

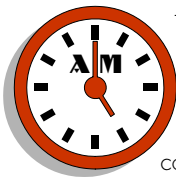
APRIL - MAY 2010

ClubNews

LITTLE ROCK ATHLETIC CLUB



THE (BEFORE) BREAKFAST CLUB by Pat Riley, Jr.



They come every day - rain or shine, snow or fog, dark (usually) or light, sleepy or wide awake. They are the picture of dedication, consistency and 'can do' spirit.

It's an elite group in numbers but absolutely everyone is welcome to join in the fun. There's no entrance exam, secret handshake or background check required - all one needs to become a member of this "A" team is the ability to get out of bed early. Really early.

Monday thru Friday the Club opens at 5:00 a.m. and believe it or not, every day there's a group of twenty or more people queued up to rush in as soon as beloved staff members Derek and Mitzi unlock the door. On an average day, about 100 members check in to the Club before 6:00 a.m. This column is dedicated to those proud and few who have made it a way of life to exercise at the LRAC in the wee hours of the morning.

To shed some light on how and why these members exercise when they do, we sent out a questionnaire to a representative sample (see summary chart on page two). As you might expect, this is a subset of members who have a lot in common. For one thing, they mostly go to bed early so they can get up early. They are also mostly busy professionals with demanding careers who greatly value the benefits of exercise and know that first thing in the morning is their best bet to "get it done".

The number one answer for "why" they exercise in the morning was "it's a great way to start your day." Many of the respondents also spoke of the high energy they feel from working out early - energy that stays with them throughout their workday. Also, since the Club is relatively empty at this hour, everyone's favorite piece of equipment is always available.

The morning group, limited as they are in numbers, forms something of a club within the Club. Like citizens of a small town, most of them know each other if not by name, at least by sight. It is a group that long time regular Aaron Lubin calls "upbeat and positive" and who move with a sense of purpose to accomplish the

task at hand. They also share, as Dr. Tom Badger put it "a weird sense of commitment" that he really appreciates.

In some cases this micro-clubbiness is overt - such as the 'regulars' who attend Kris Mougeot's group exercise classes. Kris teaches every morning at 5:45 a.m. and has done so for years. Many of her students have been coming to her class(es) for years and over time they have become close. This group even gets together outside of the Club, which reinforces their affection and connection with each other.

The members we interviewed frequently pointed to this sense of "community" that motivates them to show up and adds to the positive feelings they have about this daily ritual. Some of their stories are particularly poignant.

Sue Tull is a case in point. A Senior Vice President at Twin City Bank, Sue has been an early morning regular at the Club for more than ten years. Ten months ago Sue lost her 21-year-old son, Jake, to cardiac arrest - the result of an undetected enlarged heart. Jake had been in Africa doing field study and Sue was visiting him when it happened. Thousands of miles from home, in shock and disbelief, Sue had to cope with every parent's worst nightmare.

Contending with this tragedy hasn't been easy but Sue credits the LRAC community with helping her: "The LRAC and especially instructors Kris, Betsy, Barbara and David got me through the first few months after Jake's death. They knew I needed to sweat, burn, hurt and not think of my terrible loss for at least an hour a day and they did their best to get me there. The instructors, as well as many of the participants, have become a close circle of friends with whom I have developed an incredible bond. The LRAC is so much more than a fitness center for me, it is a community of caring people that have a similar philosophy on life, health and a passion to always be a better person."

There's something about the early morning experience that can be life changing in ways that are hard to describe but are felt by many. It's an energy and passion for life that comes perhaps from going against the grain -

leaving a warm bed to get the heart pumping and muscles burning - while most of the world is still asleep. Just showing up is an accomplishment, which rewards the participant with a jolt of energy that can be savored all day.

Stephen's attorney David Prince started coming in the mornings after admitting to a friend that he missed more days than he made when he used to try and workout in the afternoon. The friend, a regular in the morning, told him "set your alarm clock, brush your teeth, put on your gym clothes and just go - no one cares what anyone looks like." He tried it for six weeks and was hooked. Now, David who comes every day at opening, wants to pass on his experience to others: "If you haven't tried it, be there when the Club opens up at 5 - commit for one month. You will enjoy being around all the great people, the early classes (which are the best) and you will leave with a clear head, feeling you have gotten your day off to a terrific start!"

Note from Pat: I had wanted to write an article on the early morning group for years but felt like I couldn't because I had so seldom been at the Club in the early morning. That changed with my current tour of all the group exercise classes. Over the past six weeks I've been to about ten early morning classes and can confirm the good feelings and high energy of which the regulars speak. It may not be for everyone but if you're in a rut and want to try something radical and completely new - give it a try - it just might change your life!





breakfast club sampling

Name	Days/Wk (M-F)	For How Long	Bedtime (all p.m.)	Wake Up Time (all a.m.)	Profession	Comment about Why You Exercise before Work
Alman, Larry	5	21 years	10:30	5:00	Business Owner	What I enjoy most are the friendships and people I've met. Through early morning exercise I've made life-long friends.
Badger, Thomas	5	21 years	9:00	2:00-3:00	Neuroendocrinologist	If I don't get it done early it doesn't get done. I also like the other people there, they have this weird sense of commitment.
Bienvenu, Jim	5	off and on 20 years	9:00	4:30	Financial Advisor	It's a GREAT way to start my day. It energizes me for the rest of the day.
Cantrell, Mary	5	15 years	9:00	5:00	Medical Educator	The best thing is that there is a real community of people there that depend on each other.
Esmailpour, Elliot	5	7 months	9:00-9:30	4:30	Director of Engineering	Started with the goal of losing weight but now I like it because it energizes me for most of the day.
Fess, Greg	3	21 years	11:00	5:00	TV Station Management	It's the only time in my day I can consistently workout and it's a great way to start the day.
Findlay, April	2-3	7 years	9:30	4:30-5:00	Marketing Manager	I get in and get it over with and feel good the rest of the day.
Flis, Dominic	3-4	4 years	10:00-11:00	5:10	Executive	Fits well into my schedule and gives a boost to the start of the workday.
Garrett, Steve	2	7 years	9:30-10:00	4:15	Chief Information Officer	An early morning workout has the least impact on my other responsibilities.
Godwin, Mary Kay	3-4	10 years	8:30	4:30	Accountant	Kris Mougeot's classes - she's awesome. It's the best way I know to start the day.
Harville, Cathy	3	10 years	9:30-10:00	5:30	Banking	Energy and the club is less busy - it's easier to get my workout in.
James, Pat	2-3	7 years	10:15-10:30	5:21	Attorney	It gets your day started early and your exercise over.
Kaplan, Philip	3	21 years	9:30	4:40	Lawyer	I enjoy getting off to a great start and also getting the routine out of the way.
Lubin, Aaron	5	21 years	9:00-10:30	4:25	Business Owner	Great way to start your day. It's an accomplishment. Early morning group are very upbeat and positive.
Menz, Doug	3	11 years	8:30-9:00	4:30-5:00	Financial Advisor	Getting it out of the way and the camaraderie of the early morning folks. I've made a lot of good friends doing this.
Meredith, Christie	5	5 years	9:00	5:00	Mom/Billing Clerk/Student	Great way to start each day. Great classes as well as a great group of people.
Miles, Jim	2	7 years	9:00-10:00	4:00	Business Owner	If I don't get my exercise in early morning it doesn't get done. Also, my high energy time of day.
Mougeot, Kris	5	12 years	9:00	4:45-5:00	Professional Sales/Group Exercise Instructor	Nothing gets in the way at 5:30 in the morning. I love the pre-dawn hours.
Mougeot, Larry	2	7-8 years	9:00	5:00	Marketing	Gets it over with early. Too easy to find excuses to avoid it later in the day.
Prince, David	5	2 years	9:30	4:30	Securities Lawyer	The energy I get from being around all the other energetic people. The close circle of friends who notice when I miss a day.
Stortz, Sam	4	15 years	9:00	3:30-4:00	Real Estate	It's less crowded, easier to schedule my time since I get up early anyway.
Tharp, Stephanie	5	4 years	9:00-9:30	5:00	Realtor	It's a great way to start my day. Daytime schedule is unpredictable so mornings are best.
Tull, Sue	5	8 years	9:00-10:00	4:20	Banking/Certified Financial Planner	I love the people, both the instructors and the other crazy 5:00 a.m. groupies.

program notes

MIXED DOUBLES TENNIS PARTY
Friday, April 30; 6:00 pm. Pizza, salad, beer, wine, court time, balls and child care. Call Sharon to register, 225-3601, ext. 317. \$15 per player.

WAGGIN' 'N WALKIN
Dog walk, Saturday, April 17 at 8:30 am, meet at the base of the Big Dam Bridge (LR side). RSVP to Kelly, ext. 331, if you plan on attending.

LIFEGUARD TRAINING
April 21 - 25, May 12 - 16 or May 19 - 23. Fee: \$225; Call the Aquatics Office, 225-3601, ext. 311, to register.



member spotlight: BETSY MEACHAM

by Kelly Parker

So what happens when you and two of your best girlfriends/tennis buddies go out to see if you can run seven miles? If you're Betsy Meacham you have so much fun and are so proud of yourself for finishing, you schedule an eight mile run for the following week. Fast forward nine years and you've participated in all eight Little Rock half or full marathons, the Nashville, Chicago, Boston, Dallas and Austin marathons and you're making plans to run the Marine Corps Marathon in October – whew, I mean wow!

Betsy, a Batesville native, grew up playing tennis. "I'm a singles player. All I did was run every ball down and try not to make a mistake. I don't go for winners; my goal was to hit the last ball in. I've played five hour matches." To help stay in shape for tennis she ran (some) and jumped rope. "I'd watch *Eight is Enough* and jump rope for an hour. My mother let me jump in the house." The work paid off. Betsy played #1 singles at the University of Arkansas her junior and senior year.

After Fayetteville, she went to law school and obtained her Masters degree in Tax Law from NYU. After returning to Little Rock, friends recruited her to play team tennis, which she did for ten years. On a whim, she and tennis friends, Ann Tarwater and Stephanie Sharp, went out and ran the seven miles mentioned above. The time since has been filled with thrills, disappointments, and eye opening experiences. Here are some from the Little Rock Marathon:

2003 (3:21:41) – Betsy finished second overall while struggling with a bloody foot for 14 miles.

2004 (3:20:50) – Betsy finished second again but felt horrible from mile one. Her blood pressure was so low by the time she finished the race she collapsed at the finish line and was hooked up to IV's by the EMTs.

2005 (3:19:37) – Thankfully, Betsy did not experience any health issues but again struggled with not "feeling good" at the start.

2006 (3:43:58)– Betsy fainted at mile 14 landing in a bush. Paramedics were called but she refused help and finished the race.

2007 (1:31:34)– Betsy ran the half marathon.

2008 – She paced a friend.

2009 – Betsy and her friend Barbara Mariani ran the half marathon with a blind woman from Washington, DC. "We used a rope attached to our arm and called 'right, left, right, left' and 'watch out for this or that.' We got together the day before the race and she trained us. It was hard because we all have different strides and you can't relax your arms. This lady had a particular time she wanted to run and thanks to Barbara who's a great coach and really encouraged her at the end, we made it. It was without a doubt one of the best experiences I've ever had."

2010 (3:10:16) – Betsy decided to run the full marathon again because she wanted to have a good experience in her hometown. Hard work particularly in the area of speed training and "living clean" enabled her to run nearly ten minutes faster than her previous finishes. "I felt great from start to finish this year."

"I've made my best friends through running and it's gotten me involved in my favorite thing to do – coaching Mount Saint Mary's cross country team. I absolutely love it. During the season, I meet the girls every morning at 5:45 am and we train. There are lots of different levels but I love helping and encouraging all of them. Last fall, we had 28 on the team and almost all of them improved their times from the first to the last race. Their level of commitment is amazing."

Betsy has become a proponent of cross training because of injuries. "Three years ago I broke my fibula. I was running on a stress fracture during a race and it broke fully. My lateral movement is much more restricted now which impedes my tennis. Also, my Achilles flares up on occasion. When that started, I tried the cycling classes and became hooked. Now I do a number of them every week." I should mention she was in Ronnie's cycling/circuit class, considered by many to be the toughest on the LRRC schedule, the Tuesday after this year's marathon.



Betsy Meacham, 2010 Little Rock Marathon third place finisher with personal best time of 3:10:16 at age 45

All told, Betsy spends 18 to 20 hours per week training. "I don't have children so I have that kind of time but anyone can fit in 30 minutes a day. Exercise makes you feel so much better. I'll never give it up."

FUN FACTS:

Favorite running shoes: Nike Air Pegasus

Race ritual: Peanut butter toast marathon morning

Celebrated this year's race finish: Lunch at U.S. Pizza with running friends and Oscar's party with tennis friends

PARENT'S NIGHT OUT

April 9 and 23, May 7 and 21 (End of School Year Bash); 6:00 - 10:30 pm. Register by calling the DUC, 225-3601, ext. 335.

AMERICAN FOXTROT LESSONS

Tuesdays, April 6 - May 11 with "Latin Louie". 8:15 to 10:00 pm. Fee: \$195 per couple. Call Lisa, 225-3601, ext. 318, to sign up.

BURN 30/30

Mondays and Wednesdays with Betsy Kortebein, 11:30 am to 12:30 pm. April 5 - 28. Fee: \$120. Call Lisa to register, 225-3601, ext. 318.

STROKE AND TURN CLINIC FOR ADULTS

April 5 and 7, 5:30 - 6:30 pm; Call Eimear to register, 225-3601, ext. 310. Fee: M \$28, NM \$35

competitors' corner

Little Rock Marathon Finishers

Betsy Meacham 3rd overall

Eddie Morin, Chuck Spohn, Roch Diebold, Sam Vandiver, Dean Worley, Chris Baldwin, Emily Hartman, Perkins Mukunyadzi, Tammy Walther, Barry Strevig, Tracie Walker, John Steward, Russ Jackson, Kenneth Bland, Tina Worley, Stephen Parr, Walt Catlett, Martha Mukunyadzi, Dennis Baas, Susan Blair, Ashley Philbrick, Mark Speed, Lisa Alberius, Benjamin Haynes, Hatim Smouni, Alisha Black-Ocken, Heather Barnett, Saba Koja, Robert Hanle, Phil Brown, Michael Vanderford, Robin Hanle, Lyndsey Foster, Helen Jones, Marilyn Pearce, Kim Mesaris, Suzanne Catlett

Little Rock Half Marathon

Gary Taylor 1st in age group; Collin McGowan, Justin Butler and Betsy Kortebein 2nd in age group; Jimmy Thompson 3rd in age group

Michael Franzetti, Warren Franzetti, Cezar Terlea, Lee Brown, Allison Ridings, Maggie Mathis, Joe Cordi, Shawn Cranford, Will Connell, Jo Spencer, Christian Perry, Megan Carpenter, Cole Treece, Russ Berryhill, Kevin Kelly, Angie Johnson, Tim Taylor, Erin Smith, Michele Adams, Kelly Thompson, Kristen Saffa, Bart Foster, Doug Menz, John Kauzlaric, Joe Fox, Dennis Bean, James Yuen, Teodora Terlea, Jacob Goldsholl, Chris Franzetti, Kimberly Moros, Reid Landes, Debbie Gay, Cindy Farzley, Amy Decastro, Cammie Mackey, Jeff Franzetti, Susan Allen, April Davis, Halsey Ward, Shannon Wooley, Randy Wooley, Kathryn Tull, Christopher Irons, Josh Danforth, Sara Silzer, Sandy Cordi, Sally Stokes, Janice Corkern, Kristie Mitchell, Cyd Ward, Matthew Lane, James Goldberg, Allyson Sample, Kerry Lareau, Scot Goldsholl, Hillary Hunt, Thomas Tulgetske, Marty White, David Conrad, Dana Yates, Mark Fortune, Susan France, Charlotte Studdard, Cheryl Ahart, Melanie Taylor, Jennifer Bobbitt, Gary Speas, Rita Speas, Jan Mensik, Tad Pruiitt, Kara Wilkerson, Megan Garrison, Mary Marks, Karen Halbert, Gary Garrison, Jeff Chandler, Charlotte Hobbs, Sue Tull, Barry Griffith, Stacey Russell, Michelle Williams, Elizabeth Glasbrenner, Rachel Freeman, Caylie Gillum, Gretchen Farrell, Ashley Phelps, Mary Olson, Vicky Crook, Robyn Tolbert, Lori Payne, Randy Tolbert, Ernie Peters, Paul Abdella, Ashley Jones, Jane Delahoussay, Matthew Henry, Stephanie Hernandez, Cindi Blackwood, Kara Stockwell, Christie McGetrick, Kristen Shepherd, Martha Sartor, Susan Bullington, Robert McKinney, Misty Brown, Stephanie Pace, Candace Pierce, Lindsey Clark, Michelle Tulgetske, Denise Perrymore, Annette Prieur, Debbie Harris, Tracey Shell, Debbie Hayes, Larry Krajci, Jennifer Krajci, Louise Fox, Tina Wagoner, Laura Baxter, Belinda Paton, Johnny Mitchum, Lee Mesaris, Tommy Johnson, Stephana Loyd, Evelyn Anderson, Tim Loyd



Tony Chacko, Emily Watkins and Kate Cavin completed the Indoor Triathlon on their own.

Irac indoor triathlon

Three of our young members were not deterred by the cancellation of the indoor triathlon and completed the event on their own. Together they swam 69 laps, biked 42.2 miles and ran 90 laps around the track. The report from Julie Watkins, Emily's mom, is, "The kids had a blast! Emily wants to make this a monthly event and several of her friends have expressed interest since hearing about how much fun they had." Tony's father, Joe Chacko, showed his support and did the event with the children.

league winners

Monday: John Christopher, Alan Stewart, Jolene Coop, Joyce Faulkner, Corinne Gilbreath, Mary Lou Billingsley, Gina Blanchard, Melinda Andersen, Margaret Moore, Robyn Horn, Krista Storey, Larry Price, Eric Miller, Carol Seago, Jennifer Krajci, Peggy Fletcher

Tuesday: Ann Holthoff, Kara Lee Ford, Michael Huber, Mauro Tognetti, Susan Olmsted, Lindsay Harp, Barbie Wilson, Marcie Palecek, Paula Tinsley, Mike Scott, Jim Conner, Paul Simms, Diane Cadieux

Wednesday: Scott Yant, Karen Toland, Sandra Carlisle, Lili Palmer, Ellen Dugan, Debbie Cooper, Jonie Burks, Robin Dehaven, Stephanie Jacuzzi

Thursday: Christy Bray, Cindy Alexander, Jim Robbins, Jody Purifoy, Krista Storey, Bob Gleason, Theo Hronas, Melinda Andersen, Valerie Cloud, Shara Turk, Jolene Coop, Monica Weigle, Mike Stockwell, Margaret Dodd, Judy Baldwin, Jeanelle Huchingson, Darrell Boggs, Michael Osborn

Friday: Caroline Fox, Shara Turk, Bana Alshami

Saturday: Candy Roman



Kevin Sebrovski, winner of the Polar Heart Rate Monitor giveaway. Pictured here at Olympic National Park. "I love my heart rate monitor! It's so much better than having to always grab the bars on the machines. I can't wait to get outdoors and try it on a hike. Thanks again!"