

# AURA NEWS

## Arkansas Ultra Running Association

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## From the Editor

### *Help Keep Races Rolling Forward*

In the last edition I talked about the importance of following race rules so that we can keep races rolling forward, without fear of losing permits. This month I would like to encourage YOU to volunteer for an AURA event. If you know me well then you have seen and heard me step up on my soapbox to preach to our generation about volunteering. We have a great number of amazing volunteers who have been serving for decades and would like to retire. Without volunteers races don't exist. So, if you enjoy the trails and the AURA events then please consider being a bigger part of the community by committing your time to ONE race a year. If every member did that, then those long serving volunteers can retire. Not to mention the burden you will remove from the shoulders of the race directors, who do not get paid and volunteer a great number of hours to put on these fun and wonderful events for you.



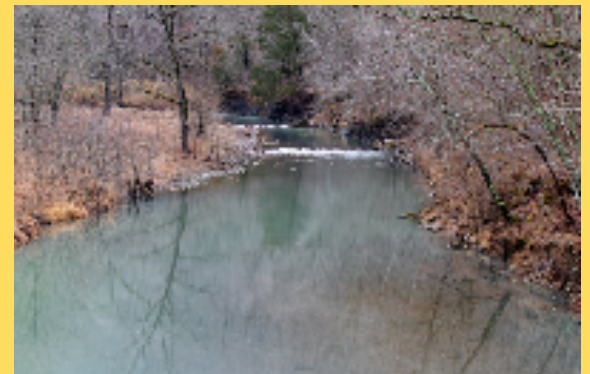
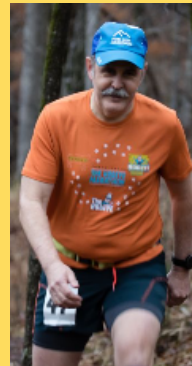
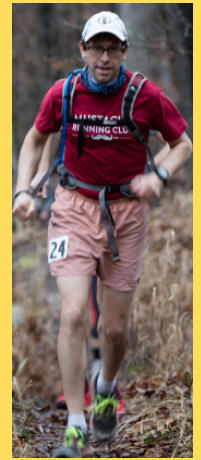
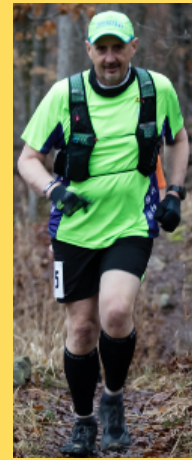
**Styx n Stones  
Pandemic Version  
~By Mark Den Herder**

sleepless worry  
winter's fury  
race postponed  
beautiful days  
drying trails  
cautious optimism  
but not for long  
spring awakens  
torrential and  
uncertain

race day descends  
foggy brain bends  
trails are soggy  
treacherous  
creeping pessimism  
confidence shaken  
no time to lose  
staggered start  
won't be waitin'

off one goes  
and then a few  
more  
seems like no time  
missed turns  
bonus miles  
frustration flows  
community grows  
sometimes when  
we least expect it

slithering rocks  
unrelenting  
stumbling climbs  
unrepenting  
the course is the  
test  
of not who's best  
but am I willing  
to make the journey  
over countless  
'sticks'  
and all those jarring  
stones  
to find  
what dares me to  
move



## Ozark Highlands 35K / 50K

As I processed this year's event while sweeping the course on Sunday following the race, I could not help but smile...reminding myself what a privilege it was to be able to put together event during a time period that was in dire need of more positivity and community. We saw our largest field to date with 136 registered; both new entrants and returning veterans on a day with perfect sun, well-groomed trails and wonderful volunteers.

Although I was not able to give out the coveted high fives at the finish line, we were able to enjoy some great food and fellowship. It is such a treat to watch everyone tell stories, laugh and cheer on other participants as they made their way to Norfolk River Resort and the finish line.

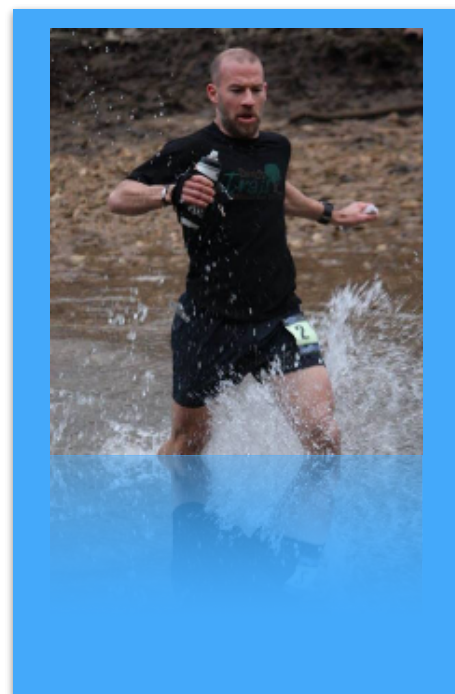
The 50K saw some impressive racing with the top two finishers separated by only 38 seconds. Curtis Phipps from Kansas City, MO took home top honors in 5:07:15 followed by Joe Lyons of Webster Grove, MO in 5:07:53. Chris Lyle from Cave Springs, AR was close behind in a time of 5:09:32. Marianne Stone of Kansas City, MO was first female and 4 th Overall in a course-record setting time of 5:14:26. Taylor Budd of Kansas City, MO was second in 6:27:04 followed by Carrie Van Quathem of Urbandale, IA in 6:29:46. The "Wolf Pack" running club from Kansas City really represented...let's fix that next year Arkies!

The 35K race was led by John Wardlaw of Memphis, TN in 3:06:08. McKensie Hopkins from Harrison, AR took home top women's honors in a time of 3:53:01.

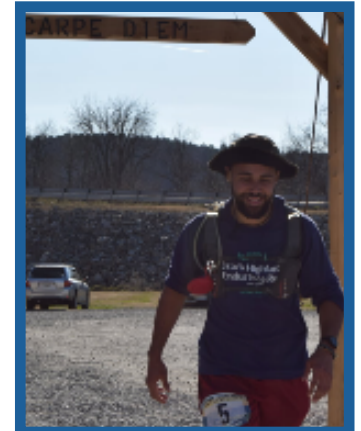
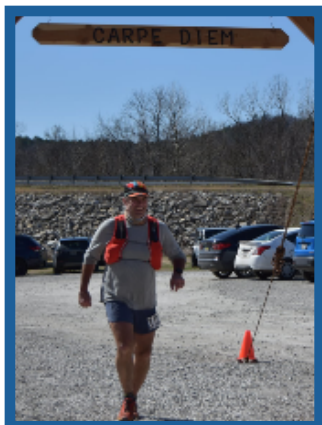
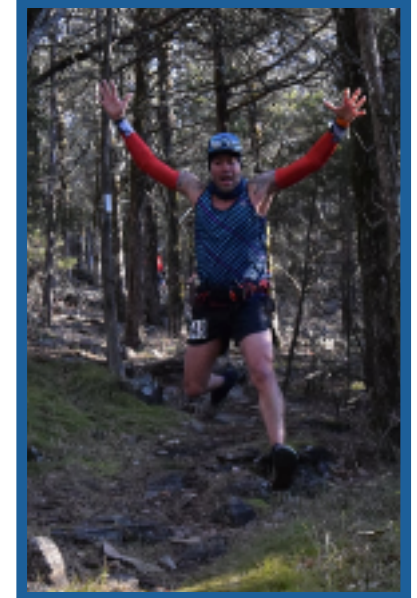
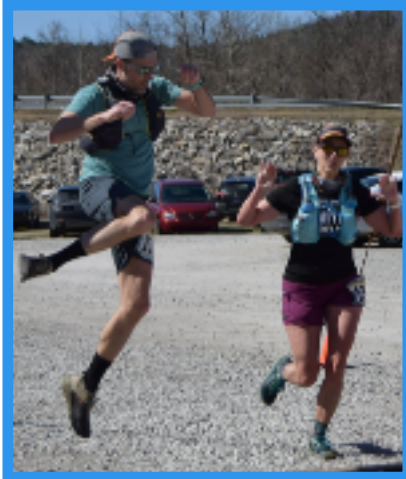
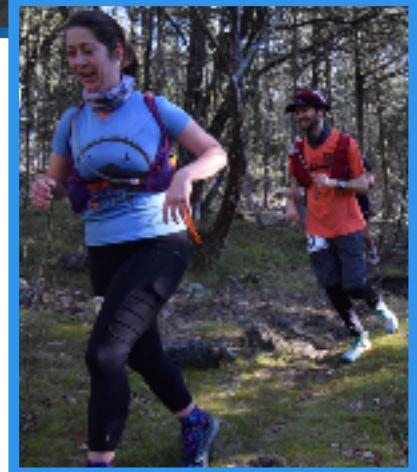
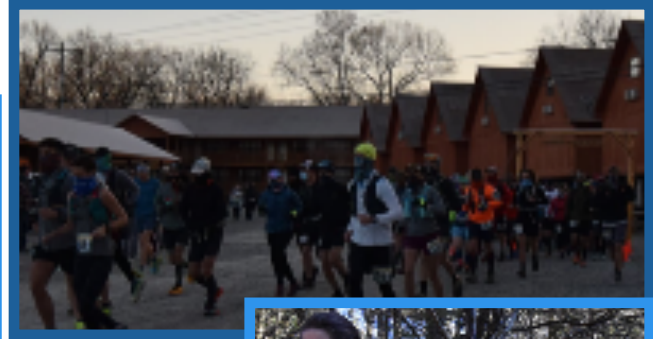
Thank you to everyone who have helped make this event possible and continue to support the town of Norfolk and the Ozark Highlands Trail Association. Already looking forward to seeing you all next year!

Cheers!

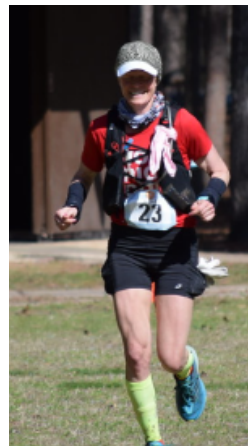
Jake Anderson, RD



# OZARK HIGHLANDS TRAIL ENDURANCE RUN



# THREE DAYS OF SYLLAMO



## OT 50 Changing of the Guard

It was a great honor to be asked to take on another AURA race. I was offered both the OT 50 and the Full Moon 50. These events were too close together for me to feel comfortable taking them both on. After much thought I chose to take on the Ouachita Trail 50 for several reasons. The biggest reason was the having the opportunity to learn from one of my idols and local heroes of our trail community, Chrissy Ferguson.

For those who are new to the trail running community might not know that for decades Chrissy juggled race directing a large

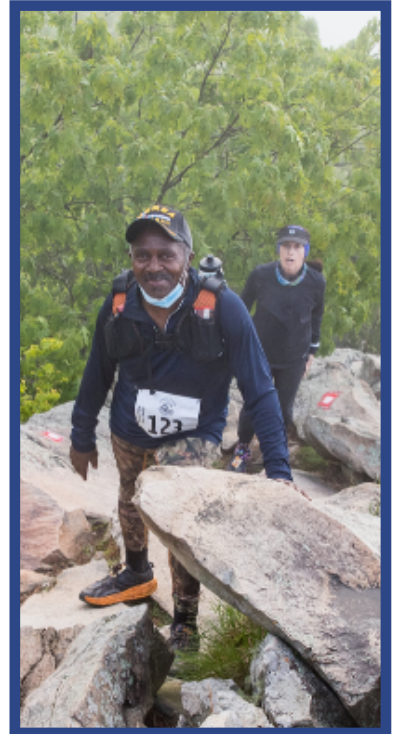
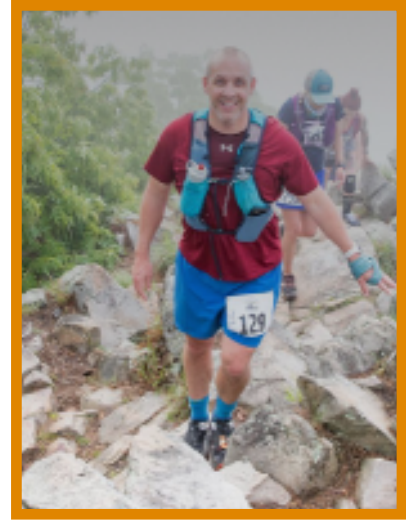
number of events. In it's infancy, she helped to mold and shape AURA and the Arkansas trail running community as we know it today. Who wouldn't want to learn from her! Just look at her legacy! I have certainly learned a lot from Chrissy over the years and in the last six months she has shared a lifetime of knowledge. There was one very telling moment that I got to witness that spoke volumes about her work ethic. The day before this year's race I went with her to the Pinnacle Visitor's Center to speak with the Superintendent and the young men under him. She spoke with him about important race day matters and gave him a folder with race information that was pertinent to them. The superintendent told those young men that Chrissy always puts on the smoothest race of the year. He told them that he uses her folder of information as a guide for other race directors who want to host events within the park. He finished by telling the men that they will wish all race directors are like her!

Another reason that I chose the OT 50 is my love for Pinnacle Mountain. For those who know me know that it is my go to place for mountain repeats. For Tahoe 200 training I made it up 9 times in one day and ten times in one day during my BigFoot 200 training. I swear the mountain is alive and seems to shift and change every day. Just when I think I have it figured out a rock or boulder shifts in a way that I have to adjust. The mountain says to forget muscle memory. The mountain is a good place to test one's metal. The mountain is also a peaceful place for quiet contemplation. I imagine most of you know this to be true. It is a place I love to go just to get away from the noise of life.

Finally, I like that this race course is technical and tough. I have been directing the Athens Big Fork Trail Marathon, the toughest trail marathon in the south, for 5 years now. It is always fun to see who comes out for the challenge and how they grow and improve from year to year. I love a good challenge and both ABF and the OT 50 offer just that!

I know that I have some big shoes to fill and I will strive to offer our runners and our volunteers the best racing experience possible. As the new guardian of this event I will go forward with the same traditions and integrity in race directing that you are used to. I look forward to seeing you all at next year's event on April 9th, 2022.







VOLUNTEERS  
MAKE  
RACING  
POSSIBLE!  
They Also  
Add A Lot  
Of  
Extra  
Fun!



Ass!  
A Dumb  
Don't Be  
NO  
Sign Up To



Thanks To All Who Give of Your Time So We Can Play



AURA would like to give a big thanks to Mark Den Herder, Jacob Anderson, and Chrissy Ferguson for hosting some amazing events!

With the continued pandemic we understand the extra expense, measures, and time it takes to make trail racing happen. We applaud and appreciate you!

~AURA & AURA MEMBERS~



## Upcoming Events

 <p>The Catsmacker 20 Miles (+/-) Ouachita National Forest, AR 05/15/21</p>	 <p>AR Backyard Ultra timed loops Cotter May 22, 2021</p>	 <p>Mount Magazine Fun Run 18 Miles Paris, AR 05/08/21 ???</p>
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[Click Here for Catsmacker Website](#)

[Click Here for ABBU Website](#)

[Click Here for Mt Magazine Website](#)

Green Mountain Mayhem is an inaugural event hosted by AURA Members, Jonathan and Jennifer Dorris from Batesville. The event utilizes the Syllamo mountain biking trails and offers 11 or 20 mile options. It is also perfect timing for those wanting a final supported long run before the Arkansas Traveller 100. I hope you will come out and support their first dive into race directing an ultra.

[Click here to register](#)

[Click here to see course preview videos](#)



If you have friends who are new to trail running please invite them to join the  
Arkansas Ultra Running Association

Cost is still only \$12/Year because we aren't looking to make money but rather trying to bring people into the trail community, introduce them to new trails and to help them have a good experience. This has been the mentality of the club for decades.

[Click Here To Register or Renew Your Membership](#)

[Click Here To See If You Need To Renew](#)

[Click Here To See Events In The Ultra Trail Series](#)



Central Arkansas Trail Alliance does a lot for our community from volunteering at aid stations, to advocating for more trails, to maintaining and building trails. This is just one more way that YOU as a RUNNER can help give back and serve YOUR community. Why not join today!



[Click Here For CATA Website](#)