me T-shirts



Virtual award certificates take up less room especially when digital and will not have to be “decluttered”

## 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Bridge 2 Bridge – Danville

### Going Virtual!

This Certificate Is Presented To

**EILEEN BACKOFEN**

First Place Female 70 And Over

**VIRTUAL 5K RUN OCTOBER, 2020**



For the record there were only 2 of us in that age group.

Then there is this event.

If you saw me in this shirt, wouldn't you think I was one tough old lady?



Maybe you wouldn't read the small print on the back

"One hundred miles or more in 100 days"

If you have read this far, thank you.

Shout out to Alicia323 whose accomplishment also gave me the final push to start supporting these local events. Look at her cool award!

[www.sparkpeople.com/mypage\\_public\\_journal\\_individual.asp?blog\\_id=6714558](http://www.sparkpeople.com/mypage_public_journal_individual.asp?blog_id=6714558)

Note: this blog is not about encouraging anyone to run. Remember, the best exercise is one you enjoy doing and will continue to do. There are plenty of alternatives out there.

Note #2: The wedding gown photos in my "awards" picture is my mom in 1943 described in my blog of Nov 6th and DD Hayburner1969 in the same gown that I had restored in 1992 when she got married. She was the only family member petite enough to wear it, but had to buy another since a gown worn in November in the mountains of PA was way too warm for an August wedding in VA.

We had a studio portrait done anyway since I used the 2 photos for the album covers of the 5 decades of photos I made for my parents' 50th wedding anniversary.

Edit: I edited a bit from the first version just to clarify the dates in the blog.

[Edit Blog Entry](#) | [Delete Blog Entry](#)

## Member Comments About This Blog Post



**PAULALALALA**

Love your 'award station' -- not clutter -- they're things that bring back memories and make you happy and proud when you look at them. I made similar T-shirt quilts for my sons, too.

204 days ago



**MORTICIARAVYNN**



204 days ago



**LINDA!**

I was also a Spa Lady member in the 70s. It was a good place to go to. Love the quilt. I think it

is great that you have the event tee shirts. I would be proud.

205 days ago



**BEESHELL8**

Great blog as always. I participated in one virtual event, similar to your Roanoke one! It was for the Western States 100 mile endurance run - a big event around here for ultra runners. I've participated in it in support ways - crewing runners, working aid stations - it is an amazing event to be a part of. So I supported it in the same way - only way I'm running that race is to do it over time! Love the quilt and your memories of your daughter and your experiences.

By the way. One of my favorite stories of yours you may not remember. You commented on my blog about how you asked your husband to take your picture as you crossed a finish line - he was eating at the finish - he said he did, but he took a picture of someone else! When I think of this, it always cracks me up.

205 days ago



**MARTHA324**

Wow! 100 miles in 100 days ....see I read to the end.

Runny always appealed to me in theory and I did run for awhile by found that I just didn't like it as much as other things and it's true. the best exercise is one that you will do. Never get rid of all those awards.



205 days ago



**SUNNYBEACHGIRL**

I have kept the tshirts from my daughter and a quilt would be a fun thing to make.

205 days ago



**THOMS1**



Love the quilt!

205 days ago



**NANCY-**

Love "The Race is Not Always to the Swift...but to Those Who Keep on Running"

Love the quilt.

You are amazing!



206 days ago



**1DAY-ATA-TIME**

Awesome and inspiring story. Thanks for sharing.

Ninety percent of my t-shirts are from races I ran. Like you, the older I get the more awards I won; almost always finishing in the top three in my age group. Alas, a severe back injury ended my running days but I still have the memories.

206 days ago



**PLCHAPPELL**

Fun





206 days ago



**PHATPAT18**

What an inspiring story.  
206 days ago

v



**KITTYHAWK1949**

  
206 days ago

v



**AZMOMXTWO**

way to go  
206 days ago

v



**HARRIETT14**

Don't worry, I couldn't run if my life depended on it.  
206 days ago

v



**NANANANA**

I love your daughter and I love her quilt. My son is about her age. When I had a total hysterectomy he used 'sneaky' techniques to get me moving. I took a book and rode with him to the Y. Spent a minute or 2 on the treadmill. Each trip he had to park further away 'because there isn't anything closer'. By the end of 5 weeks, I was doing 30 minutes on the treadmill and hadn't realized I was increasing my activity so gradually.

My only 5-K was a blended prediction or run race. Having just donated blood, I opted for prediction. The other 2 women in my age group also went prediction. They could have won the run and I could have won prediction. I was still pleased to finish in 45 minutes.

207 days ago

v



**SCDALYNCH**

That quilt is a wonderful way to keep memories alive. Glad to hear you are still active. My life was at a standstill until we moved to build a house next to my daughter's home. She calls after work and we walk her dogs every evening and during the day on weekends.

207 days ago

v



**OVERWORKEDJANET**

Yes, Ace motivated me too and I completed my extra 100 miles (walking) in 69 days. The tally is carrying on and I hope to get 200 by the end of this mess of a year!

I love your mojo over the years. Keep it up!



207 days ago

v



**SWEETNEEY**

beautiful memories  
207 days ago

v



**LIS193**

Wonderful memories!  
207 days ago

v



**JERICO1991**

Connections...Boston is my favorite city since I grew up 16 minutes north of there in the suburbs. Teenage friends from my town would run in the Marathon in the 60s & 70s before qualifying was necessary. NYC 2nd favorite and Chicago (currently live about 130 miles from there) 3rd. My uncle was a professor at Virginia Tech. He is now retired and was driving a public bus near there until COVID. We have been having a family reunion at a beautiful VA state park close to Tech on odd numbered years. Hope we are able to again in 2021. Usually had to book our cabin 1 year in advance.

207 days ago

v



**MARYJEANSL**

They may be clutter, but it's at least clutter you can be very proud of! I love the quilt, too - that must have taken you many hours.

207 days ago

v

v

**MJREIMERS**

I can relate to the running t-shirts. I love your blog! Keep doing what you love to do.  
207 days ago

**DOVESEYES**

I love that all these can be passed on and make a wonderful heritage for those who come after :) a positive family heritage :)  
207 days ago

**QUARTERMASTER3**

207 days ago

**ALEXSGIRL1**

lovely keepsake way to go hugs  
207 days ago

**MORTICIAADDAMS**

Loved this! Especially that wonderful quilt. Awesome gift to pass down generations.  
207 days ago

**CD4114015**

You are so talented in all areas of your life!  
207 days ago

**CD18090386**

job on the quilt. A great way to save memories without cluttering up the house. I gotta look into some of the local events coming in the spring that just might be going virtual. Good way to inspire!  
207 days ago

**CHAYOR73**

Wonderful memories with such a beautiful plan!!  
207 days ago

**HAYBURNER1969**

I laughed out loud several times - like "there were only 2 in my age group"

My sister has definitely been an inspiration for my own fitness journey, too! I think, "I've got to at least have SOME of the same genes!"  
207 days ago

**NANASUEH**

How fun! Quilts are a great "scrapbook".



207 days ago

**PHEBESS**

I've walked a variety of 5K "runs" - and yes, I just walk. Though one I came in first in my age group, LOL! Like you, I wear the tees for a while - I love the idea of turning them into a quilt!!!

If you ever get a chance, go for a Color Run - at every 1k marker, they have people who throw powdered paint on you! Absolutely crazy fun!!!! I think that was my personal favorite (for obvious reasons).  
207 days ago

**WATERMELLEN**

Such a fun blog -- it's great to read about your daughter's quilt and your own awards too. And yes: the virtual certificates will result in less "clutter"!!

208 days ago



**RAZZOOZLE**

v



Such a great idea to make a quilt.  
208 days ago



**ONEKIDSMOM**

v

Like you, my medals and shirts over the years became clutter. I now have a bed (in the guest room) covered in medals. After MOBYCARP passed away, his daughter discovered that he had enough medals to have made into FIVE windchimes. One for herself, one for each of his sisters. The pandemic has slowed the manufacture of these keepsakes, but my non-sparking sister already has hers. I got to choose which of his medals will go in mine, and I will cherish it when eventually it comes. Perhaps more because of the wait!



It's amazing how going through clutter stirs up the memories and the love, isn't it?  
208 days ago



**75HEALTHYME**

Thank you for sharing.

v

208 days ago



**QUILTYENGINEER**

v

How nice! If you wanted to declutter all those keepsakes and awards, perhaps you could take pictures of them first.



And that's a wonderful quilt. One of these days I will make a T-shirt quilt from my husband's running days. He ran a lot of the Virginia 10-Milers.

208 days ago



**2BDYNAMIC**

v

First, Amazing quilt and such wonderful memorabilia! ..  And  to Your daughter for running her 1st marathon And qualifying for the Boston marathon! On the 100th Anniversary no less!! .. I love their Motto From her HS cross country team: " The race is Not always to the swift...

But to those who keep on running! " ....  To you too For running your 1st 5k in 30:30.

As they say, " The apple doesn't fall far from the tree! .. Great job for both mother and daughter! ...



208 days ago

Comment edited on: 11/13/2020 10:56:51 AM



**INCH\_BY\_INCH**

v



208 days ago



**WHILLSW**

What a wonderful memory for both of you.....how nice....



208 days ago



**RUTHIEBEAR**

v



What an inspiration to keep working at it! Thank you! SOmetimes I feel like I

am pitiful in my attempts at fitness. You have done amazing things!  
208 days ago



v





**GOLFGMA**

Wonderful blog. Keep running!  
208 days ago



**SUSIEMT**

How wonderful you were to make that quilt for DD! And talented!  
208 days ago



v



**JEANNESPARK**

Amazing quilt and other memorabilia! A lot of memories there.  
I can see why it would be difficult to get rid of these!  
Very inspiring blog, thanks!

208 days ago

v



**NASFKAB**

What a lovely keepsake. Way to go  
208 days ago

v



**GRANDMA524DAR**

208 days ago



v



**MAMIEALLIE**

I think the quilt is absolutely beautiful! Now that is a wonderful way to make an important  
keepsake! I love the way you kept all the awards. Keep running  
208 days ago



v

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