

2017 ARC HIGHLIGHTS

Updated as of Jan 3,2018

Patrick Bussey

"The first time since high school that I decided to get off the couch, and go out for run..... FOR FUN..... was July 6th 2016. .4 miles. 8:15 pace per mile. I remember that sucked BAD afterwards and during. "Why do people do this for fun?" Next time I had the otherworldy itch to go, *scoff*, run..... was Aug 8th 2016. 1.5 miles. 9:56 pace per mile. Slowed it down and I made it farther. Imagine that. Well I soon got more itches to run, and I soon ran farther and farther. I didn't even know what cadence or lactate threshold was(nobody does). Who cared? I didn't. I just ran with garbage running shoes. I kept wanting to get back out there. "hey guys, I made it a whole 2 miles today...WITHOUT STOPPING", I told people at work. Anyway, 10 miles per month, 30, 2, 0, 0, 15, something like that from there. Not consistent. I decided to do my first 5k in June 2017 Hayley's Team Twilight. 24:20 per mile or something. I was proud. But I wanted to get better. All the sudden, with a goal in mind to get faster and do more of that(Woodstock was next), I was doing 100 miles a month. Woodstock had me 22:24 or something. A PR! I was researching how to properly train to run faster and farther. Worked on a training plan. Right before Woodstock I found ARC and went on a training run or two. Made some friends in the process. Ran a full 13.1 miles without stopping eventually. Never thought that would happen..... Yadda yadda, more running came and went, trail running was a thing I liked all the sudden, my shorts got shorter and shorter, and I got faster and faster(there is a correlation I swear). I'm now involved with a great group of people that I never would have met otherwise without getting a slight itch to run one day. That group introduced me to other groups. I racked a total of 624 miles this year. I had hernia surgery in November which put me out for a month. Did my excessive running cause it? Probably didn't HELP it. But who cares. Now I'm working on fixing another slight injury. It's part of it I guess. WHO CARES?! I'll be fine. I'm a runner now, so I'll just deal with whatever as it comes; good or bad. Here's to 1200 miles in 2018. Hopefully an organ won't fall out in the process "

Gina Copeland: My December mileage is 102 miles. Thank goodness most of this was accomplished before brain tumor and hospitalization! And thank goodness for my walking machine. Thank you for inspiring me and hopefully I can inspire someone else, and Jim Copeland said he would even try to keep up with me this year☺.

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Bob and Paula Pearl : As I reflect on my running this past year, I am constantly amazed at some of the great runners I see at the races we attend. Paula and I travel a good bit, and

therefore we see a wide variety of runners from different areas. It seems as I grow older (Not up!), I'm constantly being challenged to step it up a bit, in order to remain somewhat competitive. And, I think that is good thing. One of my favorite halves (The Kaiser Half Marathon), occurs towards the end of the running season. It's a great mix of peaceful back country paved trails, a traffic free Gulf State Park road, a cruise along the Gulf front highway and a tour around Orange Beach City Hall, finishing up where it started (Orange Beach Sports Complex). I also enjoyed the Rock n Fly Half Marathon. After having been injured in Iraq (2003), and subsequent neck, back, and shoulder surgeries, I feel very fortunate to be able to run. I hope everyone has a great 2018 Running Season. And I know, I will continue to be amazed by the many great runners out there. Kind regards, Paula & Bob Pearl

Mike Michelson :The year 2017 brought victories and defeats in my quest to honor Suzy by completing 100 half marathons in 50 states. In February, I ran the slowest half of my life in Tallahassee, Florida, having to walk after only 6 miles of uninspired running. The second Saturday in June, at the Marathon to Marathon in Iowa, I ran the second fastest half ever by a 70-year old in the long history of the race and it was by far my fastest half of the year. In July, I ran a race in Boise, Idaho, which had over a 3000 foot drop in altitude from start to finish and almost didn't finish. The day before Labor Day, in Tupelo, Mississippi, I ran my second fastest half of the year. In early October, in Newport, Rhode Island, I barely made the time limit and did a great imitation of someone who had no business being entered into that race at all. And finally, on December 16th, in San Diego, California, I ran my third fast half of the year to finish my slate of halves for the year. As you can see, it was a year of ups and downs, but brought me much closer to my goals as I completed 24 halves in 12 new states to finish the year with 87 total halves in 45 different states. The most important lesson I learned, after Newport, was that less could really be more. By running less during races, I could run faster and have found what I hope is a way to avoid setbacks in 2018. I may never duplicate the speed that I exhibited in 2015 and the first 9.5 months of 2016, but I can still have fun and feel a sense of accomplishment.

Brooke Nelson: My highlight for the year is actually not about me running, it's about the members of Anniston Runners Club. As most of you know, I am the Ride Director for the Cheaha Challenge bike ride in May put on by the Northeast AL Bicycle Association (NEABA), ARC's sister club. I am always humbled and honored that so many ARC members step up to volunteer to help us put on the ride. From putting out signs and banners to driving supplies to rest stops to hosting rest stops to working the registration or helping decorate the venue or a multitude of other duties, ARC has always come out in force. For this I am always extremely grateful.

Jim Parham: *I thought for sure my 2017 Highlight was going to be the Hokes Bluff tri with the usual bike (ARC Pres. Robert Powers) and run (me) but also a 3 mile kayak down the Coosa! Adam Arrington gave us such a lead our team finished 5th. Later than spring I swam the Kayak course. Surely that would be the highlight!.....But it wasn't. A Midshipman shipmate of over 50 years (Chuck Taylor—former minesweeper and Black Hawk pilot) talked me into training for MCM FULL. I really thought it would be impossible based on*

1. my last full marathon (my 8th) was almost 20 years—I had vowed to not run over 10K's ever again; 2. We are both over 70+; 3. We both had knee problems as old parachute jumpers

AND Chuck was a cancer survivor and 4: the Marine Corps marathon has a time limit gauntlet to get the medal.Neverthelss..... I trained hard with a great warm up half marathon in Newport RI in Sept with good bud Mike Michelson. Then in October Chuck and I got to report mission accomplished meeting all objectives: 1.Avoid med tent. 2.Beat the Bridge and 22 mile Gauntlet and 3. Finish together. Yes likely my last marathon but definitely a 2017 Highlight for me!

Ronnie Roberson

I had several, but my highlight of the year was was running two 50k's and a 50 miler with no DNF's. Ran the Grayson Highlands 50k in May, in the ice and snow. It was challenging. Then the Snakebite 50k in August. Then my final Ultra was the Yeti 50 Miler in September. I had never gone over a 50k and knew everything would have to go smooth to finish. I was trained and had my nutrition and hydration dialed in that day. I ended up running the race with a girl from Maryland who I had never met. She got sick and started throwing up around mile

38. At 45 she talked about stopping and calling someone to come get her. I told her we had suffered together all day and if she dropped then I was dropping. Would not have left her behind. So we moved on and finished together. The entire 50 Mile experience was awesome. Training for these events ultimately got me to the 1,200 mile mark.

Eric Rupp (First Sargeant US Army, Seattle Wa) This year has been my highest total since I started tracking in 2008. 1,603 miles of running for the year. 2 marathons and one half. The most miles yet since I started tracking in 2008I was able to stay injury free and had the pleasure of running in both Alabama and Washington and several states in between. The climate here is nice for running a lot once you get used to the rain.

Becky Strunk: My highlight for 2017 is completing my "40 before 40" personal goals. I had set three goals on Jan 1, 2017 and I reached every one of them. I ran the Lake Martin 50 Miler, Grand Viduta Stage race (completing 43 miles over 3 days), and completing my first 24 hour timed race, the Endless Mile. My goal for the timed race was 40 miles in the first 12 hours, which I completed. My total for the 24 hours period was 63 miles, completing my first 100K.

Meghan Wayman

Every run is my highlight of the day so it seems hard to choose one, but I'll go with the Rebecca Mountain 50miler in September. Not only was it a trail race on my home turf on the Pinhoti (on some sections hardly run by many) with gorgeous weather and great friends, but it was also filled with many familiar ARC faces at the aid stations which kept me smiling even more. I've traveled more and run further this year than

ever before, but there is no place like home and the people that make up my running family—thank you all and many happy miles to you in 2018!

Mandy Williams 2017 was a year of accomplishing several running goals and bucket list items. In March, I ran the Backyard to Vineyard challenge in Asheville, NC on the Biltmore Estate. A half marathon on Saturday followed by a full marathon on Sunday. Accomplishing this physical feat gave me confidence to register for a 50k. In May, I ran the Rockin' Choccolocco. I made a rookie mistake and drank something during that run that I had never tried before (and will never drink again). I finished, but only after feeling like I would surely die from mile 20-27. In June, my husband and I decided to change our eating habits and become Plant Based. Since then, I was able to accomplish PRs in 5k, 10k, and half marathon distances. November brought about the Wine and Dine 10k and Half Two Course Challenge. Running in Disney is amazing!

Another highlight for me, was my son, Luke, running Cross Country this year with Faith Christian School. He has never loved to run, but has watched me run since he was 5 or 6. He decided to join the team and improved his 5k time by over 4 minutes from the beginning of the season to the end. Watching him work hard and achieve a PR was definitely the best running memory for me in 2017. His soccer coaches also noted how it helped to improve his game, so I hope he runs again in 2018.

My last race of 2017 was the Ladiga Half Marathon where my dog Ruby, (whom I found after the Half Naked Half Marathon 2017) ran her first half marathon. All 3 of our dogs have ran the Ladiga Half. My first half of 2018 will be running the Half Naked Half Marathon with all 3 of the dogs. After that, I plan to add a few more states and maybe another 50k.

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Betsy Wright. Highlight- first 12 hour overnight ultra this year and ran 3 ultras before going down with multiple surgeries in June. Being able to get 1200 miles in spite of 2 shoulder surgeries, including a shoulder replacement, a severe ankle injury, and a foot surgery. Lost 6 months of running but worked hard to overcome injuries and make up mileage.

Chris Wright logged 50 miles in December and his highlight was running his first trail half marathon. Chris is new to trail running and plans to do many more I. 2018.