

# THE FLEET FOOT

NEWSLETTER OF THE GULF WINDS TRACK CLUB | JUNE/JULY 2025



## BIRGIT MAIER-KATKIN

EARNs THE ABBOTT WORLD MARATHON MAJOR  
SIX STAR MEDAL AT THE LONDON MARATHON

Photo credit: Kory Skrob

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NEWSLETTER OF THE GULF WINDS TRACK CLUB | JUNE/JULY 2025

VOLUME 50 | ISSUE 6

**Editor:** Robert & Kory Skrob, [FleetFoot@GulfWinds.org](mailto:FleetFoot@GulfWinds.org)

**Columnists:** Jane Johnson (Featured Feet), Jennifer Hay and Jerry McDaniel (Presidents Column), Bill Lott (Race Calendar).

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GWTC-Fleet Foot and sent to, PO Box 3447, Tallahassee, FL 32315

### Submissions/Contributions:

Submissions for publication are strongly encouraged, the preferred format is Microsoft Word. If you have pictures or stories about your running group, don't be shy, photos should be in jpg format. Contact us if you have questions.

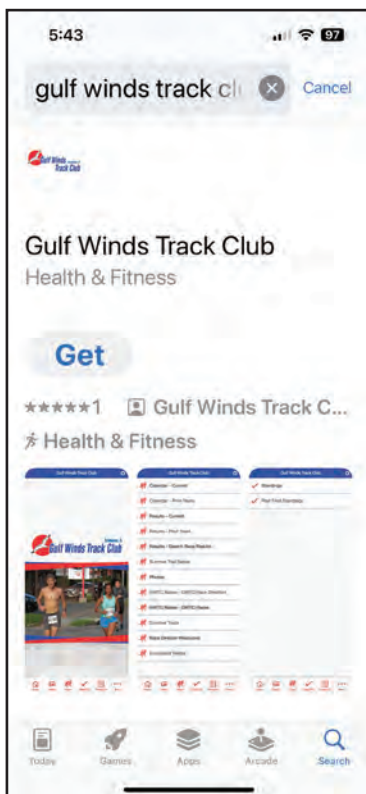
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## Stay Connected with the Gulf Winds Track Club App!

Get the latest club updates, check race results, and view the event calendar right from your phone! It's the easiest way to stay informed and connected with all things GWTC. Download the app today on the Google Play Store or Apple App Store to keep up with our club's activities. Don't miss out—download now!





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**Road Runners Club of America Member Club**

**USA Track & Field Member Club #14-1275**

# APRIL 2025 BOARD MEETING RECAP

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Here is a Gulf Winds Track Club Board of Directors meeting briefing about the meeting held April 9, 2025, hosted by Hawthorne Hay. The full meeting minutes are available at <https://www.gulfwinds.org/minutes/>. To learn about future board meetings and their locations, visit <https://www.gulfwinds.org/business-meetings/>. All GWTC members are welcome to attend any board meeting. Please join us if you are interested or curious about the work happening behind the scenes.

## **Board Approves 2026 Tallahassee Marathon Budget and New Initiatives**

The Board approved the 2026 Tallahassee Marathon and Half Marathon budget proposal, with Robert and Kory Skrob as race directors for the event scheduled on February 8, 2026. The budget includes additional funding for clothing sales, and efforts are underway to secure Bank of America as a sponsor again. Robert will also review and potentially increase sponsorship pricing.

## **Fleet Foot Newsletter to Have Managing Editor**

Due to increased responsibilities, Robert Skrob suggested hiring a Managing Editor for the Fleet Foot newsletter for the remainder of 2025. The Board approved this motion.

## **Final Year for Paul Hoover Memorial Freedom 5K**

Jerry McDaniel announced that 2025 will be the final year for the Paul Hoover Memorial Freedom 5K, which typically clears \$5,000 after expenses, primarily from sponsors. The Board decided not to adopt it as a club race.

## **Bowlegs Run for Scholarship 5K Donates to Faculty and Friends Club**

The Bowlegs 5K generated revenues of \$4,149.73 and expenses of \$1,388.93, resulting in a net revenue of \$2,760.80. With \$202 in donations, the total contribution to the Faculty and Friends Club is \$2,962.80. The Board approved awarding 100% of the net proceeds to the club, supporting scholarships for students.

## **Tallahassee Marathon Raises \$57,000 for Charitable Causes**

The 2025 Tallahassee Marathon raised approximately \$57,000. The Board approved the budget closeout and discussed donations to Second Harvest, Sportsability, Leon County Parks, Friends of Our Parks, and the Youth Running program. A \$200 donation to RRCA was also considered. Approval for these donations was withheld pending further details.

## **Chip Timing Services Update**

In March, GWTC provided chip timing for one non-club race (Shamrock Scurry 5K/1M) and two club races (Bowlegs 5K Run for Scholarship and Springtime 10K/5K/1M). In April, the club timed one non-club race (Cornerstone Learning Community Hawk Run Jubilee 5K/1M) and one club race (Palace Saloon 5K). Scheduled for May are two non-club races (Tails and Trails Half Marathon/10K/5K/1M and NeSmith Way 5K) and one club race (Summer Trail Series Race #1). Chip timing revenue from non-club races held since July 2024 totals \$4,031.00.

## **Membership and Communications**

As of March 31, 2025, GWTC has 1,324 individual members and 753 family memberships, up from 1,280 and 728, respectively, the previous year. Director of Communications Jennifer Hay reported on ordering new GWTC shirts, including performance shirts, and working on car magnets. She is also updating the website and enhancing the club's presence on Instagram.

## **Equipment Maintenance and Updates**

Bill Lott reported replacing the battery in a Chronomix and the batteries in a small, one-sided flip-digit clock. A rain cover for a large, two-sided flip-digit clock was purchased, ensuring all clocks now have rain covers. An LED-digit clock malfunctioned during the Springtime race but appears to be functioning properly now.

## **Grand Prix and Training Groups**

Lisa Unger reported that all Grand Prix races have been scored up to this point, with the next race being the Palace Saloon 5K. Training Groups Coordinator Jennifer Hay mentioned that Emily Webster suggested Ology Northside as a meeting place, potentially every other month.

## **School Grants Outreach**

School Grants Coordinator Amy will contact Title One schools to see if they would like to apply for school grants for the coming year.



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opportunities to be a part of history.

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# **Great Potluck Bash 4 Mile Prediction Run**

**Saturday June 8, 2025**

Forestmeadows Parks & Athletic Center  
4750 N Meridian Rd Tallahassee, FL US 32312

## **LEAVE YOUR WATCH AT HOME**

Runners who finish closest to their predicted time will be recognized,  
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You'll be running 4 miles through the gorgeous Phipps Property Trails.  
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# FEAR NO DISTANCE

A group of runners in silhouette are shown in various stages of a running stride, moving from left to right across the frame. The background is a soft, hazy sky at sunset or sunrise, with a warm glow on the horizon. The runners are positioned in the lower half of the image, creating a sense of motion and energy.

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# RACE CALENDAR



## JUNE 2025

### 05 GWTC Summer Track Series - Week

1, 6:45 p.m. Maclay School Track, 3737 N. Meridian Rd. Tom Perkins at (850) 264-4595 or [tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com](mailto:tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com); or Jeanne O'Kon at (850) 264-4903 or [okonj@flagger.edu](mailto:okonj@flagger.edu).

### 07 Monticello Kiwanis Club Watermelon

5K Run/4M Walk, 8:15 a.m. First United Methodist Church – Family Ministry Center, corner of South Water St. and Hwy 90 West, Monticello, FL. Online registration available at [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com); or Floyd Faglie at [watermelonrun@gmail.com](mailto:watermelonrun@gmail.com) or (850) 841-0828.

### 07 GWTC Great Potluck Bash 4M (Trail

Prediction Run), 6 p.m. Forestmeadows Park and Athletic Center, 4750 N. Meridian Rd. Online registration available at [RunSignUp.com](https://RunSignUp.com). Visit [www.gulfwinds.org](http://www.gulfwinds.org); or David Yon at [david@radeylaw.com](mailto:david@radeylaw.com).

### 10-15 NCAA Outdoor Track & Field

Championships, TBA. Hayward Field, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR. Visit [www.ncaa.com](http://www.ncaa.com).

### 12 GWTC Summer Track Series - Week

2, 6:45 p.m. Maclay School Track, 3737 N. Meridian Rd. Tom Perkins at (850) 264-4595 or [tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com](mailto:tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com); or Jeanne O'Kon at (850) 264-4903 or [okonj@flagger.edu](mailto:okonj@flagger.edu).

### 19 GWTC Summer Track Series - Week

3, 6:45 p.m. Maclay School Track, 3737 N. Meridian Rd. Tom Perkins at (850) 264-4595 or [tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com](mailto:tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com); or

Jeanne O'Kon at (850) 264-4903 or [okonj@flagger.edu](mailto:okonj@flagger.edu).

### 26 GWTC Summer Track Series - Week

4, 6:45 p.m. Maclay School Track, 3737 N. Meridian Rd. Tom Perkins at (850) 264-4595 or [tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com](mailto:tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com); or Jeanne O'Kon at (850) 264-4903 or [okonj@flagger.edu](mailto:okonj@flagger.edu).

### 28 GWTC Summer Trail Series Race

#2 - TBA. Online registration available at [RunSignUp.com](https://RunSignUp.com). Bobby York at [byorkjr@msn.com](mailto:byorkjr@msn.com).

### 28 Paul Hoover Memorial Freedom

Run 5K and Extra Mile Run/Walk, 8 a.m. 5K; 8:45 a.m. Extra Mile. Wakulla Springs State Park, 465 Wakulla Park Dr., Wakulla Springs, FL. (15 miles south of Tallahassee on SR 267). Online registration available at [RunSignUp.com](https://RunSignUp.com). Michael Atkinson at [nexnbax1@comcast.net](mailto:nexnbax1@comcast.net); or Mike Martin at [mike\\_martin23@yahoo.com](mailto:mike_martin23@yahoo.com).

## JULY 2025

### 04 41st Annual Capital City Kiwanis

Firecracker 5K/1M Sparkler Run, 7:30 a.m. 1M; 8 a.m. 5K. Cascades Park, 1001 S. Gadsden St. Online registration available at [raceroster.com](https://raceroster.com). Visit [www.cckcfirecracker5k.com](http://www.cckcfirecracker5k.com); or Capital City Kiwanis at [tallahasseeffirecracker5k@gmail.com](mailto:tallahasseeffirecracker5k@gmail.com).

### 04 Freedom Springs Triathlon (400-meter

swim; 10M bike; 5K run), 7 a.m. (CT). Blue Spring Recreation Park, 5461 Blue Springs

Rd., Marianna, FL. Additional information and online registration available at [freedomsspringstriathlon.com](http://freedomsspringstriathlon.com).

**10 GWTC Summer Track Series - Week 5**, 6:45 p.m. Maclay School Track, 3737 N. Meridian Rd. Tom Perkins at (850) 264-4595 or [tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com](mailto:tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com); or Jeanne O'Kon at (850) 264-4903 or [okonj@flagger.edu](mailto:okonj@flagger.edu).

**12 Ernie Sims Track Invitational (AAU)**, 8:30 a.m. field events (rolling schedule); 10 a.m. running events (rolling schedule). Chiles High School, 7200 Lawton Chiles Lane. Alice Sims at [alicesims3435@gmail.com](mailto:alicesims3435@gmail.com) or (850) 322-3929.

**17 GWTC Summer Track Series - Week 6**, 6:45 p.m. Maclay School Track, 3737 N. Meridian Rd. Tom Perkins at (850) 264-4595 or [tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com](mailto:tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com); or Jeanne O'Kon at (850) 264-4903 or [okonj@flagger.edu](mailto:okonj@flagger.edu).

**24 GWTC Summer Track Series - Week 7**, 6:45 p.m. Maclay School Track, 3737 N. Meridian Rd. Tom Perkins at (850) 264-4595 or [tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com](mailto:tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com); or Jeanne O'Kon at (850) 264-4903 or [okonj@flagger.edu](mailto:okonj@flagger.edu).

**26 GWTC Summer Trail Series Race #3** - TBA. Online registration available at [RunSignUp.com](http://RunSignUp.com). Bobby York at [byorkjr@msn.com](mailto:byorkjr@msn.com).

**31 GWTC Summer Track Series - Week 8**, 6:45 p.m. Maclay School Track, 3737 N. Meridian Rd. Tom Perkins at (850) 264-4595 or [tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com](mailto:tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com); or Jeanne O'Kon at (850) 264-4903 or [okonj@flagger.edu](mailto:okonj@flagger.edu).

## AUGUST 2025

**08 Tallahassee Beer Festival Beer Mile**, 6:30 p.m. Donald L. Tucker Civic Center, 505 W. Pensacola St. Visit Tallahassee Beer Festival at <https://tlhbeerfest.com>; or Mickey Moore at [mickey@mooretobusiness.com](mailto:mickey@mooretobusiness.com).

**09 GWTC Breakfast on the Track Mile**, 7:45 a.m. Maclay School Track, 3737 N. Meridian Rd. Online registration available at [RunSignUp.com](http://RunSignUp.com). Chris or Lauren Stanley at [ctstanley800@gmail.com](mailto:ctstanley800@gmail.com).

**16 GWTC Miller Landing Madness 8K/5K/3K XC Run**, 8 a.m. 8K/5K; 9 a.m. 3K. Elinor Klapp- Phipps Park, Gate B, 1775 Miller Landing Rd. (1.3 miles west of Meridian Rd. on Miller Landing Rd.). Online registration available at [RunSignUp.com](http://RunSignUp.com). Tom Perkins at [tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com](mailto:tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com) or (850) 264-4595; Jeanne O'Kon at [okonj@tsc.fl.edu](mailto:okonj@tsc.fl.edu) or (850) 264-4903; or Bill Lott at [blott@nettally.com](mailto:blott@nettally.com) or (850) 656-1273.

**23 GWTC Summer Trail Series Race #4** - Maclay Gardens (~6M), 8 a.m. Maclay Gardens State Park, 3540 Thomasville Rd. Online registration available at [RunSignUp.com](http://RunSignUp.com). Bobby York at [byorkjr@msn.com](mailto:byorkjr@msn.com).

**23 Dueling Summits XC Invitational**, 7:15 a.m. community 5K; 8 a.m. girls high school 5K; 8:40 a.m. boys high school 5K; 9:30 a.m. girls middle school 3K; 10 a.m. boys middle school 3K. Elinor Klapp-Phipps Park, Gate B, 1775 Miller Landing Rd. (1.3 miles west of Meridian Rd.). Online meet information and registration available at <http://fl.milesplit.com/>; or Jose Fernandez at [multijumps@gmail.com](mailto:multijumps@gmail.com).



# *Gulf Winds Track Club* **GRAND PRIX**

All GWTC members receive points for finishing in the top 12 positions by age group for Grand Prix events. It's a fun way to compete with fellow members throughout the year.

## 2025 Complete Grand Prix Schedule

Date	Race	Adult	Youth
August 9	Breakfast on the Track	1M	1M
August 16	Miller Landing Madness 8K/5K/3K	8K/5K	3K
September 1	Bluebird Run 5k (1mile not timed)	5K	-
September 13	5K for Sickle Cell Anemia & Tim Simpkins 1 Mile	-	5K or 1M
September 20	Women's Distance Festival 5K & 1M	-	5K or 1M
September 27	Steve Prefontaine 5K Forest Run	5K	-
October 11	Pine Run at Tall Timbers 20K	20K	-
November 27	Turkey Trot 15k, 10k, 5k, & 1M	15K	5K or 1M
December 13	Tallahassee Ultra Distance Classic 50M/50K	50K or Marathon	-

## **GRAND PRIX STANDINGS**

Get the complete 2024 standings by visiting:  
<https://runsignup.com/Series/GWTCGrandPrix>



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# PRESIDENTS COLUMN

By: Allen Blay, GWTC Vice President

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This past week, the GWTC Executive Board voted to make the single largest donation that we have ever made to become an official sponsor of the 2026 World Athletics Cross Country Championships being held at Apalachee Regional Park, known to most runners as the ARP. If there has ever been an opportunity that perfectly fits the mission of our club, this is it. Our donation will help fund the construction of a permanent bridge that will cross the course at the Corbin Trail, providing a crazy mountain obstacle for the runners in the World Championships, but a new and safer way for spectators to cross the course and view the race about 500 meters in at future races. I can picture Herb Wills grinning as he thinks about the pictures he will be able to take from the bridge. The World Championships are also going to have a number of temporary modifications – swamps, beaches, lakes – all critical aspects of a challenging course, and representative of the state of Florida. There will be a community race also and I can't wait.

I love the ARP. On December 21 last year I was warming up for the GWTC Tannenbaum 6K and I was enjoying the beauty of this course. It really is no wonder why we have hosted the FHSAA State XC Championships for the past 13 years, as well as Middle School, NCAA, and USATF XC Championships. A little while later while I was gasping for air after finishing the race 10 minutes behind winner Alyson Churchill, the difficulty of the course was also apparent. It also sent me down a rabbit hole trying to learn the history of how this course became “the ARP” to cross country runners from around the country, and now, the world.

In 2008, Leon County identified an underutilized portion of its Solid Waste Management Facility as a potential site for a cross-country course. The vision was to create a space that could host competitive events and serve the community. GWTC, FSU and Leon County Parks & Rec donated \$10,000 each to spearhead the effort – without this the ARP might never

have happened. By 2009, the park opened with an 8-mile running trail, marking the beginning of its transformation. It also explains why my colleague and long-time Tallahassee runner Bud Fennema refers to it as “the dump”, which is about as wrong a description as you can get.

Recognizing the park’s potential, Leon County invested in significant upgrades. In 2012, the county allocated \$300,000 to widen the course to meet the 10m NCAA standards. Further enhancements in 2021, totaling \$3 million, introduced a permanent finish line structure, multipurpose building, restrooms, and improved accessibility features. I can remember a friend from Miami walking around saying, “Wow...” at the state meet the first year the new structures were there. I agree and can’t imagine a better cross-country facility.

There have been many people involved in the development of this course over the years, but from what I can tell, the original idea, vision, and fighting through significant early resistance was largely the work of recently-retired FSU Coach Bob Braman, “new” Leon High School coach Brian Corbin – both of whom are recognized with trails in their name at the park – and the tireless efforts of GWTC’s Judy Alexander and Herb Wills, who both still

frequent and fight for the ARP. Judy is the volunteer coordinator for the World Championship event continuing her years of service to the running community. More recently, Amanda Heidecker, the director of Leon County Parks and Recreation and co-Chair of the World Championships, has taken a lead role in the more recent changes and her vision is impressive. If you haven’t met Amanda, you need to. She’s a former FSU athlete who competed in both cross country and track, and helped the Noles win the 2009 ACC Track Championship with her 3000m Steeplechase performance. She’s also a big reason why people from all over are jealous of our park system.

The ARP’s development has had a significant economic impact, generating over \$40 million in direct spending in Leon County according to Visit Tallahassee. It has become a hub for cross-country events, drawing participants and spectators from across the nation and beyond. Apalachee Regional Park stands as a testament to the power of community collaboration and vision. From its humble beginnings as excess landfill property, it has grown into a world-class facility that continues to inspire athletes and enrich the local community. And once a year in December, it reminds this mid-50s runner that the famous ARP “Wall” is no joke! 🏃



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## FEATURED FEET

# IAN FITTON



**Childhood ambition:** Professional Baseball Player (1st base for the Braves if we're getting specific).

**Current Occupation:** Data Scientist for an Economic Consulting Firm

**If money were no object, what profession would you choose:** I'd love to work with plants all day, so maybe I'd work at a nursery. Or a bartender on the beach if that falls through.

**Favorite running memory:** The Pine Run this past October. The weather was perfect and the views out there were stellar!

**Indulgence:** Pizza all day.

**Non-Running hobbies:** I love reading, rock climbing over at Alchemy (not an Ad), going hiking up in the mountains (Appalachians or Rockies) when I get the chance, and traveling with my wife.

**Favorite Reads:** Slaughterhouse Five (anything by Kurt Vonnegut really), The Warmth of Other Suns, the "3 Body Problem" Series.

**Best place to run in Tallahassee:** Cascades, Railroad Square, FSU campus, Piney Z, Miccosukee Trail, in no order.

**Preferred Running Technology:** Just my cheap-o Garmin Forerunner!

**Perfect day:** A morning run, followed by a big breakfast, a day baseball game with a couple of beers, and hanging with my dogs in the afternoon.

**Biggest challenge:** It's a tie between the Tallahassee Marathon I did this past February (first marathon) and the Swamp Forest Trail 20-miler I thought it'd be fun to do as a prep race the month prior. 🏃



**2025  
ELIGIBILITY  
REQUIREMENTS**

**Members aged 15 and older must perform volunteer service for at least one GWTC race.**

Document your volunteer service here

<https://tinyurl.com/GWTCVolunteer>

## FEATURED FEET

# AVERI LEWIS



**Childhood ambition:** I went through a phase in elementary school after reading a series of books on horse racing where I decided I wanted to be a racehorse jockey when I grew up.

**Current Occupation:** Triathlon coach at Odyssey Multisport and Service Manager at Trek Bicycle Tallahassee.

**If money were no object, what profession would you choose:** I'd still be a coach :)

**Favorite running memory:** Crossing the finish line at my first Ironman.

**Indulgence:** Anything with chocolate + peanut butter.

**Non-Running hobbies:** I'm a triathlete, so swimming and cycling :)

**Favorite Reads:** Anything that focuses on performance or mindset! I love reading anything that helps me be a better athlete or coach.

**Best place to run in Tallahassee:** My favorite spot for a run is around Piney Z on a quiet morning before the trails get crowded.

**Preferred Running Technology:** I love running with AfterShokz open ear headphones! It's great to have music and hear my surroundings at the same time.

**Perfect day:** Sunny and 65 degrees, morning bike ride with my friends and boyfriend followed by brunch or brewery stop.

**Biggest challenge:** Finding enough time each week to fit in swimming, biking, running, and lifting while coaching 10 triathletes and working full time at the bike shop! 🚴

# BREAKFAST ON THE TRACK

*is back!*

**SATURDAY  
AUGUST 9TH • 8AM  
MACLAY SCHOOL TRACK**

Races include a competitive mile, youth heats, and fun runs for all ages. Whether you're chasing a PR or just here for the pancakes, this 1-mile race is the perfect way to start your day. Run fast. Eat well.



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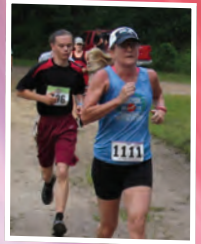
GULF WINDS TRACK CLUB PRESENTS  
**MILLER LANDING  
MADNESS**

**8K/5K/3K CROSS COUNTRY RUN  
TO BENEFIT SECOND HARVEST OF THE BIG BEND**



**WHEN:** AUGUST 16, 2025

**WHERE:** GATE B, ELINOR KLAPP-PHIPPS PARK  
(1.3 MILES WEST OF MERIDIAN ROAD  
ON MILLER LANDING ROAD)



**TIME:** 8K/5K START AT 8:00 A.M.; 3K STARTS AT 9:00 A.M.

All monetary proceeds benefit the GWTC Chenoweth Fund.  
All canned food donations go to Second Harvest of the Big Bend.



**Online registration available  
at RunSignUp.com.**



**EARLY PACKET PICK-UP:**

Register, pick up your packet, & drop off food items early:  
Wednesday, August 13, 2025 Cadence Running,  
2743 Capital Circle NE #101 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.



**Race Day Registration and Packet Pick-Up:** Begins at race site at 6:30 a.m.

Ages 18 and Under and under: Free with four cans of food.

Over 18 years of age: Pay registration fee and minimum of two cans of food.

High School age and Middle School age Club Teams may compete for team awards in the 5K and 3K races, respectively. Team members must enter team name when registering.  
Each team participant is required to register and submit a signed, completed waiver.



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHENOWETH FUND  
OR GULF WINDS TRACK CLUB, VISIT [WWW.GULFWINDS.ORG](http://WWW.GULFWINDS.ORG).**

**FOR RACE INFORMATION**

**CONTACT TOM PERKINS AT (850) 264-4595;  
JEANNE O'KON AT (850) 264-4903; OR  
BILL LOTT AT (850) 656-1273.**





# LONDON MARATHON: CHASING THE 6TH STAR

*On April 27, 2025, London set a new world record with 56,640 runners finishing the London Marathon.*

Like other World Major Marathons, the mix of elite runners and international participants made the experience unforgettable.

It took me 10 years to earn a spot in the London Marathon. Since running my first Boston Marathon in 2015, I'd dreamed of earning the Abbott Six Star Medal, awarded to runners who complete Boston, Chicago, New York, Berlin, Tokyo, and London. While I'd run Boston, Chicago, New York, and Berlin several times, getting into Tokyo and London was a challenge. In 2024, I finally won a lottery entry for Tokyo, and later learned Sports Tours International had London entries available for 2025. My six-star dream was in reach.

Race morning began with a bus ride to the start at Greenwich Park. The sunny forecast meant heat and little shade, and loudspeakers encouraged runners to pace conservatively and hydrate wisely. Motivational music, blooming trees, and the buzz of thousands of runners created a magical atmosphere.



## LONDON MARATHON: CHASING THE 6TH STAR<sub>CONT</sub>

My training hadn't been ideal—nagging leg pain forced me to cut back in the final weeks. I knew that anything can happen in 26.2 miles, so I resolved to take it one step at a time, enjoy the crowds, and celebrate the moment.

The first two miles passed quickly as I ran through quiet country roads, soaking in the energy of the runners around me. But by mile three, my stomach rebelled. I spent several miles scouting for a “loo,” losing time but grateful for relief by mile five. Spirits lifted again as we passed the Cutty Sark, and the crowds and musicians kept me moving.

London is famous for its costumed runners, and I saw everything from rhinos to Big Ben, firefighters in full gear, and even barefoot runners. I had my name printed on my shirt and loved hearing spectators cheer, sometimes wondering aloud if they got “Birgit” right.

Crossing Tower Bridge at the halfway point was incredible. From there, things grew hazy—fatigue set in, and I focused on reducing the remaining miles, playing number games in my head. The final stretch along the Embankment, past Scotland Yard, and toward Big Ben was a blur of excitement. As Buckingham Palace came into view, adrenaline kicked in. My aches disappeared. The finish line neared.

Ten years of dreaming came rushing back. I crossed the line with tears and endorphins flooding my senses. I received my London medal and stepped to the Abbott World Majors tent, where I was awarded the coveted Six Star Medal.

Getting back to the hotel was another feat. Though marathon bibs allowed free subway rides, my quads went on strike. I clung to handrails, hobbling along, the jingle of two medals announcing my triumph to the world.

This journey wouldn't have been possible without the support of so many. Ruffian, Tsigie, Kory, and Lily—you made the training joyful and meaningful. Tsigie, thanks for the airport hero's welcome. To GWTC—thank you for the community and the incredible local races that keep us going. And to my broader Tallahassee support team—you keep me strong.

***Dan, I know you were smiling. We did it. Six stars. Journey complete.***



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# YEAR ROUND RUNNING GROUPS

Learn a lot more about  
running groups by visiting  
[www.gulfwinds.org/training](http://www.gulfwinds.org/training).

## **TUESDAY MORNING INTERVALS**

Tuesday, 6:30am at Maclay School Track

## **TUESDAY EVENING INTERVALS**

Tuesday, 6:00pm at Railroad Square (by skate  
park/rattler snake)

## **MIDTOWN MIDWEEK MILES**

Wednesday, 5:30am at Whole Foods Market

## **WEDNESDAY EVENING INTERVAL WORKOUT GROUP**

Wednesday, 5:30pm at Harriman Circle Park

## **OPTIMIST PARK THURSDAY NIGHT GROUP RUN**

Thursday, 6pm at Optimist Park

## **SUNDAY AT FOREST MEADOWS TRAIL RUN**

Sunday, 7:30am at  
Forest Meadows Tennis Complex

## **REFLECTION TRAIL RUN**

Every Sunday EXCEPT for the last  
Sunday of the month. Tom Brown's Lafayette  
Heritage Trail (501 Easterwood Dr). Meet at  
the West Cadillac Trailhead signpost.

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## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

# BILL MCGUIRE



**Tell us briefly about your running experience.** My first running experience actually happened before I was even born! I was at Madison Square Garden in utero the night my father won the National AAU 1,000-yard Championship in March 1947.

My early running days included organizing and running relay races in 4th grade during recess at St. Teresa School in Woodside, NY. We'd form two lines, and the lead-off runners would race to the fire alarm box and back, tag the next person, and so on. I also had to run away from bullies on 46th Street every time I got a haircut—luckily, they never caught me!

My “formal” running (daily training and weekly racing) started in the fall of 1961 as a freshman at Chaminade High School in Mineola, NY. I ran four years of cross country and track, competing throughout the NY/NJ area. I was a small fish in a big pond, often lining up against national high school champions and future Olympians. I didn't win much, but I did well enough to earn a scholarship to Fordham University in the Bronx.

At Fordham, I ran the 400 hurdles and qualified for both the NCAA and AAU Nationals in 1968. After graduating, I joined Brooklyn's United Athletic Association track team and ran on a 2-mile relay with Jamaican Olympian Byron Dyce. We competed at the national level and even had the honor of racing against the Kenyan National 2-mile relay at the Martin Luther King Games in 1970.

I kept training and racing on the track until I moved to Tallahassee in 1974. Around that time, I started transitioning into road races, including a few 5Ks—and I actually

ran the last 18 miles of the very first New York Marathon! Once I settled in Tallahassee, I left the track behind and became a full-on road runner. I did well in 5Ks and 10Ks, and between 1987 and 2002, I was ranked among the top Masters and Grandmasters at those distances in the state of Florida.

**How long have you been a GWTC member?** I've been a member of GWTC since before it was even a club. Back in the fall of 1974, just a dozen or so of us would meet at Tully Gym or at Jeff Galloway's house from time to time.

**What was your first volunteer experience?** In late '74 or early '75, I volunteered to direct a 2-mile “fun run” that finished at the FSU track. About 110 locals ran it. Jeff supplied Phidippides t-shirts for everyone and a few trophies for the overall winners. (Tim Simpkins won it!)

**What do you enjoy about volunteering?** Running has always been a part of me, and I like being part of the action. Doing massage at races is probably my favorite volunteer activity, but I'm happy doing anything that helps get runners from start to finish—like course marking or monitoring. (Just not traffic control...ugh!)

**Why do you volunteer?** I love everything about running, and I've gotten so much from the sport over my lifetime. It only feels right to give something back.

**What are your next volunteer projects?**

1. Helping to figure out the 2026 TLH Marathon course.
2. Helping to lay out and mark the June 7th Potluck course. 🏃





SportsAbility founder David Jones, CEO Fran Gilbert, and Robert Skrob

From The Proceeds Of The 2025 Bank Of America  
Tallahassee Marathon And Half Marathon,

**GULF WINDS TRACK CLUB  
DONATED \$3,000 TO  
SPORTSABILITY TALLAHASSEE.**