

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Worldwide 24-Hour Runathon to Raise Awareness and Money for Health and Giving – 8/25/13

Every year is an adventure. And a gift. A blessing. Every day, really. Every hour. Every minute. Such is life. And Sunday, August 25, 2013 was no different. The whole day, midnight to midnight. Every hour. Every minute. An adventure, a gift, and a blessing, as we ran all 24 hours to help everyone in the world become more aware of their health, and of giving. And to raise money for numerous causes.

But the adventure did not start at midnight on 8/25/13. The Annual Worldwide 24-Hour Runathon to Raise Awareness and Money for Health and Giving occurs every year, and preparations have already begun for the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual on Saturday, August 23, 2014. The more participation that we have throughout the world on that day, and in preparation of the event throughout the year, the more we can help the world with this unique and potentially powerful tool. So **please let us know how you are ready to commit to helping!** In the Milwaukee, WI area we are running a loop by Bradford Beach, with a main meeting place with parking, bathrooms, food/water, etc. to make it easier for the Organizer, but also for all those participating. And – especially – to make a bigger impact on the observers, for that is the whole purpose of the event!

Please help spread the word:

- 1) **Click following link** to Facebook Event. <https://www.facebook.com/events/171581433038938/?context=create>
- 2) **Click “Join”** on the upper right.
- 3) Then **click “Invite Friends”** on the upper right to inform ALL of your Facebook friends.

This past year a volunteer, Alex Lutze, helped get media attention for the event, which did result in more of the general public knowing what we were doing, and why. This year we hope that many more TV stations, radio stations, magazines, newspapers, running groups and stores, non-profits and businesses, websites, blogs, twitter tweeters, facebook posters, and other people do even more to inform our 7,000,000,000 human family members what we are doing, and – most importantly – why we are doing it. This is not a running event. Running is the tool. The mission is increasing the global consciousness of health and giving. And raising money for whatever cause the fundraiser or donor chooses.

Another volunteer, Justin Houck, created a registration form through the “Runathon” tab of [www.theGIVEshirt.com](http://www.theGIVEshirt.com). Please **click the following link and “Register Now”** – it’s FREE! <http://www.thegiveshirt.com/?p=770> This helps us better track who is participating throughout the world, and exactly what they are doing.

Yet another volunteer, Kurt Owens, helped plan, shoot, view, and edit video footage and created 2 short video clips, and a short documentary about the Runathon. Please **click the following link** to watch them, “like” them, “share” them, and subscribe to theGIVEshirt.com’s youtube account so you can be notified each time we post a video! [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uO-7c9ZsrTA&feature=share&list=PLueLS0dmk1DTmoUorPTXf6y5\\_OX2iJGkp](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uO-7c9ZsrTA&feature=share&list=PLueLS0dmk1DTmoUorPTXf6y5_OX2iJGkp)

Shaunie Franke, another volunteer, helped sort through email contacts to send out email notification of the event. Volunteer Ryan Treviranus helped create the more efficient and effective newsletter. Jon Tran helped spread the word via twitter. Fransisco Torres donated use of the support bike, and Ray Hentschke rigged it with the sign. Others committed to ride the support bike or run throughout the day, and gathered others to likewise join us. The list of preparations, and fellow volunteer team members who performed the tasks, goes on.

The GIVE shirt movement is 100% Volunteer-Operated! So anything that is done, is done by volunteers. Nobody gets paid to do anything. So the more committed, responsible volunteers we have, the more we can help this world. **We sincerely hope you seriously consider joining us!**

Since theGIVEshirt.com is also an entirely non-profit charity, and we give 100% of proceeds to numerous other charities, we also GREATLY appreciate all of our sponsors. The following list includes some major sponsors of this year’s Runathon.

The North Face – Provided Dri-Fit T-Shirts **\*\*\*Unisex and Womens (Normal, Runathon Logo, or Spanish).**

Starbucks – Gave coffee, mugs, etc. **\*\*\*available for donations.**

Noodles – Gave group meals for Volunteers/Participants, and free meal cards **\*\*\*available for donations.**

Vitamix – Donated AMAZING Vitamix blender.

Nuun electrolytes – Provided tablets. **\*\*\*Tube of 12 available for only \$6 donation (Lemon-Lime or Tri-Berry).**

Footlevelers Orthotics – Donated pair of orthotics.

Alliance Packaging Group – Donate ORGANIC, Natural Lip Balm, Sun Block Face Stick and Lotion, Anti-Chafing.

bluepearlhealth.com – Donated guidance and mineral samples.

Milwaukee Community Acupuncture – Donated Initial Session. **\*\*\*Available for only \$20 Donation.**

Ben’s Cycle – Donated tune-ups for training and support bike.

Thank you!

So on to the running! For the months, weeks, and especially days leading up to the big physical portion of the event – actually running the full 24 hours – an almost overwhelming amount of tasks made it difficult to attain ideal sleep, food, hydration, etc. After spending several hours in the late afternoon with extended family for a niece's birthday party, I left it early to take a nap and pack up all the clothes, food, drinks, lights, gps watches, supplements, bags to carry them in, etc. At 11pm, while driving to the start/finish home base, I took video to capture with images along with the words what was going on. Something I would continue to do every few hours throughout the next 24 hours.

When I got to the home base, it was time to rig the bike with the food and drinks, make some adjustments to the sign, lights, and bag, etc. We never know how many people throughout the world are running – or doing something active – on this day every year, and who they are telling about it, how much money they are raising and for whom, etc. But I am not yet aware of anyone else who has run the full 24 hours.

It was about 1:00am by the time we were actually able to start running. And I began alone. Some last minute changes with participants had me making many phone calls, sending texts, and figuring out what to do, while making sure not to get hit by any late Saturday night drivers – whether drunk or not. I was running downtown where it was busiest to inform and influence as many people as possible, since that is the purpose of the Runathon. But because I had to use the phone so much for re-planning, I was not able to carry the hand-held sign that still survives from the first year. And I was running by so many people – who had no idea who I was, nor what I was doing, nor why. So I realized; we had to get someone to ride the support bike – which carries the sign – ASAP!

Running 24 hours is challenging enough. Doing everything else required of the person who simultaneously organizes the event is the real adventure! The first year I ran alone for about an hour due to an injury also taking away her un-injured counter-part. The second year I was alone for the first 7 hours, and the last 4. The third year I was never alone outside of a flat tire before the next participant arrived, and the final half hour, which was by choice. One of many things I had come to learn is that it is much easier to run 24 hours, and especially carry the necessary food, drinks, sign, etc. and otherwise simultaneously organize such a unique event, with the help and physical presence of others!

While I was otherwise fine being alone for the first couple of hours, I knew that without the sign, the mission was not being as well achieved. And rather than waiting for the next participant to catch the bus, and then ride it all the way downtown, I figured out how we could begin getting people's attention sooner. I would mount the bike and ride it to him! So I did. One of several unexpected firsts in this grand adventure. I never would have expected that I would be riding a bike during the 24-Hour Runathon!

By the time I got there the bars were closed and most of the people had gone home. At the least we impacted 1 intoxicated college student who ran with us for several blocks, if he remembers it. So Justin Houck and I again headed south to Oak Creek where we were to meet Mike Thompson and Michael W. around 8am. We took video clips for the documentary, including Justin describing why he has remained involved in the GIVE shirt movement for over a year now. Fox 6 TV News arrived around 4am just before their night shift ended, after covering all of the violence around town.

After the sun had risen I noticed the back tire on the seldom used bike looked a little flat. We did have quite a bit of weight on there with the sign, drinks, and food. I decided it would be better to blow it up now than let it get flat and thus potentially damaged. When it wouldn't take air I noticed that the tube had a leak. (Yes, here I was again with another first – on my back during the 24-Hour Runathon fixing a bike tire.) I then learned that the patch would fix the tear on the hose of the tube, but it wouldn't fit back through the hole of the wheel. I also discovered that the portable battery charger wasn't working. So I brainstormed with Justin what to do, and made calls until we realized that Mike W. could get a tube at Wal-Mart on his way.

Fortunately Justin stayed later than anticipated and sat with the bike and supplies while I found a place to charge the phone on a tiny ledge above the freezers in the gas station, which I reached with a step ladder. Eventually I was able to run out and back from where the bike was down for an hour or so, as Mike W. arrived about 2 hours later. When he did arrive I found that Justin had left and I needed to stop running again to put the new tube in, and reload/pack the bike, sign, bag, etc. Finally, after about a 3 hour delay, we were again moving. Mike Thompson was on his way to meet us, and did minutes later. Now we had 2 bikers to help bring attention and carry stuff!

So while I was re-planning the route and communicating with everyone about the changes of plan, and coordinating the other TV stations that were hopefully still coming, I realized that the bikers were no longer behind me! I looped back to find out that the bike had lost a bolt and the sign/bag were rubbing against the tire. It was again laying on the ground – about 2 blocks from where it had laid for the previous 3 hours. And I was laying on my back in the dirt yet again, too. I spent about half of the next hour trying to figure out what to do, looking for the bolt, etc. Since Mike Thompson had not yet returned from the store where he had gone to buy another one, and the

store was only a few blocks away, I ran there. I arrived to find no Mike, and a “CLOSED” sign. Directions were confused and he was still riding east toward the lake! I gave him clear directions to another store.

Yet another somewhat expectable, but totally unexpected significant delay. Not having spare batteries for the light that went out the night before was no problem because we had multiple lights. But this could not be so easily resolved because we didn’t have more bolts... or did we? I suddenly realized when yet again down on my back in the dirt analyzing the situation that the bolts intended to hold the water bottle cages in place could be the same bolts that held the rear luggage rack on. And they were! So I began bike repair number 2.

We were off again minutes later. Mike W. needed to leave earlier than expected, and since he was riding the support bike with the sign and supplies, the next rider needed to find transport to meet us to prevent us from being stalled yet again. My mom and sister brought my brother-in-law to take over. We resumed taking video of different aspects of the Runathon, and the GIVE shirt movement in general. And the perspectives of the different participants, many of whom are also volunteers of the movement. And enjoyed the beautiful sunny, hot day. Previous years we had done it 1.5-2.5 months later, and it had been cold, and rained every year.

I felt great, and was happy to be moving again. We arrived at the next meeting point where most of my family was gathered, and immediately began running around the house with the five 2-6 year-old nieces and nephew – a ritual they love doing with Uncle Tommy. And one which I love more than any of us realize. After the transition to new bikers and runners we were off again. With the little ones’ desires to run, bike, scooter, etc. with us, we sometimes only made it a block or two before turning around to take the next little one back that wanted to switch mode of transportation, or just be done. Gotta appreciate their heart. Kids are so magnificent. I’m really excited to help the world maintain more of our innate and natural purity, love, cooperation, inclusion, etc. as we become adults.

We now still had 2 bikers, and a group of runners. Fransisco, Jenny, and Alex with his mom and brother. Then new biker, Tina Martin, owner of Orange Shoe Fitness in Whitefish Bay, arrived. Mike Thompson left after about 6 hours. Sami was running with us as she has every year. Kurt Owens was spotted up ahead behind the video camera, and even ran more than a mile with us this year. His first time running since childhood! Ray Martinez beeped the horn, and followed us for miles taking pictures. WTMJ 4 TV News shot some footage and did an interview, as did CBS 6 TV News. And after 18 hours I was still feeling great.

Then the heat started to finally catch up with me. I began to feel sluggish for the first time. A bit tired, slower, tight. I knew I needed something, but I didn’t know what. I had been drinking plenty of water with the Nuun electrolytes, and eating energy/protein exercise food, and drinking Raw Meal powder. I had even rested for a few minutes in the cool basement of my sister’s house when I began feeling a little dizzy from the heat earlier.

Tina faithfully stayed with me, and I rejuvenated with some food and a quick Epsom salt bath at the home base while I ate. I was now heading back out alone, and Ray Hentzche – who has ridden the support bike every year – was to join me later for the final couple of hours. So this was my real test. I was tired, felt drained of energy, my body hurt, I was alone, and all I wanted to do was lay down and rest. Instead I remembered the words of a 9 year-old friend who missed joining us because of our delays and route change, and my 4 and 6 year-old nieces: “Never give up. Don’t stop; don’t give up!” They say that they learned those principles from me. It was time to put them to use. Time to walk the talk, practice what I preach. And I started moving.

I walked at first. I told myself that I could at least walk. And if I couldn’t walk anymore, then I could lay in the grass. But I knew from previous experiences that I likely would begin to gain energy again eventually, and be able to jog. Which I did. Still, it was a welcomed treat when Ray arrived. A distraction... and a good friend. I always say I am doing awesome, whether to myself, or to others when they ask. Because I choose “how” I am doing. And that’s how I prefer to be doing, regardless of what’s going on. But, at the same time, I sure recognize how much even better I feel, and how much even better life is when shared with those family and friends that are even closer and more dearly loved, appreciated, and treasured than the other members of our grand global human family.

The last hour I felt strong. Worn, but steady. I thought, “I must be running about a 10-minute mile.” A glance at the GPS watch revealed 13:00. I guess the tight, stiff, sore, tired, heavy legs were not able to stride as far as normal. On the final stretch we saw a deer in the silent, still night. Across the road, just outside the tree line, with downtown’s tall buildings towering in the background. As we approached the deer didn’t even move, not until I was about 5 feet away. Amazing. By far the closest I have ever been to such a free animal. She knew that we, too, are all members of the same family, and all in this together. Caring for our health, and giving, involve caring for all life, including the environment, and this planet Earth, for all is a gift, a blessing – every day, every hour, every minute...

Event

This is not an event about me running 24 hours!  
This is a tool for all of us to use

3<sup>rd</sup> annual - 2012

The first year I woke up on an air mattress on the floor of the basement in the house for which I pay the bank each month, in the same room as my 5<sup>th</sup> roommate/tenant. And sore from an ill-advised recent first-of-the-year football game. It was 2 am. A friend and a friend of his met me at 4 am, and I was only alone for less than 1 of the following 24 hours. And that was due to an injury. We had been on TV the night before, and in the Journal/Sentinel online, were on TV again that night, and directly raised over \$1,200. (There's never any way to know how much money – or the many other forms of giving – are actually raised as a result of the Runathon, or the GIVE shirt movement in general.) I had invested so much of my time, heart, and soul, and expected so much more. But nevertheless, I was very happy.

The second year I had invested even more (time, money, energy, etc.), and had expected even more. As I began running alone at 4am I had already begun allowing myself to feel a bit discouraged. Many people did not come through with what they had committed to doing, resulting in no media coverage, only one pledge of \$1/mile (which never ended up being paid), and me being alone until a biker joined me 9 hours into it. Dean Karnazes – the most famous ultra distance runner in the world, and Bernie Salazar – At-Home Winner of TV's "The Biggest Loser" were among others around the globe participating in the Worldwide Runathon that day. Yet here in Milwaukee - outside of 2 bikers, 1 co-runner, a small group of co-runners, and 2 people in a car that joined me for a total of about 12 hours - I was alone, including for the final and most challenging 4 hours. Many people either didn't show up, or backed out at the last minute. I was surprised at how disappointed I allowed myself to be.

During and after this year's 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Worldwide 24-Hour Runathon to Raise Awareness and Money for Health and Giving when people asked me how it was going, I was very pleased to quickly, easily, honestly, and cheerily say "Awesome!". And when they asked me why, it was interesting to observe the simplicity of the multitude of reasons that came to mind.

- 1) I didn't allow myself to expect much. Rather, I took whatever came with great appreciation.
- 2) We had already been featured on TV, with promise of more media attention that day.
- 3) Even though I had waited until the day before to ask for donations, we had received some, including a pledge from one person of \$5/mile!
- 4) I was met beforehand by a driver, a biker who had rigged his bike with a sweet blinking sign, and a videographer making a documentary – all of whom helped me make last minute preparations.
- 5) I was only alone for about a half hour, and only because of a flat tire.
- 6) I don't remember anyone backing out, and even more TV News crews came than expected.
- 7) Although I had barely trained at all, at least I hadn't played football recently. ☺

Again, the #1 reason continually coming to mind: Rather than expecting things, I simply accepted all things as they were. And further, appreciated them regardless of what they were.

I was so filled with joy and appreciation that Ray Hentzche had spent so much time tuning up his bike so that it could be used by different people throughout the 24 hours, even though – not having a car – it was essential to his life. Especially appreciated was how much time and creativity he used to rig it to carry the sign all day and night, to be easily seen, including at night by the blinking neon string of lights. And the fact that he began the first few hours of the journey with me, despite being very tired. And was set to join me for the final crucial several hours the next night.

And how fulfilling it felt to have Kurt Owens behind the large official video camera catching footage of our last minute preparations, and then following us for the first hour. Being driven by Sami Wilson who couldn't run due to post-surgery recuperation. Another big smile of gratitude entered and remained on my face as Volunteer Coordinator Justin Houck arrived via bus and foot to ride the bike through the middle of the night. Similar grand amounts of thanks emerged as my brother-in-law Jason Underkofler was waiting in the driveway around 8am to take the next 4 hour bike shift, after driving Justin to the bus stop.

We were pleased to spot Nikki Cahen, a long-time running buddy and partner of the GIVE shirt movement, running toward us several hours later, as I hadn't seen her in a couple of years. Nikki, Jason, and I enjoyed running back and forth on Grange a few times waiting for the News Crew that Justin had secured after sleeping for a few hours. Then Theresa Sebestyen left Steven and Sienna to drive Nikki back to her car, while Tara, Haley, and Aubrey Underkofler and Avika Sebestyen ran up and down the street in front of the house after the 2<sup>nd</sup> TV News crew left.

The night had been cold. But this year when I stopped to address foot issues on the bike path along the lake I could feel my fingers, and thus use them more easily to pierce the blister that was forming already after only several hours. And Justin was there to hold the light. Unfortunately, due to strong winds, the sign had to be removed from the bike. The calm night passed quickly, as did the beautiful morning and afternoon.

Shane Gayle, one of my best and long-time friends, forced to back out last minute the prior year, was like a guest of honor. Sisters Clare and Emily Geiger patiently waited while I resealed the blister. I don't even know who drove Jason back to get his car. Many videos, interviews, and pics for the documentary were taken throughout the day.

Now, around 4pm, it started to rain. After being greeted by the friendly GIVE-shirt-wearing partners at our 2<sup>nd</sup> official Starbucks meeting place, it started raining harder. Such a pleasure to be running with Clare, with whom I had recently re-united after also not having seen her for a couple of years. (Where had I been the previous 2 years?)

It was now raining so hard that the next volunteer biker had called to ask if we were still doing it. It was obviously Joe Dilallo's first year, for – as I always tell my personal training/fitness/health clients – we clearly don't ever stop for anything (unless it endangers our health or safety). So much was happening behind the scenes, as Shane's dad was coming to take him back to his car, Clare and Emily's mom was picking them up after having dropped them off 15 miles back several hours ago, Joe's girlfriend was waiting in the car for him to finish, Sami later took him back to his car, Luke Laga and his friend were being picked up and dropped off,

Sami and Ray were on their way to fix the flat tire on the bike, and Francisco was on his way on his bike, in the rain, to find me. Meanwhile I, for the first time in the previous 20 hours, was alone.

The peaceful break from others was actually treasured. I finally got to call Angelica Angulo, who had been calling and texting encouragement and support every hour throughout the day and night. Almost before I could even hang up with her I was met by the big smile of my tall Venezuelan friend. Several hours later, for the first time I ever remember in my life, I actually had warmer hands than someone I was with, and lent Francisco Torres one of the pair of gloves I was wearing. The point is that despite the weather not being ideal with rain and cold, I was fine. I had a couple of bouts of relatively extreme cold when I was so wet. But had just the right amount of dry enough clothes with me, and took the time to use them, and wring out the others. My abdomen had been hurting a bit. Luke Laga of Laga Wellness had seemingly miraculously helped me (voluntarily) with some physical issues in the months prior in order to be in a better position to run those 24 hours. He again worked some magic on me as I lay in the wet grass for a couple of minutes.

All those of you who donated, participated however you could wherever you were, and especially when you let me know about it and shared your support and encouragement with me/us, from the personal email I received from Dean Karnazes the night before, to “likes”, “joins”, and comments on the Facebook page and event – you were with me/us the whole time. You helped make it possible more than you can realize. A sincere and grand expression of appreciation and gratitude from my heart and soul to yours.

Among numerous pieces of advice I received from expert Luke was that at times I could open up a bit and run fast. So I did. With just a couple of hours left (which means after I had already run for about 22 hours) I ran fast for  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile. Then  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile. I was, again, literally amazed with my body’s ability to do this. I had run about 2/week all summer, and never more than 15 miles. In September I ran a marathon, 50 miles, and another marathon. And never more than 15 miles again for the next month. So – while I was at least well-rested! – I was nowhere near as prepared as I could have been. Yet here I was feeling truly great after having run over 80 miles, and for almost 24 hours. How?!

I had treated the blister several times in the first 50 miles. But now I didn’t even want to take off my wet shoe and sock and see what was going on down there. My body had numbed out the pain, so at least it didn’t hurt with every step anymore. I figured at this point I’ll just deal with whatever damage there is afterward. And there wasn’t even hardly any. Post-run, pre-epson salt bath analysis revealed 1 less than major blister on each foot, and 1 other tiny one. How was that possible?!

One answer is that the amazing ORGANIC lubricant donated by Alliance Packaging really is as incredible as I had already thought. Another is that having conditioned my body by another year of even healthier nutrition was even more beneficial than running. I had now eliminated ice cream for all of 2012, not eaten almost any animals, rarely eaten products from animals, always purchased organic food when possible, and brought the organic, raw, natural, unprocessed

veggies, fruits, nuts, seeds, whole grains, etc. with me almost everywhere I went, rather than settle for whatever food was there.

Secondly, of course, is that I was able to feel more this third year that the mission of the event was being more effectively accomplished. The media attention was allowing us to help countless more people become more aware of their health. And more aware of giving. We weren't getting even as many donations as the first year, but the money mattered less. Raising the consciousness of giving, and therefore raising health and happiness across the globe, is the primary purpose of the Runathon. It's the mission of my life. And being able to so personally feel and experience that happening is a blessing beyond what words can describe. A gift of joy, allowing me to be even happier than I always already am.

The other main reason that running those 24 hours with such little training, in such less than ideal weather conditions, was so relatively easy is those who physically accompanied me throughout the night-day-night. In addition to true, deep happiness resulting from giving, helping, and thinking even more about the welfare of others, I learned even more that I personally am even more happy when I am with others. I'm not meant to live the lifestyle of a monk in this life, at least not at this time. I'm meant to be with others. To be with you. To share with you, learn from you, teach you, and learn from teaching you. Thank you for sharing this journey of life with me.

Shortly after the Runathon I saw this quote somewhere. I noted it here to use later as part of this story, and now cannot even remember where I got it from, or exactly why or how I intended to use it.

"The secret of happiness is: Find something more important than you are and dedicate your life to it."

I have found something more important than I am – helping the whole world understand the power of giving, and thus give more in order to be happier and healthier.

And I've dedicated my life to pursuing this "thing".

And I'm happy.

Yesterday I had a realization of another "secret of life":

"Always be satisfied. Never be satiated."

Thus, please love yourself. And your life. But at the same time, ask yourself, "What more can I do?"

Please join us this year, in whatever way you can.

\* Go to the facebook event (link below) for the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Worldwide 24-Hour Runathon to Raise Awareness and Money for Health and Giving on Sunday, 8/25/13

<http://www.facebook.com/events/434754716597218/>

\* Click that you "Are Going", whether you're running or not.

\* Invite all of your facebook friends, whether you think they'll join or not.

The purpose of the event is primarily to RAISE AWARENESS for HEALTH and GIVING, and also to raise money. So by doing the above, you are helping us achieve this mission by helping us spread the word. THANK YOU!!!

What I consumed during the 24 hours: 6 bottles of FRS protein drink, 10 coconut waters, 16 Nuun electrolyte tablets, 12 Jelly Belly sports beans mini bags, 2 Clif shot blocks, several handfuls of dried fruit and nuts, ½ cheese pizza, several gallons of water.

Clothing: Same pair of shoes, orthotics (donated by Footlevelers), socks, and calf compression sleeves. Multiple boxer briefs, shorts, thermal tights, pants, rain pants, t-shirts, long sleeve shirts, long sleeve thermal shirts, jacket, rain jacket, gloves, caps, and hats.

Amount raised for charities (that we know of): \$870.20

Number inspired: Countless.

#### Donors

100 Andrea stehling

20 Emily Geiger

5 claire Geiger

15 nikki cahen

50 ed wolf

26.20 justin fleming

5 missy cleary

9 bridget

25 ? in mail when returned from Puerto rico

pledge

5/mile 415 kathy lewandowski

200 laura whiteis – red cross

1<sup>st</sup> annual - 2010

At 3:00 am, after having run for 22.5 hours, I suddenly realized and said to Ricky, “I only ...” – wait, let me back up and start at the beginning.

Almost 3 years ago I started the non-profit movement, theGIVEshirt.com, to help everyone in the world be happier by helping them better understand the power of giving. We increase this global consciousness of giving primarily by distributing shirts and other apparel printed simply with the word “give”, and then give all of the proceeds to various charities (keeping no money for ourselves).

About 4 years ago I started running, and quickly learned that many people are inspired, motivated, and otherwise helped by my running experiences, especially when they read/hear about them. As these endurance adventures become more and more epic, people are increasingly impacted.



Thus, it was naturally time to combine these 2 passions in order to help others in a way larger than I could with either passion alone. I had competed in marathons, the Ironman, and 50 mile trail runs. So the next challenge – considered impossible by many – was to run for 24 hours. Truth is that I didn't know if I would be able to do it either. The 50 mile trail run was only 9 hours, and even the Ironman was only 13, half of which was spent sitting on a bike.

But this challenge would be focused solely on helping others become more healthy, and more conscious of giving, while also raising money for various good causes. And for these purposes, I knew that I could at least try. So, knowing that I was helping countless others more and more with each additional step I took, I showed up at InStep Running and Walking Center in downtown Milwaukee at 4:00 am on Saturday morning, October 23, 2010 – without hesitation – and with the intention of running 2.5 times longer and at least twice as far as I'd ever run in my life.

Many have asked, "How do you train for that?" It's simple, you run a lot. 50-150 miles a week for a few months, then 150-250 miles a week for a couple of months, and then a lot less for the 4-6 weeks before the event so your muscles and body can fully rest, heal, and recover so that they're at full strength for the event. And sometimes during the really high mileage weeks you run 60, 70, or 80 miles in a day. And you cross train a lot – swimming, biking, etc.

Well, that would have been nice. I did at least plan to do something like that. But then an ankle tendon injury rendered me nearly motionless for several weeks in July before I accepted that it wasn't going to heal, and I couldn't afford to rest anymore. TheGIVEshirt.com's first fundraiser in August kept me so busy that I literally didn't have time to run for a few more weeks. In September when I finally ran 10 miles for the first time in months my knee acted up, causing me to have to rest again. I couldn't afford new orthotics, which I knew would again resolve my knee issue, but finally got Footlevelers to sponsor me and the Runathon by donating a pair!

Even if my knee and ankle hadn't limited me, I was so busy putting together all of the many facets of the Runathon event that I wouldn't have been able to run much anyway. And aside from spending about 40 hours a week on the GIVE shirt movement, I also need to earn enough income to live. Fortunately I've figured out how to do this as an "Exercise Coach", so at least I was able to walk, jog, lift, swim, etc. with my clients for about 15 hours each week.

So, how did I train? Very healthy nutrition! My nutrition has gradually been becoming more and more healthy for a few years, but for the 2 months before the Runathon I not only refrained from eating land animals, but I also almost completely stopped eating seafood, dairy, bread, processed foods, sugar, ice cream, etc., sticking primarily to raw veggies, fruit, nuts, seeds, beans, herbs, spices, and protein powder. Wow – how much better your body performs when you give it what it needs, and don't poison it!

I hadn't run 20 miles for almost a year until 6 weeks before this Runathon. (Remember the training plan - Run a lot for months and then take it easy the 6 weeks before!) 5 weeks before it I ran a 50 mile race. 3 weeks before I ran 19 miles of the Milwaukee marathon faster than I had ever run that many miles before (to help a friend), followed by about 10 very slow miles, and my

legs hurt all week unlike they had for years. 2 weeks before I ran/walked (helped another friend) the Chicago marathon. The final weekend, 5.5 days before the 24-hour Runathon, when my legs were finally recovering, I decided to play football for the first time in almost a year. My legs were still sore Friday night when I went to bed 5 hours before I was to get up and run for 24 hours.

The forecast was for rain all day, and wind, but fortunately not too cold. I threw almost every hat, pair of gloves, and piece of running and water resistant clothing that I had in my car, not knowing what I would need based on temperature and wind, and how many I would need based on how wet they got. Similarly, I had some of each type of sport drink and food I could find in my house, not knowing what I would be able to drink and eat as the day and night wore on. Eating/drinking becomes a (if not “the”) key component to ultra endurance activities.

Chris Ponteri, co-owner of InStep, who helped me make this idea of an adventure a reality months earlier, was waiting for me with his friend Melinda Pedersen. Both also ended up running further and longer than they ever had before in their lives. The morning was beautiful, despite the darkness. There weren't many people around yet, and I just enjoyed being in the presence of 2 fellow runners supporting the cause - both wearing GIVE shirts! I carried my own fuel, and stopped for water every hour or so, when not borrowing some from Chris. We ran south on the path along the lake, and then a bit inland on the Oak Leaf Trail, until we reached my house in Oak Creek. 22 miles.

I helped Chris and Melinda prepare some bagels donated by Einstein with peanut butter, and ran back and forth in front of my house for a bit while they ate them. I continued consuming protein powder, Perpetuem, Acel gel, Jelly Belly sports beans, Endurolyte tablets, and 20-40 ozs. of water once or twice an hour. I was peeing at least hourly, so I knew I was getting enough water, but my legs were already cramping, tired, sore, tight, and heavy after only 10 miles, when they usually are fine for at least 20 if not 30. I started consuming more electrolytes, protein, and carbs just in case it would help, but I knew the cause – multiple touchdowns, some other nice catches, 1 uncharacteristic drop, and many defended passes and “tackles”.

I was so excited to see my friend Shane Gayle running the GIVE shirt station at Starbucks on Ryan Rd. just off I-94. Richard, the manager, and all of the workers were so kind, friendly, and helpful. As we rapidly ate, drank, put on dry clothes, and refilled our fuel pouches and bottles, it was such an incredible experience seeing people's expressions as Shaner explained the Runathon, and the GIVE shirt movement, while I simply introduced myself and thanked them. They were in good hands, and I had miles to run. One man was waiting for me immediately outside of the bathroom and quickly said, “I know this sounds crazy, but does God talk to you? He talks to me all the time. And he tells me that you're doing a great thing.”

Now we had the sign that my sisters Tara Underkofler and Theresa Sebestyen made, and people began honking, cheering, clapping, waving, and yelling, “I saw you on TV!” Jen Lada of Fox 6 Sports had done a feature about the GIVE shirt movement and the 24-Hour Runathon that had aired the night before. <http://www.fox6now.com/sports/witi-103110-give-shirt,0,3044437.story>

Barry Dusold, who helped organize things at InStep, picked up Chris and Melinda and I was alone for the first and only time all day. As I braced the sign against my head to keep it upright in the gusty wind I couldn't help but smile big with every step I took. My cheek muscles were now cramping more than my thighs. And people were beeping everywhere. This was the first time I really got to notice – it was working. I had set out on this incredible adventure to change people's lives by helping them become healthier, and happier by giving more. And people were noticing. And appreciating. And expressing it. I started wondering how many were being impacted and not expressing it? And how many would they impact as a result? The ripple effect sure is a powerful thing.

My brother Thaddeus Budde called and asked where I was. I was behind my projected schedule and it was tough trying to inform everyone of all the changes while running, especially while also carrying the sign. But he told me that my sister-in-law, Carrie Lavelle, was on her way to join me! What perfect, unexpected timing. She took the sign, and Thaddeus took pictures.

When I arrived at Instep it was overwhelming. The place was filled with Sami Wilson to exchange and charge Garmin's, Ray Hentzche to carry the sign, fuel, and water on his bike, Katie Whittaker to run, Michael Kohler to say hello, Jaime Lee who was running the store, 2 supporters who were buying the GIVE shirt, Ashley Kumlien of MSRuntheUS.com, and her parents, as well as the 3 previously mentioned participants. And while I wanted to answer all of their questions and give each of them my deserved attention, I needed to put on dry clothes, socks, shoes, and orthotics after re-lubricating my feet and toes (the rain really did slow me down throughout the day and night as I had to do this repeatedly), make sure I had enough of the right things to eat and drink, etc., and find everything in my car, which took several trips, and it was about a block away. I had run 40 miles, but I had many, many more to go.

I ate my first piece of "real food" as we headed west. It was fun running through downtown, especially with Ray yelling to everyone what we were doing. After a few miles Katie (who had run over 3 miles way faster than she ever had before) and Sami left us. It was so convenient having Ray to carry the sign, food, and water, but it didn't allow me any sort of break (e.g., running inside a restaurant to get water every hour). That 11 mile stretch to Calhoun road was the toughest leg of the journey. Ray kept me entertained by signaling all the cars and really raising awareness, which was, of course, the purpose of the Runathon. A minivan full of people pulled over, got out, and clapped as I ran by. I ran over to them and gave each one a high five. One gave me \$2. Another lady pulled over, got out of her car, and videotaped us.

Honestly, what I wanted most on the way to Calhoun, was to lay down. And I did a few times while Ray got me a piece of something else to put in my mouth. Running those 175 blocks of constant gradual uphill was taking its toll on my body, and my spirit. But cbs58 was waiting at Performance Running Outfitters in Brookfield, along with Nicki Cyrak who was helping there, Trae and Jess the amazingly helpful owners, and fellow runners Ashley, Lance Ekum, and Julie Fangman. And they closed at 5:00 pm. So I needed to keep moving.

When I ran in the door the energy level was incredible! I had run further (53 miles), and for longer (12 hours), than I ever had in my life, and I felt great! After being interviewed, using the

bathroom, grabbing some food and drink, and giving everyone thank yous and hugs, we headed back east.

These slightly downhill 13 miles were among the most enjoyable of the day. Ray had offered his bike to someone else if they wanted to ride it back, so I called Steffanie who had offered her services the day before but didn't have a bike, and she met us an hour later. Everyone was waving the sign, yelling to people to let them know what we were doing, and enjoying each other's company. All of us are doing good things to help others, and that's a good crowd to be in. We were also met along the way by some good friends - Mark Veth, his wife Kerry, and another friend.

We decided to add 3 miles to the leg and run to Francisco Torres' house where he had a pizza for us all to enjoy together. It was a tough 3 miles. I had now run 69 miles, and I was beginning to feel like it. My good friend's house was a welcomed oasis. For everyone else it was a finish line celebration. For me it was a chance to re-lubricate toes and feet, use the bathroom, transfer the fuel I needed from the bike to the running pouch, eat some "real food" (I had also eaten some veggies at Performance), and receive an incredible massage that I allowed to continue much longer than I had anticipated. Steffanie is a massage therapist, and available for appointments! [rejuvenatemx@yahoo.com](mailto:rejuvenatemx@yahoo.com)

It was a long break, but a needed one after 17 hours of running, with over 6 more to go. Compared to 17, 6 didn't seem like much. But it is still 6 hours of running! And after having just run for 17 hours, it REALLY is a lot!

But this was the fun part. It was night. We were downtown. People were out and about everywhere. Mike Stearns and Sami joined us. And we ventured everywhere. But not before it began pouring. I didn't mind getting sprinkled on, or even rained on. But it was cold, late, dark, I had been running for 18 hours, I still had 6 to go, and now I was getting absolutely pounded by rain. I decided to escape it, and ducked into a parking structure in hopes that it would stop soon like it had earlier. I ran up and down the first level ramp in a small circle for about 15 minutes until I felt too woozy and ill to continue. I needed to get out of there. And it hadn't stopped pouring. I needed to get wet.

It came down so hard for so long that the streets were flooded. We had to navigate around deep and enlarging mini lakes each time we crossed the street. Sometimes we couldn't tell that the water was several inches deep and stepped right in it. Now my feet weighed about 5 more pounds each. I was so happy to return to Francisco's house to get warm, and put on a new set of dry clothes, in hopes of it not pouring anymore. It really took a long time to find a dry pair of each piece of clothing needed in the car now, as things had become vastly scattered and disorganized throughout the day. By the time I got up to Francisco's place and peeled the soaking wet clothes off of me I was freezing. So cold I couldn't put my dry clothes on. I simply smothered my naked body with towels and blankets and laid on the floor to warm up.

I told Francisco, and Ricky Caron, who was to lead me the final 3 hours, that I didn't want to go back out there. And I didn't. I wanted to stay right where I was. I had run for 21 hours, and had gone 82 miles. It was late. I was tired. I didn't want to eat anything. My legs hurt now that

I had stopped running. And it was still raining out there! Of course, I knew that I was going to keep going. And they helped me do that faster than I would have alone.

Ricky and I wound our way to, up, and down Water St., and stashed the sign at his work building. It was about 2:30 am and not many people not looking for a fight were out anymore anyway. We headed down to the lake. Ricky ran ahead of me, pushing me to keep going, yelling encouragement just often enough. No one else was around though. It was just he, I, the night sky, and the rain. But the rain was light enough to be tolerable now.

However, there was no one around anymore to raise awareness in. No one to inspire to be healthy. No one to help understand the true power of giving. No one to help. So why was I still running? Because I said I would. Because I made a promise, a commitment, a pledge. And I wasn't going to stop until I accomplished that mission. Plus, several people had pledged to donate a certain amount of money per mile that I ran to help others, so I was running to help those who would benefit from that extra \$9.75 I raised for each additional mile I ran. And I was running for you, for those of you who would read and share this story. Thank you. Thank you for being there and inspiring me without even knowing it. I needed you. And I am grateful for the strength and purpose that you gave me.

So, after 22.5 hours of running, and 87.5 miles, I suddenly realized, and said to Ricky, "I only have 1.5 hours left. And I feel fine. I feel just like I did at 10 miles. (How that's possible is nearly unbelievable, even to me.) And there's no more reason to save it. So why not go for it and run faster, at least for as long as I can?" After all, the more miles I ran, the more money was raised for charity.

Whenever I stopped running I was uncomfortable. Ok, I'll admit it, I was in pain. It was tough to walk or stand, I would hunch over or lean on something, and my feet felt like they had been rubbed raw with sandpaper and were being pricked by many tiny sharp stones. Several times I actually emptied my shoes out, and then also took each sock off and turned it inside out to get the stones out, before realizing that there weren't any stones in there!

I was so stiff and sore that whenever I began running I had to do it very gradually, deliberately, and in slow motion. But once running, I felt fine. Relatively speaking, I felt awesome! I had made it this far without injury, without stomach problems, and without anything else that normally ends many such adventures prematurely, including a broken spirit. The few times I caught myself thinking, "I don't want to run anymore", I quickly changed those thoughts to, "Thank you! I DO want to do this! That is why I'm here. I am fortunate and grateful to be able to..." And my stride once again became slightly, but significantly, less laborious.

So now, at 3:00 am, Ricky and I picked up the pace and ran mile 88 in 8 minutes. I think we may have run mile 89 in 8 minutes as well. (For those of you who don't know, that's a 3 hour and 30 minute marathon pace, which would qualify over half of the population for Boston!) Then I encountered my first significant physical limitation of the adventure. My stomach finally had reached its limit, and didn't let me run that fast anymore.

As long as I kept the pace just slow enough, which was about 10 minute miles, I could continue. This last hour was the longest of the day. It was like my body knew it was almost done, and had spaced out what it was capable of doing to cover the time it needed to do it, and was now running out, and beginning to shut down. Our bodies are so amazing. Incredible. Almost unbelievable. Especially when we don't poison them, and give them what they truly need.

About a mile from Ricky's house, after running for over 23.75 hours, and 96 miles, my body just couldn't do it anymore. Let me rephrase myself. I probably could have found a way to run another 24 hours if I needed to! But the pain in my stomach had become bad enough that I was concerned that it could develop into something significant, and it wasn't worth the risk. So I decided to play it safe, and walk it in.

I couldn't eat a thing. My legs hurt so badly that for an hour I tossed and turned every few seconds to try to find a position in which the pain was tolerable enough to sleep, and couldn't find one. I finally gave in and took 5 ibuprophen (I normally only use natural anti-inflammatory), and tried the couch. Eventually I found a position in which I could tolerate the pain enough to "sleep" – for a couple of hours. 5 more ibuprophen, and another hour of sleep. I then took Francisco and Ricky to Noodles (another sponsor), and picked up my dad to watch football. I could walk easily, though not quite normally. That night I had a client with whom I walk.

I stayed at my sister Tara's house (she and my other sister Tiffany Budde had missed us the day before when we had to change the anticipated route). The following day, about 30 hours after I had stopped running, I my nieces chased me around the yard. 6 hours later I ran with a client. My ankle and knee pain that had severely limited my training – totally gone. Again, the human body is an incredible entity. Please treat yours well.

Thank you!

What I consumed during the 24 hours: 15 servings of Perpetuem, 3 of Recoverite, 3 of protein powder, 3 Ironman Power Bar drinks, 9 Nuun electrolyte tablets, 16 Endurolyte tablets, 10 energy gels, 6 mini Larabars, 4 Jelly Belly sports beans, 1 Clif shot rocks, 1 Kickbutt, 1 bagel with spread, 2 bananas, 2 pieces of pizza, broccoli, cauliflower, tomatoes, dip, and 128 gallons of water.  
Calories = 9,300. Protein = 230 grams.

Number inspired = Countless. A quote from just 1, who also ended up running about 5 times further than she ever had, "You've helped me realize what I believe is impossible is only my own self-imposed illusionary limit. You've inspired me to exercise and run again."

Money raised for charities = \$1,296  
You can still give! Please do...