



Dallas Marathon and Tourist Trip Notes December 6-10, 2012

Is the marathon the priority?

No, not the least, and less and less so, but I usually start there so here it is and then quickly move to the main purpose of my trips – to see something new and interesting and Dallas served up that requirement. In this case two of my three tours were indeed very unique and quite different (if not foreign) for me.

Results: 6:36:12 at 15:07 pace with only 73 clocked behind me. I walked from about the 4 mile marker when I gave up 5:30 pacer Sharon realizing that I didn't have any 'run' in me so I walked every step of the way in. I had a good time even if my final time wasn't any impressive. I took a couple hundred photos, went off the course to see some tourist sites, danced to bands and begged food from spectators and once even received a baggie of crackers from momma almost out of her baby's hands. This was my second time to ask for food and (be embarrassed to) find myself taking food from a baby. It was hot and humid, then it was breezy and chilly, then a huge headwind of up to 30mph came up and the temperatures went from 60 to 70 to 55 at the end. It will fall to 28 the night of the marathon and might even snow on Monday.



Did I have a good time? Basically yes, but it's begging the question of "why?" and/or not passing the "so what?" test. If its exercise I want then I could get it in the woods on nice soft dirt in the midst of nature without a finish line closure to worry about or a registration fee to pay. If its numbers I want, well, I should be done with that by this stage of my life. If its health I want then I shouldn't be eating up my well-earned muscles by staying out on the course so long. If its marathon friends I want, well, many have gotten a plague or are addicted and I can't keep up anyway. I always said I'd quit this when I wasn't having a good time anymore; I've all too often heard others say "I need to finish xxxx so I can start having a good time" or "I'll be so glad when this xxxx is done." Duh? Honest, you can't make this stuff up. So basically I am in a quandary and definitely won't sign up for any more marathons with deadlines and maybe will stop marathons altogether anyway.



Good and bad aka pros and cons

This is harder to address effectively since my needs and goals are altering.

- The expo is now downtown in a big convention center (second in size only to Vegas) within a walk to the start and at the finish. It is used both before and after the marathon so toilets and warm area are nearby.

- The course was interesting and new as it now starts on Main Street near to the JFK memorial and finishes downtown at the big convention center (not the AA center as it used to), and it goes through the fancy neighborhoods housing the likes of Ross Perot, George Bush, Dick Cheney, the CEO of Exxon, and coach and cowboys owner Jerry Jones. Then we headed to the parkland around White Rock Lake. The last two or three miles are industrial and uninspiring. (It must cost a lot for police coverage as there were many street crossings or neighborhood streets requiring 2 and 3 police.)
- The start has three corrals with the first two requiring lining up way early. They can only be entered through one street for each corral. Despite this, it is rough to get through the fat asses (I started in the very back) (and pretty sobering to be coming in with those fat asses too.) For about 2 miles it was very crowded with walkers as much because both full and half marathoners start together.
- Hyatt hotel complex is farther away than expected from the start unless you're at the first, not the back as I was. The Hyatt was a dream and everything about my stay was a delight. The Aloft would be closer.
- There was limited food on the course but lots of fluid stations. There may well have been more food for those coming in earlier than 6 hours as I saw a lot of juice bottles on the roadway.
- Entertainment was excellent, frequent and fun. They seemed to enjoy my stopping for pictures and to dance. Costumes were few and far between meaning I either got more attention for my crown or got ostracized because of it.
- The shirt at the expo was so 1980s cotton (yet with a good design picture of their new artsy bridge) but they made up for it with a nice white long-sleeve well-designed tech shirt at the finish. However, they ran out of all but ladies size small and medium.
- The medal is well-designed and a solid chunk of gold colored medal that has class, as does the high quality ribbon attached.
- Food at the finish line had either ran out or closed down at 3pm though the finish line was to be open until 3pm. So I headed to McDonalds.
- Finish line at 3pm was impossible to figure out where to go and finally other runners directed me through an open gate area into the convention hall.



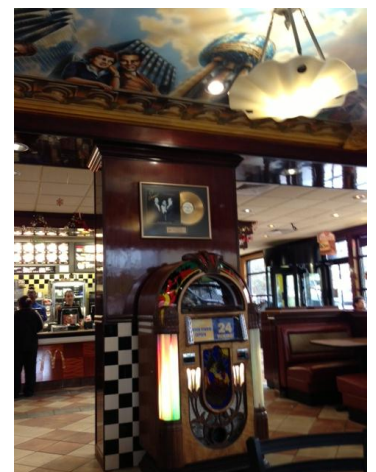
There were about 25,000 participants but only 4866 full marathoners so the course was pretty thin after the half marathons peeled off.

In 2011 the finish line clocked runners to 7:41 gun and 7:11 chip. Maybe they had an early start?

Joyce! At mile 6 and she saw me! We knew Joyce from Fort Worth having met she and friends at Oklahoma City if not before. Then in Vegas, and a few places in between. She's contemplating foot surgery so came out to meet her friends and amazingly we connected.

Food! Remember there was no food left at the finish line?

That was okay because it's the only time but I crave the Angus Burger (swiss and mushroom) after a marathon anyway so off I went hunting down



the old historical McDonald's I'd learned about. It has the original huge golden arches holding up the building. Finally after about 8 blocks I found it. It, my Angus Burger, fries and big coffee, along with the dredges of the earth. Yet look at this unique old style McDonald's with a juke box and golden records on the wall and a ceiling painted like a museum piece. There's a story about the juke box: it plays only long hair music. Seems the mob used to hang out here but they didn't purchase a thing and thus the business was closing. The solution was the juke box and what it plays – causing the mob to move out. Too bad that then the dregs of the earth moved in, but who was I to talk, there with a space blanket as a skirt and three shirts? By the time I was done the temperature had dipped to under 55 degrees and the winds were blowing me off my feet so I wrapped in both my shirts plus my new one plus both space blankets and still shivered all the way home about 1 ½ miles.

Random photos from the marathon



There were not many costumes but enough to make me feel okay about my Lady Liberty. The pink cowboy hat is Clif Bars Pacer Sharon. I didn't keep up with her 5:30 group for very long. I later learned that I wasn't the only one suffering from the heat as did the winners who added greatly to their time.



Confetti for every start. Colorful runners and lots of entertainment. This building houses the Texas Elite Barbers and a barbershop quartet. Yes!



The bridge is an amazing piece of art. It has just opened.



You're reading it right: She says 'poop your pants' and the t-shirt caused many a laugh.



The barefoot runner in kilt was doing the half marathon; the only other barefoot or 5-finger I saw was limping. That seems to be a crazy that's over with – again. Or as Coach Jeff Galloway says: I've seen this fad come and go at least five times in my career. Here we are entering into the ritzy Highland Park which surprised me that they'd allow runners access. I'd toured there the prior day.



The sign reads: 'I thought this was a Christmas parade.' There were many bands and drummers and two taiko drummer groups. Somewhere in between we ran around the White Rock Lake which was uneventful enough to skip those pictures. It was huge however and very windy.



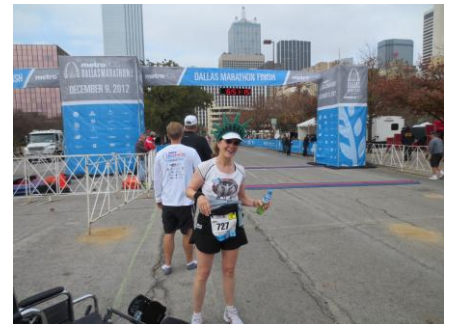
The dog family includes 5 puppies. Don't know how many puppies were at the Hooters stand but they were serving up food (before I got there) and cheering us on. Then we went into the Swiss Avenue Historical Neighborhood before finishing up in a boring industrial area. At the last was the Masonic Lodge, Scottish Rites Temple, city views and an unusual for me feeling of being glad to be done. It was cold and the wind had rattled us greatly.



City skyline, library, city hall, and finally as the cows come home, so did I to the finish line, hungry and cold. And ready to get into the real priority of the trip

Touring is the priority

I wasn't all that hot on coming to Dallas at the last minute. Maybe I was travel weary after the Peru trip. Maybe I just knew that my legs hadn't run for a very long time – maybe even back to Stockholm in July. (Ayres Rock was ankle deep sand, I did two hikes in August, toured with Tom in September, copped out of Buenos Aires in October before heading off to three more hikes and skipped Morgan Hill marathon due to Hurricane Sandy.) Maybe there was history to Dallas where I'd had my feelings hurt when my friends went without me. All those hesitations changed my first afternoon and evening when I found so much to see and do.



Dallas main sites

From my tour brochure: *Perhaps the genesis of Dallas as a small trading post in 1841 seems incredulous as one now looks on one of the most beautiful cities in these United States. Dallas is indeed a city of international renown and boasts some marvelous landmarks.*

- The Historic "West Ellum" (West Elm Street), the place for arts and entertainment, featuring some mighty fine jazz and blues.*
- The Pioneer Plaza, an amazing public park in the convention district with the extraordinary 70 bronze steers and 3 riders sculpture commemorating the days of cattle drives.*
- The West End, a glimpse into the histories of Texas and, as some might say, the very heart-beat of downtown Dallas.*
- The Thanksgiving Square, a wondrous park that features the Court of All Nations and the Norman Rockwell-inspired Wall of Praise.*

And this is not all . . . venture into the Kennedy Memorial for a time of remembrances and reflections on our nation and the price of freedom, the Art District with its incredible architecture and fabulous

collections and of course, who would want to miss the Farmer's Market? All-in-all, Dallas landmarks are more than worthy of the time and effort it would take to see and appreciate their beauty.

From my tour notes

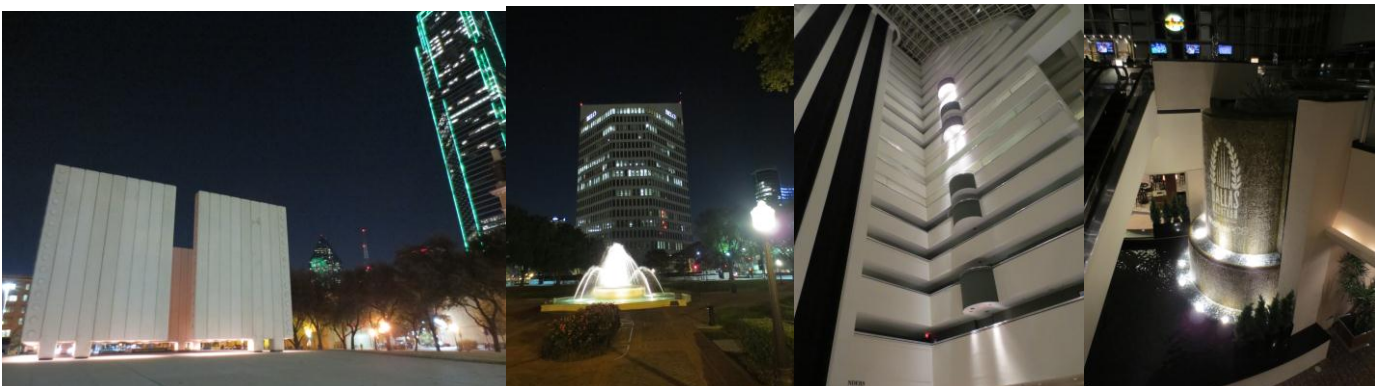
DFW airport is one of largest and busiest in world. The blues area was once called 'Humping Town' for all the brothels. A trolley runs the full length of McKinnon Ave where there are an amazing 110 restaurants. There's also at least one dog spa where full services can cost up to \$700 night – that's just for pooch. A drive through Highland Park revealed the richest community with homes pointed out of folks like Ross Perot, Dick Cheney, Madonna, the CEO of Exxon, the coach and cowboys owner Jerry Jones, among a few. The JFK memorial is like an open casket and huge; it's a totally different look at night. The grassy knoll and museum gave us too much on the conspiracy theories but apparently there are many who believe the Warren Report was totally off since there have been over 2000 books written on the conspiracy(s).

At the farmers market I ate my way through the samples and also by purchasing big baskets of raspberries and also of blackberries, then a large bag of candied ginger said to be good for car sickness.

After the tour I retraced many of our steps where walking was possible going through a few museums including the Asian and the Sculpture museum as well as an outdoor sculpture park ending at the bar and restaurant which is home to hundreds of water fountains. I had a drink and then dinner there so I could see the fountains lit at night but my walk home was more than I bargained for; I found the 'other' side of Dallas and it wasn't a pretty sight.



Main Street was always popping with lights and bars and revelers. The first tree was of car parts and the next was a feature of Neiman Marcus. Dallas is the foremost store in their chain and the windows were to be of the best. Frankly Bergdorf Goodman and Saks in NYC are better but not as crazy as the series of tunnels available to climb and slide in. Thursday nights they are open to adults. Here's an adult showing there is a kid in all of us. I considered it but was probably lucky that it closed down when I returned after dinner and a drink.



The JFK Memorial is like an open grave that seems to float on air. It's just off Main Street and a few blocks from the historical 'grassy knoll' and 6th floor museum. I wasn't much enthused about my tour that included far too much of conspiracy theories which are rampant there. I much preferred the town's fountains and museums. See the interior of the Hyatt Hotel? I was on the 21st floor and could look down at the series of fountains with the Dallas Marathon logo lite up in one of them.



The new bridge is quite the art sculpture piece. We ran over it and its visible from much of the city and from the Hyatt Hotel complex which you see in the middle. The old city hall of red stone contains a museum.



There are 60 or 70 steer sculptures and each are different. We hiked up the hill to see them all. The weird building is and could only be one designed by I.M. Pei and as usual with a cost overrun of about 300%. We went onto a historical district where some houses had been transplanted and where now non-profits inhabit them. It was worth a long walk around.



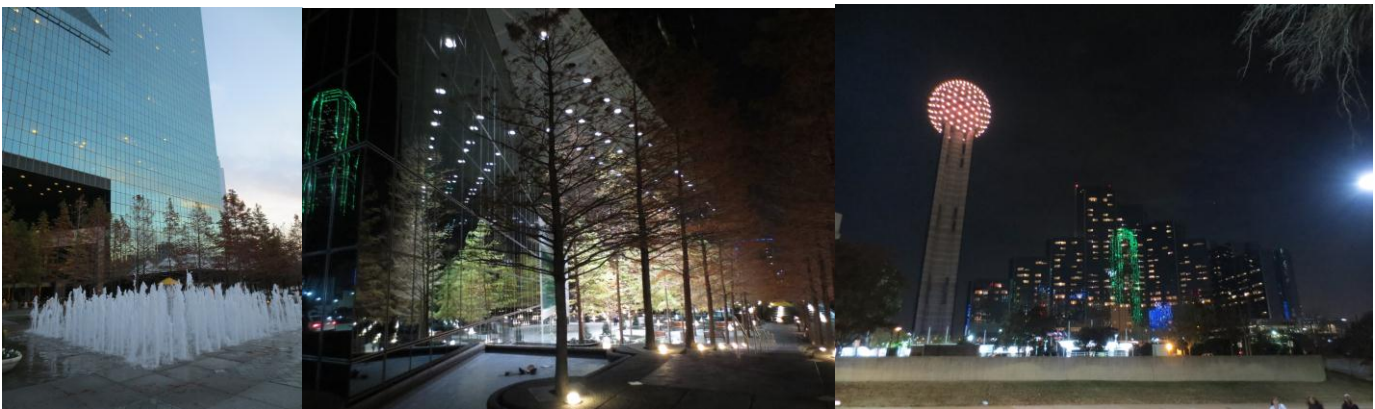
Within the downtown area is a large daily farmers market where we ate our way through and I bought tins of big blackberries and of raspberries.



Remember the famous Hunt Brothers of silver fame? I think one of them footed the bill for Tucson's Biosphere. Their building is in the shape of an H. Dallas is quite the mixture of old and new. I would visit a few museums in the museum section making it easy to hop from one to the other. The sculpture museum's top draw was a Henry Moore. The More you look the More you see and the More you like.



The Asian Museum had a hallway of hanging origami that moved with the breeze of walking. The top floor might not be acceptable for children.



After an afternoon at museums I returned to the home of hundreds of fountains and decided to stay in their bar until the night lights went on, and then to stay even longer for dinner. On my way home the colorful changing lights of the Omni Hotel glowed on the face of the Hyatt Hotel complex and of course the observations tower changes lights constantly. I was never able to get into the Wolfgang Puck restaurant at the top since it was fully booked. I tried to make reservations for Jane Collier and me.

Dallas Cowboy Stadium

On the drive to Arlington we got the history of the stadium and a few sights on the way, finally getting through the PRO shop where shopping is the norm and mostly by fat asses before taking the VIP



tour. We saw the private suites and boxes, the radio and print media boxes, went into Jerry Jones private eagles nest, through the Cotton Bowl offices, the Dr. Pepper Star Bar and the Ford Motor Company Fountain where they have racks of cars and where one can buy \$29 stand up tickets. Into the event area we were on the field, walked through the Miller Lite Club where players enter the field, sat in the post-game press and interview room as well as the more popular spots: the Cowboys locker room and the Cheerleaders locker room.

This was a sad day as that morning a player had died in an auto accident while the driver was another player who was inebriated.

From my notes: Four of us were driven to the stadium in a long white stretch limo by a Russian immigrant. Jerry Jones is a character and both loved and hated. He's one of only two manager and owners to hold two titles. Stadium was first to cost \$350 million, then went up to \$650 million quote and finally went to \$1.2 billion with Jerry Jones footing a big chunk of the bill himself. The TV screen has been enlarged and it now makes up 10,000 TVs to make up the entire huge screen that's 7 stories high, includes 6 catwalks inside, 30 million led lights and cost \$40 million. It weighs in at 1.2 million pounds and has pulleys to lower or raise it – rebuilt with help and at request of a U2 concert.

Statue of Liberty will easily fit inside the stadium. It holds world record for most TVs. 1 million tourists have already toured in its three years and thus it is paid off already. 108,000 can attend at a time. We got part of our tour sitting in club seating with padding though there are three levels of seating types. The roof opens plus both sides; many firsts and in the book of Guinness records. It takes six minutes to open. There is a star on the field and a star in center also which is over the TV and is illuminated so it can be seen from 6 miles up.

Cost \$1.3 million to rent a suit or \$65 an hour to rent screen. Some have rented the screen to play video games. The marble flooring glows the green cowboy colors. Oldest cheerleader was 42 but oldest now is 29. One gal tried out at age 55 but didn't make it. They really aren't paid and they have to have other income. This is the world's biggest building, biggest doors, etc.

Got to walk and stand inside what they call the Jerry Jones perch or his own man cave where he has a multitude of TVs and microphones direct and his own elevator to get him immediately onto the field. A look across reveals a similar 'perch' that's just larger and it's for the commentators.

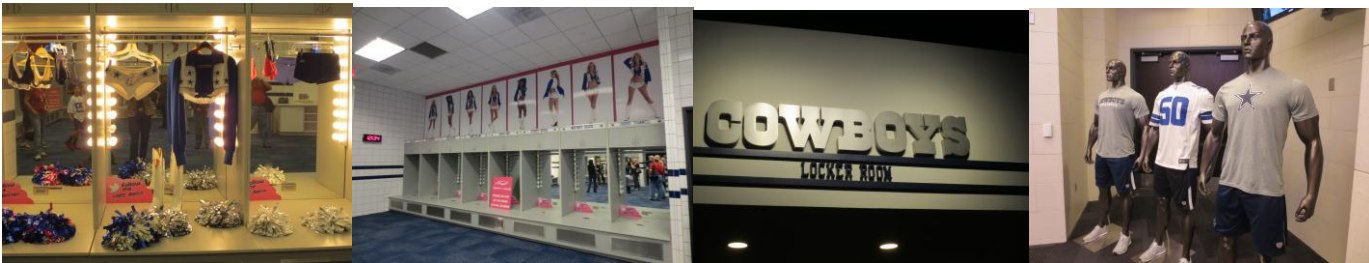
Went through a number of clubs include one owned by AT&T club; one of 8. It is 64,000SF with 5 star hotel feel. The ceiling is cut out with the shape of football and the lamp fixtures are shaped like a football. Floor tiles pop out as cowboy blue (did I say green somewhere?) when walking over. Also thru American Airlines lounge.

The huge steel arches did not come from Pittsburg (political thing) but from Europe and they hold up the roof like flying buttresses. It takes a crew of 7000 employees per game day. Lockers are special wood (African safalie or the same wood used in Bentleys) coating \$9000 per locker. Kids got to try on jerseys and equipment. I noticed they didn't offer to let us try on the Cheerleaders outfits (they were miniscule), only the Cowboys big jerseys.

Into press room and the Miller VIP lounge. Special soundproofing and windows for protecting from flash. Can immediately walk out to the field. On the field were more opportunities to purchase footballs and/or photographs, of course. A big money maker.



If you didn't get enough of the stadium you could buy a replica for \$69, or a pair of Luchase 'real' Cowboy boots. There was a lot of art work of interest and a number of historical posters. Maybe a highlight after the VIP lounges was going into the Cheerleader's and then the Cowboy's locker rooms.



Notice that they allowed us to try on Cowboy's uniforms but not the Cheerleader's which were tiny! Why these girls do this I'm not sure because they are not paid and are required to have another means of support.

We came and went in a long white stretch limousine. Well, after we successfully pulled out our fellow tour folks who didn't seem to want to leave. This was all very foreign to me and the usual person touring were not what you'd see on a marathon course by a long shot.



Facts

- Two nearly 300 foot tall arches span the length of the stadium dome, anchored to the ground at each end and buried 80-ft underground.
- The stadium is the largest domed stadium in the world with the two largest high definition video screens which hang from the 20 yard line to 20 yard line and weighs in at 600 tons.
- The new stadium also includes more than 3,000 Sony LCD displays throughout the luxury suites, concourses and concession areas.
- Glass doors, allowing each end zone to be opened, were designed and constructed by Dallas-based Haley-Greer glass systems.
- The retractable roof was designed by the structural engineering firm Walter P Moore. The systems were implemented by mechanization consultants Uni-Systems.

- When the design was officially unveiled on December 12, 2006, it showed that they were bringing elements from the old Texas Stadium roof with its trademark hole.
- The hole that was in Texas Stadium was actually a structural flaw, but as any Cowboys fan will say, it was there so that God could watch His team play.
- However, in the Dallas Cowboys new stadium the hole can be covered by the retractable roof panel to protect against the elements.
- The Dallas Cowboys new stadium has a seating capacity of 80,000 people for regular season games. For post-season games and special events the seating capacity is 100,000. The design of the seats for this stadium puts all of the seats on rails; they're not bolted into the concrete.
- During the regular season, the seats are 22-inches wide. When more seats are required, those seats are removed and 18-inch seats are installed. There are six "party decks" on each level of the end zones for extra standing-room only crowds to gather.

Southfork Ranch aka Dallas show site

Tour – a half day tour out to Parker, Texas. I might have been the only person who visited who never saw a "Dallas" TV segment. I knew who and what from newspaper and magazine accounts. It just seemed so "Dallas" that I thought it was a good idea to go see.

From the tour brochure: *If you are someone who enjoyed the TV show "Dallas," your tour of Southfork Ranch will be a memorable one. Come see the where the Ewing family called "home" and see their lifestyle made famous by the watching world. Take home some collectibles from the "Ranch Round-Up" store in the visitor's center where you'll find a wide assortment of items seen on the show and worn by the cast. Enjoy a guided train from the Visitor's Center to the Ewing Mansion that will not only provide you with a history of the property, but will give you a chance to see Texas Longhorns and American Quarter horses. The mansion itself is the next stop on the tour. You'll hear interesting factoids about the filming done there and character insights as you see the "most famous White House" and even J.R. Ewing's bedroom!*

After the mansion tour, you can stroll around the ranch and stop at "Lincolns and Longhorns," where on display you'll find Jock Ewing's original 1978 Lincoln Continental as well as "Dallas" inspired clothing and accessories.

From the SF website: *History at Southfork began in 1978, when Lorimar Productions chose the North Texas showplace as the site for the CBS-TV series "Dallas". The hit series, which counted millions of viewers across the United States and in 95 foreign countries as fans, was originally broadcast in the United States from 1978 to 1991. The series continues to be broadcast in syndication and still is in first-run status in many countries around the world. Because of the ranch's high profile on television, the beautiful white mansion, the pool, the barns and surroundings quickly became a tourist mecca.*

The original owner of the ranch and his family were actually in residence at Southfork as the filming began. When requests for private parties began to pour in, tents were erected and a small party pavilion was built to accommodate these types of events. However, tourism finally took its toll on the family, as it became increasingly hard to live privately in what had become Dallas' leading visitor attraction.

In 1985, Southfork became strictly a tourist attraction and event location. The mansion was opened to the public for the first time. A 63,000 square foot conference and event center was built to accommodate several thousand people for special events and functions. A rodeo arena, which was originally constructed for the filming of "Dallas" rodeos, began to host open competition rodeos as well as private "showdeos."

The show - Never envisioned to be the winner it became, "Dallas" was initially scripted as a non-continuing five-part drama. Airing for the first time on April 2, 1978, it ran for five consecutive Sunday nights. Ratings climbed weekly. By the fifth episode, it ranked in the top ten of the week's most watched shows. On the basis of these impressive numbers, CBS approved thirteen additional scripts and "Season One" officially began the next full season. "Dallas" success continued, with the show airing for 13 seasons until May of 1991. By this time, the series included 356 episodes and had become the most watched series in the world, and had spawned a successful spin-off series in Knots Landing. In 1995 and 1997, "Dallas" original cast members including Larry Hagman, Linda Gray, and Patrick Duffy returned to Southfork to film two reunion movies. The

first reunion movie, "JR Returns," aired in 1996, and the reunion sequel, "The War of the Ewings," aired in 1998.

From my notes: Biggest and longest run sitcom in world. From 1978 to 1991. Translated and shown in 96 countries. The Duncan family sold it eventually. The home is about 5000SF having been built in the 70s and the property is over 300 acres. Duncan had been a builder then raised quarter-horses. His first name was also JR. Rumored to take \$9 million to get them out as at first they didn't allow filming in the house and only in the summer months of June July and August. It was only "who shot JR" that was totally shot at ranch; most shooting occurred in the studio. Second most watched TV ever for the "who shot JR" show and the popularity of the show was enough to scare any Duncan family out; folks came from all over as though JR were really gone. They camped out, they swam in the pool, they cried, they were like a bunch of locust. I can believe this because there was currently a memorial for Hagman with flowers, mementos and even an emotional book to write and sign. The ranch is now open for private events and "God bless Texas" shoots there. Only about 20 percent of visitors are Americans.

It is noteworthy to me that the majority of those touring both the Cowboy stadium and the ranch are pretty foreign looking though I'm afraid they are Americans. They aren't any of those who I would know for sure. A different world and different looking people with what seems to me to be very odd needs and desires for entertainment.



I quickly realized that the "Dallas" TV program and now the Southfork Ranch has as much of a cult following as the Cowboys. When "JR" died it was like when they filmed "Who killed JR" as people came from afar and camped on the grounds, swam in the pool and picnicked everywhere; especially for the death of Hagman the cult acted like their father had departed. Still mementos, funeral wreaths and mementos are brought. There were two gift shops, a museum, and the entire grounds to walk.



The house, in some cases, contained smaller representations of the rooms where they'd filmed on set. But by the sounds of those touring, they were quite precise. The JR bed on double pedestal was amusing as was the room with a Jacuzzi and mirrors, next to the walk in shower for two.



Because of the holiday decorations the house was of more interest to me. We did get to go out onto the balcony to see how the body couldn't have fallen into the pool but filming in segments made it happen.



Yes, folks are still writing in the funeral book!

Would I do it again?

Cowboy stadium and Dallas set? Heck yes! It was all a hoot and a reminder that there are all kinds in the world. Dallas itself was a nice surprise full of old historical buildings, some turned into museums and many new elaborate modern skyscrapers too, and all intermixed. On the marathon course it became clear that there were not only rich folks in Dallas but the not so comfortable too and I suppose that is the case for most cities. They did however give us some glorious views on the marathon course and what wasn't there I did pretty well at finding within my few days of touring.

What's next?

I'm a little bit at odds with myself because I don't really know. Though I'm off next to Houston for the End of the World Marathon, then Marie arrives next day for our Vienna Holiday adventure, 2013 isn't as clear as I'd like. Not with plans, not even with a comfort that I know what I want to do "when I grow up." I do have marathons booked in Anaheim, Jerusalem, San Luis Obispo, Vancouver and Madagascar. I do have hikes booked in Maui, Canyonlands and Arches, Whistler BC, Glacier NP, Minnesota and Capitol Reef. I do have vacations booked in Vienna, Kripalu, Paris and Santa Barbara. But there are a lot of holes in the calendar and an even bigger need for direction.

Itinerary

Thu Dec 6

12:55pm Depart Newark EWR via UA1729

4:05pm Arrive Dallas/Fort Worth DFW

Shuttle at \$17 runs each 30 minutes until 6pm or call 800 258 3826 to book.

DART requires shuttle then DART at \$2.50 then walk a very long underground tunnel; Taxi \$50-\$60.

Hotel Hyatt Regency Dallas – downtown near to Union Station
300 Reunion Boulevard, Dallas, TX 75207 Tele: 214 651 1234

Hyatt is walk to start (.4 or more like 1 mile to back of the line); from finish (.8) and expo (.8). Other host hotels: Aloft probably closest, and Crowne Plaza

Fri/Sat Dec 7/8

Health & Fitness Expo at Dallas Convention Center in Hall C

Friday, December 7 - 11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 8 - 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Sun Dec 9

8:00am Marathon - www.dallasmarathon.com

8:45 a.m. Start Line closes

10:30 a.m. Live entertainment begins at the Post Race Party

3:00 p.m. Finish Line closes - Timed to 7:15 chip and 7:41 gun in 2011 (must have started early)
4571 finishers with 2843 male and 1728 females

Mon Dec 10

3:50pm Depart Dallas/Fort Worth DFW via UA463

8:28pm Arrive Newark EWR

Others: Barb, Jane, Kevin Brosi

From Marathon & Beyond newsletter: Lace up those running shoes for the MetroPCS Dallas Marathon, formerly the Dallas White Rock Marathon, on Sunday, December 9. Texas's oldest running marathon will feature a field of 25,000 participants in 2012 and a new start and finish in downtown Dallas near the JFK Memorial and Old Red Courthouse.

The flat and fast course will lead runners across the new Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge, designed by Santiago Calatrava, with views of the downtown skyline at sunrise. Runners will then pass through the nation's largest urban arts district and Dallas's newest urban greenspace, Klyde Warren Park. The course winds through the Uptown, Turtle Creek, and Highland Park neighborhoods before leading marathoners to the scenic White Rock Lake and heading back downtown for the finish.

Race activities occur the second weekend of December and include the southwest's largest Health & Fitness Expo, the Mayor's Race 5K, the MetroPCS Dallas Marathon, Half Marathon, 5-Person Relay,

and SMU Cox Corporate Relay Challenge presented by Behringer Harvard. The Dallas Marathon benefits Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children, with proceeds from the race going to support general hospital care. To date, the marathon has contributed more than \$2.8 million to the hospital.

From MarathonGuide.com:

★★★★☆ **Fun event in the pouring rain** (about: 2011)

Course: 4 Organization: 5 Fans: 3

Tyler McCandless from Colorado (9/27/12)

6-10 previous marathons | 1 Dallas White Rock Marathon

The race is a very well organized event with good hospitality. In 2011 when I ran it the weather was unfortunately poor - 40F and raining pretty hard during a lot of it. I'm fairly sure I even heard thunder as I was entering the finish. The course isn't pancake flat, but it isn't horribly hilly either. You could definitely PR here and I plan to come back to this race in the future.

★★★★☆ **Please don't ruin this great race!** (about: 2012)

Course: 3 Organization: 4 Fans: 5

Z. W. from Houston, TX (6/4/12)

11-50 previous marathons | 2 Dallas White Rock Marathons

I have run the half and full over the last couple of years and this race was great the way they had it. The new changes are starting to make me wonder if this race is departing from greatness.

1. The course out of fair park was awesome, straight downhill to the finish. I don't see how downtown can give you any time advantage over what was already there.
2. Changing the name to the 'Dallas Marathon.' That doesn't mean anything, stick with what people know, which is 'White Rock.'
3. Tacking on a \$3 'facilities usage fee.' This sends a signal that suckage is starting to seep in. If it costs \$3 extra to use the facilities, just put it in the price, don't kick us in the nuts at the checkout line!
4. This has been the same every year, but why do we get the shirt on the first day? Any way to lower the price and get rid of the participant shirt?

I already registered for 2012, I'll give it a chance with all of the new changes. However, what you had going was great and I hate to see it change!

★★★★☆ **Horrible weather but great course** (about: 2011)

Course: 4 Organization: 3 Fans: 5

K. R. from Dallas, Texas (5/2/12)

1 previous marathon | 1 Dallas White Rock Marathon

I have ran the half marathon before but this was my first full marathon and boy did we have awful weather for it. The packet pick-up is always fairly easy and the expo has some great freebies.

I was surprised to see so many spectators out due to the weather so that definitely helped keep me going when I was pretty sure my fingers were frozen solid and I was seconds away from hypothermia. Not really, but my goodness low 40's and raining the whole way was miserable!!!! The starting line could definitely use some improvement, I have ran this race two years in a row and each time I have had to wait 30-45 minutes to actually start running after the race starts. It seems a bit ridiculous to me. Another issue I had was at the water stops before the half marathoners split off, I am a middle of the pack runner and I was having to either stop to get water or they were out of water or cups at some of the stations. Not good when you are relying on these stations for water or gatorade to keep you running for 26.2 miles.

My last complaint is that when you finish running and pay a good bit of \$\$\$ I would expect to have bottled water, not tiny cups filled with nasty tasting Dallas City water. GROSS! A race of this size should easily be able to get bottles of water donated so I am not sure who drops the ball on this, but seriously get bottles of water!!!!

★★★★☆ **My Favorite Marathon** (about: 2012)

Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 5

J. A. from Wylie, Texas (2/28/12)

6-10 previous marathons | 2 Dallas White Rock Marathons

I ran this the previous year on the VIP package. It came with a parking pass that put you right next to the finish (plus some really cool race swag and VIP diva perks). I noticed however that there were hundreds of runners who parked in the same area just by arriving a few minutes early before the crowd. This year I did likewise and parked within a few feet of my VIP spot from the previous year. This is a great event for anyone who gives it half a chance. The event is well organized, from the Expo all the way through to the Finish celebrations. The course is challenging but not too hilly and takes you through some beautiful parts of Dallas. In addition to there being plenty to see, there is spectator support all along the way. I loved this year's finisher medal as well. For those who wish to skip the drive this event venue is right on the DART light rail line. It works out really well for those from out of town or car free. I have used it in other years to get to and from the event during race weekend with no issues. For those from out of town you can also stay at one of the downtown hotels and have the DART rail line stop right outside your door. You can walk out of your hotel and in ten minutes be on the race site.

★★★★★ **Big Event with Heart** (about: 2011)

Course: 5 Organization: 4 Fans: 5

J. W. from Irving TX (2/3/12)

1 previous marathon | 1 Dallas White Rock Marathon

This was my first marathon and, while the weather was awful, the crowd support, Expo, and swag made up for it! Can't believe how many people were out cheering us on despite the cold and rain! I do wish the mile markers were easier to spot, AND I wish there were some shuttles from the finish to the parking lots. I was so freezing afterward and felt like I walked forever to get to my car. It took hours and a hot shower to warm back up. I also didn't see anywhere to change in the finishers' building, but I didn't look that hard.

I really love this event (have done the half several times before) and am really glad it was the site for my first full. I will just hope for better weather next year!

★★★★★ **Even with the rain, it was fantastic!!!!** (about: 2011)

Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 4

N. L. from Florida (12/28/11)

11-50 previous marathons | 1 Dallas White Rock Marathon

This course was simply spectacular! We ran through some of the fancier neighborhoods of Dallas, and the homes were decorated for the holidays. Fantastic course support (loved the HUGE cup of beer at mile 9 or so). Now, everyone is talking about the weather. It was so bad that it actually became funny. I felt like a warrior (or some kind of middle-earth creature) battling nature in addition to the run itself. I would do this course again... no doubt! Thanks for the great run, Dallas. I'll be back!

★★★★★ **Lived up to its reputation!** (about: 2011)

Course: 4 Organization: 5 Fans: 5

Javier Pita from Los Angeles, CA (12/24/11)

11-50 previous marathons | 1 Dallas White Rock Marathon

After reading that Dallas was one of the top 25 marathons to do and then finally getting run it. I have to agree. The crowd support was awesome despite the fact that it was pouring people were still out there. The mile markers were off but in the end it was the right distance. My only issue was the finish where the half marathoners and marathoners merged. It was crowded and I found myself trying not to run over other runners. But I was happy despite the pouring rain I got a PR and will certainly mark this as one of my favorite marathons.

★★★★☆ **Will not be doing the white rock again** (about: 2011)

Course: 4 Organization: 3 Fans: 5

T. B. from Dallas, TX (12/22/11)

11-50 previous marathons | 3 Dallas White Rock Marathons

I have participated in the White Rock Marathon either as a spectator or as a participant for the past 10 years. This marathon has an excellent course and amazing crowd support, even in the uncommonly nasty weather, but moving this event to the fair park has ruined it. It is a complete mad house, and ridiculously inconvenient for the race and the packet pick up. There is no way to park close to the finish or the start unless you opt for some VIP packages for an extra \$150!!! I was forced to park in the fair shuttle parking lot (no shuttle service for the marathon), the police would not let our line of traffic go to the gate we planned out using the map, the attendant told us that we were in the closest spot to the start which was absolutely incorrect. I later mapped out the distance on Map My Run and it was 1.1 miles from the finish line to the car. After running 26.2 or 13.1 miles in the cold rain (which no one to blame for the weather) I do not want to walk 1.1 miles to my car!!! Last year was the same issue, only at least the weather was nice. I remember last year saying I

wouldnt do WR Marathon again and NOW I KNOW I wont. Next year I will do Houston or San Antonio. Sorry White Rock, apparently your goal is to be as big as the New York Marathon, that just ain't gonna happen! Let me know when you start caring about the participants again you bring it back to the AA center.

★★★★★ **VERY WELL ORGANIZED EVENT! - BIG FAN!!** (about: 2011)

Course: 4 Organization: 5 Fans: 5

Mark Fisher from Louisville, CO (12/15/11)

11-50 previous marathons | 1 Dallas White Rock Marathon

Pros:

- Lots of water/aid stations - seemed like every mile!
- Lots of volunteers manning the stations in VERY tough conditions - thank you!
- Love the start/finish in same location!
- No lines at the expo for packet pick-up (at 10am on Sat)
- Nice expo - lots of vendors
- Awesome that there is building in the State Fair Park where you could wait INSIDE prior to event (especially considering the poor weather)
- Loved the ability to go inside after the race to get food, etc. (again especially considering the weather)
- DART was super easy - took it (stayed at downtown hotel) to the Expo and to the Race
- Nice course - mostly flat - I did my first negative split ever!

Cons:

- No clocks on the course to determine your time (might be unnecessary with today's technology - but one at 13.1 would have been nice).
 - Starting line was a bit narrow which meant it took me 24 minutes to get to the starting line (I planned on a 4:20 pace)
-

★★★★★ **time waster** (about: 2011)

Course: 4 Organization: 4 Fans: 5

D. M. from Fort Collins, CO (12/13/11)

50+ previous marathons | 1 Dallas White Rock Marathon

The weather (cold with hard rain during 95% of the race) really sucked - but you can't blame anyone for that. (Well, I understand that it is typically a pretty sketchy time of the year for weather.)

The biggest hassle was the packet pick-up and getting to / from the race from the hotel. It took almost 2 hours to pick up my packet: wait for the next bus, 30 minute bus ride, pick up packet then be forced to wind through a maze to get t-shirt - being treated like dumb cattle to be herded around for the convenience of the expo sellers and promoters . . . it should be optional whether you want to shop or not - wait for the return bus, another bus ride home. It's really a shame they don't have packet pickup at the hotel or the near-by convention center. It took me longer to pick up my packet than the flight took to get to Dallas.

The race announcer went on about the good race weather (it wasn't raining yet at the very start) . . . saying there might be some moisture later but all you'd need to wear is shorts and a shirt. That was a dangerous thing to say . . . I saw people ditching soon-to-be-very-needed clothing / garbage bags / poncho's based on that bad weather and clothing advice.

Fans and aid station staffers were unbelievable - especially considering the horrible weather!

The course should have been very beautiful (around White Rock Reservoir) + running through some very attractive neighborhoods . . . but the rain and bad weather sort of ruined all of that.