



TIME TO SET FITNESS GOALS



# Ready, Set, GO!

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## *Make Every Day Christmas in 2024!*

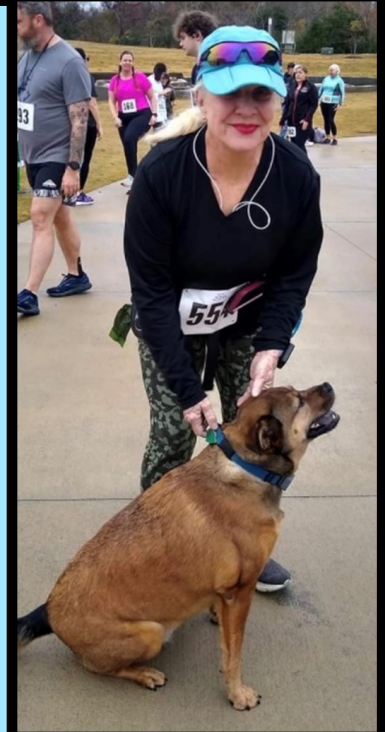
Christmas has passed but the spirit of Christmas lives on in each of us if we choose to share the joy of the holiday spirit daily! Here we have a good friend of R3 share his journey from running to being Santa! Thank you Roxy for all you do to help others!

If I have understood the assignment (and with each passing day, that is less likely) this brief article is to share a glimpse at how I morphed from an avid runner, to triathlete and Ironman, and then to the jolly old elf known as Santa. Serving as an Ambassador for Santa with required “bowl full of jelly” seems an unlikely direction. Parts of this journey were not chosen and are not pleasant. COVID nearly ended my journey in this physical world and the resulting lung issues and loss of fitness did, in fact, terminate my running and triathlon career. So, I moved in the direction that seemed obvious, having a mop of white hair and full beard. Rather than dwell on the sense of loss of habits from the past 40 or so years, lets focus on the positive of what exists now. Are you familiar with the word “mosaic”? Most of you are. The art of taking small, irregular pieces and placing them together to create beauty is what gives stunning stained glass windows in cathedrals. But, we are also a mosaic of sorts. R3 is made of lots of individuals, each with special abilities and quirks. Our community is also a beautiful mosaic—if only we can see all the parts with eyes seeking beauty. That is what being Santa has been for me. This season, like last, I will volunteer for photos with tiny babies in the NICU so parents can have a bit of joy in a challenging time. Then I will engage in photos at nursing homes where ladies over 100 years old will sit on my lap and giggle like school girls. In between, I will ride on a firetruck in a Montgomery parade and see genuine joy in the eyes of little ones. When a small boy or girl hugs you and doesn’t want to let you go, it is easy to see what a beautiful mosaic has been pieced together. AND, I get to see that we are all ambassadors. So many of you have encouraged me and just on the day I am writing this, my doctor said I should run and bike. So, guess what? I hope to come out of hibernation March 9 for the 5k in conjunction with our 13.1. Can you see how you are part of my mosaic? Together, we are creating art that is breathtaking (pun intended). **Roxy Wishum**



## Does this dog make me look fat?

Actually the right question may be *“Does my dog look fat?”* The saying is that if the answer is yes, then you are not getting your dog out enough for exercise. In my case, I feel the extra pounds sneaking up on us both as I see my dog struggling to do a three mile run/walk. So the responsibility is on me to see that we both get out and do more, eat less and make healthier choices. Why do we want to be thinner as runners? The answer is and always will be, to have LESS weight to carry on those miles. Distance runners tend to have a lean and slender physique for several reasons. First, carrying less body weight can improve running efficiency, as it reduces the energy required to move the body forward. Second, a lower body weight can also reduce the risk of injury, as there is less strain on the joints and muscles. Additionally, a lower body fat percentage can improve the body's ability to dissipate heat, which is important during long-distance runs. Finally, many distance runners follow a specific training and nutrition regimen to optimize their performance, which often results in a lean physique. So my goal for 2024 is to drop weight for me and Buddy Pablo. Unfortunately that has been my plan for the past previous ten New Year Eve's!



## President Pete Ponderings!

The excitement of Christmas is behind us and the promise of opportunity in the New Year before us! In the coming year, there are ample road race events in the area to keep us busy. I try to keep a listing of races both local and some popular ones afar. Currently, I have a total of 58 on the list for 2024 and experience dictates there will be additions. They include all varieties of distances, terrain, size, and venue. There is that special race for you, somehow, somewhere, sometime! Our sport is one of the greatest as our participation not only keeps us in a healthy exercise regime, we also get the satisfaction of helping various organizations in their benevolent quests. **On another note, as the New Year is here, please remember to renew your R3 membership for 2024.** Your membership not only supports the longest serving running club in the River Region of Montgomery, it also gives you a membership in the RRCA, race registration discounts on several races, participation in the Lost in Pace mileage program, monthly membership meeting, & the camaraderie of fellow club members! As always, keep one foot in front of the other ... *R3 President Pete*



**Pete doing what he loves best to do! RUNNING! Way to go!**

Patient: The problem is that obesity runs in our family.  
 Doctor: No, the problem is that no one runs in your family.





**Red Nose Half Marathon in Columbus, GA—R3 Favorite!**



R3 had some First Timers at the Half Marathon this past year!

**Congratulations**

Cynda Fickert Doug Poole, Jeremy Browning and Brantley Kirk  
*(pictured below.)*



*Is it just me or does Jeremy look like he has a halo and butterfly wings in the First Timers' Photo? Plus I have never seen anyone as happy to see the finish line as our President Pete! Way to go R3! Join a group when you see posts about out of town trips. It is so much fun to run and fellowship with R3 members. Columbus, GA is a great destination for food, fun and races! Get involved 2024!*



**Old Timers Raced the Red Nose Half Too!**







## Cousin Eddy 5K & Polar Dip Great Fun for R3!



Cousin Eddy 5K Run & Polar Dip at White Water Park was Dec. 2023! If there had been a prize for BEST Cousin Eddy costume, the definite winner would be R3 Member & RWB Patriot Jason Hochsprung! Awesome resemblance to Cousin Eddy!



## Looking for a Road Trip, check out DBR!

The Publix Pensacola Double Bridge Run (DBR) is a favorite of River Region Runners and it is coming up February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024. One of the premier 15K races in the country, the course carries runners over two bridges, across Pensacola Bay and Santa Rosa Sound. For the first time this year, the run will go over the fully completed Pensacola Bay Bridge! It will run from downtown Pensacola which includes the historic district, picturesque Bayfront Parkway, Gulf Breeze, and onto Pensacola Beach. The 5K invites both runners and walkers to travel from Gulf Breeze to beautiful Pensacola Beach on Santa Rosa Island and the Gulf Islands Seashore. There will be a post-race party at the boardwalk, Hooters, Bamboo Willies and Whiskey Joe's. Want to party more? There is also a post-post-race party at the Sand Shaker Lounge. As you are driving to Pensacola, stop by the Fish House Restaurant at 600 South Barracks Street. The Fish House is known for its fresh seafood cuisine coupled with upscale dockside dining overlooking beautiful Pensacola Bay and Seville Harbor. While at Pensacola Beach, you have a lot of restaurants to choose from to include Flounder's Chowder House, a local favorite. On your way home, be sure to stop by Joe Patti's Seafood and fill your coolers with quality Florida seafood as well as seafood from the Northeast and Northwest such as lobster, swordfish, and salmon. Hope to see you at this year's event. We'll have a good time! *Thanks Irene for inviting all to DBR! When you sign up, please add that you are on the River Region Runners Team for fine dining, a run with a view & great fellowship!*



**See what you've been missing! R3 Runners have WAY TOO MUCH FUN when they meet in Pensacola! Register today and enjoy an outstanding race!**