

Atlanta 13.1 Marathon and 5K Trip Notes

December 11-16, 2014

I was giving up marathons, remember? Then I was giving up half marathons, remember? Darned if I can remember why I can't remember. Here I was again, yet with friends and we just all stayed

together and had some wild time and a wild finish time (something like 4:30 hours – you ask if it's possible to even crawl that slow?)

Mostly I'm done with trip notes and maybe this email from Jim says enough? ".... I met some friends at Starbucks to discuss the morning papers and the weather and they all wanted to know about my trip to Atlanta. And I delighted them with stories about listening to music, the CIA pick up artist, Republican women, the Fox Theater, segregation, the varsity diner, museums, and the warm and gracious Southern Hospitality provided by a grand and friendly lady named Judy. I really appreciate the thought and energy you made for us. Everything was fun and interesting. I hope we can do more sometime, someplace. Maybe here in Washington." Amen. Maybe Washington next.

This was also an 'adopted-family' visit as Parker (Uncle David) lives in Atlanta with his delightful partner Rich that

we were so pleased to meet. Loudean and her friend Kandi came from Kansas City to join in the family fun, Judy always being family and Jim just fitting right in. One evening we had a dinner at Parker's house and another evening at the famously huge drive in called Varsity.

Some pictures and then I'll let my past 2008 and 2011 trip notes speak to Atlanta.

Adopted family members





I oftentimes suggest to Jim that he ought to have a honey around but I didn't mean 'the singer' we found at the Ritz in Buckhead! I am super glad that "Uncle Parker" (Marie's Uncle David) has found Rich and that they now reside in Atlanta. Aunt Loudean and her friend Kandi (alias Misty – don't ask) came in for the event and family reunion.

Touring

After the marathon expo, Judy, Jim and I would walk the town and Olympic site and though we were headed to the Coca Cola Museum, we'd only make it as far as the CNN Center for food and then to the Marriott Marquis for this dramatic center foyer where we stayed near the bar for long enough to miss any more touring.

The High Museum complex was dramatic. I'm next on my way to Florence and high (no pun intended) on my list was the Duomo Museum but look at this: it's under renovation and many of the artifacts are on loan to the High Museum. This happened to me before when I went to Rome to see some Bernini sculptures and they were on loan to the Getty Villa where I'd just visited.







Illuminated manuscripts were the focus: Many had been lost to the Flood of Florence but the best preserved were on display. A nice surprise was to have all these costumed singers perform old ancient carols. Like that mirrored picture of me? I do. Soft, smooth, and just how I like it.

The marathon

For what we lost in speed, we made up for it in fun. No one was in a hurry and that's an understatement. One of us can't work their mouth and feet at the same time and she talks a good deal so there was an overage of fun which means we really got our money's worth by staying out on the course long enough to do a full marathon vs a full.



The weather was so unusually cold that even Judy wore a jacket. I had two shirts, a jacket and two BUFFs but still shivered so I found a huge XL man's velour zip up that saved the day. The course was good, through residential, businesses and the beltway trails with loads of sculpture – this one framing downtown.

More touring

Later it was off to The Varsity and another meet up with 'adopted family' and if you don't know about The Varsity, it's explained in earlier trip reports below. Its huge, its historical, and its unhealthy but we eat it all anyway.



Five of us would do a guided tour of the famous Fox Theatre one morning and while a couple renewed acquaintances with the singer and big band trumpet player, I would return to the Fox for an evening performance by a country singer. Across the street is a famous hotel worthy of a visit and a unique lobby.

Judy's Lair



I invited myself more than once to enjoy her 26th floor view of Buckhead and Atlanta. Windows are on three sides and it's a wonder she can work for looking at the view but here she is as she must be often – emailing me! I am blessed that she has let us into her world.

Atlanta Peachtree Road Race Trip Notes July 2-5, 2011











Bandit pictures from the web. Obviously having loads of fun!

A record - This is the famous Peachtree Road Race – the largest road race in the country at 60,000 and they broke even their own record. I wanted to be a part of history and here I am having a super time despite 91 degree highs with over 90% humidity. Not making much time but so what – I stopped and talked and took pictures and stood under the sprays of water. I ate and I drank but I never could drink enough to make up for sweating for 7 hours. After finishing the 10K and wandering the festival and eating at the Atlanta Track Club tent, I went back to the finish line, watched runners wandering in, perused the park awhile and then did the entire course in reverse. And yes it was a record number of participants and almost a record heat.

Can you imagine a run that starts at 7:30am and yet the last corral doesn't get to start until 9:05am? True! From my hotel room I watched a number of the corrals starting and there was a lot of time in between them. I then went out much later and started at something like 8:37am.

Costume – Yes, that's one of the Liberty Ladies in Texas flag shorts. Thank you very much David Williams who helped me find these shorts. If it's too hot to wear my Liberty Lady drape-costume in Medoc France, this might be it. At San Francisco's Bay to Breakers I had to revert to cold weather gear.

Our party – There were various calling cards and friends played a role in my deciding to attend. Diane, Tommy and family have been to Peachtree many years in a row. Judy lives in Atlanta and has participated for many years. Judy clued me into the idea of joining the Atlanta Track Club so as to gain early entry to one of the coveted slots. Here's Diane and Tommy as well as Judy and her new daughter in law Sophie. That's ME very flushed at the ATC tent after a morning of 90 degree temperatures.

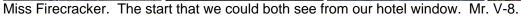






Course pictures - compliments of Diane











Course pictures - compliments of Judy's husband









See the guy who is 90 years old? When I returned to the finish line much later I stayed with him a while. That's Judy in the middle between a couple cute Germans, but just before the hula skirt boys.

Hotels - My Grand Hyatt in Buckhead was at Judy's suggestion and did me very well. It is a lovely hotel with much richness and its classy and within 4-6 blocks from the start line. The Westin would be the closest and next closest would be the Intercontinental. Across the street from the Hyatt was the Embassy Suites but it was similar price and as it turned out they had a disaster checking folks in the day before the run – at 7pm they still had a lobby full of runners camping out and trying to check in and not getting decent information. Apparently they had a group with late check out and a short staffing of housekeepers.

My initial post race report to Judy:

What a super day! Congratulations for your finish but even more importantly for getting Bonnie through her FIRST. One never forgets their FIRST anything.

The rains held off for me until about a mile from the hotel and there was a B&N just as it looked black and windy so I took cover and read a book about Munich for awhile, well, in between the shivering because I was fairly wet and the a/c was cold. The rains let up and I walked the rest of the way and really have taken 7 hours to complete a 10K.

I'm looking forward to the shower and then a walk to the Lenox Square area for the fireworks this evening. I might meet up with Diane and Tommy during the Embassy Suites happy hour. I'm into some much needed caffeine right now. Odd to me how many stores and cafes were closed but I guess it is a holiday. I should have stopped near to the finish line where there were some places open.

This morning it had been my intention to just start out the front of my hotel and pay no mind to the fact that I wouldn't have an official time. Though it was only 4-5 blocks to the start line (in the opposite direction of course), it was hugely more distance to get to my corral so I had decided to heck with it. I got up at 7am and went out at 8:20am (after watching the various coral starts from my window) but what should I find to my surprise but a lot of fencing and no way to get onto the roadway to start unofficially/illegally. I ended up walking far enough to get past the start line and just missed my N corral's start and started with the Ps at about 8:37. All in all next to perfect for me as I didn't have to go through the long line up in corrals.

The spectators and scenery were an absolute delight all day and I took a huge number of pictures and even went off course a few times as evidenced by my not finishing until 10:15am – gee, one could crawl in that amount of time!

After the finish line I walked the perimeter of the large festival area to include up the hill but missed the Atlanta Track Club tent so went back to the Michelob beer tent were someone told me to go back up the hill. After breakfast sandwiches and potty stop and freebies compliments of ATC I returned all the way back to the finish line again and reversed course. As the time would expose, I stopped at a lot of places both for pictures and for cooling down. I was on the course again, reversing direction, from about 11:30am. On the road leading to the finish line were a lot of fun characters such as the 90 year old man who was and should be very proud of himself. I walked a good bit of the park before leaving the area.

So from 8:20 to 3:10 – for one delicious 10K! YES! I'd love to see some of your husband's pictures. Your driving me on the course and the commentary made today much more interesting and hopefully I caught all the important sites as I had two times to find them. I even walked around The Temple.

Thanks again, Diana

PS I'll copy Marv and Maryanne – Marv just helped Seth in from a 50-miler in Tulsa where it was also 90 degrees. Now to the shower.

From Judy: Are u still in Barnes & Noble? Want me to drive you back? I'm just taking a break. Hope you had a good walk back. Yes, great day. My husband got some amazing pictures of people in weird outfits...I'll send later after he puts them on computer. I'm so proud of my sister-in-law Bonnie who finished her first "Peachtree" today, "got the t-shirt," and as far as I know, she is still alive. It's been a fun weekend...and what are your plans now?...perhaps a shower...unless you were already washed clean by the storm. Pretty decent timing for the storm, considering everything.

From Diana to Judy at around 2:30pm: Hope you got in before this storm. I have been a tourist for a long time. I wonder if anybody else has taken 7 hours to do a 10k? I'm safely in a Barnes & Noble watching the monsoon and about 1 mile from hotel. All is fine for me. It's been a great day.

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN PEACHTREE CITY HAS ISSUED A * SEVERE THUNDERSTORM WARNING FOR... NORTHWESTERN DEKALB COUNTY IN NORTH CENTRAL GEORGIA CENTRAL FULTON COUNTY IN NORTH CENTRAL GEORGIA WEST CENTRAL GWINNETT COUNTY IN NORTH CENTRAL GEORGIA * UNTIL 245 PM EDT * AT 200 PM EDT...NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE DOPPLER RADAR INDICATED A SEVERE THUNDERSTORM CAPABLE OF PRODUCING DAMAGING WINDS UP TO 60 MPH. THIS STORM WAS LOCATED NEAR BUCKHEAD...MOVING NORTHEAST AT 15 MPH. PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS... IN ADDITION TO LARGE HAIL AND DAMAGING WINDS...CONTINUOUS CLOUD TO GROUND LIGHTNING IS OCCURRING WITH THIS STORM. MOVE INDOORS IMMEDIATELY! REMEMBER...IF YOU CAN HEAR THUNDER...YOU ARE CLOSE ENOUGH TO BE STRUCK BY LIGHTNING. IF YOU SEE WIND DAMAGE...LARGE HAIL OR SIGNIFICANT FLOODING...WAIT UNTIL THE STORM HAS PASSED.

More - Hot, Hot Heat – from the ATC website: For all of you who love everything about the weather, here's a fun tidbit about the 2011 AJC Peachtree Road Race for you! Last year we were spoiled by the weather with a 66-degree temperature at the starting line. This year as the gun went off, it was a hot and humid 73 degrees; the hottest starting temperature since 1997's 74-degree mark. It went up to 91 degrees and nearly 100% humidity!

More pictures - ATC website with lots of pictures and articles about the race: http://atlantatrackclub.tumblr.com/

Course pictures by Diana



Remember I watched the start from my hotel room from 7:30am until about 8:20am. As I walked to the start-line I saw a lot of the corrals being started.



I just missed my N-corral start and lined up with the P-corral. There were a bunch of runners with signs saying "I flew 9,234 miles to run 10K" and they were from Hong Kong. There were an amazing number of 'old timers' who were proud of having run in every Peachtree Road Race. The spectators were often worthy of a stop to chat and definitely for a picture.



Spectators were generally in costume themselves and many were set up for a picnic.



More than one body-paint-job got partially washed or sweated away. There were showers offered at many locations. See the cross bearing bible reader? His partner was reading scriptures. Mr. Big Cup guy was giving away smoothies. Some were tossing out t-shirts with the MOE navy blue t-shirt being a coveted one. They only gave away about 9,000 so no wonder I missed them. But Diane and Marie both fetched one.



Of spectators, I should have started counting doggies there were so many, to include the Greyhound Society with their dogs dressed in hats and neckerchiefs.



One simply couldn't drink enough. I carried a bottle and drank at every station and simply couldn't keep up. See the doggie in sunglasses? Right before a fellow Liberty Lady. This last picture is a lady so pregnant she was due just a few days later; this is such a nice change from my days when we weren't even allowed to run for fear of our uterus dropping out. Thank you Kathrine Switzer for helping bring in Title IX and women's running.







See the finish line festival? It was huge and pretty much a sea of people. And the good looking body painted boys were pretty much washed up.



Mr. Peach was a huge guy and very popular for pictures. The post race refreshments included fresh peaches! Here's Mr. 90-year-old at the finish line where I returned to about an hour later. He looks great! The back of his shirt reads: I'm 90 and I just passed you!



Piedmont Park was designed by the Olmsted Brothers and I enjoyed wandering some of it. See that skyline? There are three separate skyline areas to Atlanta. Now we start walking the course in reverse starting with the Margaret Mitchell "Gone with the Wind" house. At the Atlanta History Center the day before we'd toured a special exhibit with her papers.



I talked to the owner of these wee doggies – he'd just acquired them at three months old. I sat in the next park awhile until the noise of the street cleaners pushed me out. Yes, there were still people on the course but I'm not sure this t-shirt that read: "Please let there be someone behind me" saved her any more than that I was there.



That's ME in a building's reflection, before finding the children's center with lots of bronze statues.



I find it amazing that clean up can be so thorough and quick. Porta potties were being vacuumed out and streets cleaned as I walked home. Porta potties were even being carted away. See the guy with the squirt gun? There were many of them on the course and this guy managed to catch me even though the streets were clean. It felt good. I was drenched anyway.



There really are a lot of churches. Most worthy of a picture. This is Judy's Temple – its one with a grave history of having been burned to the ground but then rebuilt. Atlanta has had a lot of disruption in its history. From Judy later: *More about the Temple on Peachtree -- The Temple did not burn to the ground. It was bombed during the Civil rights era, in 1958. My rabbi, Rabbi Jacob Rothschild, was liberal, outspoken and worked with MLK and others trying to make change come sooner. An outstanding book, a finalist for the National Book Award, "The Temple Bombing," by Melissa Fay Greene, can be "peeked into" so that you can read a sampling on Amazon.com. She is an accomplished writer with other impressive books as well. Thank you Judy. Travel should be educational and you certainly helped make this trip so. I learned more about Atlanta's background during this trip than I did during my 2008 trip.*



A little mini Fiat used as advertisement for a restaurant. That little old Fiat is going to be returned to the market and is coming to the U.S. Lots of lovely flowers along Peachtree Road. Did you know there are over 100 street names with Peachtree as part of the name? Maybe even more churches than Peachtree street names.

So now we've "made it to the top" and my second tour of the course has finished.



The top!

On my second hike up the hill I found the Atlanta Track Club tent and it was worth it. They gave out goodies and a full breakfast.



Fireworks at Lenox Square Mall

A big fireworks show in Atlanta is at Buckhead's Lenox Square Mall. Complete with a kid's zone and live music, this celebration has the largest fireworks show in the Southeast. The fun starts at noon, when the Kids Zone opens, and goes until 10 p.m. Musical entertainment begins at 6 p.m.

Unfortunately it was also Taste of Atlanta and just as they were setting up the monsoons hit. Then it cleared awhile and as I walked there at 8:45pm it was only sprinkling but it opened up with full and heavy rain very quickly and fireworks were held off until 10:00pm. I saw the end of them from my hotel window.







People found multiple ways to try to stay dry but probably only the couple in the porta-potty was successful.

Judy's Post-Peachtree report. I had a wonderful time yesterday. Jogged some and walked a lot...I didn't want to get hurt in what I consider a party/parade! Just before I got to my condo building I "met" 2 adorable costumed runners and asked them to be my friends and run with me as we approached my place. They were delightful and posed with me and my husband took pictures. I didn't get any food or freebies in Piedmont Park, but found 2 people near the High Museum promoting and giving out sample 4-pack cartons of cans of energy drinks made by the LIVESTRONG group, so I guess the organization named for Lance Armstrong is branching out. Proud that I had scored such a cool freebie, I planned to take it back to the condo and present it to Jonathan and Sophie...I saw so many participants toward the end of the race that I gave them all away! I decided that perhaps I was worthy of one can and drank some...it is not good, perhaps chilling it would help. I had hurried from Piedmont Park back up Peachtree Road hoping that I would see my sister-in-law Bonnie. She was one of the last few...honestly she looked so cute...I had told her that she "HAD TO POUR WATER DOWN THE FRONT & BACK OF HER T-SHIRT AT EVERY WATER STOP" or I was afraid she wouldn't make it. Since the most she had ever walked at one time was 4 miles (and that was during what should have been her tapering period) and she STARTED in the X Corral at 9:00, I was worried. When I saw her near the Temple, she was so wet that she looked like she had been thrown over Niagara Falls...her clothes were stuck to her and she was happily walking along with a big stick (tree branch) she had found, using it like a back scratcher. I said "you're funny with your back scratcher stick" and she said "oh I've done this the entire way." I'm so proud of her for her courage and good attitude. Fortunately, there were enough t-shirts left for her to get one. I walked the rest of the way back and met someone who had childhood traumas that we discussed and psychoanalyzed. Came back and started eating everything I could find which included Krispy Kreme doughnuts that I had purchased for Jonathan as well as other fattening things that I purchased for him for HIGH CALORIE cycling snacks. Showered, looked at the news and took a NAP right through the fireworks, BUT when I got up at 2 or 3 am searching for food, I saw fireworks set off in the area near your hotel.

It's not all about the run - tourist sites are important!



Touring the Swan House inside and out with Judy and new daughter-in-law Sophie. Judy later drove us around to the front of the house too.



The Atlanta History Center is highly rated and gave us a full afternoon of enjoyment. Well, except the reminder of what our country went through not all that long ago. My goodness how nicely life has changed! Later Judy would drive me through the estates and gorgeous homes of Atlanta.

The Jimmy Carter Presidential Library



I'm embarrassed to say that the Jimmy Carter Library was a big surprise to me. I had no realization that he and Rosalyn were doing such great deeds and were recipients of so many peace prizes. They have had much success and is a man to be admired.

Here is a unique portrait collage of Jimmy Carter that's comprised of historical and smaller pictures.





Along with the Carter Presidential Library was the Carter Center and on the grounds were lovely gardens with a Japanese influence. We walked the lake and worked up an appetite for the Varsity Diner.



On collecting presidential libraries: Some of you know that I've tried to see them all. And some of you who are 50-staters know I've often said "damn, do I have to go to lowa too?" Well, I only have one presidential library missing and guess what state it's in?

Varsity Diner



Varsity might be the largest and oldest diner in the country. They still have car hops. Judy dressed as one with her hat.

Happy Hour

Before venturing out for the Fourth of July fireworks, I would join Diane and Tommy for drinks at the Embassy Suites. The day before we'd done the same and consumed many leftovers from her 50th birthday party. Here's some cute little Bolt On personalized wine bottles for Diane Bolton.

Pre Peachtree included a pasta dinner and cookout at Eileen's parent's home on Windsor Parkway. Eileen had been Marie's roommate in Rio de Janeiro, Marie was staying there, and acquired this lovely invitation for us.

Bon Voyage

All in all, Atlanta was a quicky type trip for me but enough to know I'd like to return again. I had been there in March 2008 for the 2nd annual ING Georgia marathon and that was where I'd met "Aunt Loudean" who would later that year bring along little-Marie to Charlotte's Marathon.

ING Georgia (Hotlanta) Marathon March 28-31, 2008

Despite two tornadoes just two weeks prior, the organizers came through with flying colors. The night before the race they were challenged to move the finish line due to falling glass from the Omni. The attached CNN headquarters had been so badly damaged so much as to move the Expo the week before. It's doubtful the wheelchair participants are giving the organizers much kudos however as at least 12 of them suffered flats at the start and then careened out of control at mile 6 due to flats.

This was the 2nd year of this marathon and the weather couldn't have been more extreme. It went from hot and balmy in its inaugural year to cold and windy this year; from no support and no fluids last year to the wonderful cheering squads at every mile this year. We couldn't have faulted them anywhere this year.

Were there hills? I'd heard it was hilly but no amount of warning can get you ready for this course that not only has hills, but big hills, and one after the other. It was however an extremely interesting course and since time obviously can't matter much to me, I liked the variety of the hills a lot. Good thing.

Observations on the marathon:

- From a number of hotels, one can walk to the start.
- There is no congestion at the start though it could take a half hour to start due to corrals. Suggest going late and lining up at the back.
- Centennial Park, site of the Olympics and the start/finish line, is a smallish non-event location.
- The course was interesting from downtown high rises to parks to slums to huge estates.
- MARTA tickets purchased with entry are not sent in time for use from the airport.
- Expo was mid-sized. Contained a lot of non-profits.
- Swag included Publix and Saturn cinch back packs, some t-shirts, but limited food.
- Website, newsletters and follow up were all above average and excellent.
- Expo merchandise was above average. ING sponsorship helped. Mizuno produced the official clothing.
- Speakers were high caliber but they unfortunately hadn't advertised speaking times and there
 were times with no one in the audience.
- Parking for the Expo was \$10 but later found there was free parking around the corner.

Observations on Atlanta:

- Downtown Atlanta can look dark and dismal. Buckhead about 6 miles away is the main area but too far from race start and finish.
- Downtown Atlanta has some absolutely superb architectural wonders. Many require going inside to find.
- Buildings are connected by underground or overhead walkways and can continue on for blocks.
- Homeless abound but seem friendly and harmless though I felt spooked walking at dark.
- Tourist opportunities are limited unless a car is available. I hired a private driver and then took the preservation society's walking tour on Saturday.
- Underground Atlanta is iffy and a tour guide is suggested. There are tours just of the underground.
- CNN headquarters tour was not recommended.
- Coca Cola headquarters tour was both loved and hated.

- Aquarium is one of the largest in the world and recommended. Mr. Marcus of Home Depot gave it to Atlanta.
- Everyone was unusually friendly and helpful.
- MARTA is limited but clean, easy and cheap.

Race Statistics:

- 14,000 Total Entrants
- · 10,793 Total Starters it had rained until a half hour before the start and up to 6" of rain fell
- · 10,711 Total Finishers
- · 2,142 athletes finished the marathon (34% were female) Diana finished #606 female
- 8,569 athletes finished the half marathon (56% were female)
- · Age of youngest participant (half marathon): 8 years
- Age of oldest participant (half marathon): 85 years Diana finished 3AG in "60 and over" with 13 total.
- · U.S. states represented: 48, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico
- · Countries represented: 25
- Number of volunteers: more than 2,000
- Temperature at the start (7 a.m.): 44 F (overcast)
- Temperature at the finish (2 p.m.): 46 F (overcast with winds 10-20 mph)

Itinerary for 2014 Trip

Thu Dec 11

12:40pm Depart Newark EWR3:12pm Arrive Atlanta ATL

Hotel W Atlanta – Midtown for 5 nights

188 14th Street, NE, Atlanta, GA 30361 Tele: 404 892 6000 www.watlantamidtown.com

Fri Dec 12

3:30pm Loudean and Kandi arrive - Staying at Parker's home

6:00pm Dinner at Parker and Rich's home in Sandy Springs

Sat Dec 13

8:00am Start of Barb's 5K at nearby park, 179 11th Street NE, Atlanta 30309

Registered: Diana and Judy; no others known - Did not go

Sun Dec 14

8:00am Start of Jeff Galloway 13.1 at nearby park, 179 11th Street NE, Atlanta GA 30309

Registered: Diana, Judy, Jim, Loudean, Parker

Mon Dec 15

10:00am Fox Theatre Christmas tour – booked for Diana, Judy and Jim

Tue Dec 16

5:14pm Depart Atlanta ATL7:29pm Arrive Newark EWR

Things to do:

Go to Midtown hotels and click on your W at end of list. I like their map.

http://www.atlanta.net/50fun/midtown/

Staying in an area of Atlanta known as Midtown.

http://wikitravel.org/en/Atlanta/Midtown

Joe Gransden at Rtiz Buckhead Thursday night. See ritzy shopping center first.

http://www.joegransden.com/

www.atlanta.com

Great little map!

http://www.atlanta.net/explore/neighborhoods/

http://www.atlanta.net/explore/itineraries/

Robert Woodruff, past CEO of Coca Cola and major donator http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert W. Woodruff

Fox Theatre tour on Monday 12/15/14 at 10am

Little 5 Points might be fun. Odd shops & odd people.

High Museum and related Woodruff complex – is there a complex tour?

Margaret Mitchell House – 75th anniversary so might be crowded?

Oakland Cemetery - Sunday is 75th Margaret Mitchell anniversary and tours sold out

Hotel concierge will recommended guided tours

Coca Cola tour