

Summer Newsletter



Volume 1, Issue 2

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KRR Members Take Flight...

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and experienced owner of the small tour company.

We spent a few days in Yangon where we visited Pagodas, a huge inner city lake and local street markets. Then we took a two-day journey northeast to The Golden Rock. Arriving in the small rustic town, we rode in small trucks and walked up a steep mountain to the Rock. This huge boulder, a Buddhist Pagoda, sits on an area of about 4 X 4 feet and moves slightly if earthquakes are felt in the area.



After this, we walked and rode back to the hotel. We stayed one more night in the town and started toward Mandalay. Taking a full day to reach Mandalay, we stayed in the heart of the city in a very nice hotel. We toured the city and I had time to go into a large street shopping area of about 2 blocks square.

I found most locally made items to be very inexpensive. One day we took a river motorboat boat ride up the Ayeyarwaddy River to a small village with sandy streets where among other sites, we saw a large Buddhist Pagoda that had crumbled during an earthquake. Huge parts of it had fallen and rolled down into the river.



Amongst the grind of daily work, the tireless training, and all the family responsibilities, KRR members still find time to "go global"...by travelling that is. Whether it's getting in touch with family roots, working in a developing country or simply exploring somewhere they haven't been yet, the following short stories attest to the adventurous nature of members.

In April of this year, **Jud Thompson** had the opportunity to visit Myanmar (formerly Burma). Below is a condensed journal of his exciting travels. Enjoy.

I traveled to Myanmar (Formerly Burma) on a private tour with a guide and his old Toyota. After a long journey via Los Angeles and Singapore, I arrived in Yangon (Formerly Rangoon) where Myint, the guide, met me. Myint Thu was the likeable



"Hills are speedwork in disguise."

- Frank Shorter

Returning to Mandalay in the afternoon, I toured the ancient Palace used by past Myanmar Royalty. The Palace grounds covered a huge area of 2 K by 2 K in the city centre. Mandalay is a busy, noisy city with lots of pollution from cars, diesel trucks and busses.

We left Mandalay and traveled to the World Heritage site of Bagan southwest from Mandalay. After a day's drive through lush vegetation and then very arid conditions, we arrived at a nice hotel in Bagan. We toured many Pagodas, some just a pile of bricks while others were huge structures, all of which were built over a period of about 300 years beginning around 1000 AD. These Pagodas house the Buddha statues and can be very ornate in their construction.



The Myanmar people are very friendly as several families sort of adopted me at various places along my route. They would voluntarily line up for pictures, but never ask for anything. Many times I was given small presents by the people I came in contact with, and in turn I would present them with pins from our city and country.

The country as a whole is ruled by a military government that appears self-serving. An example of this was the roads that were four lane highways around the military installations. But, as one traveled further from these sites the roads deteriorated to a one lane series of potholes that could barely be called a road. There seemed to be few infrastructures for the comfort and well being of the people. I saw a few French and Chinese tourists but no other North Americans.

From Bagan, I flew back to Yangon, then to Singapore and home—just leaving weeks before the devastating typhoon. Email is difficult at the best of time and since the typhoon I still have not been able to make contact with some people whom I met in Myanmar. I can't help but feel sadness for the plight of these gentle, kind people who live in a land that is completely controlled by a repressive government.

The Runner's Commandments



While many live their lives strictly by the tenets set out by the 10 Commandments, others argue that runners pay homage to a whole host of "rules of the road"—some spoken, some not—that get us through the good runs and the not-so-good runs...

For some, running is a release—a vehicle to escape daily stresses and feel better by doing so. For others, it's all about the challenge—just how far can I push myself? For

those who "live and breathe" running, all the sacrifices, the training, and the thrill of the chase amount to somewhat of a religious experience..... Whatever your perspective, take time to read (and smile) over Joe Kelly's 53 Runner's Commandments in this newsletter.....

Commandments 1-15

1. Don't be a whiner. Nobody likes a whiner, not even other whiners.
2. Walking out the door is often the toughest part of a run.
3. Don't make running your life. Make it part of your life.
4. During group training runs, don't let anyone run alone.
5. Keep promises, especially ones made to yourself.

6. When doing group runs, start on time no matter who's missing.
7. The faster you are the less you should talk about your times.
8. Keep a quarter in your pocket. One day you'll need to call for a ride.
9. Don't compare yourself to other runners.
10. All runners are equal, some are just faster than others.
11. Keep in mind that the later in the day it gets, the more likely it is that you won't run.
12. For a change of pace, get driven out and then run back.
13. If it was easy, everybody would be a runner.
14. When standing in starting lines, remind yourself how fortunate you are to be there.
15. Getting out of shape is much easier than getting into shape.



History Revisted.... Elaine Sager's Adventures in Greece

On October 7, 1905, my grandfather Kyriacos (age 23) and his sister Dimitra (age 19) arrived in New York (Ellis Island), having travelled from Piraeus, Greece via Cherbourg, France. According to the ship's manifest, they had \$20 between them and were headed to Chicago where their brother Elias lived. My grandfather ended up in Vancouver, becoming a Canadian citizen while his sister remained in the United States.

My grandfather died in 1953, before my parents married, so I was never able to ask him about his past, and never had an opportunity to learn the Greek language. My dad was an only child; my siblings and did not have the advantage of growing up with a large bunch of cousins a la "My Big Fat Greek Wedding." Still, as the only one of my dad's children to have inherited his olive skin, I've often longed to go back and explore the country of my ancestors.

On July 13, 2008, my dream of travelling to "the motherland" as I joking called it was finally realized as I boarded a plane that would take me through Frankfurt to my ultimate destination, Athens. Many hours later (in fact, the next day in Athens), I got my first glimpse of the Acropolis from the taxi which took me to my hotel—the adventure had begun!



A view of the Parthenon, Acropolis, Athens

The next day, an orientation tour of Athens and a visit to the Acropolis set the tone for six days of travel throughout the Peloponnese and Central and Western Greece. July is a hot month in Greece, and I was not disappointed – the daily temperatures were in the high 30s. Although Athens tended to be slightly hazy due to smog, once out of the city I experienced skies and waters that are truly as blue as the pictures you've seen in travel literature.

Greece has undertaken an ambitious program of uncovering and preserving its ancient history. While on the mainland, I visited the ancient cities of Corinth, Mycenae, Olympia, and Delphi the monasteries of Meteora. Site visits involved lots of walking and in the case of Delphi a lot of climbing! I'm glad I went all the way to the top at Delphi where the stadium is located. The view down the valley was spectacular, and the sheer rock slopes above us were awe-inspiring.



In the theatre at Ancient Delphi. Built 2500 years ago, the stadium seats 5,000 people.

In addition to ancient ruins, I also saw some more modern constructions, including the Corinth Canal. Four miles long and 23 metres wide, construction of the canal began during the reign of Emperor Nero, but was not completed until 1893. Although too small for today's large container ships, it is still in use, and I was lucky enough to see it when a ship was passing through.

I also crossed the Gulf of Corinth on the world's longest (2,252 m) cable-stayed bridge, built to withstand an earthquake of magnitude 9. Opened on the eve of the 2004 Athens Olympics, the bridge replaces a 45 minute ferry ride with a five minute drive.



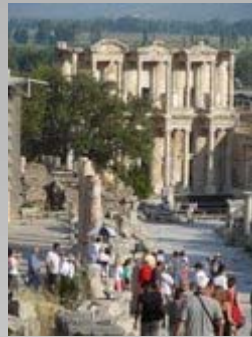
Corinth Canal

At the conclusion of the land tour, I boarded the *Aquamarine* for four days of Island hopping. In a brief span of time, we touched in Mykonos, Patmos, Rhodes, Crete and Santorina. In addition, we also visited Kusadasi, Turkey where a visit to Ephesus was in order. The ruins at this site are incredible, and because Turkey is not as seismically active as Greece is, they were much better preserved. The visit to Ephesus was followed by

Commandments 16-30

- 16. A bad day of running still beats a good day at work.
- 17. Talk like a runner. "Singlets" are worn on warm days. "Tank tops" are worn to the beach.
- 18. Don't talk about your running injuries. People don't want to hear about your sore knee or black toe.
- 19. Don't always run alone.
- 20. Don't always run with people.
- 21. Approach running as if the quality of your life depended on it.
- 22. No matter how slow you run it is still faster than someone sitting on a couch.
- 23. Keep in mind that the harder you run during training, the luckier you'll get during racing.
- 24. Races aren't just for those who

a trip to the bazaar and a chance to barter for, among other things, "genuine fake watches."



Ephesus, Turkey. The large building at the end of the street is the ancient library thought to have been completed in 117 AD.

Rhodes, which my guidebook stated had the cleanest water and air, was definitely beautiful! Sadly, there was a forest fire the day I was on the island, so the air was hazy and had an odour strangely familiar to someone who lives among the interior forests of British Columbia. Still, the walled Old Town was beautiful and a wonderful place to

can run fast.

- 25. There are no shortcuts to running excellence.
- 26. The best runs sometimes come on days when you didn't feel like running.



- 27. Be modest after a race, especially if you have reason to brag.
- 28. If you say, "Let's run this race together," then you must stay with that person no matter how slow.
- 29. Think twice before agreeing to run with someone during a race.

spend an afternoon. As we sailed away, we were able to view miles of magnificent beaches.

Kallimarmaro Stadium, built on the site of original Panathenaic Stadium. Site of the 2004 Olympic Marathon finish.



I went to Greece to discover my roots, and I was not disappointed. One of the first things I noticed about Athens (besides the amazing traffic) was the number of older men who looked like my dad. Upon entering shops I was often addressed immediately in Greek, and I felt right at home wandering the streets of Athens the day before I returned to Canada. I guess I went to Greece to find myself, but I have to admit that I left a part of myself there. I'm looking forward to returning in the future.



- 30. There is nothing boring about running. There are, however, boring people who run.



~Developing World Connections 2008~
Peru

We have done several of the “all-inclusive” type holidays, but this spring decided to do something different. Instead of being waited on “hand and foot,” it was high time to give something back. So, along with **Sherry and her daughter Sandya, we (Rick and Donna)** decided to go to Peru with Developing World Connections, a non-profit organization that strives to build connections through a combination of work and other cultural experiences/exchanges in developing countries across the globe.

The geography of Peru is nothing short of amazing. From the chaotic metropolis of coastal Lima to the surreal world of Machu Picchu, the towering Andes and the small villages perched on mountainsides, the Peruvian landscape is a feast for the senses.



Ancient city of Machu Picchu

Our first few days there felt like the Amazing Race as we rapidly toured as many places as we could before we started work in the second week. We knew we had to see Machu Picchu; we’re so glad we did! Perched precariously atop an Andean peak, the stone ruins of this ancient Inca city transport you

back in time. One cannot help but marvel at the ingenuity and strength it must have taken to construct this city without the modern technologies and conveniences we enjoy today.

In the second week we set out from Lima for a 5 hour car ride that took us southwest to the city of Huancayo. We weren’t sorry to “hear” the end of Lima for awhile, given that it is a bustling city of over 10 million—lots of pollution and horns! Huancayo, on the other hand, seemed to move at a slightly slower pace, despite the fact that it too is a large city by our standards—400,000 people. Upon arrival in Huancayo we met up with the rest of the work crew from DWC and got ourselves ready for work the next day.

On Tuesday morning, we were driven to the worksite about 10 minutes from our hotel. The rest of the team had already been there the day before so had laid some of the groundwork for us. Our mission? To start work on building a school...



Foundation of the school

Many of the children who attend school in Peru are there because their parents can afford to pay for

their education. This school, however, will be geared towards those children who work at home, mainly in the farming industry. Hours at this school will be tailored to the children’s work schedules. Teaching will focus on academic basics as well as improved methods of planting, harvesting, etc.

The work was not easy, but we managed nicely. Temperatures in the low to mid 20’s, along with plenty of breaks to help us cope with the altitude, all helped make the work seem not so bad—despite the fact it was manual labour sans the tools and machines to which we are accustomed. Every day you could see the progress...it was so rewarding to know you were there helping to make the locals’ lives just a little bit easier.



Now there are walls!

Food figured quite heavily into our Peruvian cultural experience. While Donna and Sherry were adventurous enough to try cuy—guinea pig—I was not. That aside, we ate plenty of chicken and lots of French fries as they were served with practically every meal!

A highlight of the culinary experience was a traditional pachamanca

(a barbeque Peruvian style). Rather than firing up the gas grill, a pachamanca means food (meats, vegetables, spices) is layered with hot rocks; then covered with paper and dirt and allowed to “cook” for 40 minutes. Together with some of the locals, a great feast was had by all.

Uncovering the feast!



Working alongside the Peruvian people and doing your best to learn some of their language was truly, in my opinion, the best way to get to know the culture. Moreover, seeing how other people live their daily lives certainly makes one appreciate all those things we take for granted.

I think I speak for all us who went when I say that each of us left Peru with a feeling of great fulfillment—an overwhelming sense of satisfaction in knowing that 1) we learned something about ourselves, and 2) in some small way we helped make some else’s life just a little bit better. I certainly look forward to our next DWC excursion.....



The work crew!! (missing: Rick and Sandya)

Commandments 31-45

- 31.** Look at hills as opportunities to pass people.
- 32.** Distance running is like cod liver oil. At first it makes you feel awful, then it makes you feel better.
- 33.** Never throw away the instructions to your running watch.
- 34.** Don’t try to outrun dogs.
- 35.** Don’t trust runners who show up at races claiming to be tired, out of share, or not feeling well.
- 36.** Don’t wait for perfect weather. If you do, you won’t run very often.
- 37.** When tempted to stop being a runner, make a list of the reasons you started.
- 38.** Never run alongside very old or very young racers. They get all of the applause.
- 39.** Without goals, training has no purpose.
- 40.** During training runs, let the slowest runner in the group set the pace.

Rick Dives Right In



Race Director, **Rick Cameron** recently received his certification in scuba diving. He completed a 5 week course at Ocean Pacific and was able to put his new skills into practice with 2 open dives at Kelly Lake near Clinton. Apparently a tropical vacation is in the works so hopefully he’ll find time to do some deep sea diving. Congratulations, Rick!



Low GI Eating



Given that many people in our westernized world meet the criteria for obesity, is it any wonder that we are constantly bombarded with widespread marketing outlining the best new eating plans, the most effective weight loss programs, or fitness machines that give you the best results?....ahhhh....who and what do we believe?

Arguably, all eating plans—diets—whatever you wish to call them—can be successful to some degree depending on the individual....is it safe to assume, however, there is no “magical” cure, no panacea to miraculously fix poor eating habits and bulging waistlines? Consequently, we are left to find what combination of healthy eating and lifestyle changes works best for us.

Low GI eating is a term that’s been buzzing about quite a bit just lately so I thought it worthy of some investigation. The GI (glycemic index) is a concept that came about from the work of Dr. David Jenkins in 1981. Jenkins, a professor at the University of Toronto, jumped headlong into the longstanding battle of simple sugars vs. complex carbohydrates and their impact on blood sugar levels in the body.

In his study he compared blood sugar levels following the ingestion of a particular carbohydrate to those following the ingestion of a control food (glucose). It was then from the resulting differences in blood sugar levels that he established the GI (glycemic index). Glucose was given a GI of 100 and all other foods were indexed according to how much they raised blood sugar.

The glycemic index ranks carbohydrate foods on the basis of how they affect blood sugar (glucose). This is important for many people because eating a lot of foods that rank high on the glycemic index will produce spikes in blood sugar that over time can lead to a loss of sensitivity to insulin, the hormone needed to allow blood sugar to enter cells for use as fuel. Insulin resistance is associated with obesity, high blood pressure, elevated blood fats, and an increased risk of type 2 diabetes.

So often we’ve heard the lament “I exercise like crazy; eat not bad, but I can’t seem to lose my ‘spare tire’ around the waist!” Part of this might be attributed to the insensitivity to our own insulin that comes from eating high glycemic foods that continually cause sugar spikes in the body. Without insulin being active in the process of breaking down the sugars for use as fuel, those sugars get converted to fat and stored nicely around our middle.

The science of low GI eating aside, I felt it worthy to ask

someone who actually following follows the principles of low GI in her daily eating. Here’s what she had to say:

“(We make) more of an effort at fruit and vegetables in our diet, with attention paid to the GI index. (We) definitely have more interest in the sugar content of food (one serving of carbs is roughly 15 g), so we read a lot of labels. Sprouted grain breads and wraps have replaced the ciabatta buns for lunches; less potatoes at dinner. I also add more whole grains, beans, and nuts to what and how I cook....”

(We also eat) smaller portions of meat, and try to bring in more fish and less red meat...just generally healthier eating! A dietician told me to pay less attention to fat content, still to watch it to ensure it is in reason, but really focus on sugar. She also said to eat every 3 hrs, and not to go long periods without food.

This does not feel like a diet! I don’t buy special food, other than no sugar ice-cream for a treat! Advantages have been huge—(significant) weight control, fewer swings in blood sugar, drop in blood pressure, and I eat as much as I want.

Challenges? Sometimes eating out in restaurants, occasionally craving BREAD and chips....chocolate is still a given, provided it is just a small portion. (I look) for the 75% and up pure cacao to get the carb count down.”

With its emphasis on low-glycemic carbs such as fresh fruits and vegetables along with whole grains, the low GI concept seeks to break the cycle of spiking blood sugar—a damaging cycle linked to so many adverse health issues. Given the fact that it is really about eating and living healthy in general, low GI eating is worthy of further investigation by us all.

A good place to start is Laura Kalina’s cookbook, ***Low-Glycemic Meals in Minutes.***





Nutrition Tip...

Legumes (such as chickpeas, beans and lentils) are an excellent source of soluble daily fiber which helps in the regulation of blood sugar and in lowering cholesterol levels. Other sources of soluble fiber include oat bran, oatmeal, brown rice, barley, and pectin-rich fruits (apples, strawberries and citrus fruit)...Kalina, pg.51

Commandments 41-53

- 41. The first year in a new age group offers the best opportunity for trophies.
- 42. Go for broke, but be prepared to be broken.
- 43. Spend more time running on the roads than sitting on the couch.
- 44. Make progress in your training, but progress at your own rate.
- 45. "Winning" means different things to different people.
- 46. Unless you make your living as a runner, don't take running too seriously.
- 47. Runners who never fail are runners who never try anything great.
- 48. Never tell a runner that he or she doesn't look good in tights.

- 49. Never confuse the Ben-Gay tube with the toothpaste tube.
- 50. Never apologize for doing the best you can.
- 51. Preventing running injuries is easier than curing
- 52. Running is always enjoyable. Sometimes, though, the joy doesn't come until the end of the run. them.

And I think the final commandment is a lasting thought we should all take with us on each run and/or race...



53. Running is simple. Don't make it complicated.

Don't forget...we're on the Web. Check us out at:

www.ridgerunners.bc.ca

I Need to Hear from YOU

Everyone has a story to tell. It is these which bring publications such as this to life! Please send me:

- ⇒ Biographies
- ⇒ A noteworthy article or book you've read
- ⇒ Pictures and anecdotes from your latest travels
- ⇒ Running/fitness advice
- ⇒ Upcoming events
- ⇒ Etc...

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