

Running Blind 2015 Annual Report

A Message from the Founder

2015 was sort of an in-between year. After the big push on the Adventure Camp of 2014, 2015 was a little more laid back. We still had a number of active visually impaired runners including Sile in Ann Arbor, and Hope and Tanya in the downriver area, and Geri in Bloomfield Hills area. Hope has been working as our Communications Director. She has been helping to communicate with perspective guide volunteers. The main activity of the year was the Gallup Gallop 5K which is our main annual fundraiser. The event went well and did raise some much needed cash to replenish our funds after the 2014 Adventure Camp. I did not conduct an online fundraising campaign in 2015. Without a major activity to spark donations, I was reticent to initiate a push for donations.

Blind runners Running Blind is supporting

Running Blind's primary mission is to help people with visual impairments live a more active and healthy life. This year we have been supporting 4 people in that regard.

Sile lives in Ann Arbor and works for U of M – she is a professor in the Music Department. She is on her 3rd guide and is currently running with Kelly Hogan and Mikel Rubio of Ann Arbor. They ran the Dexter Ann Arbor Run together.

Tonya lives in Lincoln Park and has been running with various guides including ones that she found on her own.

Hope lives in Wyandotte and is currently running the Grosse Ile Runners Club. She is been networking with that group and finding guide support from them.

Geri lives in Farmington Hills. She is in the B3 category and doesn't not need guides all of the time, but she does like to have them for support during events.

Plans for continuing support of our visually impaired runners

As we have learned, finding and keeping good guide runner partnerships is a challenge. In 2015 we also added the offer for financial support as a component of what we can offer. Without the expense associated with last year's Adventure Camp, we were able to retain funds raised at the Gallup Gallop and offer them to our members. Our plan is to offer up to around \$200 per year for expenses associated with training and participating in events, such as a pair of running shoes, safety vests, and race entry fees.

2015 Gallop Gallup and Run Like Hal's Jingle Bell Fun Run

Gallup Gallop – the Gallup Gallop went well in 2015, but unfortunately continued to decline in size since Victor Dobrin and I restarted the event in 2013. This year we moved the vent to Saturday. Since there are no road closures required, which is what generally pushes most road races to Sunday mornings, we decided to try the switch to Saturday to offer a alternative to the many Sunday events.

Jingle Bell Run – I decided to discontinue the Jingle Bell Fun Run in 2015. It was a fun family event but was not as popular with runners as I had hoped, and still required a fair amount of work to organize. At the moment I have no plans to restart it.

Financial Status

Largely from the Gallup Gallop, we raised a little over \$3000, We also got a nice gift of over \$200 from the Dykema Law firm in Ann Arbor – they conducted a “Jeans Day” and donated the proceeds to Running Blind. We also received donations from other people that totaled around \$400. Since we didn't fund any major activities this year, we have raised our balance to around \$3,500 from close to zero after 2014.

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