

Tussey race proceeds to go to ill children

Some run for the challenge of a 50-mile road race. Some run for the beauty of the course winding through Rothrock State Forest. Others run to support a good cause.

Whatever the reason they come, runners in the Tussey Mountainback 50-mile relay and ultramarathon are on track for another record-breaking year when the race gets underway Oct. 15.

The race, which has grown from 15 relay teams and one ultramarathoner in 2000 to 58 teams and 33 ultramarathoners last year, is hosting the USA Track & Field (USATF) 50 Mile National Road Championships. USATF is the national governing body for track and field, distance running and race walking. This is the second year the race has received the USATF's stamp of approval, which is credited for the increased participation.

More registration fees translate into a larger donation to a local nonprofit organization. Last year, Mountainback organizers donated \$2,000 in proceeds to the Centre Hall Library. This year organizers chose The Jared Box Project, which supplies activity boxes to young patients receiving



A race volunteer brought her faithful assistant with her for last year's race day.

chemotherapy or similar ongoing treatment.

"We look for causes that may be overlooked for lack of visibility," said race co-founder Michael Casper. "Last year was the most we have been able to give any nonprofit group so far, but as the race grows, we expect our contributions to grow as well."

"We are simply thrilled to be chosen as this year's Mountainback 50 beneficiary,"

"The Jared Box Project is designed to lift the spirits of chronically-ill children... What is really inspiring is the dedication, camaraderie and relentless spirit of our patients and volunteers. Ironically, these characteristics are the hallmarks of those who volunteer and run in the Tussey Mountainback 50."

--Cindy Kolarik

said the project's founder, Cindy Kolarik. "The Jared Box Project is designed to lift the spirits of chronically ill children, and, while the boxes themselves can do that, what is really inspiring is the dedication, camaraderie and relentless spirit of our patients and volunteers. Ironically, these characteristics are the hallmarks of those who volunteer and run in the Tussey Mountainback 50."

Jared Boxes are shoebox-size plastic storage boxes filled with small gifts, toys, cards and games. Each box contains items chosen for a child of a specific age and gender. The boxes are delivered to hospitals, where they are distributed to chronically ill children needing a diversion from the trials of ongoing treatment.

The project was named for Jared, a student at Our Lady of Victory School in State College who battled cancer. Since 2000, when Jared's friends and classmates created the project in his honor, more than 10,000 boxes have been delivered to chronically-ill children in 23 states.

The recent national attention to the race has caused some other record-breaking as well. In 2004, the 50-mile championship winners set new records for the course. Distance star Chad Ricklefs, of Boulder, Colo., completed the course in under six hours. Ricklefs also posted the fastest time nationally that year at that distance. Ultramarathoner Laura Nelson, of Woodstock, Va., took the women's title in just over seven hours.

Spectators will be able to view this year's race from several recreation areas, including Whipple Dam State Park, Alan Seeger Natural Area, Colyer Lake and the Tussey Mountain Ski Area. The race starts and finishes at the Tussey Mountain Ski Area, on Bear Meadows Road off Rt. 322, just south of Boalsburg. The ultra division race will



Evelyn Ellis of Runnin' On Empty wraps up Leg 6 of last year's race and turns the team's baton (slap bracelet) over to Mike Doorsis.

begin at 7 a.m. and the relay teams will start in progressive waves, beginning at 8 a.m.

Registration ends Oct. 1 and is available online (or via downloadable form) at www.tusseymountainback.com or Active.com or by mail or hand delivery to 103 E. Hamilton Ave., State College, PA 16801.

For information, call (814) 238-5918.

Sponsoring this year's race are the Central Pennsylvania Convention and Visitors Bureau, Tom Cali-Re/MAX Centre Realty, Rapid Transit Sports, Appalachian Outdoors, Anthony G. DeBoef Esq., B&E Cycles, and McClarren Financial Advisors.

The Rules of the Family

Advice by Donna

Dear Madrone,

My mother-in-law treats me better than my own mother, who I am sorry to say is a real piece of work, always putting me down and whining I don't do for her. I manage a PR firm and often I get freebies from the clients for this or that show. I prefer to go with my mother-in-law, who at least appreciates the gesture and will thank me, instead of with my mother, who complains every second about the seats and the quality of the experience. Back me up on this one, so I don't have to hear it from her. Happy-In-Law Milheim

Dear Happy,

No can do. A complaining mother may make you wish to put out your own eyeballs with hatpins, but a rotten disposition and no manners (I'm not saying your mother has such things; I am just making a point) is not reason enough to exclude her. God bless, Donna.

Dear Madrone,

I need your help. My cousin and her husband always insist on paying when we go out to dinner. Most people think I am crazy when I complain about this, but you know as well as I do that this is disrespectful. There is no reason for her to always pay except to show off and put me down. She's always been that way for years. How can I make her NOT pay?

Frustrated, Lock Haven

Dear Frustrated, How long has this been going on? For YEARS, you say? What do I look like, an idiot? If you wanted to pay the bill you could have done it long before now. It's very simple. I will spell it out, on the off chance you really are that slow, instead of finally becoming ashamed of bad manners. Here's how you pay for the dinner: YOU PAY FOR THE DINNER. End of story. God bless, Donna.

P.S. You crazy folks at the Lock Haven Social Club, don't you think I can tell a fake letter when I see one?