

Thank you for the wonderful Across the Years experience in the 2014/2015 event! Thank you again for the best run race I have ever been at, and I've been doing ultras since 1981.

### **ACROSS THE YEARS (ATY)**

**A-Attitude:** The Race Directors (RDs), Jamil and his family and volunteers treated each participant as if they were the lead runner. Everyone had a relaxed and supportive attitude. For the first time in an ultramarathon, I intentionally left it early at 12:30am, after a 36.7 mile workout for 15 ½ hours, so I could be well rested for my father's 82<sup>nd</sup> birthday in Oceanside, CA on January 2. I was motivated to do this (rest up for my visit with Dad) after seeing someone do 82 miles in honor of their father's 82 years of life in a November 2014 24 Hour ultramarathon.

**C-Comraderie:** The slower pace of an ultramarathon (ultra) and my Day 1 (and only) coinciding with the 6 Day folks' Day 4, allowed for many talks and chances to meet new people and refresh old friendships.

**R-Real People:** One of the things I've appreciated about ultras since my first one in 1981 (JFK 50 Miler in 10:14), is the authenticity of the ultra community. There is no elite attitude among the elite runners. We are all on the ABC journey of Adventure, Building relationships and accepting Challenges.

**O-Open environment:** I asked many people at ATY if they would be willing to share what motivated them to do their first ultra, what their most useful techniques were for getting through "rough patches" and what their favorite ultra memory was. Not one person said they weren't up for talking. I could write a book with the responses that I got.

**S-Social event:** When people ask why I do ultras (I did 5 ultras in 2014 at age 57), my first response is the friendships and social aspects. The intersecting journeys and common bonds are always a lift in our busy lives.

**S-Super event:** Many of the folks told me they thought the ATY was the best run ultra they have ever experienced. I agree with them. The level of detail that the RDs paid attention to is phenomenal.

**T-Tenacity training:** Life is an ultramarathon. I've noticed that in 3 Day ultra events I typically experience a sunny day, a cloudy day and a rainy day. One ultra runner told me it is kind of like life. You enjoy it more and you can help more people if you learn to keep making forward progress in spite of adversity.

**H-Having fun:** I never feel more like a "kid in a sandbox" than when I am doing an ultra. You get a triple benefit from ultras; anticipation of the excitement, the actual experience of the event itself and the memory of the wonderful time.

**E-Enthusiasm:** The 6 Day participants of ATY had a level of enthusiasm and senses of humor that were contagious. One friend, Fred told me "If you keep stopping to take pictures for your family, you won't break any world records today Cliff!"

**Y-Year to year transition:** It was a great time to reflect on 2014 and to dream about 2015 while running Across the Years at ATY. What a great way to transition into a new year. The last time I did anything like this was the January 1, 1979 midnight 5 mile race in Palo Alto, CA during Runner's World National Running Week.

**E-Experiment of one:** I remember a famous runner once said that one of the best things about each runner and race is that we are each an "experiment of one". I love to practice motivational techniques during ultras to see which ones give me the greatest boost in energy and endurance. One of my favorites is to use the acronym PARTY: Passion, Adventure, Renewal, Tenacity and Yes, I can do this.

**A-Amazing time:** The midnight toast on the transition point from 2014 to 2015 and the group lap together just after midnight were especially delightful.

**R-Run or walk-go as you please:** In 1978 Don Ritchie and Frank Bozanich told me that completing a 50 miler was easier than doing a standard marathon. When I asked how that could be, they told me that there is a more relaxed attitude in the 50 mile event, since even world class runners have been known to take walk breaks. This "go as you please" approach was the "hook" that planted the first seed of hope that I could someday do an ultra.

**S-Satisfying experience:** The combination of the spiritual, emotional, physical and intellectual "quadruple high" that you can get in an ultra is the reason why so many of us keep going back.