

OFF 'N' RUNNING

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE JPL RUNNING CLUB

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(whenever all the news to print just fits)

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RUNNING CLUB ANNUAL MEETING

Friday, December 13, 1985

12 p.m. - 1 p.m.

Von Karman Auditorium

Agenda: Election of Officers, Presentation of Club medals from recent races.

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Note: Official Entry Forms are available for the L.A. Marathon (March 9, 1986). Call Valerie Pickett (2731).

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NEWS BRIEF

(Reprinted from "LaCrescenta Valley Leader", October 2, 1985. Submitted by Chris Weiner.)

"Defending the Rights of Joggers"

There is nothing as beautiful as a deserted beach at 7 o'clock in the morning. The sun's rays shimmer off the gentle waves; the flat plane of sand stretches for miles, disappearing into the horizon.

And there is no better way to appreciate the beach at that time than to jog on it. City surfaces of concrete and asphalt give way to soft layers of sand, allowing cumbersome running shoes to be discarded in favor of bare feet.

I (Doug Bandow, Copley News Service, Virginia Beach, Va.) contribute only about eight of the 28 million miles run every day in this country, but every inch is good for my health. I especially enjoy ordering dessert while my plump friends have to just salivate and watch.

Happily, neither Virginia Beach nor the suburbs of Washington, D.C., where I rack up most of my 2600 or so miles a year, limits this most American of activities. But elsewhere in the land of the free the constitutional freedom to get fit - and show off - is coming under increasing attack from the forces of physical unfitness, obesity and intolerance. It's time to form a National Joggers Defense League (NJDL) to protect runners' rights and reputations.

Palm Beach, Fla., has spearheaded the assault on running, with an ordinance requiring males to keep their upper bodies covered, except on the beach or on private property. The law is directed against joggers: "We're attempting to protect the welfare of the people in this town," contends city attorney John Randolph.

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However, Allen DeWeese, a heroic shirtless runner (Have you ever tried jogging in the summer with a sweat-soaked shirt clinging to you?) has fought a long court battle after being cited for "indecent exposure-lewdness." The city's real objection, says DeWeese, is "seeing people running rather than holding a cocktail."

Indeed, DeWeese's attorney points out that if Palm Beach really wants to make the streets aesthetically safe, it should concern itself with men in leisure suits and elderly obese women in short shorts. These people pose a genuine threat to mankind.

Few other municipalities have attacked the natural right of a male jogger to shed his shirt when the weather demands. But, unless the NJDL intervenes, new legal repression may follow the increased public scorn and obloquy that is visited upon those of us who dare to keep in shape.

Consider the nation's capital, where columnists and letter-writers alike spend their time denouncing and demeaning runners. A resident of Hyattsville, Md., for example, wrote the Washington Post to complain that his view of the district's federal buildings had been disrupted by the "proliferation of nearly naked joggers snuffling and huffing through the noon-day, brightly dressed tourist crowd".

As the politicians spend us blind, much of the world is at war and the New York Yankees stay close in the American League East, the Maryland correspondent demanded sanctions against...runners. He argued that the city should cordon off a jogging area, or, "if this is impractical, at least make them wear shirts."

Equally ridiculous was Washington Post columnist Bob Levey's proposal that joggers - people dedicated to better fitness and thus a lower intake of the very products usually contained in the discarded plastic wrappers and paper bags - become trash collectors, stopping and picking up garbage on their way.

Not tourists, mind you, nor government bureaucrats, who do nothing useful, But joggers should break their stride, pick up other people's refuse, and carry it for miles on end until they find a trash can. Indeed!

And then there are people who take matters into their own hands, literally unleashing the dogs. New York City's Riverside Park, for example, has become a regular battleground between runners and dog owners.

Said one man walking his dog, "It is my belief that the dog is superior mentally to the jogger."

And the dogs demonstrate their first-rate mental faculties by biting and chasing anyone who strides past.

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RUNNING

- December 8 Nathan Pritikin Memorial 8K and SPATAC District Championship, Encino
Twenty Third Annual Long Beach Marathon 16.2 Mile Prep Run, Long Beach
Great American Smokeout 2 mile, 10K, and Half Marathon, Riverside
St. Joseph's Medical Center 5K, 10K, & 15K, Griffith Park
City of Beverly Hills/Perrier Diamond 10K
- 14 Rudolph's 5 & 10K, Lancaster
Fifth Annual South Pasadena 5 & 10K Tiger Runs, South Pasadena
Eighth Annual Christmas 10K and (maybe) 5K Run, Venice
- 15 Orange County Marathon, Newport Beach
- 21 George Guerrero 8K Run, South El Monte
- 22 Run Across L. A. 10 Mile, L.A.
Festival of Freedom 5 & 10K Fun Run, Ventura
- 26-29 West Coast University 24, 48, and 72 Hours Runs, Norwalk
- 28 West Covina Police Assoc. 2nd Annual Foot Pursuit 2K, 5K, 10K,
West Covina
European Style Cross Country, 2.2 and 6.6 miles, Ventura
- 29 Run for the Roses 5 & 10K, Pasadena
- 31 New Years Eve Midnight 10K Run (Come as You Are), Encino