

# TEAM Survivor The Strength of Survival

T R I - S T A T E

Volume 3, Issue

April/May 2009

## Upcoming Events

- **June 6, 2009 - 3:00 pm**  
Swim with Coach Tom  
Monmouth University
- **June 18, 2009 - 7:00 pm**  
Swim with Coach Tom  
Lower Bucks YMCA
- **June 20, 2009 - Time TBA**  
Triathlon Camp  
CAN DO Fitness,  
Princeton, NJ

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*Team Survivor Tri-State provides exercise and health education programs for women with a past or present diagnosis of cancer. Classes are free, but registration is required.*

## Message from the President

Hello Survivors!

Welcome to triathlon season! It's hard to believe that summer is almost upon us. As you know, Team Survivor Tri-State will be participating in numerous local triathlons during the next few months. In order to help you prepare, we will be offering our annual Triathlon Training Camp, led by Triathlon Coach Tom Battaglia. Please be sure to RSVP to reserve your spot for this informative event. Since we're on the topic of RSVP's, please make sure you do so for

every TSTS program and race. As you know, most of our instructors are volunteers, and we would like to let them know how many participants they should expect for a class ahead of time.

I hope you find time to enjoy the beautiful spring weather. Take a walk, run, or bike ride outside, and be sure to stop and smell the roses while you do!

Happy Training,



## Program & Membership Notes

As we enter the summer months, we often enter the time of vacations, changing schedules and outdoor fun. With that often we find lower attendance for TSTS classes and programs. TSTS is in the midst of doing a comprehensive evaluate of programs and attendance so that we can evaluate what is working and what isn't.

While I try to communicate with you, it remains important that you communicate with me to make our organization a success.

Please remember to RSVP for programs you would like to attend, ask questions, suggest ideas for programs, let me know of resources (i.e. gyms, instructors, facilities) that might be useful and communicate what you would like to gain from your membership in TSTS.

*-Jen*

## TSTS Annual Tri Camp

We are preparing for our annual triathlon training camp.

Saturday, June 20th

CAN DO Fitness  
Princeton, NJ

Triathlon camp will feature a sit down seminar on triathlon 101, swim coaching, bike and run coaching, as well as a seminar on stretching, plus answers to all your triathlon questions.

If you are interested in attending, please e-mail Jen at [jen@teamsurvivortristate.org](mailto:jen@teamsurvivortristate.org)

## Through Rain and Wind: A NJ Marathon Story

In May of 2005, I was diagnosed with DCIS breast cancer, 32 years after I ran a mile for the first time in my junior year of high school. Back then I thought one day I will be able to run that mile and much more.

In February of 2007, a friend of mine called and said “I think we should do a triathlon – we can do it with a group called Team Survivor Tri-State.” So I joined Team Survivor Tri-State and within days, I participated in the Long Branch half-marathon. The first person I met from Team Survivor, Amy Spiegel, embraced me as if I had known her my whole life and made me believe I could do the half-marathon even though I had never run outside!

I started the race and at mile 8, I joined a fellow Team Survivor member, Donna Gunderson, who ran, walked, and encouraged me for the remaining 5.1 miles. We measured our progress one telephone pole at a time and we finished together in 2 hours and 58 minutes – the hardest thing I had ever done in my life!

After I finished the race, I asked Amy why she did not warn me that completing a half-marathon would be that difficult. Her response was that she did not want to discourage me before I even tried.

My next Team Survivor event was the Philly Women’s Triathlon in 2007 where I was positioned next to Amy at the start. I was so nervous and kept repeating to her “I’m going to throw up.” Amy looked calmly at me and reassured me I’d be fine. And she was right – I completed my first triathlon and I was fine.

Amy, like so many of my friends at Team Survivor, gives me the strength to try things I would have never attempted on my own. I see Ronni with her “can do” attitude and the faces of the mothers in the group struggling through treatment while taking care of small children. I watch my friends who have battled cancer multiple times always with a smile on their faces and exult with Karolyn Tucker who completed her first triathlon at age 65. All of them give me the courage and strength to try physically challenging things while remembering to smile and have fun and that’s why after last year’s Long Branch Half-marathon, I decided to achieve my lifelong dream to run/walk a marathon.

So after six months of hard training, on Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, I awoke at 3 a.m., arrived in Long Branch at 5 a.m. and parked in a totally empty indoor parking garage at Pier Village. I got the #6 (lucky number) parking space in an indoor parking garage with a restroom! Excellent omens!! Because the weather was gray skies and light rain, I decided to wear long sleeves with a vest. By 7 a.m., the mist had stopped but it was chilly. I was with Donna and when the 7:30 a.m. race start time was delayed, I headed to a bathroom for one last time. As I thanked God for letting me go to the bathroom and the fact that there was toilet paper, it started to sink in that I was 52 years old and going to start my first marathon in a few minutes.

I returned to the start to find Donna chatting with TSTSers Jen and Amy S. and shortly after, the race started. Donna and I began a slow walk/jog and after the first quarter mile, I noticed that my GPS watch was not set correctly. Since I use my watch to follow my routine of running a quarter mile then walking one and half minutes, I told Donna to go ahead while I reset my watch. As I was resetting my watch, I heard the yell “WHEELCHAIR.” I turned around and BOOM! The wheelchair hit me and my left foot got caught between the chair and the wheel. Although I knew immediately that I had cut the back of my foot, I hobbled along and let the rain wash the blood away. At this point I hadn’t even reached the first mile. Did I mention that I hit the “wall” between miles 1 and 2???

I recovered from the wheelchair hit and kept to my schedule for most of the first 13.1 miles. There were plenty of spectators and people running the course so I always had someone to talk and joke with. I wanted to complete the 13.1 miles in 3 hours so when I reached the half-marathon point and saw the clock read 2:59:23, I sprinted to beat that 3 hour clock time (my chip time was 2:56:08.)

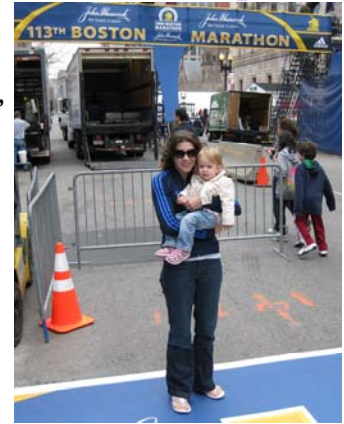
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## TSTS Boston Marathoner: Sarah Blakely

TSTS member Sarah Blakely decided on the ultimate running challenge: the legendary Boston Marathon. Since Sarah is an ovarian cancer survivor, she participated with the National Ovarian Cancer Coalition's Team Teal, and not only set out to finish the race, but also raised money for ovarian cancer education and awareness in the process.

Sarah got involved with TSTS shortly after her ovarian cancer diagnosis in January of 2007. She completed her first triathlon and her first half-marathon with TSTS last year. Sarah's story is particularly inspiring, though, due to the timing of her diagnosis. She was nine weeks pregnant when a mass was found on her ovary during a routine ultrasound. The mass was biopsied, and found to be a rare and aggressive form of ovarian cancer. Sarah and her husband decided to continue the pregnancy and delay treatment until after delivery. Beautiful baby Charlotte was born in August, and Sarah's chemotherapy started less than a month later.



Now, less than two years after treatment ended, Sarah has bragging rights. She finished the grueling Boston Marathon in just over six hours. At the end, she was presented with a shiny finishers medal. Jokingly, Sarah said "I've never worked so hard for a piece of jewelry in my life!"

Sarah's family continues to be a source of inspiration for her. She knows Charlotte needs a mom and her husband Matt needs a wife. In fact, Matt was so supportive during the Boston Marathon that he ran the last 10 miles of the race with her. Says Sarah, "I have never been so happy to see him in my entire life (wedding day included)."

Sarah's story is one of inspiration and strength. For more information on

Sarah and her amazing journey, please visit her blog at <http://www.sarahblakeley.blogspot.com/>



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After the half-marathon mark, I was basically running alone on the course and there were fewer than a dozen spectators. During miles 14 through 15 it started to rain heavily and the wind really picked up. I was mixing walking and running without a schedule, I was totally drenched, my hands were white from being so cold, and even the things I had in my pockets were dripping wet. It was dark, rainy, cold and windy – but I still had a smile on my face because I was doing a marathon!

My boyfriend, Tom, joined me at mile 16 and we walked together for the next 10 miles. He held an umbrella over my head the entire way and talked to me to take my mind off my legs. The mantra I chanted to myself was "follow the green lined road" since the entire course had a green line painted in the middle of the road.

At mile 24 I started to cry because I knew I was going to complete my first marathon in the coming half-hour. When I got within 100 yards of the finish line, I gave Tom a kiss and sprinted to the finish line. I saw and heard Donna, one of the two remaining spectators waiting in the pouring rain, cheering me on. After I crossed the finish line, she said "you were really moving," but I had to confess to her that I just started running when I was close to the finish line because I wanted a good photo!

It took me 6 hours and 20 minutes to finish, there were 1710 people who finished the marathon before me, and I came in 24 out of 24 in my age group – but I do not care. I had fun and I finished – 71 people did not finish the marathon. THE BEST NEWS IS – I BEAT LARRY THE LIGHTHOUSE IN THE NJ MARATHON – now that piece of news should have made the Asbury Park Press!

Would I do it again? In a heartbeat! But unlike this race, I won't be wearing the "Virgin Marathoner" headband Donnalyne gave me because I am one proud marathoner and no longer a virgin!

## Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed for the Philadelphia Women's Triathlon and the NJ State Triathlon.

Team Survivor will once again have an, "Inspiration Station" at both races and will offer face-painting and sign making for kids at a booth on race day. The activities are free but we accept donations and all monies go directly to Team Survivor TriState.

We may also need volunteers to help with other duties.

Philadelphia Women's Triathlon  
Race: Sunday, July 12th

NJ State Triathlon  
Race: Sunday, July 26th

If you, your friends or family members can volunteer, please e-mail Jen at [jen@teamsurvivortristate.org](mailto:jen@teamsurvivortristate.org)



On April 4th, in the cold and lots of wind, TSTS members participated in the D&R Canal 5K.

Pictured here, L to R: Janice Love, Sharon Mechlowitz, Lenora Kandiner, Clementine Reyes, Anne Lumberger, Donna Gunderson, Debbie Prendergast and Carla Hagan.

## Long Branch Half Marathon

Congratulations are in order for the TSTS members who raced the Long Branch Half Marathon on May 3rd. Congratulations Susan Berowitz, Amy Spiegel, Sharon Friedman, Donna Gunderson, Jen Polo and Janice Love.

## Recipe of the Month: Bran Muffins

Yields 15 medium muffins

### Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 3/4 cup Ground flax seed
- 3/4 cup Oat Bran
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 1/2 cup carrots (shredded)
- 2 apples (peeled and shredded)
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1 cup nuts (chopped)
- 3/4 cup milk
- 2 eggs (beaten)
- 1 tsp. vanilla

### Directions:

Mix together flour, flaxseed, oat bran, brown sugar, baking soda, baking powder, salt and cinnamon in a large bowl. Stir in carrots, apples, raisins and nuts. Combine milk, beaten eggs and vanilla. Pour liquid ingredients into dry ingredients. Stir until moistened. Do not over mix. Fill muffin cups 3/4 full. Bake at 350 for 15 - 20 minutes.

## Contribute to Our Newsletter

If you would like to submit an idea or share a story or picture to be included in our monthly newsletter, please contact: [info@teamsurvivortristate.org](mailto:info@teamsurvivortristate.org)

All submissions should be received by the 15th of the month for the following months newsletter.

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