

President's Message to FRC Members January 2021

Thank you to those of you who were able to attend last night's Zoom Annual Club Meeting. Hopefully we'll be fortunate enough to be able to hold next year's meeting in person.

2020 was a tough year for many people and many organizations, including the Falmouth Track Club. All of the races that the club would conduct in a normal year, including the Seagull 6, Cape Cod Trail Races, The Main Street Mile and the Cape Cod Marathon Weekend Event, had to be cancelled. Other activities that the Club normally conducts, such as the Friday Night 5 Miler, Youth School Running Program, Youth Competitive Running Program and Wednesday workouts, were either scaled back or cancelled. The biggest loss to the Club was the cancellation of the Cape Cod Marathon Weekend Event, which normally contributes significantly to the Club's finances. This resulted in our inability to make the annual financial donations to many local school groups and other non-profit organizations. Fortunately, we were able to continue with the Margaret Bradley and Paul Phinney High School Scholarship Program, which contributed \$5,000 to deserving high school seniors.

As we get into 2021, it appears that things may soon be getting back to some semblance of normalcy. We all can use a shot in the arm, so to speak. The Club will be getting back into some of our annual activities, although as you may already know, the Seagull 6 (March) and the Cape Cod Trail Races (April) have been cancelled for this year.

As the new President of the Club, I have set some objectives that I think we can and should achieve this year. The Board of Directors, listed below, along with many dedicated Club members, will help us get there.

- President – Jack Afarian
- Vice President –Ken Gartner
- Treasurer – Chris Langlais
- Secretary – Kathy MacDonald (new)
- At-Large – Mary Tolland
- At-Large – Steve Morris
- At-Large - Matt Auger
- At-Large – Julianna Coughlin (new)
- At-Large – Steve Rondeau (new)

Objectives

- **Rename the Club to The Falmouth Running Club (FRC)**
 - Certainly, a name change in and of itself is only the beginning of a new era for the Club. As we build on the solid foundation of the Falmouth Track Club, the new Falmouth Running Club will strive to include all that worked well in the past as well as introduce some new ideas and activities, which are listed below. This re-naming and re-branding of the FRC will evolve over the next few weeks and months. BOD member, **Steve Morris**, will be coordinating all of the many tasks that need to be accomplished to make this change successful. FRC Administrator **Leslie DiAngelis** will be working with Steve on this. As changes to the FRC website, Logos, Letterhead, Merchandise and legal forms are required, other Club members will be getting involved.

- **Relocate the FRC Office**
 - We soon will be relocating from the current office in Town Hall Square to the new (Old) location at 661 Main Street. The building at the new location is nearing completion of a total renovation that will allow for offices, a general meeting area and a storage room. We're expecting to be able to move in to this location in the spring and will celebrate the re-opening with a Special Open House celebration (pending COVID restrictions at the time) for all members and potential new members. The new office will serve as the main meeting place for club members as well as possibly being the location for fun runs and other social activities. If you are looking for a way to contribute to the FRC, assisting with the physical move would be a good place to start. We will need volunteers to help with this.

- **Establish Regular forms of Communication to FRC Members**
 - **Conduct Monthly FRC meetings** that will be mandatory for BOD members and optional for all other club members to attend. A week prior to each meeting the agenda will be published in an email to all club members along with a Zoom invitation, at least initially. Eventually we would like to conduct these meetings in person at the new FRC office. Minutes of these meetings will be posted on the FRC website.
 - **A Monthly "President's Message"** will be emailed to all FRC members. This will contain updates from the President as well as from BOD members who have specific event responsibilities.
 - **An "Ask the President" Forum** will be established to offer the opportunity for any member to ask FRC related questions to the President. He may, or may not answer them (just kidding). The format of this initiative is to be determined.
 - **Focusing on Social Media** will help us get our messages out to a wide audience. **Lindsay Benson**, former BOD member, has done a great job with this over the years and will continue in this capacity as the FRC moves forward

- **Unveil the New FRC Women's Running Initiative**
 - This exciting initiative is the brainchild of BOD member, **Mary Tolland**. Mary has been trying to get this off the ground for about a year, but has been hampered by the impacts of COVID. The focus of the initiative will be to give women and girls opportunities to join in safe social activities and give women the opportunity to act as mentors for the girls. Included will be presentations on women's running topics, fun runs for women and girls and hopefully a "Women Run Cape Cod 5K". Mary has submitted the race permit application for this event to the Town of Falmouth. If we obtain town approval for this race, it will be held in September and girls 16 years of age and younger will always have a FREE entry into this race. The plan is to move the date of the race to Mothers' Day starting in 2022. Mary will be providing regular updates on this initiative.

- **Consolidate the activities involved with Annual HS Scholarships"**
 - As mentioned above, The Falmouth Track Club has been awarding the annual Margaret Bradley and Paul Phinney Scholarships to high school students for many years. **Ken Gartner** has been a huge proponent and coordinator of this initiative over the years that awards scholarships to high school students who are actively involved with running and also active in serving the community. Ken will coordinate all activities related to this very important initiative.

- **Increase FRC Membership**
 - We currently have roughly 150 active (annual dues have been paid) members. I fully expect that we can significantly increase that number. Membership runs from May 1 through April 30 of the following year. The future of the FRC lies with the new members we can recruit and with the creative ideas that they will be able to bring to the table. **Julianna Coughlin**, a new member of the BOD and current Social Media Director for the Cape Cod Marathon, will be leading the efforts in this area.

- **Adequately Fund and Market the FRC Youth Running Programs**
 - Although COVID has interrupted these initiatives, we fully expect to get back on track soon. The FRC currently supports three youth running initiatives. The School Youth Running Program, is coordinated by **Anne and Jim Priesig** and the Competitive Youth Running Program is coordinated by **Ken Gartner**. Getting younger girls and boys interested and excited about running and a healthy lifestyle is a great way for our Club to give back to our local community and to develop potential future FRC members. Rounding out our youth running program is the Cape Cod Marathon Kids' Fun Run, which is coordinated by **Anne Priesig**.
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- **Establish a Relationship with Aquatic Brewing**
 - Beer and Running? Or is it Running and Beer? The owners of the new brewery, located just next door to our new office location, are runners and potential FRC members. I've had conversations with them and they are very interested in forming a partnership with the new FRC. One idea is to have fun runs at our mutual location, possibly followed by a pint of their great brew. We're also kicking around a few other exciting ideas. More to come on this relationship.

- **Update the FRC Website**
 - Changes to the existing website have been long overdue. With the club naming change, now is the time to address the needs of the website. Former BOD Member **Julianne Waite** is leading our efforts with this. We expect website changes to evolve over a period of time.

- **Revive Club Workouts**
 - In the not-too-distant-past, the Club held workouts at the Falmouth High School Track on Wednesday evenings. We would like to reinstate this activity. We're not sure yet how this would work, but we need a format where we can get serious and non-serious runners and walkers together on a regular (weekly?) basis for a bit of activity and some fun. We'll have to noodle with this one. Any and all ideas you have are welcome.

- **Friday Night 5 Miler...**
 - A mainstay of the Falmouth Track Club. **Courtney Bird** was the organizer for this weekly “No Frills” event, which draws anywhere from 5 to 20 runners during the winter and up to about 30 or more runners during the summer. **Ken Gartner** has been coordinating the event over the past few years and will continue to do so. If you have run it in the past, now may be the time to get back into it. If you’ve never run it and are curious about it, reach out to Ken for info.

- **FRC Booths at the FRR and CCM Runners’ Expos**
 - The Falmouth Track Club has had a booth at the Runners’ Expo for the Falmouth Road Race and the Cape Cod Marathon for many years. Honestly, it has been a challenge over the past few years to set up a great looking booth and to staff it appropriately with Club members. New BOD Member, **Steve Rondeau**, will coordinate efforts surrounding the setup and staffing of these booths. If you are interested in assisting with this, you can reach out to Steve. It’s a great way to socialize with FRC members and talk with potential new members.

- **Cape Cod Marathon Weekend**
 - I will continue with my responsibilities as Race Director for the CCM. As of now, we are planning on a “Live” event and hoping that by the last weekend in October we will be COVID Free. Our race application has been submitted to the Town for approval. We should be receiving approval for this event in February. As you know, volunteers are always needed for this great event. Most likely there will be a few openings on the CCM Race Committee. If you are interested, please let me know.