



Boulder City “Running from an Angel Marathon” Trip Notes
January 7-11, 2011

This was my first marathon of the year and let me declare that if they all are so enjoyable I'll continue on as long as my legs allow. “Running from an Angel” is put on by Joyce of Calico Racing and as you read on you might think as I did – run anything that has Joyce in charge.

While this event met most of my marathon criteria it might also please those that fly in/fly out. And since my reports are generally “marathon first” I'll get on with why I'm overall pleased with my choice and why you might want to consider this marathon too. Then I'll move onto touring in Boulder City, Lake Mead, Hoover Dam and finally Las Vegas and The Famous Sin City Strip.



Lots of good stuff

- Inexpensive entry fee at \$75 though it goes up to \$90.
- Event includes a 50 mile run, half marathon, 10K and 5K so something for the family.
- The 50 miler keeps the course open for 11 hours.
- The giveaway t-shirt is the best I've ever encountered other than the one I purchased in Lake Placid. The design and quality are outstanding and there are NO advertisements on it! There were also a few samples in the goody bag.



- The hotel is Hacienda Casino just outside Boulder City NV and it was \$67 all in for two nights and it was quite decent. See (1) for hotel description.
- You can leave the hotel at 7:30am for an 8am start and do fine. If you don't park the half mile out like the parks suggest you can do better. I abided but many parked right at the start/finish line.
- Boulder City is a historically significant town full of walking tours, cute little shops, nice but simple restaurants, and a fantastic view of Lake Mead from the top of the hill.
- It is only 30 minutes simple and easy drive from the Las Vegas airport which is generally an inexpensive airport to use.
- It is an out and back course with huge cliff mountains on one side and Lake Mead on the other side. The elevation chart must be off the wall. The views are magnificent and on www.marathonguide.com some compare it to Big Sur. See (2) for Marathon Guide comments and (3) for course description.

- Out and backs are good for me because I like seeing the fast boys and I always see something new on my return. It also means there is no need to ride a bus. There were some costumes. And some friends.



- The run is all within Lake Mead National Recreation Area so there are nice facilities.
- Food on the course is amazing and almost as good as Lake Placid and in both cases because of these ultra athletes who need more food. PBJ sandwiches, cooked potatoes dipped in salt (for non-runners, this snack is a great replenishment), pretzels, oranges, bananas, Gu, etc.
- Fluid stations were plentiful again made easier by the out and back course. There were plenty of porta-potties and never a line. Can you imagine cold wet washcloths at the end?



- Though the course is all on asphalt, there's opportunity to run on the sand and gravel shoulder throughout most of the course which I did.
- Tourist opportunities abound and though I was here a year or two ago and return in June, I found much new to do. Plus old tourist sites I wanted to see again.
- The medal is cute as well as large and well-designed.



Views from the course



More of the course and yes that long curvy hilly road was ours



And finally! First picture is from the course and compliments of Kevin Brosi.



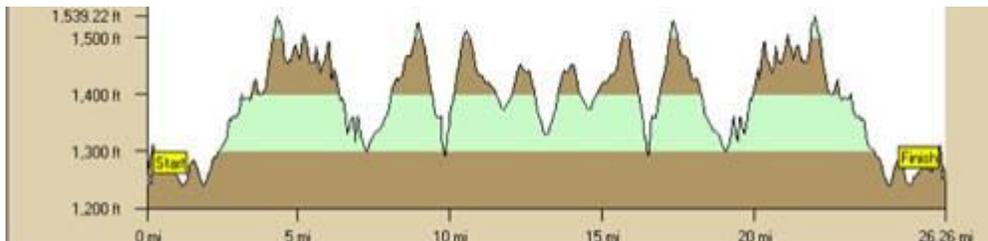
Why like this race director?

- Joyce answers emails and I can't say that about many race directors. And she answers promptly. I inquired if this marathon was suitable for a 6 to 6:30 marathoner and that I would understand if not.
- She is tireless. She was loading the tables onto the huge truck after the event.
- When served hot chili after the event and complimenting the worker standing over huge selections of food, he readily said that Joyce was responsible.
- She's apparently an ultra runner herself so she understands runner's needs.
- Smart to start the 50 miler at 6am, the marathon at 8am, and the half marathon later so there is no crowding like most runs.
- Smart to station a photographer and a recorder of bib numbers at each turn around. At least one runner missed, but who knows maybe that runner was just pacing.
- I'm going to look at doing her Red Rock Canyon marathon next year. If it weren't on top of my Big Bend NP hike I'd look at it this year – March 5. It might be the featured marathon in the current issue of *Marathon & Beyond*.

Problems and/or areas some may not like – which obviously did not take away from my overall favorable opinion of this marathon.

- The registration link on Active was missing when I tried, but reappeared later.
- There is next to nothing at the expo but a couple t-shirt vendors and a coach/trainer. Packet pick up is from 5-9pm on Friday night at the hotel and went easy.
- It being a National Recreation Area (NRA) a \$5 entry fee is charged unless you have a National Parks senior pass which fortunately I remembered to bring.
- A car is required as its 4-5 miles from the nearest hotel and a half hour drive from the Las Vegas airport.
- The medal does not show a year but that makes good business sense. Nor does the t-shirt show the year.
- Some runners don't like out and back.
- If you need spectators, this isn't for you. If there were a dozen, that was a lot.
- If you need company of other runners, this isn't for you. There were plenty of times I couldn't see a runner ahead nor one behind. Alone is the norm. There were 85 marathoners.
- Some runners don't like this extreme elevation change. For those who know the course of my Sunday runs, it was a series of very long Kick-Ass-Hills. The elevation chart must be off the wall. I read that there were plenty of 8% grades. I hadn't really noticed so I was grateful to have had a couple recent long runs on our local hills. Thank you Stephanie, Dana and Kathy!

- Cars are allowed on the course though there's a wide shoulder and an even wider trail to the side and not many cars. This is nothing like running on Tucson marathon's highway.
- I don't like "Heed" but fortunately I carry my own Gatorade.



Another view of this marathon

Here's a race report from Seth. Remember Seth? He's the super smart chemistry professor from Orlando. I met him at Capon Valley, later at Turkey Swamp, and then with Marv's 50-state finish in Outer Banks. Seth runs ultras practically every weekend. (And if you haven't heard it, he has a humorous story about running Disney with an IV tube.)

Glad to see you plan to attend Running from an Angle near Las Vegas. I did it in 2009. The un-named fellow wearing the Phillipians quote on his shirt that is mentioned in my report turned out later to be my Atlanta friend Steve Laine who has subsequently joined me for many other events. NV is where we first met.

The second leg of the flight from Orlando to Las Vegas via Denver on Friday finds me in the middle seat between two people who appear to be the only other runners on the crowded aircraft. On my left is a fit outdoorsy-looking woman who will be running the 50-mile event. The man my right appears to be roughly my age. He plans to run the marathon.

The Hertz folks in Las Vegas rent me a PT cruiser for the weekend. (I reserved it through Hotwire.com which I find offers the best deals. Sometimes one has to prepay but the savings is worth it. Check it out. The drive from LAS out to Boulder City where the host hotel and event are located is only about 22 miles but takes quite a while since the last 5 miles are a traffic jam of travel trailers and boats etc. on a two lane road toward the Hoover Dam. I hear later that there is a large road project underway at the dam and that has caused the daily backup. The locals are annoyed.



The Hacienda Hotel and Casino is the host hotel and the race director has arranged a great deal: two nights for the price of one. It's the closest lodging to the event. The sprawling casino takes up most of the ground floor and hosts the usual mix of seniors, jet-setters, drunks, glamour girls, and grim-faced losers. Smoking is clearly permitted and ashtrays are stationed at many of the slot machines and card tables. There are several eateries covering a wide price range. There is also a nice partially darkened theatre-like room off to one side where a 15-minute documentary film continuously loops around showing the construction of the nearby Hoover Dam.

While waiting for the expo to open I meet Sam in the lobby. He's from the Las Vegas area and is just coming back home after visiting friends in Arizona. The hotel charges for internet access but fortunately Sam graciously gives me his printed copies of the race instructions and schedule of events.

Packet pick-up is easy for this small event. There's not much expo really but there are some give-aways provided by the generous sponsors. I had to decline a quart bottle of fancy sport drink since I knew I couldn't take it home on the plane. At the expo I'm surprised to see Bettie Wailes from my neighborhood. Had I known she was coming here I'd have tried to coordinate transportation. I also am delighted to see Deb Cropper from Anchorage AK. We met last summer in Helena MT when we were there to run Governor's Cup Marathon. I knew from the 50-states club website that she was planning to be here and I attempted to e-mail a couple times in advance but the notes were always returned for some reason. (Her server thinks I'm spam?) Deb often dresses for the theme of these events and she explains she'll e dressing like an angel for the Marathon.

Bart Yasso, originator of the famous Yasso 800s and long time Runners World staffer is doing a book signing. I get in line to buy one and manage to get the absolute last one he has. Bart is a fun guy. His book is "My life on the Run" and it contains some nice stories. He does a short talk at the expo and we learn that he and his wife Laura will be running the marathon with us in the morning. Last year Laura ran the 50-miler and she gives those folks a few tips about the course.

Race morning is cool, breezy and nearly clear with only some high cirrus clouds filtering the sun at the time of the 8am start. I see Sam, Bettie, and Deb who is, as promised, dressed in a home-made angel costume complete with wings. You've got to love her attitude.

We're off and within a few minutes the small field spreads out according to ability and ambition. The course is that harsh kind of beautiful one often sees in the desert southwest. We get intermittent and sometimes sustained views of Lake Mead which seems incongruous with the beige and barren landscape. There are rolling hills over most of the course but none are enough to really be a problem. By mile 5 I can tell that wind may be a factor today. I pass and am passed by several runners during the first half. In most cases there is enough time for a short conversation. A couple guys who appear to be about my age are running well and are on the first day of a double and will do this again tomorrow in another state. A young man in his mid 20's passes me confidently explaining that he hopes to finish. This is his first marathon although he has some shorter triathlon experience. I pass and am re-overtaken several times by a fellow wearing a shirt with the Philippians quote "I can do all things..."

At about 1 mile before the turn-around of the out-and-back course I see Sam on his way back in. He appears to be at least my age and I'm impressed that he is running so well. A short while later I see my seat neighbor from the airplane and then Deb who is now the most windblown angel I've ever beheld. Her wings have blown askew and are now limp off to one side. Her flowing robe is tangled and bunched. She is running well ahead of me and appears on target to be the first place female finisher.

At the turn-around the strong headwind becomes and crosswind and then a tailwind. Remarkably the gusts are strong enough that at the turn a contact lens blows out of my right eye. Who knew that was even possible? It's disposable and near the end of its useful life anyhow so I don't put much effort into trying to rescue it. I saw the scenery on the way out so can get back a little more blind than usual without any real problem.

About a mile after the turn around I see Bart Yasso. I never thought I'd be in front of him! He's running even and obviously just enjoying the day. Remarkably he calls me by name as we pass.

I'm tiring by mile 18 but the cool clear day offsets the fatigue. This is the first time I've used my new Garmin GPS that Janice gave me for Christmas. It's working well and helps me keep track of the miles which is fortunate since most of the mile marker signs have blown away by now. I walk briefly several times especially at the aid stations while drinking and then on some uphill during the later miles. I'm running at the finish and am satisfied with a time of 4:23:59 which is about 30 minutes faster than my last one in Honolulu a few weeks ago. Deb won overall female.

A couple hours later I drive into Las Vegas and observe the remarkable spectacle of "the strip". Walking around most of the afternoon and evening keeps my legs loose. After my customary post-marathon steak dinner I go over to enjoy the Cirque du Soleil show "O" at the Bellagio. It's hypnotically beautiful and amazing.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYaLLX_bF7c and www.youtube.com/watch?v=BdF3zRl6-3o

Early Sunday morning after all-you-can-eat buffet breakfast I head over to Hoover Dam. Quite a marvel of engineering. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hoover_Dam

The trip and the marathon are both well worth the effort and expense. The race director for this marathon does an excellent job. I recommend her and her events confidently and enthusiastically.

A fellow marathoner, Frank Livaudais, whom I don't believe I have ever actually met but have seen at several events wearing his signature Texas Longhorns shirt, was the overall winner. His excellent account of the event is at his blog. <http://www.marathonme.com/index.php/2009/01/08/running-from-an-angel-marathon/> It's a good read. His perspective from the front is a quite different than mine. He also has some great photographs.

Was I in withdrawal?

I hadn't done a marathon since Honolulu on December 12 and during the time at home in between trips I felt so very lazy. The extreme snow on the East Coast gave me some exercise as did two Sunday runs, but still . . . Fortunately I have Ellen. Here are her words of wisdom that you might enjoy and/or need too:

Withdrawal has its benefits. It gives you a chance to let your body and brain catch up. Some days I find myself sitting quietly with a cup of tea, just watching the rain slide down the plant leaves outside my window, and I feel so happy just being. There's a different pace involved. I can get into a laid back pace that's so satisfying. I almost don't want to get back into my usual frenetic pace. Both paces are great (when I settle into them). But it's having the ability to experience

for either pace that gives life its zest. The contemplation of the minute or the universal are exercises that produce delight – and learning. The tourist pace brings excitement, but it needs to be thought about and culled for cross-filing opportunities to help me understand this matrix we refer to as life and the history of life. I can get caught up in one pace and don't want to leave it, but when I find myself in the other pace, I do the same – get caught up in it and resent being forced (by me) to get back in to the faster pace. This is not a complaint. It's just an acknowledgement of something I hadn't thought of before. Enjoy your down time. You're in a very beautiful place – where you live!!!

My results- and of course my list of excuses



A 6:18 has nothing to do with being old, does it? I was 2nd in 60-69 age group with a 60 year old taking first place at somewhere in the 5:40 range. 6:15 range is the new 5:45: it was only last year that I had a number of 5:45s to start the year. I haven't done those times since Athens.

While it was lovely scenery that I totally and full enjoyed, the steep and continuous grades would have been torturous were it not for the super views. Some of the hills were easily what I train on and call Kick-Ass-Hill but these were continuous and many of them I could only crawl up.

I swore that we only went UP the first six miles but darned if I noticed the DOWN for the final six (smile).

The entire course is on asphalt but the majority has sand, gravel and low shrub to the side so I was able to save the legs and feet by making this primarily a trail run. I continue with a worrisome hip compounded by a worrisome calf and heel so there's no way I'm going to run down a hill on asphalt if I can choose a soft surface. And many of you know how I love down-hills and speed is easier on asphalt. However, the "trail" surface meant picking out stones from my running shoes and hindsight suggests I would have been better served with trail shoes that don't pick up rocks. I also could have used gaiters to keep the stickers from my socks and shoes, but the stopping to pick them out was probably good for me.

It was easy to get glued to my camera for the views and even easier the last few miles as an excuse to go slower. I was on schedule for a 6 hour finish until around mile 21. I also took extra pictures showing the housing areas and boat docks that are totally dry now whereas they had water frontage in the recent past. Lake Mead looks like the Lake Powell sad low water levels.

Dehydration in the desert is a very real concern. I'm a big drinker but I couldn't keep up. I think the desert just soaked up the liquid from my body.

I haven't decided if I'm taking longer to recover or if age-related laziness is taking hold. No matter, I am pleased and grateful to be doing well enough and recovering sufficient to not be backing down stairs like I saw at Hoover Dam the next day. Or as I respond when someone yells "You're doing good" is "Doing – even just doing -- is good." Yes, I sometimes talk to myself about life when I can't run any longer and I think it will be okay and I'll sure have some good memories for my rocking chair days.

Speaking of good race directors

From David: Great line from a note from the Maui Oceanfront Marathon (I did it last year, not doing it this year!) -- *"To change events at registration bring a cold six pack of Corona with a lime to number pickup."* If you ever want to do a race in Hawaii, this is a good one. I saw about 30 whales during the marathon, from mile 12 to 22. But it is tough with the heat and humidity.

From Joyce, this RD: *"Bandits will be shot and left to dehydrate. NO BIB, NO AID! Bandits steal from the paying participants-- not only in the form of aid stations, but unnecessarily crowding the roadway*

at the same time of the event, jeopardizing the permit, confusing the volunteers and timers, and soaking up the atmosphere of the race that I have so laboriously worked to provide. Please respect me, the other runners, and the sport: If you did not pay for the race, please do not run at the same time as the course!!!!"

It must be hard to be such a good Race Director and still keep a sense of humor.

Plans

This was my 73rd marathon finish, following a year where I managed 24 marathons in a 12 month period. I don't plan to do anything like that again in 2011. I have booked other vacations, five major hikes and five international marathons so there simply wouldn't be enough time to do another 24 in 2011 even if my legs cooperated. I qualified for Marathon Maniac 8-star level so not joining didn't keep me calmed down at all. I still try to resist doing marathons just for the sake of a star or a state but I haven't been totally true to myself. I worry about some runners whose quests have seemed sometimes to the expense of the rest of their life. As Yolanda said when she finished her 106 marathons in 2010 to qualify for the Guinness Book of World Records: "I am joining an AA of Maniacs."

Next up is Charleston SC marathon which is just one week after Boulder City's marathon. Tom will go with me to Charleston and we'll have a week before coming home. I'll have a couple days then to prepare for a 9-day Houston-area trip which will include a marathon. Houston will be the third marathon of January. It is looking doubtful that I can complete the Houston Marathon in the required 6-hours but I knew that possibility existed when I signed up and it's okay. It's not like my wall needs another medal.

February takes me to Maui for a six-day hike and a few days as a regular tourist on either side. I'm only home a couple days before departing to Houston (again) for a couple-hour-drive to the Surfside Beach Texas Marathon. The following day I fly to Midland and meet up with another hiking tour for 8-9 days through Big Bend National Park, Guadalupe National Park (both in Texas) and Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico.

In order to run the Rome Marathon I leave less than a week later for two weeks to Italy, first for touring Rome, then the marathon followed by meeting Tom in Orvieto where he rented a place for another week. That uses up March.

Can I handle the Knoxville marathon on April 3rd? We'll see but it's barely done in time for me to fly off to London for that marathon. How lucky to already have accommodations just before the Royal Wedding? I'd guess it would be next to impossible now. The end of April will take me to Gettysburg for a 150th anniversary run in a humorous sounding marathon called the North-South. It's an inaugural and who knows if this race director is up to handling the necessary double course but it's got an old historical hotel and a tourist area I'd like to see. Well, even if it only gives me two days home between Gettysburg and Capon Valley's 50K the first weekend of May. I'll have a week the end of May in Michigan going from Grand Rapids tourist sites up to Traverse City for the marathon.

Anniversary Events

Bay to Breakers is that naughty 13K run in San Francisco where clothing is not only optional but rare and it should be the Woodstock of runs with a maximum of 50,000 runners allowed for this 100th anniversary. I liked being a part of Athens Greece 2500th anniversary marathon. Next I'll take part in Gettysburg 150th anniversary, followed by San Francisco's 100th. Does this put our country into perspective time-wise?

Five Hikes

From the February Maui hike to the follow-on Big Bend NP/Guadalupe/Carlsbad hike, I'm trying to set the tone of cross training and not so much focus on marathons. Bryce and Zion hike is booked for June and all of Loudean, her friend Christy, my running friends Sofia and Marty, Kathy D and hopefully Dave will go on that one out of Las Vegas. July brings Glacier NP followed on with Mt Rainier in August.

Five International Marathons completing the Five Majors

The year starts with Rome which I'm doing on my own and could hardly believe the mess and paper work to get registered which included the need for a physical exam. London is in April with Marathon Tours, Medoc France on my own in September with Tom having found us a small chateau room near to the start just before we take a house near Sarlot France for a week. We move to Nice France for another week after which I'll probably join Marathon Tours a day late in Berlin for that marathon and some touring. Dublin is on the list to include Galway and that will likely be with Marathon Tours too.

If I get both London and Berlin done, I'll have experienced the Five Majors that are used for Olympic qualification: NYC, Boston, Chicago, London and Berlin. I thought I'd better try to do them while I can.

Tourist

I don't go to a marathon just for the marathon as evidenced by my refusal to finish four states out of the 50, which has an additional story that I might add later thanks to Dave and Dana. This marathon met my criteria with the historically significant town of Boulder City, the newly opened Hoover Dam Bridge, and a newly completed City Place on the Las Vegas Strip.

Yes, everyone has heard of Las Vegas which makes them conger up images of "The Strip" with bright neon lights, casinos, gambling, wild nightlife, drunken fools, and general gluttony, i.e., Sin City. (All of which I love about Vegas, plus more!) But did you also know (info compliments of the race director):

- Las Vegas lies within the country's fourth largest desert, the Mohave Desert. Home of numerous indigenous plants and animals. The desert abounds with color from the surrounding red rocks, to the burst of color on a flowering cactus, to the crystal blue waters of Lake Mead.
- Lake Mead is the country's largest man-made lake covering more than 150 square miles.
- Hoover Dam, one of the engineering marvels of the world, is just minutes from the start/finish area.
- Henderson, a satellite city to Las Vegas, has been among the country's fastest growing cities for roughly a decade.
- Boulder City, once a community planned for the workers on the building of the Hoover Dam back in the 1930s, today is a city listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and home to 14,000 residents. Boulder City is the only town in Nevada that does not allow gambling.





The new Hoover Dam Bridge – info from a Civil-Engineering blog

"[This is] . . . America's newest wonder. It stands like a sentinel, watching in the wind over one of America's most treasured landmarks, the Hoover Dam, headlined January 2011. When the Mike O'Callaghan-Pat Tillman Memorial Bridge opens to traffic later this week, it is expected to become an instant tourist attraction while providing a quicker, safer drive between Phoenix and Las Vegas.

The Hoover Dam bypass bridge is a study in superlatives:

- *The highest and longest arched concrete bridge in the Western Hemisphere.*
- *The second-highest bridge of any kind in the United States and 14th in the world.*
- *The world's tallest concrete columns of their kind.*

But what sets the bridge apart most of all is the setting. It is perched 890 feet above the turquoise Colorado River, wedged between rock cliffs that form Black Canyon, with commanding views of Hoover Dam and Lake Mead. The four-lane bridge near Boulder City, Nev., was dedicated just two weeks after the 75th anniversary of the dam's opening ceremony. It's a bridge whose future seemed always to be in doubt. The first study recommending a bypass was written in 1968, and over the years, 27 more studies followed. Yet it wasn't until March 2001 that the Federal Highway Administration approved the plan. Full funding would materialize only after Arizona, Nevada and various federal agencies agreed to split the cost. The deal hinged on the states lending part of the money, knowing complete funding was years off. The terrorist attacks in September of that year quickly made it clear that Hoover Dam wasn't just a traffic bottleneck and safety hazard but also a target. Commercial traffic was immediately banned from U.S. 93 across Hoover Dam, forcing a 75-mile detour. The urgency to build the bridge accelerated.

Views from cars crossing the dam will be partly obscured by a barrier. But pedestrians are allowed to cross on the upstream side. From there, they can look straight down through the railing at the rocks and river far below. They also get a new perspective on the dam. Studies from 2001 showed a motorist will save an average of 17 minutes when crossing from one side of the canyon to the other. On busy holiday weekends, the time savings could be more because the bridge eliminates tourist travel congestion and security checkpoints that have caused two-hour delays at the dam.

As the bridge rose, the 1,200 workers and 300 engineers on the project found inspiration a quarter-mile upstream. "If any one of us had a day when we felt tired or rundown or in doubt, working in the shadow of that dam really helped," project manager Dave Zanetell said. "Hoover Dam was the greatest engineering accomplishment in our nation's history," he said. "We had an opportunity to be as great for our generation.

Boulder City

This quaint little town was built in 1931 to house the builders of Hoover Dam as well as designed to be a model of the brighter future Americans could hope for under President Hoover. They immediately set the law with an anti-gaming ordinance that is still in effect today. The town's planning remains intact and thus it's listed on the historical records as being unusually well preserved. There's a few smallish museums, a nice Chamber of Commerce with a walking tour, quite a few restaurants and a railroad and train ride. One of my highlights was visiting the publicly-owned museum of the Boulder Dam Hotel. It was built at the same time as the town to host visiting government officials and dignitaries during the construction of the dam. Yes, you can stay there for a decent price and the rooms look quaintly special. It's run as a non-profit. Past visitors include Bette Davis, Shirley Temple, Howard Hughes, George Pepperdine, Archduke Otto Hapsburg and Cardinal Pacelli, who later became Pope Pius XII. The hotel is on the National Register of Historic Places.



The Boulder Dam Hotel, inside the lobby, and some of the little diners on main street.



The main street of Nevada Way (here crossing Arizona!) is lined with sculpture in front of cute little shops.

Las Vegas and the New City Center – An Adult Disneyland!

Some of you old timers who appreciated the quality of Bellagio might be disappointed in the new City Center. It's youthful, extravagant, but not in an elegant way. In my view, though it's fun and worthy of a look, it's primarily far too cutesy if not somewhat silly. Here's a copyright link to some good pictures of the New City Center: http://westvegas.com/city_center_photo_guide.html

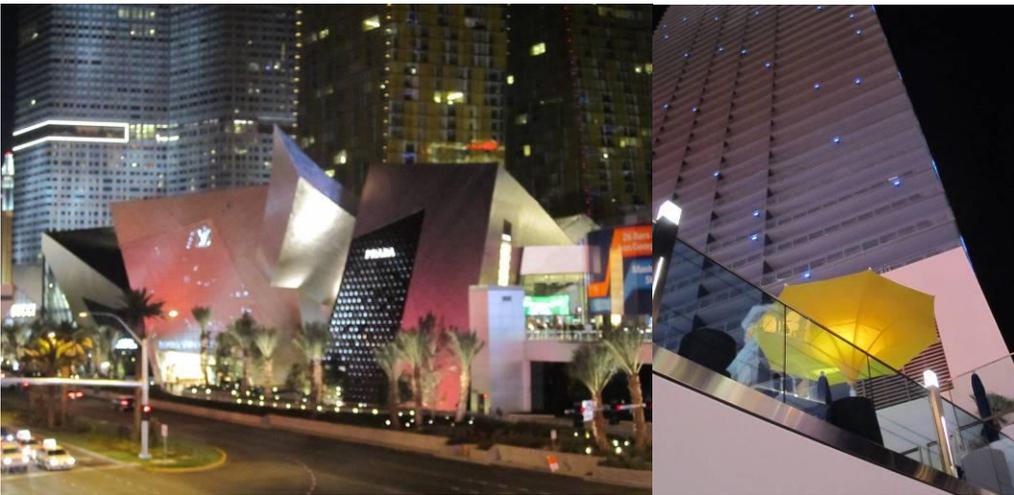
Yes, the little Jockey Club still survives and it's buried back behind and in the middle of this complex. I guess they refused to sell out. I'm not sure which deserved to survive but apparently Jockey Club is doing better than City Center. I saw a headline that it was "financially hemorrhaging" and that MGM was considering imploding their huge building that does nothing currently but serve as an Elvis billboard and was the result of a couple million dollar write off so far.



Pictures obviously off the web as there's no way to capture all of City Center other than from the sky

I won't go into the tourist stuff that has already been covered by our numerous past trips. Within the last couple years I've been in Vegas on my own and Tom and I had our own trip – all of which is the subject of trip reports and photo shows. As I watched the fountain show at the Bellagio I was reminded how different our trips are: with Tom we stayed in Bellagio's Presidential Penthouse Suite high up in the tower facing The Strip. We had a perfect view down to the fountains and we turned on a special TV channel to hear the music accompanying the fountain play. This time, like when I am in Vegas with a hiking group, I'm a mile away at La Quinta Inn.

Here are some of my pictures of the New City Center at night.



Thank you Tom for encouraging me to get out and walk the first night. My body was tired and I was ready for a nap and Tom said "how can you not walk The Strip?" so walk I did for 3 ½ hours and got rejuvenated and took these pictures.

Then the next the day – I had to go back!



If the buildings on the right look off center and angled – they are!



One walks along many levels, street or above. On the right all those wall of fountains cover 180 degrees and the water flow is varied in sound and pressure.



Does the sculpture look like a bunch of colored canoes? They are!



A lot of money was spent but never the feel of conservative elegance, only glitz.

Now let's go inside some of these extravaganzas. You might wonder why some exist? I did.



Silver sculptures that didn't mean anything to me but were striking. That's me with the Bust of Elvis. This red restaurant and night club had a wall made up of very thick rich glass panels bolted and overlapping.



Marble and marble designs, and skylights helped the sometimes black marble interiors brighten.



I believe all these three pictures were inside Aria. I also spent time in Crystals, Cosmopolitan, Mandarin Oriental and the lesser hotel on the backside didn't hold my attention so I forgot its name.



The interior of the Mandarin Oriental was the most classy with simple elegance. The lobby is on the 23rd floor. Outside were parked a Ferraris, Maseratis and a Jaguar. Appropriate.



Maybe these pictures from the Crystal Hotel shouldn't be on the same page. You'll see more of these dining pods. Maybe folks need cocoons now days?



All those hanging bulbs aren't for Christmas – they are permanent. Well, as permanent as City Center is.



This is a dining pod. Honest.



The casino area of Crystals Hotel or another hotel? I got confused as they were all interconnected too. There were at least three levels engulfed in this crystal drapery. Then there's a child's play area with mini gambling and a billiard table which will help to train them to like Vegas early on!

Mon Ami Gabi

So I revert to this restaurant old standby. It is in the Paris Hotel and has been a favorite of ours for many past trips and I've probably eaten at Mon Ami Gabi for every Vegas trip. Coincidentally I later found out it was a small chain when I enjoyed a similar restaurant in Chicago. It is generally hard to get in but this time the main difficulty was getting them to give a single person a table that wasn't in the back. I prevailed. I enjoyed. As always.



Inside Mon Ami Gabi

Why like Las Vegas?

Some friends have said they dislike Vegas. Some have asked whatever is it that I like in Vegas? It's hard to define but zillions of others do too. There are areas of absolute elegance and it's a lesson in architectural extravagance. We've stayed in the smallish places and we've stayed at the Wynn. (In fact we stayed at the Wynn the month it opened and Steve Wynn was the speaker at a dinner I attended there.) We've enjoyed some of the best restaurants in the world as evidenced by the most famous chefs joining the extravagance. There is something for everyone and I can walk that Strip for hours, popping in and out of hotels and people watching all the time. The types of people who go to Vegas are as varied as the hotels, restaurants and architecture. It's a cross section of the world. It's a Fifth Avenue or Worth Avenue duplicated every other block with the finest names in the world selling here. It's alive, fun, and a walker's paradise. It's convenient and easy to be entertained. You can go cheap or you can go expensive. And if you get tired of the city, go to the close by hills for fabulous hiking and views.

In the late 60s and early 70s we used to go every time the plane flew westerly. There wasn't much of a Strip then and downtown ruled. Those trips ceased during a few years out of the country but then started up again, first with cheap trips and later with some gloriously pricey ones. I've been there for business when my company sponsored an Indy car and also for many conventions that were business related. I've hosted analysts to builder's shows and presented at investor seminars. I've hiked out of the immediate area and used Las Vegas as a drop off point for trips to the Grand Canyon, Bryce and Zion and later to Death Valley. I'm going again in June for one of these hikes and will hopefully get to stay a few days again. Every trip is an experience to see still more striking, and always fun, changes in the city.

Some characters of the town



And some fashion?



A wild shop in Aria with jewelry that only Las Vegas could sell: a ring that's a diamond and ruby hypodermic needle; a watch with diamond crystals that float inside the glass; a ring that's a finger long gun. Plenty of gals who either don't have a mirror at home or intended to look like streetwalkers.

Finally a classic!

There could be some logic to thinking of Las Vegas as classic American. We shop, we spend, and we like to be entertained. We and the rest of the world have loved and enjoyed Las Vegas enough to allow it to be built in a striking little amount of time from next to nothing to its wild extravagance of today.

Aren't we lucky!



Itinerary

Note: Depart to Charleston SC on Thurs Jan 13th

Fri Jan 7

7:00am Depart Newark EWR via CO#768 (meals for purchase only)

9:42am Arrive Las Vegas LAS

Rental car Thrifty – see file - drive approx 30 minutes from Las Vegas airport

Directions from Las Vegas Area: 215 East, which becomes Lake Mead Drive. Take the 515/ 93/ 95 exit SOUTH toward Boulder City. Once you start to enter the town of Boulder City you will come to a traffic light, take a LEFT onto Hwy 93, which is the truck/ direct route toward Lake Mead and Hoover Dam. Drive down the hill about 4 miles. PASS the sign that directs you left down into Lake Mead and toward beaches. Just beyond this is the Hacienda Hotel and Casino on your left.

From "The Strip": I-15 South to 215 East. Follow directions above.

5-9pm Expo - Packet pick up at the host hotel, The Hacienda Hotel and Casino in Boulder City, located on U.S. Highway 93 about 3-4 miles before Hoover Dam on the Nevada side. Packet pick up will be in the banquet room downstairs, just off to the left when entering thru the main entrance.

Hotel Hacienda Hotel and Casino (1) - Between Boulder City & Hoover Dam
Highway 93, Boulder City, Nevada 89005 - (702) 293-5000
Tele 800 245 6380 <http://www.haciendaonline.com/>
2 queens - \$67.14 total covers 2 nights

Sat Jan 8

8:00am Start of Marathon - Running from an Angel Marathon – course closes at 7pm

Starts for 50-miler is 5am, Half Marathon at 8:30am; then 5K and 10K

Directions to Start area: From Las Vegas Area: 215 East, which becomes Lake Mead Drive. Take the 515/ 93/ 95 exit SOUTH toward Boulder City. Once you start to enter the town of Boulder City you will come to a traffic light, take a LEFT, which is the truck/ direct route toward Lake Mead and Hoover Dam. Drive down the hill about 4 miles. Go LEFT into the Lake Mead area toward the Visitors' Center. Go thru the toll plaza (\$5 or National Parks Annual Pass). Through the toll plaza straight about 2 miles. Turn RIGHT at Boulder Beach; Special Events Beach.

Description: In Lake Mead NRA about 30 minutes from Las Vegas strip, in sight of Hoover Dam; 8 hour cut off; heavy elevations – some say with magnificent views like Big Sur. (2)

Race description at (3) - www.calicoracing.com – known for good shirts

2010: 69 marathoners only; add in other events

Sun Jan 9

AM Drive to Las Vegas – need directions

Hotel La Quinta Inn – on points
3970 Paradise Road, Las Vegas, NV 89109 Tele 702 796 9000

Directions:

US-93 N/US-95 N for 3.2 mi; Onto I-515 N for 12.1 mi; Exit 69 for Flamingo Rd for 0.4 mi; Left at E Flamingo Rd for 4.1 mi; Right at Paradise Rd for 0.1 mi; Destination on the right

Tue Jan 11

8:10am Depart Las Vegas via CO#769

3:59pm Arrive Newark

Note: one day home pre departing for Charleston SC with Tom and another marathon.

(1) **Hacienda Hotel & Casino**. We offer a spectacular panoramic view of Lake Mead and we're just minutes from scenic Hoover Dam. Just a short drive from Las Vegas, yet a world apart from the traffic and congestion of the big city. The Hacienda's full service casino offers the excitement of live table games and a variety of popular state-of-the-art slots, video poker and electronic Keno machines. Visit our sports book to place a wager on your favorite team. Swimming, fishing, boating and water skiing are just minutes away on beautiful Lake Mead. Explore historical Boulder City, go biking, or play a round of golf at either of Boulder City's two outstanding golf courses. Enjoy a romantic dinner at the Hacienda Steak house and catch a movie in our first run movie theater. Something for everyone, the Hacienda has it all. Let our friendly staff make it your best vacation ever.

(2) **www.Marathonguide.com**

Average Ratings: Course - ★★★★★ Organization - ★★★★★ Fans - ★★★☆☆

★★★★★ **Excellent race!!!** (about: 2010)

Course: 4 Organization: 5 Fans: 4

S. T. from Massachusetts, USA (1/16/10)

2 previous marathons | 1 Running from an Angel Marathon

My husband and I ran the half marathon. It was the hilliest course we've run and we loved it!! Great challenge; great volunteers!!! Perfectly organized with lots of water/HEED stops. I can't wait to do it again!!! And great technical t-shirt and medal too.

★★★★☆ **Great race** (about: 2010)

Course: 4 Organization: 5 Fans: 1

L. J. from Maine (1/16/10)

11-50 previous marathons | 1 Running from an Angel Marathon

This was a small but well organized race. The host hotel was super close to the start and the marathon went off without a hitch. I actually did better than I had expected given the hills and the difference in weather (which was perfect) from Maine. The aid stations were frequent and well stocked, and the course was beautiful. Very friendly runners as well. My hat is off to the 50-miler who passed me at around my mile 20 (44-ish for him) looking like he was out for a 3-mile Saturday run. Good medal and shirt.

★★★★★ **A great way to start the year** (about: 2010)

Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 3

J. V. from Ventura, CA (1/11/10)

50+ previous marathons | 1 Running from an Angel Marathon

This year the weather was perfect. Although located close to Vegas, it is in the recreational area of beautiful Lake Mead and Hoover Dam. There are a few hills, but for me, this helps break the run up. The views are magnificent.

The t-shirt and medal were outstanding. Joyce, the RD of Calico, makes every runner feel special and has to be the hardest working RD around - not only a great RD, but also a great runner, participating in many marathons and ultras herself. This is reflected in her positive attitude and her volunteers.

This was my third Calico event and the experience is always the same... unique, excellent and "as advertised."

★★★★☆ **Great** (about: 2009)

Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 1

B. S. from Baltimore (2/21/09)

50+ previous marathons | 1 Running from an Angel Marathon

A great course celebrating desert vistas of the lake. I note that some complained about the wind. It frankly was much better than forecast - and sometimes in your face and sometimes on your back. The race director is superb and really into running. We are grateful that she allowed us an early start on the marathon so we could have time to shower before our flight. I'm looking forward to running with Calico Running again! PS. In the categories of marathons run, why not up it? This was my 103rd and there was a person there running her 100th.

★★★★☆ **Great desert run** (about: 2009)

Course: 4 Organization: 4 Fans: 2

w. m. from USA (1/15/09)

50+ previous marathons | 1 Running from an Angel Marathon

Overall I liked this race. You can tell the race director has a true love of the sport and for runners to go through the trouble of staging a 5K, 10K, half and full marathon, and 50-miler all on the same day.

I didn't have a particularly good run because I am dealing with knee issues, so I was slower than I wanted to be, but that is no one's fault but mine. I really liked the course. It was a small race, and since I was running so slowly, I was all alone for about 98% of time. But there was beautiful scenery to look at and take pictures of while I was talking and singing to myself! Yeah, it was very windy, but that is not the race director's fault. It was also hilly, but nothing bone crunching. I think it was a nice rolling course with some good downhill too. There was plenty of water and sports drink on the course, and porta-potties about every 4 or 5 miles. Since it was such a small race, at least there was no waiting in line at the potties!

My only complaints are about the shirt and medal. Neither distinguish which race you ran (they're not dated either), so the 5K runners got the same medal and shirt as the 50-mile runners. That wouldn't be so bad if the shirt and medal you received had only the race you ran on it. And this year someone finished that had a bunch of kids with him at the finish line. These kids swarmed the food table and they were allowed to eat what they wanted, so when my husband finished the 50-miler, there wasn't much food left. The finish line stuff should be for runners only - not family and friends too.

I would recommend this race. It's not far from Las Vegas, so it's a fun long weekend in Sin City! But be prepared to run alone if you don't go with a friend who runs at your pace.

★★★★☆ **Tough Course in a Good Location** (about: 2009)

Course: 4 Organization: 5 Fans: 1

R. H. from Midwest, USA (1/10/09)

11-50 previous marathons | 1 Running from an Angel Marathon

I would recommend this marathon, as it is run on a good, challenging course away from the city in a recreation area. We ran on an asphalt road along Lake Mead and started just a few miles from the Hoover Dam. This course was very challenging, as there were several hills that definitely got our attention, but none were unreasonably tough. Others have commented on the wind, as we definitely had to battle the wind for much of the first half. With the hills and certain wind, this is not an easy qualifier for the Boston Marathon.

I would without hesitation recommend staying at the host hotel, the Hacienda Hotel, which is between Boulder City and the Hoover Dam. This was a nice place to stay, with good food, and it's only about three miles from the start and finish lines. And, the race director arranged an unbelievable rate of \$60 total for a two-day stay, which makes it convenient to take a shower after the marathon even if you don't plan to stay that evening.

There were about as few spectators as any race could have, which didn't bother me one bit, but be aware of it if this is important to you.

Lastly, I should mention that the long-sleeved tech shirt is heavier than many other tech shirts, so it's great to wear in cooler weather. Good job with the shirt!

★★★★☆ **tough cookies....** (about: 2009)

Course: 2 Organization: 3 Fans: 3

j. c. from Michigan (1/5/09)

4-5 previous marathons | 1 Running from an Angel Marathon

Beautiful scenery... just gorgeous. But this race was pretty extreme in its own right; combine the hills with the extreme wind, and you've got a tough atmosphere. I looked online and found wind gusts of 20 mph for that day. This course was a man-eater. It was fun, but I thought you better know that you're signing up to really test yourself with this one. It was rewarding to complete, though, and had some just gorgeous views!! It didn't have a large number of racers, which was nice, and the other racers and volunteers were a friendly group.

I would have preferred a tech running shirt rather than just a regular t-shirt.

★★★★★ **GREAT Marathon!!** (about: 2009)

Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 5

C. W. from Phoenix, AZ (1/4/09)

11-50 previous marathons | 1 Running from an Angel Marathon

Three cheers for the awesome race director and the equally awesome volunteers! It was hillier than I expected, and the wind nearly knocked me off my feet a few times, but that just adds to the fun. The volunteers were amazing, and even though there were just one or two spectators who kept leap-frogging me in a vehicle and cheering for their loved ones, they cheered for the rest of us, too. Who needs spectators when you have great volunteers and fully stocked aid stations? The awards were beautiful slate hand painted plaques in the shape of Nevada. The food at the finish line was the best I have ever seen for a race. Three cheers for Calico Racing! (If you are doing 50 states and need a marathon in Nevada, make this the one.)

★★★★☆ **Impeccable organization** (about: 2008)

Course: 4 Organization: 5 Fans: 1

Eddie Hahn from Rancho Cucamonga, CA (1/11/08)

50+ previous marathons | 1 Running from an Angel Marathon

I think comparing the course to Big Sur is going a little over the top (I have run both events and disagree with that assessment).

Nonetheless, I do agree that it is moderately scenic - though the appearance of the color of the water of Lake Meade was grayer than the deep blue's of the lake in the summer. (I ran the Runnin' with the Devil Marathon in June.)

Support was exponentially greater than the Devil Run; checks every mile and a half rather than three miles. (I joked with volunteers, some who had supported both, that it was probably easier to recruit for an event that was 65 degrees cooler....)

The gray overcast skies kept conditions near perfect, but we paid for the storm passing through with extremely fierce headwinds that compounded climbing the hills on the rolling, paved course.

The full service aid stations were impressively stocked with gummy bears, bananas, animal crackers, etc., and were situated a mere three miles apart. (The others, every mile and a half, had water and sports drink.)

The race's long-sleeved, cotton, logo'd shirt is themed appropriately and has no advertising. The finisher's medal is also themed and quaint, but doesn't distinguish the distance run (listing all events held from the 5K through the 50-miler - and it does not list the date).

The finish line included pasta and ingredients for "s'mores" and more.

The race director does an excellent job and is very thorough to include pre-race and follow up e-mails.

I would highly recommend the event to any marathoner from a first-timer to a one-hundred-timer....

★★★★★ **A must-do for hard-core marathoners** (about: 2008)

Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 4

J. H. from Dillsburg, Pennsylvania (1/9/08)

50+ previous marathons | 1 Running from an Angel Marathon

Awesome race director and volunteers! This course is not for the faint of heart but the spectacular scenery will rival those of Big Sur and others. Very spiritual event in the desert! No fans, but there shouldn't be on a course like this. The volunteers and aid stations were first-class!

(3) **Course description**

Run amid the stunning scenery and vegetation of Lake Mead N.R.A the winter desert will treat runners to a magical experience. Blue skies and perfect temperatures will enchant you as you traverse continual rolling terrain alongside the azure blue waters of Lake Mead.

The sister event to Running with the Devil, the Running from an Angel races are the exact same courses as the Devil series. Together, these sister events are designed to offer athletes an opportunity to see exactly the difference in time running in the heat causes (all things held constant- I

am not responsible for holiday pigging out!) Running with the Devil races in the middle of the summer, in the middle of the day to fully get the effect of running in extreme heat. Conversely, Running from an Angel runs in the winter in much milder, even cold temperatures. Many studies have been done to determine the exact effects of heat training. Run the double and find out for yourself, or run either one on its own.

The Running from an Angel Marathon, 1/2, 10K, 5K, and 50-mile ultra is run completely inside the Lake Mead National Recreation Area. Contrary to the Running with the Devil races which challenge athletes to contend with extreme Mohave Desert heat in the middle of summer, in the middle of the day with average temperatures reaching up to 110 degrees with low humidity and little cloud cover, the Running with an Angel races enjoy perfect winter desert temperatures. The course covers continual rolling terrain overlooking the crystal blue waters of Lake Mead.

The course is an out and back on the very scenic Lakeshore and Northshore Drives, and is run completely on pavement. Aid stations will be well stocked along the course.

All races start and finish at the Boulder Beach Special Events Beach, which has ample parking. The course is continual rolling hills with some long (about a mile) gradual ascents and descents ranging from 1-8% in grade. Some shorter rollers may be a bit steeper. See the race specific mileage descriptions below.

** Lake Mead National Recreation Area is a "fee" area. Vehicles entering the park are subject to a \$5 entry fee or display of a National Parks Annual Pass (ID must match the Pass!). This entry fee is not included in the race entry fee. Carpool to save money.

*** Since the park is federal lands for the public, the roads must remain open. Signs will be posted warning motorists that runners are on the road, but you must stay on the lakeside shoulder of the road at all times. Please request that your spectators keep their driving along course to a minimum for the benefit and safety of all runners.

CERTIFIED MARATHON MAP AND PROFILE- total ascent 2839/ net zero

MARATHON COURSE ** 8am START TIME: USATF Certificate # NV08008DCR

Departing the Boulder Beach start line there is a gradual climb of about a 1/4 mile until you turn right onto Lakeshore Drive. The next 3.5 miles are a series of rollers and flat-ish sections. Then a series of 1 mile long stretches of downhill, uphill, downhill respectively taking you to the 1/2 marathon course turn around- keep going straight! You'll continue with another 1 mile downhill. Then miles 7.7 to mile 10 are a series of rollers with a slight net gain. At mile 10 take a right onto Northshore Drive. A 1 mile downhill precedes a series of rollers which lead you to your course turn around. Heading back you'll cover rollers for about 2 miles, climb 1 mile back to Lakeshore Drive (you are now at mile 16.2) Roughly 2 miles of rollers with a net loss leads you to a 1 mile climb. Now you again start the stretches of 1 mile sections going uphill, downhill, uphill. Mile 22.5- roughly 26 is a series of rollers again leading you to a strong downhill finish the last 1/4 mile. ** This course has an 8 hour cut-off.

Aid Stations:

Aid stations will be roughly every 1.5 miles along the marathon, 1/2 marathon, 5K, and 10K courses. Aid stations along the remainder of the 50-mile course will be roughly every 4-6 miles. Aid stations will accommodate runners by either bottle refill or filled cups. Though this race is in much milder winter desert conditions, it is still the desert and very dry. Don't underestimate this in your hydration strategy. That being said, aid stations designated below as *ultra* will be well stocked with water, Hammer HEED energy replacement drink (variety of flavors), Hammer Gel (variety of flavors), salty

snacks, sweet snacks, fresh fruit, boiled potatoes and salt, and limited first aid provisions. "Ultra" Aid Stations will have all of the above provisions, the remaining aid stations will have just water and HEED.

** You must give your bib number to the "clip board" volunteer at the turn around point for your race.

*** Bandits will be shot and left to dehydrate. NO BIB, NO AID! Bandits steal from the paying participants-- not only in the form of aid stations, but unnecessarily crowding the roadway at the same time of the event, jeopardizing the permit, confusing the volunteers and timers, and soaking up the atmosphere of the race that I have so laboriously worked to provide. Please respect me, the other runners, and the sport: If you did not pay for the race, please do not run at the same time as the course!!!!

AID STATIONS (this is an out and back course so you will hit each aid station twice)

Marathon Aid Stations: Will be located at miles 1.55, 3.1, 4.0 (*Ultra*), 5.7, 7.5, 9.0 (*Ultra*), 10.0, 11.5, 13.1 (*Ultra*), 14.7, 16.2, 17.2 (*Ultra*), 18.7, 20.5, 22.2 (*Ultra*), 23.1, and 24.65

Race Director example of being administratively good!

From: Calico Racing [mailto:jmforier@cox.net]
Sent: Wednesday, December 08, 2010 9:54 PM
To: Diana Burton
Subject: Re: Running from an Angel Marathon

Hi Diana,

YES! You can still register. Online registration is open until January 6th.

Yes, since the race runs in conjunction with a 50 mile race, you have 11 hours to complete the course.

Yes, I would think the Hacienda still has room, but you would have to check with them.

Temps average in the 40s at the start warming to 60s

We have roughly 500 in the total event of which roughly 100 are in the marathon. Yes- it is very well marked and easy to follow.

The course is paved.

Good luck in HNL- hope to have you join us!

Joyce

---- Diana Burton <dianab@juno.com> wrote:

Hello -

I should research on my own but maybe you're willing to help? I'd like to come on January 8th but hurrying out to the Honolulu marathon

1. Am I too late? I can still register?
2. If I'm sometimes a 6 hour marathoner, is this a suitable run for me? If not, I completely understand.
3. Might Hacienda Hotel still be available?
4. What's average temperature?
5. About how many marathoners participate?
6. If you have a small number, and knowing that I really don't mind being alone or at back of the pack, can I count on a carefully marked course?
7. What's the surface? Pavement or dirt? Hard packed or soft?

REGISTERED ATHLETE LETTER

Dear Running from an Angel Athletes,

Race day is quickly approaching! I hope all of your training has been going well and that you've enjoyed the holiday! Below are some details for the event weekend which should answer any questions you may have. *If after reading this in its entirety*, any questions left unanswered, feel free to email me. After Thursday night, please rely on my cell 702.812.2609- bearing in mind I will be swamped!

Schedule of Events:

1. **Friday January 7, 2011: 5pm- 9pm: Packet pick up** and small event expo at the Hacienda Host Hotel on U.S. 93 near Hoover Dam in Boulder City. To Mapquest directions to the Hacienda, enter: 18-43 Highway 93/ Boulder City, NV 89005. Packet pick up is in the banquet room off to the left maybe 100 feet beyond entering the WEST doors. PLEASE make every best attempt to attend packet pick up during these hours!! YES- a friend may pick up your packet for you. Race morning packet pick up is as a LAST RESORT only, at the start line. Please arrive no later than 45 minutes prior to your start time for race morning packet pick up. NO need to call or email me regarding race day packet pick up.
2. **Saturday January 8, 2011:** Please arrive to the Boulder Beach Special Events Beach (start/ finish area) with ample time before your race's scheduled start time. 50 miler= 6am; Marathon= 8am; ½ Marathon= 8:30am; 5K= 8:45am; 10K= 8:50am. All start and finish at the covered BBQ area at Boulder Beach.
3. **PARKING:** Pull into the Boulder Beach Special Events Beach area. You will see a covered BBQ area coned off about ¼ mile off Lakeshore Drive - this is the start/ finish area. Continue *passed* this area down toward the lake. Park on either the right or left side in the *dirt parking area*. It is about a ¼ mile walk back up to the event area. Please *do not park* in the water safety/ ranger station parking lot- this is not available for our use. **PLEASE remember, Lake Mead is a FEE area and costs \$5 per car or display of a National Parks Pass. Also a hint: Entrance fees into the park are going up shortly after the event. If you go to the park more than a couple of times a year and/ or plan to race my Devil and Hoover Dam events, you may want to consider buying an annual pass (currently \$20 before the increase). The new day use fee is anticipated to go up to \$10.**

Clothing Bags:

You will likely want some warm clothes for before and after the race. You can leave a warm clothes bag at the start/ finish line. These bags are not guarded or checked, so no valuables please. On course: it is recommended that you have a disposable layer to shed on course. Items left on course will be donated.

Mile Markers:

Mile markers will be every 1 mile for the marathon, ½ marathon, 10K, and 5K. Mile markers will be designated with color coordinated signs placed inside a traffic cone. On the way out all miles are the same and will be in blue. After your turn around the marathon will continue in blue, the ½ marathon will continue in green, the 10K in grey, and the 5K in purple. The 50 mile runners will have mile markers every 1 mile up to mile 13, then will continue every 5 miles to the finish denoted with red signs, i.e. 1-13, 15, 20, 25, etc.

For the 50 miler: I will also be marking the marathon distance along your course (note this is NOT the same as the regular marathon). If you are having a bad day and are considering dropping, you have the option to complete the marathon distance. You will be considered a marathon finisher instead of receiving a DNF. However- you will be taken out of the running for any overall or age group awards for either the 50 mile or marathon distance and your posted results will have an * by it denoting a different course with an *unofficial* time. The marathon distance is denoted on course simply by an orange circular disk on the pavement about 2" diameter, so keep your eyes open for it if this pertains to you. Continue to walk BACK 1.2 miles to the turn around aid station and we will do our best to get you transported back to the start/ finish area- your patience is appreciated.

Aid Stations:

50 Miler Aid Stations: Will be located at miles 4.0, 9, 13.1, 19.1, 25, 30.9, 36.9, 41, and 46.0. These are all ***Ultra*** designated aid stations and will have the full spread of food to include: Water, Hammer HEED energy drink (various flavors), Hammer Gel (various flavors), fresh fruit (likely bananas and oranges), boiled potatoes and salt; electrolyte tablets (Hammer Endurolytes), peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, pretzels, coke (by popular demand), and limited first aid provisions. ****Please note** that the aid stations have been provisioned for WATER according to ultra runners filling their bottles at these ***Ultra*** aid stations. Please keep this in mind when filling your bottle. Of course if you are desperate you are welcome to hit one of the other aid stations once they open up for the other distance runners. All 50 mile runners may have a drop bag. Please deliver it to the start line on race morning and it will be transported out to Aid Station 19.1, which you will access again at 30.9. Please label it with your name. ****Also**** I will be providing a number of flashlights at your inbound aid station at miles 41 and 46. It will be dark by about 4:45pm, so please feel free to use one and return it at the finish line. Also: The first 1/2 hour of your race will still be dark and there are no street lights. Please plan on bringing a disposable flashlight for these first 30 minutes. I will have some on hand at the start line if you need to borrow one and leave it at the station once the sun comes up.

Marathon Aid Stations: Will be located at miles 1.55, 3.1, **4.0 (*Ultra*)**, 5.7, 7.5, **9.0 (*Ultra*)**, 9.9, 11.5, **13.1 (*Ultra*)**, 14.7, 16.3, **17.2 (*Ultra*)**, 18.7, 20.5, **22.2 (*Ultra*)**, 23.1, and 24.65. *Attention:* while the course is open until 7pm, thus having 11 hours to complete the marathon, the aid stations will shut down based on a roughly 6.5 hour marathon pace. If you will be longer than this, please carry a water bottle. The ***Ultra*** aid station 4 miles out from the finish line will pack up at 6:30pm.

1/2 Marathon Aid Stations: Will be located at miles 1.55, 3.1, **4.0 (*Ultra*)**, 5.7, 7.4, **9.1 (*Ultra*)**, 10.0, and 11.55.

10K Aid Stations: Will be located at miles 1.55, 3.1, and 4.65

5K Aid Station: Will be located at mile 1.55

****All aid stations will have WATER and energy drink- Hammer HEED (various flavors). Aid Stations denoted as *Ultra* aid stations will have all of the above provisions listed for the 50 Milers.**

Trash must be placed in the bins provided only. Any littering will be an automatic DQ!

Turn Around:

50 Milers, Marathoners, and ½ Marathoners: You **MUST** display or communicate your bib number to the turn around clipboard volunteer to record your arrival. You **DO NOT** cross over the roadway! Please stay on the **LAKESIDE** of the road on both your out and back.

Volunteers:

As with every race, volunteers are a vital part of the event. Finding volunteers is always a challenge. If anyone has friends or family coming to watch that are willing to commit to a few hours on an assigned post- please email me. It'd be much appreciated by all! Please be kind and **THANK** your volunteers!

Outside Support:

Being inside the National Park the roads are open to the public. Therefore you can have your loved ones checking in on you. *However*, please try to keep this driving to a minimum! They must follow all traffic laws and may not block traffic! Any blocking of traffic will cause tension among the park rangers and reduce my chances of being permitted for next year. No outside assistance other than encouragement may be taken. Vehicles must pull **COMPLETELY** off the roadway and out of the shoulder of the road if stopping. Cars should not be more than 2 in any one area. Please respect the other athletes and the race's perpetuity.

Safety:

All runners must remain on the lake side of the roadway. The course never has you crossing over the roadway.

You will be passing runners heading the opposite direction as it is an out and back. Stay to your right. Single file running is preferred. You may only run 2 abreast if you can both stay to the outside of the white line. Those running or walking greater than single file must yield to passing or on-coming runners.

Sunrise should be 6:40am and sunset 4:40pm. There are **NO** street lights on the course. If you are running outside of those times, you **MUST** wear reflective clothing and are **HIGHLY** encouraged to wear a headlamp or carry a handheld flashlight. You may drop it at an aid station and retrieve it on the return stretch or after the race. Please mark it with your name if you want it back! I will be providing some flashlights at the 50 miler aid stations at miles 41 and 46 for your use, and return at the finish line. I will also have a bunch of flashlights at the 50 miler start line. You may use one of these and drop it at the first aid station.

An Advanced Level of Care **Ambulance** will be on course the entire event.

Finish Line:

We are a **CHIP TIMED** event! Please be sure to cross over the timing mat at the start and finish of the race. Your chip should be attached to your shoe with the fasteners provided. Timing chips must be returned. A volunteer will be at the finish line to assist you in removing them. Ask if you need assistance.

PLEASE: Display your bib number as you cross the finish line and stay in the chute until the timers have you properly recorded!

Photography:

I am proud to announce *Evan Pilchik Photography* will be on course photographing the event. He photographed the 2008, 2009, and 2010 Calico Racing seasons and has signed on again for 2011. Must be all of your smiling faces, so keep 'em coming!

Weather:

To track the weather for the event, use zip code: 89005, which is Boulder City. Note that weather at Lake Mead is slightly different.

Post Race:

Food will be provided at the finish line for runners. Enjoy!

Wet and dry hand towels will also be available at the finish area so you can towel off after the race. Please return all used towels in the clearly marked bin provided. Yup- I do loads of towel laundry after each race!

Course Certification:

This Marathon, ½, 10K, and 5K races are certified with USATF. This not only means it is accurate, but those running the marathon can use it as a Boston Qualifier.

Lastly:

I want to take a moment to express my sincere thanks to each and every one of you for attending the Running from an Angel event. Many of you are returning runners, and your continued support is SO important and appreciated. To those of you that are new to Calico Racing- welcome to the family! We are a smaller event than many of you may be used to- but that is what can make it so great. A personal race with first rate amenities. With your help, I hope to position this and other Calico Racing events for future growth and a lifelong achievement of passion, environmental responsibility, fun, and of course... running.

See you all soon!

Joyce