Minutes
Cherry Blossom, Inc. Race Committee
February 13, 2012 Meeting
Hyatt Regency Hotel
Bethesda, MD

After dinner, the meeting for the 2012 race began at 7 pm with a display of this year's Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile participant shirt. Random prizes were distributed. A packet of information for this year's notebook included: site plans and local maps, parking facilities near the Westin City Center and Madison Hotels, race day porta-john locations, emergency aid locations, and the race weekend timeline. Amenities sheets were also distributed to each committee member. A list of committee members with contact information was passed around the table to be marked with any updates.

The following committee members were present: Phil Stewart, Becky Lambros, Denny Steinauer, Susan Debad, Bee McLeod, Rick Freedman, Kathy Freedman, George Banker, Chan Robbins, George Banker, George Tarrico, Eve Mills, Chris Tatreau, Bruce Lung, Phil Pommerening, Betty Wang, Polly Porter, Eric Sinkeldam, Jen McCollum, T.G. Marsden, Robyn Marsden, Rob Wolfe, Bill Orr, Jill Washka, Keira Carlstrom, Steve Esmacher, Adam Lambros, Marsha Way, Michelle Carter, Frank McNally, Drew Woodrich (minutes), Irv Newman, Anna Berdahl, Steve Solbeck, Arlene Solbeck, Muffet Chatterton, Candice Mothersille, Timi Rogers, Nancy Betress, and Jean Arthur. Phil Stewart introduced Keira Carlstrom, who co-hosted the November reception to unveil the 2012 t-shirt design; she will also be working with the elite athletes.

Phil Stewart began the discussion by outlining three challenges for the 2012 event: 1) the race expo has expanded to two days; 2) construction near 15th Street NW has required consolidation of the staging area--bag check has been moved across 15th Street to the Washington Monument Grounds (WMG); and 3) the headquarters (HQ) hotel has changed.

The Westin City Center Hotel failed to reserve hotel rooms for the race committee and staff, and the hotel sold out rooms for race weekend. So rooms for race staff have been booked at the Madison Hotel on 15th & M Street NW, which is located around the corner from the Westin. The Saturday evening dinner will be held at the Westin, and the Sunday post-race brunch will be held at the Madison; check out time at the Madison has been extended to 2 pm Sunday. See the handout for a list of parking facilities near both hotels.

Since Westin Hotel made the room reservation mistake, the 3-year contract with Westin can be reconsidered. Looking into the future, the race will return to the Renaissance Hotel on 9th Street NW in 2015 & 2016.

A lottery was used to select entrants in this year's race; this is the third year a lottery has been used, and it went smoothly. There were about 28,000 lottery entrants, and more than 75% were accepted into the race; these statistics are similar to 2011. Streakers (finishers in ten or more years) are guaranteed entry into the race; there was a good response with 30 to 40 streakers entered. Guaranteed entries are also offered to those rejected in two straight lotteries; 50 to 60 runners qualified under this rule. The searchable database of results for all years enables these procedures. Online registration provides complete records for all entrants in the lottery and race.
Transfers of entries are allowed during the month of February via the Web site; this has been going smoothly. Registration for Capitol Hill workers will be open through February 29. Six thousand runners have signed up for the virtual training program, and a couple hundred runners have registered for the Potomac River Running training program.

Keira Carlstrom and Becky Lambros organized the November reception that raised $2,500 for the Children's Miracle Network. Becky said that the reception was popular; 300 RSVPs were received within 24 hours and 400 people were accepted.

Phil Stewart reviewed the amenities sheet during the next segment of the meeting; forms were distributed to all committee members. The form is used to order shoes and apparel for staff; race t-shirts; shirts for volunteers (Michelle Carter oversees); hotel room reservations for race weekend; VIP parking requests; radios; and credentials.

George Tarrico spoke about the WMG staging area. Bag check has moved to the location where packet pickup was held in previous years; there will be no Sunday packetpick up in 2012. For an additional fee, runners could opt to have their packets mailed. A separate tent will be used for picking up ten mile and 5K finisher medals after the races. The 5K staging area site plan is the same as last year.

Phil Stewart will plan new signage for the children's fun run; bag check will decrease the visibility of the fun run staging area.

National Park Service (NPS) rules on the placement of portable toilets have changed; there must be spacing between every fifth unit. So there will be fewer porta-johns along Constitution Avenue; additional units will be placed on the infield (see site plan handout). The units will be secured using cable ties instead of locks; they will be opened using cable cutters, instead of keys, on race morning.

Phil Pommerening has replaced Mark Wheatley as the director of communications. There will be a new tent for the communication command center located near the main medical tent along Jefferson Drive.

Phil Stewart added that the D.C. EMS van is no longer available for use.

Race day awards will be presented at the infield stage, as in 2011 (with the Monument as a back drop). There will be a bike parking area (no valets) near Independence Avenue between 14th & 15th Streets.

The staging area set up will start one day earlier (Wednesday morning) and finish one day later (Monday) this year. Phil Stewart noted that NPS will enforce a rule that allows no personal vehicles on the matting. Only box truck and larger vehicles are allowed on the mats. Gators will be used to transfer items from cars to the tents; please let George Tarrico or Eve Mills know in advance of your needs.

Phil made a few additional comments on the staging area. Each year, the matting area expands and the race site increases in complexity. This year, Saturday is a buffer day in case set up runs behind schedule. Sunday morning, streets will close at 2 am (from 4 am in 2011). 15th Street will open at 11:30 am on race day. Phil complimented the speed with which Chris Tatreau's crew sets up and tears down.

Metro will open early on race day at 5 am; the race still pays for the extra Sunday hours.

The race week timeline was the next topic; it has been color coded. The timeline needs to be as complete as possible, so committee members are urged to submit any missing or incorrect items to Irv
Newman. Phil will add the t-shirt delivery time at the National Building Museum (NBM) to Thursday's timeline.

This year's Health & Fitness Expo will be held on Friday and Saturday; Hargrove will handle the set up again, which begins at 3 pm on Thursday. Kelly Ashworth, drug testing coordinator, has replaced Nina Trocky as the expo supervisor. Expo hours will be noon to 7 pm on Friday, March 30, and 9 to 5 on Saturday, March 31. The Friday evening committee meeting might be held in the NBM auditorium, as the expo will be open on Friday. As in 2011, committee members will be reimbursed by the race for up to $50 for dinner in the restaurant of your choice. This year will be the first time that the expo is on a weekday; please let Phil or Becky know about any concerns.

New Balance branded apparel will be the featured merchandise; Muffet Chatterton and Arlene Solbeck will handle non-apparel items such as race patches and mugs. The Web store will open on March 1. In celebration of the event's 40th anniversary, there will be 10,000 free race posters available to runners at the expo on a first-come, first-served basis. The posters will be rolled with a rubber band; tubes will be available for purchase for a modest price.

Also, one lucky runner born on the date of the first race (April 1, 1973) has been extended V.I.P. treatment.

Special guests at this year's race include: Greg Meyer, who won the men's race in 1983 and set the current American 10-mile record (46:13); 4-time winner Bill Rodgers (1978-81); and race founder Gar Williams and his wife, who live in Oregon. There will be a race history clinic on Saturday. Salmini Films is producing a short film with archival race footage for Saturday evening's dinner; it will also be posted on the Web site.

As in 2011, RunnerSpace.com will provide live streaming video of the race, and there will be two Jumbotrons projecting video streams near the start/finish area and the awards stage. This has proven more effective than the 30 minute TV show on WJLA in previous years. The credit unions are excited about the video coverage.

A brief discussion was held about a request to hold all future meetings in Washington, DC; Maryland meetings are a long drive for Virginia residents. Since no objections were heard, it is likely that a central meeting location in Washington will be used.

The race received its “Silver Level Certification” from the Council for Responsible Sport (CRS) in 2012, which is valid for two years. This year's event will be a warm-up for 2013, when the race will strive to earn gold; Keith Peters of CRS will continue to provide guidance.

New race sponsors include Gold's Gym and E*Trade; Gold's is sponsoring the warm up exercise and pace groups, and E*Trade is sponsoring the RunPix interactive results. Back bibs for the pace groups will be available at the Gold's Gym expo booth; Capital Running Company (CRC) will order extra safety pins for the bibs. Pace group leaders will go into the proper corrals; runners will be assigned a corral as usual.

Denny Steinauer is handling arrangements for satellite races in Kuwait and Wiesbaden, Germany. The credit unions are also sponsoring a West Coast race on April 1 in Sacramento, CA: the Credit Union SacTown 10 Mile.
Rick and Kathy Freedman of Capital Running Company, who have served as race administrators since 1998 and who have timed the race since 2000, have sold their company. The sale will have no impact on this year's event.

Discussion moved to Irv Newman, and then around the table. Irv remarked that the race is solvent. Bee McLeod has designated two people for finish line judging. Kathy Freedman said CRC will be ordering the food. In 2011, the quantities of food items matched demand, but some bananas should be shifted from the Ten Mile area to the 5K area.

Chan Robbins has sent out 358 seeded runner invitations; 178 seeded runner entries have been returned by mail to date.

Chris Tatreau's crew will provide barricades for the main medical tent; Betty Wang will assign people to monitor the area.

Betty and Polly Porter briefly discussed with Becky how much ice they will need for this year's medical tents. Betty and Polly will set up the medical tents on Saturday. They have inventoried items in storage, and ordered a few additional items. Medical supplies will be marked to identify which items should be taken to the race site, and those items that should remain in storage.

Michelle Carter will ask Alex White to assign an information volunteer at the medical tent. Some runners approaching the race site from the Smithsonian Metro station stop at the medical tent on Jefferson Drive and ask for directions. Large site maps were not delivered to the medical tent last year; the maps will be used to orient runners.

George Banker will speak with Phil about how the Army Ten Miler uses medical bar coding to identify runners at the medical tent.

T.G. Marsden confirmed with Phil that the parking zones are the same as last year. T.G. will staff the sag wagon after his V.I.P. parking duty; he will call Steve Esmacher, director of the 5K run/walk, when the ten mile runners have exited Memorial Bridge.

Robyn Marsden requested some Gatorade and a warm-up leader for the youth fun run. Becky will ask Gold's Gym to assign someone to the fun run.

Bill Orr reported that elite athlete recruiting has gone extremely well for this year's race; athlete responses are ahead of schedule. There is increased interest among American elites, and he is working with his Japanese athlete contacts in Boulder, CO and Tokyo.

Keira Carlstrom said she will bring family friendly music to the race. Steve Esmacher will use the CRC sound system for the 5K Run/Walk again; Anna Berdahl will assist with the 5K.

Adam Lambros is serving as the "gator guard." Gator pickup and return times need to be added to the race week timeline.

Michelle Carter and Marsha Way have received a terrific response for race volunteers; 1,065 people have signed up. Friday slots have been slower to fill up. The credit unions will provide at least 600 additional volunteers. Marsha and Michelle will send out volunteer information from the committees
like last year. They will email last year’s letter to committee members; please update your volunteer letter for 2012 and return it.

Becky Lambros asked everyone to review the sign inventory sheet that she handed out. If you need any signs, please send the request to Irv. Chris Tatreau added that one should consider how any new signs will be displayed, and order the display mechanism.

The meeting concluded at 8:50 pm. The next Cherry Blossom meeting is Monday, March 12 at the Westin City Center Hotel in Washington, DC.

Respectfully submitted,

Drew Woodrich for
Capital Running Company, Race Administrator