

September 24, 2005

Update

Greenway Challenge... on the air

Greenway Challenge sponsor Citadel Broadcasting added a new twist to their support of this year's event - radio testimonials.

Testimonials are recorded interviews between radio personalities and Greenway participants edited down to 60-second spots that run during drive time on several of Citadel's Worcester, MA stations.

In June, Sheryl Duclos with teammates Susan and Chris, from Duclos Painting, triathlete Liz Reutsch, and Hans Berg from Team Great Canadian gathered at the Citadel studios to tape the spots.

The Testimonials will run between July 4 and July 17 on Oldies 98.9 and the Pike, 100.1.



Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute their endorsement by the U.S. Government.

John H. Chafee

BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY

National Heritage Corridor Commission



The Spirit of the Greenway Challenge

Editor's note: The Warren Ratpack completed their first Greenway Challenge in 2004. The following description of their experience is reprinted here with permission of team captain Shirley Warren, Cambridge, MA.

It was decided that they would enter their first sports race or challenge as it was also called. The event was for a really good cause and sounded like a great idea. They would all train accordingly in preparation for the big day - a sixty-mile course consisting of three paddling legs, two cycling segments and two running courses. They decided which part of the race each of them would complete and recruited a driver for the team.

What they might have lacked in physical ability would be made up in enthusiasm.

They arrived at the starting point adorned with team t-shirts. They looked like true contenders. The teammates left their first runner at the starting line and headed off to the next checkpoint. When it was time for the challenge to begin, she joined the large group of runners at the starting line. She observed some of the runners stretching, some walking in circles nervously, and decided to converse with a small group who chattered and laughed non-stop while waiting for the race to begin. She was never in a race before and the excitement of taking off swept her away.

People lined the streets and were cheering. She stuck with the group of runners until she realized that she was completely out of breath and was running at speed that was twice as fast as she had ever gone before.

She managed to finish her segment in the time that she had hoped for, with only two runners finishing behind her. The team cheered her on as if she was the first to cross the line and she felt like a champion. It was time to pass the baton to the next team member who would embark on his first kayak ride since he attended summer camp as a boy.

With the completion of each leg of the race, the team members applauded wildly and acknowledged success for the person who just finished their turn. The spirit of the team was lifted a bit higher when one of the teammates took off with a giant smile ringing the bell on her three-speed bike. They all followed her in the car for a bit, laughing as they watched her emanating joy with her smile, waving to every person she passed by.

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For more information:

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Captains - Mark Your Calendars

The first place team had long since passed the finish line, the check-in points were being dismantled, and the big celebration party had already kicked off when they had one last kayak route to complete.

Now on his second kayak ride since attending summer camp as a boy, the finish line team member set off to complete the challenge for the team.

They did their best to stay close enough to him, so that he could hear them rooting him on. Their excitement level was high, as they were about to complete their first sports race, or challenge as it was also called.

At last, they helped their kayaker to pull the boat ashore after he crossed the finish line. Jumping up and down, hugging one another, offering raised-hands welcoming the high-fives, they had finished.

The encouragement they gave to each other, the laughter they shared and the way they embraced each part of the journey put them on a winning team, which, by the way, came in last.

They all agreed to enter the Greenway Challenge together again this year. They have considered making some changes in strategy.

Looking back, perhaps they shouldn't change a thing.

The Captains meetings for the 2005 Greenway Challenge have been scheduled for the evenings of September 14 and September 15. One meeting will be held at the Museum of Work and Culture in Woonsocket, RI, and the other will be held at the Whitin Community Center in Whitinsville, MA.

Meeting details, including directions to each location, will be posted to the Greenway web site shortly.

The meetings are an important part of the Greenway Challenge. Staff members carefully explain the cycling, running, and paddling routes, review safety measures, and answer all questions.

It is important that each team is represented at the Captains meetings.

Volunteers

Volunteers make the Greenway Challenge happen - over 100 of them.

We need help at transition sites, clearing the river, timing and scoring, party preparation, and many other fun, rewarding tasks.

If you would like to help, please contact Greg Maas at 508-234-6388 or greg.maas@verizon.net or, Barbara Dixon at 401-762-0250 or barbara_dixon@nps.gov.

Oh yes, we do have a wonderful volunteer party in October, after the race.