

Induction Speech
Colorado Running Hall of Fame
April 19, 2012

I love to run for lots of reasons—I love to be outdoors, I get to eat more, and I'm energized by a challenge, but when I think back over the last 40 years on the road, it has to be the people that make the memories, that have been my "Aid Stations" along the way. I'd like to tell you about a few of them:

My family has been forever supportive. My husband did not run, but often came to races with me. The day after he died, my brother, John called and asked if I wouldn't like to go for a run. My brother David, hauled me from his home in Nashua, NH to the start of the Boston Marathon and home again. That was an all-day affair.

The 2000 Steamboat Marathon which I did with my daughters, Kristin and Jeni was a peak experience for me. And then there is Kurt, who conned me into going to Tokyo by promising a plane fare if I'd run the 2012 marathon with him. What could I say? Jeff is not a runner, but happily endures all the running stuff and cheers us on. And then there are my two sons-in-law who are such nice guys that they've put up with me staying in their homes so many times over the years, and are always willing to run with me.

Most of my 12 grandkids run. I've done the Bolder Boulder twice with Adam, the oldest, and joined Abby, now a freshman at Colby College as she finished up the Wild West Relay on a hot August afternoon last year in Steamboat Springs. "Thanks for coming to meet me," she puffed, red-faced, as we completed that hot last half mile together.

And then here's fresh legs Cathy Morgan who has been running for only 7 years and recently completed her first marathon in Tokyo, 3 days after her 65th birthday. She's the one who NEVER says no when you suggest an adventure!

In the wider world:

I figured I'd have a good Bolder Boulder run when, standing in line to use the porta potty before the race many years ago, a door opened, and out stepped Frank Shorter. Then it was my turn and I got to use that specially anointed porta potty. So, thanks to Frank.

At mile 18 of the Steamboat Marathon in 2000 a fellow runner wondered if he could ask me a question: "Sure," I said. "Would it by any chance be age-related?" "Yes," he said. "How old are you?" "63," I answered. And then we visited and I learned about several of his marathons and of his favorite course, the Ocean to Ocean along the coast of South Africa adjacent to the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. He made the miles pass quickly.

Four years ago, I chatted with Trip Applequist, a rancher from Farson, WY. I never forgot that name and recently I got the nicest note from him:

I am pretty sure you will not remember me, but we met at the half marathon in Green River, WY. We sat beside each other on the bus ride to the starting line. I have retold this story at least a thousand times, but I will tell it again to you.

That half marathon was my first. I was in my early 30's, and I believe you were in your mid 60's. I was extremely nervous about the race, but you visited with me on the bus ride and kept reassuring me that it would be okay. We started the race, and of course I started way too fast. However, I was pretty happy with how the race was progressing. I had no thoughts of being anywhere near the top, but as I neared the last part of the race I knew there were many more behind me than in front of me. With about a mile left in the race, I looked back and saw you approaching. I gave absolutely everything I had, and you blew past me like I was standing still. When I finally crossed the finish line, you were there to give me words of encouragement and you introduced me to some of your family who had been out for bike rides. We both finished in the top 15, but you were quite a little ahead of me.

I have taken a lot of ribbing from my non-running friends over this story. They like to remind me of the old lady that kicked my rear. Never mind that they have no idea. You have been an inspiration for me since that time. I have now completed

many half marathons and marathons, but I am still amazed by your athletic ability, and I still appreciate the kind words you had for me that day. I now make myself complete every training run with a last mile at a quicker pace, telling myself that I can't let Libby pass me.

If you ever pass through Farson, WY and want to go for a jog, let me know. It would be an honor.

Thanks again

Trip Applequist

One of the nicest notes I ever got was a few typewritten lines from Will Cloney, the venerable race director for the Boston Marathon. He wrote in November 1979 in response to my request about entering the 1980 race. I had run the Denver Marathon in 3:29:47 that year but at the time there was no qualifying time for women 40 and over for Boston. I sent him a note wondering why. He responded: *... this is the eve of Thanksgiving so what the heck. I'll accept your 3:29:47—assuming it was done in a sanctioned, certified race—so—apply. When you are mailing back the completed entry, note on the side "OK per WC."*

The best thing about all that was in the following year, 1981, a qualifying time of 3:30 was established for women over 40. Prior to that time there was only a qualifying time of 3 hrs 20 minutes for all female runners. And get THIS: the entry fee was \$5. The course record was 2:09:27 set by Bill Rodgers in 1979. In 1980 there were 5394 runners and 449 of them were women. How times have changed!

Last September I was trucking along in the Aetna Park to Park 10 miler when, after mile 7 I looked at my watch and said, wow! At the same time, a fellow near me did the same. We looked at each other and said, "Let's go." "I hadn't planned to work this hard today," he said as he ran beside me. It soon became evident that he could have gone quite a bit faster, but that he had decided to pace me. And he did, for the last three miles, finishing a few seconds ahead of me. When I thanked him after the finish, I learned that his name was William Doe and he lived in Fort Collins. He was a big factor in helping me to a surprisingly fast time for me. Since then Bill Doe and his wife, Sue and I have been in touch.

Thank you for this incredible honor and this opportunity to talk about a few of the people who have made running my favorite sport.