

# THE FLEET FOOT

NEWSLETTER OF THE GULF WINDS TRACK CLUB | APRIL 2026



## ST. MARKS DUATHLON IN FULL STRIDE

Photo Credit: Signe Ulsamer

# THE FLEET FOOT

NEWSLETTER OF THE GULF WINDS TRACK CLUB | APRIL 2026

VOLUME 51 | ISSUE 4

---

**Editor:** Robert and Kory Skrob with Alex Baglietto,  
FleetFoot@GulfWinds.org

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

## **Advertising Copy:**

The maximum print size of our page is 4.75 in. by 7.75 in. If possible, ads should be sent as MS Word files, will look best with standard fonts (Arial, Times New Roman), and formatted to fit the desired size. A simple way is to use 2 inch margins on 8.5 by 11 paper. Deadline: 10th of month previous to publication. Questions, contact the editor.

## **Advertising Payments.:**

Full Page-\$50, Half Page – \$28, Run twice, no changes – \$46, \$25 each yearly rates. \$400, \$225, \$125. Letter-size centerfold race flyer, check with editor.

Payment in advance/checks payable to:

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. Robert & Kory Skrob, (850) 270-8295, FleetFoot@GulfWinds.org

## **Change of Address:**

The US Post Office will not forward your newsletter; you must update your new address and phone number. With RunSignUp.com you now have complete control of your preference and address. Log in anytime, change/update your preferences, and be in total control of your personal information.

# DIRECTORY

PO Box 3447, Tallahassee, FL 32315

---

<b>President:</b>	Jerry McDaniel		mcdaniel6068@gmail.com
<b>Vice President:</b>	Allen Blay		allen.blay@gmail.com
<b>Secretary:</b>	Jeanne O'Kon	850-264-4903	okonj@tsc.fl.edu
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Carl Nordhielm		treasurer@gulfwinds.org
<b>Directors-at-Large:</b>	Hawthorne Hay		hawkhayfl@gmail.com
	Judy Alexander		jalexander98@comcast.net
	Debbie Peters		dh7683@yahoo.com
	Emily Webster		emilyawebster@gmail.com
	Herb Wills		hwills@gmail.com
	David Yon	850-321-8768	
<b>Past President:</b>	Mark Priddy	850-508-1961	markpriddy@msn.com
<b>Membership Chair:</b>	Geoffrey Adams		gadams52@gmail.com
<b>Race Director Coordinator:</b>	Lisa Unger		lisa.s.unger@gmail.com
<b>Director of Education &amp; Socials:</b>	Tina Bahmer	307-286-3725	tinabahmer@icloud.com
<b>Director of Communications:</b>	Mickey Moore		mickeysmoore@gmail.com
<b>Triathlon Club President:</b>	Joanne Maltese		president@gulfwindstri.com

## APPOINTED OFFICIALS

<b>USATF Liaison:</b>	Jay Silvanima	850-264-0739	jsilvanima@aol.com
<b>Newsletter Editor:</b>	Robert & Kory Skrob		FleetFoot@GulfWinds.org
<b>Equipment Manager:</b>	Vicky Droze	850-339-7766	vickydroze@comcast.net
<b>Clothing &amp; Merch Manager:</b>	Sherri Wise		Clark.sherri@gmail.com
<b>Racing Team Coordinator:</b>	Tim Unger	850-544-4563	runner1612@gmail.com
<b>School Grant Coordinator:</b>	Amy O'Kelley		amyokelley@gmail.com
<b>Group Run Coordinators:</b>	Ashlee Blake		Ashlee_FNP11@yahoo.com
	Emily Webster		emilyawebster@gmail.com
	Kendall Meikenhous		kpmeikenhous@gmail.com
	Joi Savery		joi.savery@gmail.com

Road Runners Club of America Member Club • USA Track & Field Member Club #14-1275

# *Illuminating*

Your Path in Residential & Commercial  
Real Estate Transactions.



# MSM

MANAUSA, SHAW & MINACCI, P.A.  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

1701 Hermitage Blvd., Ste. 100  
Tallahassee, FL 32308  
Phone: 850.597.7616  
Fax: 850.270.6148

140-D West First Street  
St. George Island, FL 32328  
Phone: 850.799.1882  
Fax: 850.799.1884

[www.ManausaLaw.com](http://www.ManausaLaw.com)

# FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING RECAP

---

Here is a Gulf Winds Track Club Board of Directors meeting briefing about the meeting held February 11, 2026, hosted by Tina Bahmer. The full meeting minutes are available at [gulfwinds.org/minutes](https://gulfwinds.org/minutes). To learn about future board meetings and their locations, visit [gulfwinds.org/business-meetings](https://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.

**A Busy Start to the Year** Jerry opened the meeting by thanking everyone who helped make the Tallahassee Marathon a success. With nearly 3,000 runners, the event is a huge undertaking, and it takes a lot of club members working together to pull it off. Special recognition was given to Robert and Kory Skrob for leading the effort.

Jerry also thanked Carl Nordhielm for stepping into the Treasurer role, noting that it comes with a steep learning curve and a lot of responsibility.

**Changes to Track Workouts** There will be a shift in Tuesday morning interval workouts. The club no longer has access to the Maclay School track, so workouts will now take place at the skateboard park at 6:30 a.m.

The Holy Comforter School track is still not ready for use due to construction issues, including problems with the surface, drainage, and measurements.

**Grand Prix** The Grand Prix Committee has been finalized and includes Betsy Miller, Hillary Powell, Jeanne O’Kon, Hawthorne Hay, Joe Vega, Caitlin Ubilla, and Allen Blay.

**Member Appreciation** The board discussed how the club recognizes volunteers and committee members. A new ad hoc committee, led by Mickey Moore, will explore additional ways to show appreciation beyond the current practice.

**Race Updates and Budget Closeouts** The Annual Awards event came in over budget, with total expenses reaching \$12,272.85, largely due to increased award costs. The board approved the closeout.

The Swamp Forest Trail Runs brought in about \$5,000 in revenue with 133 participants, resulting in just over \$2,000 in profit for the club. Additional funds will go to Friends of Our Parks. Future events may see increased costs due to city requirements for mowing and on site staffing.

**Podcast Growth and Continued Funding** The GWTC podcast continues to grow, with 10 to 15 percent audience growth per episode. The board approved funding to continue the podcast for another 12 months.

**Looking Ahead to Upcoming Races** The Billy Bowlegs 5K and 1 Mile race budget was approved. The race, scheduled for April 4, continues to support scholarships at FSU, with more than 250 scholarships awarded to date.

# **FLEET** **FEET.**

TALLAHASSEE



**WE'RE HERE TO HELP,**

# **Every Step of the Way**

Your feet don't have to hurt. Take the first step toward everyday comfort with a free outfitting at Fleet Feet Tallahassee. Our friendly, experienced outfitters will assess your needs, scan your feet and recommend shoes and insoles for the right support. Choose your favorite and experience the relief of happy, pain-free feet!

**LEARN  
MORE**



[fleetfeet.com](https://fleetfeet.com)

The Palace Saloon 5K budget was also approved. Last year's race had more than 2,400 participants, and organizers are aiming for around 2,000 runners this year.

**Chip Timing Continues to Pay Off** Since introducing chip timing in 2011, the club has seen significant financial benefits. GWTC now owns about \$90,000 in equipment and saves approximately \$30,000 per year by timing its own races.

In addition, timing non club races generates about \$11,000 in revenue annually. Over time, this has added up to a substantial return for the club.

**Triathlete Club** Tina shared that a new Grand Prix is in the works. The group will use the honor system to track volunteer hours and is focused on encouraging more participation, especially in off road events and races like the Palace Saloon 5K and Springtime Tallahassee.

**Race Calendar Still Being Finalized** Lisa Unger is working with Carl to confirm dates for races that are still to be determined on the calendar. A meeting with race directors is planned for March or April.

**Communications Updates and Continued Membership Growth** Mickey Moore reported that Hillary Powell will be taking over Running Shorts. With help from Peg, Mickey now has access to the club's Strava page and RunSignUp. The podcast will feature a discussion on SMIRFS and its impact on the community. Current membership stands at 1,422 individual members and 935 family memberships.

**Sustainability Efforts and Membership Questions** Judy Alexander shared that a plugging event will take place combining running with picking up trash as part of a sustainability effort. She also noted that outside groups have asked about purchasing the club's membership list, which will be discussed further at the next meeting.

**Equipment** Bill Lott reported that the PA system has been returned to PSG, Inc. after ongoing issues. The system could not be properly tested due to a mismatch between the microphone and receiver frequencies.

**Chip Timing** In January, only two races were chip timed and both were Clubraces (Swamp Forest Trail Runs; and GWTC 30K/15K). During February, two non-Club races (M.A.D. Dash 10K/5K; and Cobb Cubs Prowl 5K/1M) and two Club races (Bank of America Tallahassee Marathon/Half Marathon/ Marathon Relay; and Flash 12K/6K) were chip timed. Scheduled to be chip timed in March are one non-Club race (Shamrock Scurry 5K/1M) and two Club races (St. Marks Duathlon; and Springtime 10K/5K/1M).

**Training Groups Coordinator** Emily reported that the half marathon training group recently wrapped up, with 28 participants attending the celebration. While the group operates on a limited budget, pacers continue to play an important role.

The Springtime training group meets on Tuesdays and has seen about 25 participants across recent sessions. There may be a request for additional funding for shirts, and Emily will follow up with the board.

# FEAR NO DISTANCE

The background of the entire page is a photograph of several runners in silhouette, running on a road towards the horizon. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The runners are in various stages of their stride, and their shadows are cast on the road surface.

JUST YOU AND  
THE OPEN ROAD  
CAN DO WONDERS FOR  
YOUR MENTAL HEALTH.  
STAY HEALTHY, SAFE,  
UP AND RUNNING.

**AWARDS4U**  
ENCOURAGE. RECOGNIZE. CELEBRATE.

AWARDS4U.COM  
850.878.7187  
1387 E. LAFAYETTE ST.

# RACE CALENDAR

## APRIL 2026



**04 GWTC Bowlegs 5K Run for Scholarship/1M Fun Walk**, 9 a.m. FSU/FAMU Engineering Building, Innovation Park, 2525 Pottsdamer St. (across from Seminole Golf Course). Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. Visit [www.GulfWinds.org](http://www.GulfWinds.org); or Bill Hillison at (850) 893-4557 or [whillison@fsu.edu](mailto:whillison@fsu.edu); or Larry Giunipero at (850) 878-5569 or [Igiunipero@cob.fsu.edu](mailto:Igiunipero@cob.fsu.edu). Rescheduled from 01/25/2025.

**09-10 Dick Roberts Seminole Invite**, TBA. Mike Long Track, 1104 Spirit Way, FSU Campus. Visit [www.Seminoles.com](http://www.Seminoles.com).

**11 GWTC Palace Saloon 5K**, 8 a.m. Start at Messer Fields, corner of Jackson Bluff Rd. and Dupree St.; finish at The Palace Saloon, 1303 Jackson Bluff Rd. Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. Visit [www.gulfwinds.org](http://www.gulfwinds.org); or Tom Perkins at [tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com](mailto:tomperkinsfsu@gmail.com) or (850) 264-4595.

**11 Sopchoppy Worm Gruntin' Festival Wiggle Worm Fun Run (1.4M)**, 8 a.m. Corner of Rose St. and Municipal Ave., downtown Sopchoppy, FL. Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. Visit [www.wormgruntinfestival.com](http://www.wormgruntinfestival.com); or Mary Katherine Westmark at [mkwestmark@gmail.com](mailto:mkwestmark@gmail.com) or (850) 445-4206.

### **18** Rose City Run

**10K/1M, 8 a.m.**

**10K; 9:30 a.m. 1 M.**

North Broad St. at corner of Broad St. and Monroe St., near U.S. Post Office, Thomasville, GA. **No Race Day Registration for 1M.** Online registration available at <https://ymca-thomasville.org/rose-city-run>. Thomasville YMCA at (229) 226-9878 or [rccr@ymca-thomasville.org](mailto:rccr@ymca-thomasville.org).

### **25** Gladiator Challenge, an

**Adventure Race**, (obstacle course races ages 3 and up), 8 a.m. Phipps Farm, 4300 N. Meridian Rd. (across from Maclay School). Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. **No Race Day Registration.** Visit [www.gladiatorth.com](http://www.gladiatorth.com); or Richard Lynes at (850) 339-4847 or [gladiatorth@gmail.com](mailto:gladiatorth@gmail.com)

### **25** Rose City 5K Walk, 8:30 a.m.

Thomasville Center for the Arts, 600 E. Washington St., Thomasville, GA.

**No Race Day Registration.** Online registration available at <https://ymca-thomasville.org/rose-city-run-walk>. Thomasville YMCA at (229) 226-9878 or [rccr@ymca-thomasville.org](mailto:rccr@ymca-thomasville.org).

## MAY 2026

### **02** Tails and Trails Half

**Marathon/10K/5K/1M, 7:30 a.m.**

Half Marathon/1M; 8 a.m. 10K/5K. Tallahassee Animal Service Center, 1125 Easterwood Dr. next to Tom



# Gulf Winds Summer Trail Series

**Saturday May 30 through  
Saturday August 22**

**Registration opens April 1, 2026 at 8:00 AM EDT  
Spots are limited to 150 runners and tend to go quickly.**

This four race series takes place on some of the most scenic and challenging trails in Tallahassee. It has a little bit of everything. Rolling terrain, single track, multi use trails, and technical sections with rocks, roots, and tight, twisty turns. You never quite know what's coming next, and that's part of the fun.

**May 30 – Oak Hammock Trail (~5.0 mi), 8:00 a.m.**

**June 20 – Redbug Trail (~5.0 mi), 6:00 p.m.**

**July 18 – Cadillac Trail (~6.0 mi), 8:00 a.m.**

**August 22 – Maclay Gardens State Park (~6.0 mi), 8:00 a.m.**

Runners who register for the series will receive a race shirt.

### **Series Championship Awards:**

Awards will be presented at the final race. A point system determines the series champion, with your best three races counting toward the standings.

### **Packet Pick up:**

Race day bib pick up is from 7:00 to 7:45 AM for morning races and 5:00 to 5:45 PM for the evening race. Runners will receive a new bib for each race.

**Emails with details go out the Monday of each race week.  
Single race entry is not available.**



**For more information or to register, visit:**  
<https://runsignup.com/Race/FL/Tallahassee/GWTCSummerTrailSeries>

Brown Park. Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. Visit [www.animalshelterfoundation.org](http://www.animalshelterfoundation.org); or Cara Fowler at [carafowler@mac.com](mailto:carafowler@mac.com).

**09 St. Peters Anglican Cathedral 20th Anniversary 5K/1M**, TBA. St. Peter's Anglican Church, 4784 Thomasville Rd. Paddy Lang at [langs01234@gmail.com](mailto:langs01234@gmail.com).

**16 River Runaround 5K/1M**, 8 a.m. 5K; 9 a.m. 1M. Chattahoochee River Landing Park, 269 River Landing Rd., Chattahoochee, FL. Online registration available at [ItsYourRace.com](http://ItsYourRace.com). Pamela Medley at [pmedley@hotmail.com](mailto:pmedley@hotmail.com).

**30 GWTC Summer Trail Series Race #1**, TBA. Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. Bobby York at [byorkjr@msn.com](mailto:byorkjr@msn.com).

**30 Alice 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.

## JUNE 2026

**04 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).

**11 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).

**13 Monticello Kiwanis Club Watermelon 5K Run/4M Walk**, 8:30 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](http://Eventbrite.com); or Floyd Faglie at [watermelonrun@gmail.com](mailto:watermelonrun@gmail.com) or (850) 841-0828.

**18 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).

**20 GWTC Summer Trail Series Race #2**, TBA. Online registration available at RunSignUp.com. Bobby York at [byorkjr@msn.com](mailto:byorkjr@msn.com).

**25 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).



---

# PRESIDENTS COLUMN

By: Jerry McDaniel, GWTC President

---

Robert Skrob recently forwarded me a report from RunSignup (RSU) that chronicles race trends for 2025. I found it pretty interesting and will summarize some of the findings here and contrast what I can with my perceptions of our local experience. RSU estimates that around 50% of the U.S. market uses its software for race sign up, so it is fairly comprehensive. If you have ever been involved in surveys, you will agree this is a very high response rate. So assume extrapolation and generalization for trends across all races.

Generally speaking, race participation grew last year, but at a slower rate than in recent years (5%). The general assumption is that the post COVID resurgence has passed in terms of race growth. RSU captured data from close to 100,000 races. Over half were 5Ks, with 10Ks and the half marathon rounding out what amounts to about 75% of all races captured. The balance are marathons, ultras, tris, and others. Registrations through RSU for the above races numbered over 12,000,000. Given that, it was estimated that there were 20–25 million registrants for races in this country last year.

Personally, I see race growth occurring here in some of our larger legacy races, such as the recent Marathon/Half, Springtime, Palace, and the Turkey Trot. I am not necessarily seeing some of our other smaller races experiencing much, if any, growth. Of particular note, nationally, in sync with our local experience, the strongest race growth rate is the half marathon distance. The data show all regions of the country experiencing similar growth rates of between 3% and 8%.

The distribution of events by month shows that, nationally, the spring and fall are the most popular times to stage events, as expected. I believe our local distribution is less affected by winter and more affected by summer than

# PRESIDENTS COLUMN CONTINUED

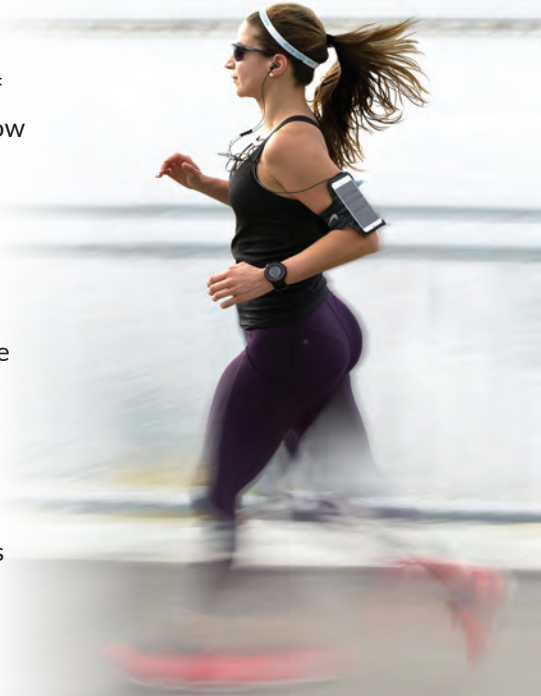
some, so we are a bit more evenly distributed through the winter and have fewer races than the rest of the country in the summer. In sum, nationally, more than a quarter of all races took place in September and October.

The report notes whether monthly participation matches the number of events offered. The answer is yes, with the same outlier we have locally: the Turkey Trot. Turkey Trots across the country are heavily attended, skewing the November participation numbers.

Fifty three percent of all race registrants are female. Apparently, there is a slight trend that the gender gap is narrowing in recent years, as females were a bit over 55% in 2021 (but possibly skewed somewhat by COVID). By way of our local example, and for just the Springtime races, as I write this, 61% of all registrants are female.

Nationally, 20% of all racers were in the 30–39 age demographic, but the largest uptick from the previous year was among those aged 19–29, with a 10% increase. Age group participation followed fairly evenly, but note that only about one fifth of all registrants are over 50 (now I know why I do okay in my age group).

Forty four percent of all races have fewer than 100 participants, and another 41% have between 100 and 500. Hopefully, this will provide some solace to our race directors who lead smaller races, as they are in the strong majority compared with what occurs nationally. Most races are smaller community events attended by a loyal following.





Tallahassee, FL

**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.

## 2026 Complete Grand Prix Schedule

Date	Race	Adult	Youth
April 4	Bowlegs 5K or 1 Mile	-	5K or 1M
April 18	Rose City 10K	10K	-
May 2	Tails and Trails 5K, 10K, and 1/2	5K, 10K, or 1/2	-
TBD	Potluck Bash 4 Miler	4M	-
July 4	Firecracker 5K	5K	5K
TBD	Breakfast on the Track	1M	1M
TBD	Miller Landing Madness 3K	-	3K
TBD	Women's Distance Festival 5K	5K	5K
September 7	Bluebird Run 5K	5K	5K
October 10	Pine Run 20K	20K	-
November 26	Turkey Trot 15K, 10K, 5K, & 1M	15K	5K or 1M
December 5	GWTC 10 & 5 MC	10M or 5M	-
December 12	Ultra 50K & 50M	50K or 50M	-
December 19	Tannenbaum 6K	6K	-

## GRAND PRIX STANDINGS

Get the complete 2026 standings by visiting:  
<https://runsignup.com/Series/GWTCGrandPrix>

# PRESIDENTS COLUMN CONTINUED

Interestingly, 24% of registrations occur the week of the race (me). I know for Springtime we experience very heavy registration race week as well. Increased prices as a race nears do not appear to be much of a motivator. This stat is much lower for the marathon distance (7%) for obvious reasons.

Average race prices nationally range from around \$21 for the 1 mile, \$31 for the 5K, \$43 for the 10K, and \$68 and \$98 for the half and full marathon, respectively. These prices are fairly close to local race prices and are rising very slowly, about 2–5% nationally. I know this is a frequent topic at race director meetings. For the Springtime races, we chose to survey similarly sized markets four years ago and set our prices accordingly. They have remained unchanged since that time.

I have touched on some of the key areas that our membership may find interesting, but this annual report goes into even greater detail on race churn (races that do not recur), virtual races (mostly a COVID era trend locally), shirt types (unisex vs. women's cut), marketing, merchandise, payment processing, donations and sponsors, RaceJoy (participant tracking—David Landis introduced this for our Marathon/Half this year), and more. Should you wish to view the entire report, it can be found at [info.runsignup.com](http://info.runsignup.com) under Knowledge Base, Industry Reports.



**Tallahassee, FL**  
**Gulf Winds Track Club**  
**GRAND PRIX**

**2026 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>

# Gulf Winds Track Club We Run This Town

## The Great Shoe Debate

**Host: Mickey Moore**

*Featuring: Scott Maphis of Cadence Running and  
Max Haerberlin of Fleet Feet*



Running shoes are one of those things everyone has an opinion on. Cushion, drop, carbon plates, brands, price. It can get overwhelming fast. Mickey Moore sat down with Scott Maphis of Cadence Running Company and Max Haerberlin of Fleet Feet to break it all down.

### More Options, More Confusion

If there's one takeaway from the conversation, it's this: we are living in a time where there are more good shoes than ever.

"We're really in the golden age of footwear," Max said. "There's an exciting shoe out there for you that fits your foot."

But with that comes a challenge. More options mean more decisions, and not all of them are necessary. Scott put it plainly. Most major brands are producing high quality shoes, often in the same factories. The difference is not always the logo. It is how the shoe fits and how it works for you.

### Trends Are Changing

One of the biggest shifts they're seeing is a move away from maximum cushioning toward lower drop shoes with wider toe boxes. Brands like Topo and Altra have gained traction as more runners look for a more natural feel.

At the same time, the "super shoe" conversation is not going anywhere. Carbon plated shoes continue to evolve, getting lighter and more responsive. For competitive runners, that matters.

"There's a race to make the lightest, most responsive shoe possible," Scott said. "Every ounce you carry is one you have to pick up over and over again."

But those gains are not for everyone. These shoes are expensive, often short lived, and only truly beneficial if your form and pace allow you to take advantage of them.

### Fit Over Brand

Both guests emphasized the same point again and again. Do not get stuck on brands.

"Don't get hung up on a brand and their advertising," Scott said. "I'm more focused on the fit and making sure the shoe matches your foot."

That is where specialty running stores come in. The process is not just about grabbing a box off the shelf. It is about understanding how you move, what your goals are, and what your body needs.

At Fleet Feet, that includes a full outfitting process with a 3D foot scan, pressure mapping, and a conversation about activity level, injuries, and preferences. At Cadence, the approach leans more toward gait analysis on a treadmill and evaluating how someone runs, not just how they stand or walk.

Different methods, same goal: get the right shoe on your foot.

# Podcast



## Not Just for Runners

Another misconception is that running stores are only for runners.

"We serve walkers, people who are on their feet all day, people going to the gym," Max said. "It's a wide range."

That matters because the right shoe is not just about performance. It is about comfort, injury prevention, and long term health.

## What Actually Matters

So what should someone focus on when buying shoes?

Start simple. What are you using them for?

Scott described it as choosing between a "Swiss Army knife" and a "scalpel." Some people want one shoe that does everything. Others need something very specific for racing, training, or trail use.

From there, it becomes about how your foot interacts with the shoe. Drop, cushioning, plates, and foam all play a role, but none of it matters if the shoe does not fit your foot properly.

And if you really want insight into your stride, both agreed that true gait analysis goes beyond the store. That level of detail usually requires a specialist and comes at a cost.

## A Few Things to Keep in Mind

Shoes do not last forever. Even if they sit in a box, materials break down over time.

Buying cheaper shoes online is not always a better deal if they are outdated or worn out.

And most runners keep their shoes far longer than they should.

"If you want to be fitted, be open to the process," Scott said. "Otherwise, you're just being sold shoes."

## Support Local Running Stores

Both guests also pointed to something bigger than just shoes.

Local running stores are part of the community. They sponsor races, support events, host packet pickups, and contribute to the overall running culture in Tallahassee.

"Support your local running store," Max said. "You're not going to get the same experience at a big box store."

## The Bottom Line

There is no perfect shoe for everyone. There is only the right shoe for you.

And the best way to find it is not by chasing trends or brands, but by understanding your body, your goals, and getting help from people who know what they're looking at.

Because at the end of the day, if you get your shoes right, everything else becomes a little easier.

---

**Listen to this full episode and future stories from our running community on the We Run This Town podcast—available on the [Gulf Winds website](#), [YouTube](#) and wherever you listen to podcasts.**



## FEATURED FEET

# KRISTYN MCCAULEY

**Childhood ambition:** Depending on when I was asked, either a professional ballerina, fashion designer, or veterinarian.

**Current occupation:** Director of Membership & Events at the Florida Airports Council

**If money were no object, what profession would you choose?** A combination of a travel blogger, book reviewer and/or editor, and a restaurant critic.

**Favorite running memory:** Crossing the finish line of the Jacksonville Marathon (my first and only so far) with my two oldest kids.

**Indulgence:** Cold beer on a hot day, spending too much time in the sunshine during those few perfect weather days we get in Tallahassee, and the occasional trashy tv show.

**Preferred running technology:** Coros Pace watch & Shokz headphones if I am running solo.

**Non-running hobbies:** Reading, cooking my way through cookbooks, Girl Scouts with my oldest daughter, and Modern Fitness classes.

**Favorite reads:** My preferences are contemporary romance, literary fiction, and the occasional memoir by a runner or B / C-list celebrity. My favorite book of 2025 was *The Correspondent*.

**Best place to run in Tallahassee:** I love the trails, but my schedule does not allow for many trail runs. Usually, I'm happy wherever I am guaranteed a post-run coffee.

**Biggest challenge:** Doing all the things I want to do alongside all my responsibilities and desire to rot on the couch with a book.

**Perfect day:** My family is staying on the coast somewhere. We enjoy a slow morning and I am able to get outside and run a few miles in comfy temps. We go out for breakfast tacos and coffee then enjoy a day at the beach where I can take turns reading and swimming with my kids and husband. We enjoy an early dinner on a patio with some delicious cocktails (for the grownups), a post dinner walk, and an early bedtime.

# LANDCORP

I N C O R P O R A T E D

Licensed Real Estate Brokerage in Florida & Georgia

## THOMAS R. "TOM" PERKINS

*Florida Sales Associate*

**CELL 850-264-4595**

**TOMPERKINS51@YAHOO.COM**

**WWW.LANDCORPINC.COM**



## 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 Holy Comforter  
Episcopal School, 2001 Fleischman Road.

### **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.



## FEATURED FEET

# JOHN HIGHTOWER

**Childhood ambition:** I really wanted to be a professional mountain biker.

**Current occupation:**  
Accountant/Consultant

**If money were no object, what profession would you choose?**  
Mediocre travel writer.

**Favorite running memory:** Running in the Marine Corp Marathon through DC, where my father was raised. It was a transcendent experience - running through the North Pentagon parking lot at mile 21, where my grandmother would have driven to park for work everyday. Gorgeous course.

**Indulgence:** Ice cream.

**Preferred running technology:**  
Garmin and heart rate monitor.

**Non-running hobbies:**  
Fishing and reading.

**Favorite reads:**  
Emerson and Mark Twain

**Best place to run in Tallahassee:**  
Between October and May, somewhere not far from Forest Meadows.

**Biggest challenge:** Staying consistent in maintaining mileage... and maybe Pikes Peak marathon in the near future.

**Perfect day:** Six or seven miles with low humidity and AM temps below 60degrees, followed by local coffee and dog walks. The rest of the day usually falls into place or is not as important. Maybe an evening run. Rinse and repeat.

### **Jamie L. Wright, CFA, CFP®, CPFA®**

Senior Vice President  
Wealth Management Advisor

850.599.8923, jamie.wright@ml.com

### **Merrill Lynch Wealth Management**

1276 Metropolitan Boulevard, Suite 201  
Tallahassee, FL 32312



Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated (MLPF&S) is a registered broker-dealer, registered investment adviser, and Member SIPC. MLPF&S is a wholly owned subsidiary of Bank of America Corporation.

© 2025 Bank of America Corporation. All rights reserved.  
7410498 Vault-BA11208 | MLWM-242-AD | 470944PM-0325 | 03/2025

Buying or selling your home?  
Call a name you can trust.



- \* HELPING SELLERS & BUYERS & IN OUR AREA SINCE 1990 \*
- \* EXPERTISE IN PRICING & PREPARING FOR THE MARKET \*
- \* I CAN SHOW YOU ANY LISTED PROPERTY! \*
- \* MARKETING POWER OF COLDWELL BANKER \*



Nancy Stedman | BROKER ASSOCIATE, CRS, GRI  
(850) 545-7074 | NANCYSTEDMAN@GMAIL.COM

## CUSTOM PRINTED APPAREL FOR YOUR RACE

Need shirts for your next event or run? We've got you covered!

Let us be your trusted source for top-quality custom printed apparel.

We can provide one-of-a-kind artwork on a wide variety of men's and women's T shirts, performance shirts, and tanks that will help your event stand out long after the finish line.



**HomesteadTshirts.com**  
229-872-3202 850-556-6651

Don@HomesteadTshirts.com



48 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE - LOCAL SINCE FOREVER

# 2026



# ST. MARKS DUATHLON

## The 2026 St. Marks Duathlon took place on Sunday, March 15, bringing together runners, cyclists, and volunteers for a fun and competitive multisport event.

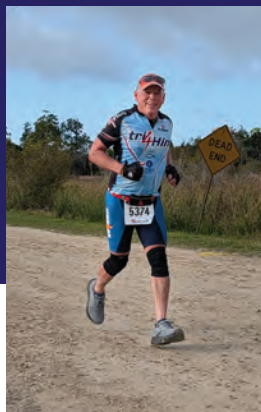
This year also marked a first for race director Signe Ulsamer, who stepped into the role with the support of an experienced team. “This was my first time directing a race, and I would like to thank the entire race directing team, Annie Smelt, Kevin Pope, and Kevin Deyo,” Signe shared. “They did an amazing job, and it would have been very challenging for any one of us to manage it alone.” She also credited last year’s race director, Averi Lewis, for laying the groundwork. “Thankfully, Averi had already done a lot of footwork, giving us very detailed instructions, templates, and other critical items that were invaluable.”

Like many endurance efforts, the experience came with moments of doubt along the way. “I was slightly unprepared for all the planning, logistics, and marketing that directing a race involves and found myself questioning my decision to sign up, much as I do in the late stages of many races.” In the end, though, it all came together.

“Seeing all the competitors enjoying themselves out on the course made it completely worthwhile.”



A major part of the race’s success came from the volunteers who showed up ready to help. “I was very nervous on the morning of the duathlon, but that quickly faded as so many experienced volunteers showed up ready to help. Most of them knew exactly what to do.” That level of support left a lasting impression. “It made me feel very fortunate to be part of such a supportive running, cycling, and triathlon community here in Tallahassee.”



Traffic control was another key piece of the event, with several officers returning year after year to support the race. “Most of them have been doing traffic control for this event since it began.” Among them was Corporal Patricia Shaw Jackson, a familiar and appreciated presence on the course. “She not only keeps our cyclists safe but also serves as one of the most enthusiastic cheerleaders. Her unrivaled energy is deeply appreciated by everyone involved.”

Signe encourages others to consider volunteering at club events, noting how much it adds to the overall experience. “I strongly encourage others to consider volunteering at events. Gaining a behind the scenes perspective really enhances your appreciation for the races you participate in. It’s also a great way to socialize, spectate, and maybe even find a new workout partner.”

One of the more unexpected challenges came from something as simple as course measurement. “This was the first time I had really thought about the technical side of course marking,” Signe said. She made sure the distances were at least accurate, even if that meant a small adjustment. “I erred on the safe side and made sure that the run course was at least a 5K and 2.5K, which included moving the start line back a touch. That’s what you get for having an ultrarunner measure the course.” Of course, that detail did not go unnoticed. “When Bill Lott arrived to start the timer, he shockingly exclaimed, ‘You moved the start line!’ Nothing gets past Bill.”

From the competitors out on the course to the volunteers behind the scenes, the St. Marks Duathlon once again showed what makes these events special. It is not just the race itself, but the people who make it happen.

PALACE SALOON



A TRADITION

TALLAHASSEE, FL



# PALACE SALOON 5K

## Saturday April 11, 2026

**Registration is open now. Online registration closes race morning at 7:30 AM, so be sure to sign up ahead of time.**

The Palace Saloon 5K is one of Tallahassee's longest running races and known as one of the fastest. It is a point to point course that starts at the James Messer Sports Complex and finishes at the Palace Saloon. It is a great race if you are chasing a PR or just want to be part of a fun, high energy morning.

### Race Details:

**April 11 – 5K, 8:00 a.m. start**

**Start:** James Messer Sports Complex  
(2800 Jackson Bluff Rd)

**Finish:** Palace Saloon

### Packet Pick Up:

**Early pickup:** April 8, 3:00 to  
6:00 PM at the Palace Saloon

**Race day pickup** begins at  
6:30 AM at Messer Field

No parking at the Palace Saloon. All runners should park at Messer Field. This is a point to point race, so plan accordingly

**Online registration only. No race day cash or check registration**

### Awards:

➤ Awards will be presented after the race, including overall and age group awards, along with team competition awards. The first 2,000 finishers will receive a medal.

➤ There is also a Fraternity, Sorority, and Club award for the group with the most finishers, so if you are running with a group, make sure everyone is registered together ahead of time.

➤ Team competition is based on speed, with teams made up of up to seven runners and the top five times counting toward the final score. Awards will be given to the top teams in both men's and women's divisions. Teams must be finalized by April 10 at 6:00 PM.

➤ Stick around at the finish for live music, recovery food courtesy of Jackson Properties, and adult beverages courtesy of the Palace Saloon and Gulf Winds Track Club. **GWTC members will receive a \$4 discount at checkout.**

**For more information or to register, visit:**

**<https://runsignup.com/Race/FL/Tallahassee/PalaceSaloon5K>**