

“Kings and Queens of the Road” Marathon in Blacksburg SC – Trip Notes
April 9-12, 2010



Winner of Overall Female Diane, with Annette and Diana

Diane was our First Queen for setting up this marathon. When Myrtle Beach Marathon got snowed out on Valentine’s Day she went into battle-mode and saved quite a few Marathon Maniacs who desperately needed South Carolina in order to complete their 50-state quest(s). Herself included. Jefferson was our First King for having volunteered to create this marathon. I suspect he expected more than 14 participants but fortunately we 14 were very grateful and made due effort to impart our appreciation to him. I can truly say that this is one marathon out of many that I will surely not forget and will be a treasured memory.

The logistics

Most of us flew into Charlotte airport and then drove about 20 minutes to either Gastonia NC (David and I) or Kings Mountain/Shelby NC (the rest, other than those who were camping at Kings Mountain) for our hotels and then about 20 minutes over the border to SC for the marathon.

While I’m not one of the Maniacs or even a serious 50-stater, I wanted to be with my friends and to support their effort. I’m glad I did. It had been thrilling to be with David Williams last month for his 50-state marathon completion at B&A in MD so to be with Rob Klein and David Reid for their completion was irresistible. Even better, I got to know Annette Wulffe better while running with her over the Kings Mountain course for over 6 hours. Annette, David and I, with Lis Cooper for awhile, were partnered enough in speed (or lack of it) and there were enough hills, turns and ways to get lost to need to stay with other runners.

The course – we all loved it! Despite the high hills, gravel and/or dirt roads, and sometimes bright and hot-hot-hot sunshine, we loved it. The company was the best and the scenery equaled the effort and the entire trip was well worth it.



The amenities – we didn't expect much and we got hugely more than 14 runners deserved. There were good course markings, two port-a-potties, about 5 fluid stations stocked with bananas, oranges, trail bars, cookies and Gatorade given by smiling young and good looking runners. At the end there were practically awards for all as well as the promised gift in lieu of a medal – a canning jar mug with gold painted "Kings & Queens of the Mountain" Marathon and the date. T-shirts are promised via mail and customized sizes.

Thank you Jefferson! He's a young fellow from Clemson University but not so young that he hadn't managed other races. He had a good support staff and a hospitable southern attitude. Had we known how much extra effort he was putting into it we might have increased our bag of gifts (smile) as we'd brought him a bottle of champagne autographed by all the runners, a pair of Texas flag colors running shorts, a bag of tangerines, and all sorts of goodies represented by the states we came from.

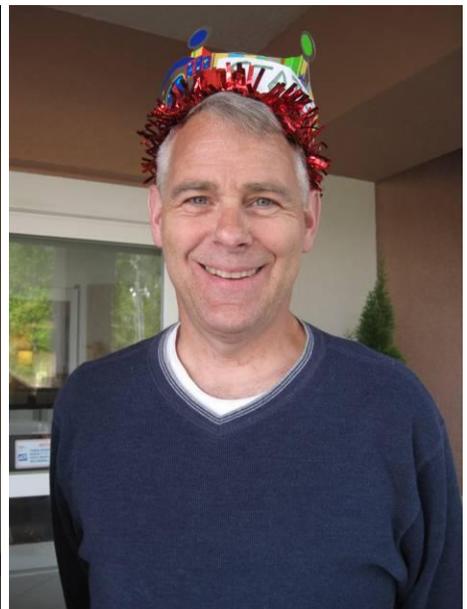
The players – here are some of the Maniacs who attended: Rob Klein and David Reid finishing their 50-states quest. Diana with Charlotte (who came to celebrate but not to run this time). David Williams who just finished his 50-states.



The dinner – thank you Annette for setting it up! We celebrated in Gastonia at Milano's Italian Restaurant and it served us very well. Southern Belle Charlotte Johnson was visiting family nearby and joined us for the dinner but having just completed the Knoxville TN marathon and being a devoted daughter, she was off to visit family instead of running and had disciplined herself by NOT bringing running shoes so as not to be tempted.



Then the finish line celebrations! Diane won the Crown for overall female and then Jefferson had made crowns for 50-state finishers David and Rob. (Hey you single gals – Rob is soon to be single too and he’s sure to have a line formed at his door by then.)



But here – let Annette tell you about the weekend. She says it so well and with such humor that its silly for me to try:

First her email caveat which created a frenzy of reply emails saying “Don’t stop! We love your reports just like they are!” Dear friends: I really have to write these reports for myself and my files as I have already forgotten so much about the first 30 states I have done and seriously regret that I did not keep details, I only send them on to you for a couple of reasons some of you might be considering these races, others ask me what I am up and other friends I just want to share these with. I know my writing and grammar skills are poor to say the least, but no excuse I know I do them quickly as I have so little free time and strongly encourage those of you who are sick of getting these to delete now before opening the attachments. For those of you who read thanks. I look forward to seeing many of you soon Happy running Happy spring EVERYONE. Annette -- "Forget the potholes in the road and celebrate the journey ahead"

Kings and Queens of the Road Marathon April 10th 2010
Kings Mountain Military Park, SC
Put on by Adventure Geek Productions - Race Director Jefferson Nicholson
State 39 Marathon 41

What a hoot. This race was specifically arranged for a couple of Marathon Maniacs and 50-staters that had the misfortune to be snowed out on Valentine's Day in Myrtle Beach, SC this year. A dear running friend of mine Diane Bolton, Nashville is due to complete her round of running a marathon in all 50 states this June and really needed to get SC completed so AK and HI could be numbers 49 and 50 for her. She did some searching and found an Easter Bunny Run (half marathon in Clemson, SC last weekend) She contacted the Race Director, Jefferson Nicholson, to see if he could add a second loop to the half for us but he was unable to. Still determined to come through for fellow runners Jefferson took it upon himself and organized his first ever marathon! He called it Kings and Queens of the Road and held it in the Kings Mountain National Military Park in Kings Mountain SC. and Kings Mountain State Park. If any of you have been there or nearby it is between Gastonia, SC and Charlotte, NC, a lovely area of the country. Earlier last week temperatures had reached a very unseasonable 90's and the pollen was intense even for those used to it. A fellow Maniac from NC described the streets as "puke green" with the stuff and sent me survival tips, sunglasses, inhalers etc! Lucky for us a little rain fell on Thursday and or Friday and really cleaned things up.

I flew into Charlotte, NC on a very early flight on AA, problem free we left and arrived on time, actually slept reroute. Heel pain very much in evidence from the PF as well as a newly diagnosed heel spur and the best part.....had spent three hours Thursday in CDH ER (girl stuff, not cured yet, but had a marathoning ER doc who was super cool and gave me the go ahead to run conservatively!) Gotta love a running doctor they totally understand the insanity we deal with. Charlotte is a great airport, I flew in a couple years ago and Concourse B through E are really nice, A is just ok. Lots of good food, stores, and those wonderful rocking chairs in front of the huge sun filled windows plus lots of quiet places to relax. I had a couple of hours before meeting my friend from Nashville. Diane and I ended up not renting a car but instead getting a ride from new friends David Reid MM and Rob Klein MM from CO., both men would be completing their first round of all 50 states tomorrow! We were staying outside of the park in Kings Mountain at a very nice Holiday Inn Express, clean quiet and inexpensive. Hotel was more than accommodating with a very late check out (after 3 pm) and a full breakfast that started at 6 am. We were able to take advantage of it as we were only a few miles from the start and the race was to start at 8 am due to the fact that the park opens at 7 and RD had to set up the course.

One member of our party had a 3pm flight home to NJ and she and others were concerned what the course would be like. The website, turn by turn directions and elevation chart left us thinking a course drive would be a very good idea to calm our many reservations about what good buddy Diane had gotten us into! We piled into a couple of cars met up with more friends, Diana Burton also NJ, Tracey Newenhouse NJ, Lis Cooper OR and David Williams TX. David Reid had turn-by-turn directions and we followed him. Oh boy it was gonna be interesting come race day. Hardly any street signs, lots and lots of big rocks to run over and hills and hills and hills. Looks like potty breaks would definitely be au natural and the RD mentioned a sweep car would be on the course with us and would supply TP! We finished the tour and Diane wondered if her friends might be planning a little lynching as several of us wondered if we would be lost on the course. While parked in the State Park lot, we meet the park ranger who nicely asked for our parking pass. We had neglected to buy one. He gave us a pass on buying one as we mentioned we were there for the next day's marathon, but not before he mentioned how unhappy the State Park and National Park were about the marathon plans. Uh Oh never good to have the feds angry with you! We were nice and thanked him and promised to be good little runners.

Now for my big debut as pasta party planner. Diane Bolton usually does this with a lot of grace and style but I offered to give her a break. Last month I Googled Pasta Blacksburg, SC and came up with half a dozen possibilities, quickly dismissed a couple of chain restaurant names and settled on Milano's. For those of you who have traveled out of state with me, you might remember I enjoy finding two things local beer and local food. They graciously offered to accommodate any size group we might present. Stupidly I looked at websites that rated the restaurant and found hugely contradictory reviews some that even mentioned the words Chef Boyardee. We could have been in trouble but my fears were soon relieved when we drove into Gastonia and found Milano's to be a lovely place. Dinner was fine and a tradition was continued when Diana Burton presented each "to be" 50 State Finisher with autographed bottles of Champagne. Both men were delighted and encouraged to open their gifts Saturday afternoon! Another 50 stater Jean from KY who was making SC State 46 joined us. She has walked all her states and brought her husband.

A good night sleep and woke at 6 am (5 IL time). Our neighbors, military personnel, were pretty quiet, the weather was perfect, chilly clear skies and the promise of 70 and more sunshine) we assembled our gifts for Jefferson and were off. Everyone bought a running related item from their home state and several were very well thought out! One member of our group had headed out to the park early, hoping for a chance to run 4 or 5 miles before the official start as the 3 pm flight home was gonna be another kind of race for her. We spotted her with a big smile on her face as we turned into the park already running! Our group numbered about 14 for the full and 2 for half. We posed for a silly start picture and I found my running partners. I was pretty sure that I would be lost even with my reading glasses and a turn-by-turn map in my baggie. I really wanted to talk with Diana Burton, as we had only met briefly in during Happy Hour in Indianapolis after the Monumental Marathon last fall. We had been emailing each other throughout the winter and spring and I was looking forward to getting to know this very interesting well-traveled lady. She runs my pace and together with David Williams we were off.

Kings Mountain National Military Park was the Battle of Kings Mountain occurred was considered the turning point for the Revolutionary War, as it was the first significant Patriot victory following the demise of the Continental Army at Charlotte and Camden. The course was marked every two miles and Jefferson had enlisted some friends to assist at the aid stations. He supplied more than we had anticipated. Gatorade, water cups of sliced oranges, bananas, cookies and more. The volunteers were absolutely delightful and never let on that they were spending a glorious Saturday afternoon catering to our fanatical quests instead of their own. Spent time as usual posing for pictures and taking some of the local scenery. The course was hilly and some were quite long. Much of the route was on a rocky unpaved almost a service type road but was easy to run on. We were in two different parks the State as well as National park. We went by some beautiful pastures, cows grazing, some creeks, historical markers noting the Revolutionary March trails, blooming azaleas, wisteria and dogwoods, lots of dogs; none appearing any too friendly, most chained except for one little fella, a beagle with a gimpy leg that decided to run onto and down the state road portion with us for a spell. I gather he gave up when the limp, fake or otherwise failed to earn him any treats. We passed a farm that had probably a hundred Martin houses, only these were in the shape of white hens actually a lot like the White Hen Pantry logo and next door was a simple shack like home with lots and lots of laundry hanging out on the front porch and spilling into the yard. The race was a loop with two short out and backs and enabled us to note our new acquaintance Jean the marathon walker was not far behind and past the halfway point had actually passed us. A support car drove the course and checked in many times with us, which was great. TP prominently displayed on the dashboard. While Diana and David wanted us to finish in a three-way tie for last I really wanted the chance to claim dead last for myself. Now had this been a race of triple digit runners or more I doubt I would have wanted the glory of being last but it was fun to add this to my accomplishments or lack of. I finished up with enough time to ensure I would make my 5 pm flight home and was able to spend a little time

chatting and thanking Jefferson before heading back for a shower and photo time. If you get a chance do look up his website, he is a terrific organizer and really follows through for his runners. As we approached the hotel lobby door out strides royalty, Diane Bolton, Rob Klein and David Reid all sporting crowns, the best at least to me is a very accurate replica of the Parkay Margarine commercial velvet crown worn by the women's overall winner, Diane. She and Rob kept theirs on throughout the airport and elicited many fun comments from fellow travelers and airport personal. It was a wonderful short weekend to accomplish another state and I am looking forward to May 2nd NJ where we again celebrate the completion of 50 states for good friend Tim Marquardt, IL who has worked really hard in only, I think, barely two years to achieve his first round even while battling injury. End

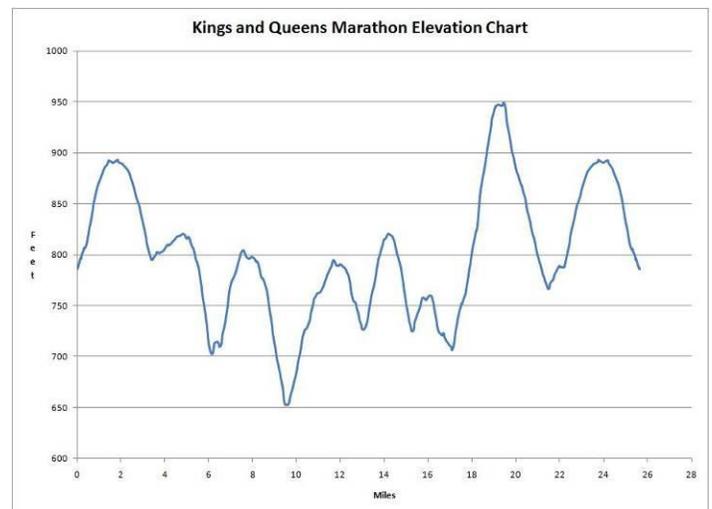
See what I mean? Who wouldn't want to run with Annette! And who would try to write such an interesting report instead of using her's?

Results

Think hills and more hills. Here's an elevation chart.

We knew that we had to be out for a good time and that we did. We even stopped and chatted with the fluid station folks. At the end Annette insisted on being the last to cross the finish line. Here's our total numbers. How often can you cut and paste in the entire group of participants?

Bolton Diane	Full Marathon	5:00:21
Burton Diana	Full Marathon	6:11:17
cooper elisabeth	Full Marathon	5:26:45
Klein Rob	Full Marathon	5:04:40
McDonaldMary	Full Marathon	6:02:42
NewenhouseTracey	Full Marathon	4:49:18
Reid David	Full Marathon	5:19:51
reid jean	Full Marathon	5:52:21
Sinclair Joe	Full Marathon	5:15:08
Snuggs JOHN L	Full Marathon	4:22:36
Temblador Silvana	Full Marathon	5:15:23
TRUE Lee	Full Marathon	3:58:15
Williams David	Full Marathon	6:11:15
Wulffe Annette	Full Marathon	6:11:27



Me? I think this was my 57th marathon finish and I'm *still* on my 36th state though after 2010 and those I've paid for there are only 5 states remaining. It is unlikely that I'll "finish 50-states" but I'll sure tour in a lot of destinations. Well, one could say that I'm on my 7th time around for New York State - having completed 5 NYC Marathons, Buffalo and Lake Placid.

Next up? Wow, I don't know that it will work but one week later will be Salt Lake City Marathon, a trip to family in K.C., followed by NJ's half marathon while all those 50-staters celebrate their completions here, followed by Capon Valley WVA 50K over Mothers Day, Boise's Marathon in May, a week's hiking the Grand Canyon later May, another week's hiking the Columbia River Gorge after some days in Portland touring early June, the Pacific Crest Trail Marathon later June, touring in Washington DC and Philadelphia with little Marie from late June through July 12th and Rio's Marathon in July.

Touring with David

David had declared that now that his 50-state quest was completed, he'd stop a bit to smell the roses. I have plenty of experience at that and had just the day before returned from a week's worth of smelling Los Angeles' roses and would return home for a mere two days before heading off to Salt Lake City and see what roses they could supply. Plus I was incentivized to stay over another day for

a major airfare discount (smile). I had moments of thinking I'd misled the poor guy about touring with me but we ended up finding plenty to do despite North Carolina nearly closing down on Sunday and Monday.

Kings Mountain is both a state park and a military park, side by side. We'd run through both. David and I toured the museum one day and returned the day after the marathon to hike the battlefield trail.



Botanical Gardens – I'd heard that some visit the region specifically to tour the 110-acre botanical gardens and I can agree that it was at least worth a visit if in the area. It's not quite Longwood Gardens but getting close. There was an art competition of park benches ongoing and that coupled with butterflies throughout we had a delightful half day through the gardens and conservatory. Middle picture is David and Diana reflected in the glass of an orchid collection.





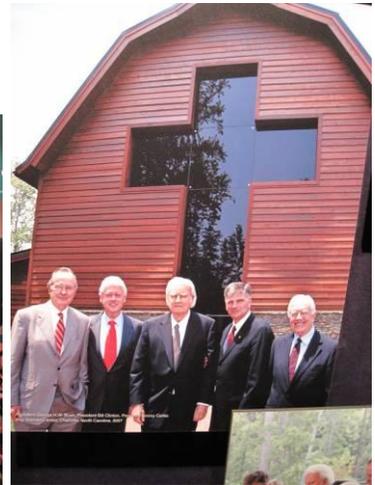
Cracker Barrel Restaurant – who knew that eating at a Cracker Barrel would be an experience. Everyone should try at least once eating what Annette calls ‘gray food’ full of grease, oil and gravy. It’s also the shopping experience.

Charlotte – The Queen City. As a city she can be a surprisingly lovely experience. Big gorgeous buildings, a few parks, lots of sculptures, and plenty of walk through downtown malls. (Note - that’s The Queen as in Britain, not Queens like in San Francisco – drats.) I’d been in Charlotte for the December 2008 marathon and felt sure that an afternoon and evening would be worthy of our time. Little did I know that the tourist office would be closed, the trolleys not running, no tours offered, the shops and many of the businesses totally shut down. So without a tour guide we walked some of the famous historical Fourth Ward of Victorian houses, a couple parks and through a few of the architecturally significant buildings. At a local bar I had champagne and David had a lush chocolate dessert but that was the end of our Downtown Charlotte experience.



Billy Graham Library – Who would guess that someone who has traveled to visit the Presidential Libraries would have the surprising opportunity to tour the Billy Graham Library. (I’d just come from Ronald Reagan’s in Simi Valley and Richard Nixon’s in Yorba Linda.) Billy Graham who has been adviser to many presidents (and who I’ve seen in many of the presidential libraries) was born and grew up in the Charlotte area, with not only his family home on view but a newly renovated Library quite near to the airport. It had just re-opened from renovation on the day we toured.

Note the picture of three presidents with Billy Graham, probably taken at wife Ruth’s funeral, and at the Billy Graham Library.



Fascinating was the last room and exit. It had a Thomas Kinkaid wall mural and archways of lights. As was wife Ruth's exit from this world – she asked to have her tombstone read: “End of Construction – Thank you for your patience.” She'd seen the sign at the end of a highway construction project and requested this.

I did have to remind the lovely volunteers that I was there to see it as a museum, not to be “born again” and there were times that David and I both wondered if they'd let us out if we didn't repent our sins right there on the spot, but 99% of it was a good tour. We saw videos, museum mementos, and a few very creative rooms all set in a new building complex. I'd recommend it to anyone and can only guess that it was NOT in the AAA guide because it'd been closed, or maybe because it was religiously oriented. It's said that Billy Graham at age 91 didn't want featured at all so it was a good

in-between. It's also said that he's well enough, though mostly home bound, that he's writing his next sermon and hoping for a come-back. His last public appearance was in NYC maybe in 2008.

Penguin Drive In

Featured on the Food Network, listed as the best hamburger in the world by *Gourmet Magazine*, and winner of a huge number of awards, this little dinky old drive in restaurant gave us our second BBQ experience. And fried pickles! It was David's birthday and all he got was a banana pudding.



The end

We left the Charlotte area happily since David and I both got upgraded to First Class on our way home.

Itinerary

Fri, Apr 9 - Diana and Tracey

8:05am Depart Newark via CO#2971 (snack)

10:13am Arrive Charlotte

Rental Car arranged by David Williams

- David

7:30am Depart Houston via CO#3032

11:02am Arrive Charlotte

Hotel Fairfield Inn by Marriott – 2 rooms for 3 nights
1860 Remount Road, Gastonia, NC 28054 Tele 704 867 5073

Tourist Town of Gastonia is interesting with many restaurants and shops; AAA gem history museum in Gastonia; Daniel Stowe's Botanical Gardens about 15 minutes away.

5:00pm Dinner at Milano Italian Restaurant, 904-C S. New Hope Rd., Gastonia, NC 28054
Tele: (704) 854-3946 <http://milanorestaurant.biz/index.html> arranged by Annette
14 people including Charlotte Johnson

Hotel Holiday Inn Express – 1 room for 3 nights
100 Woodlake Parkway, Kings Mountain, NC 28086 Tele 704 734 0014

Sat, Apr 10

8:00 AM Marathon start time

Kings Mountain State Park, 1277 Park RD, Blacksburg, SC 29702

Description: Challenging, but not crazy, this course is designed to be just tough enough to showcase the Kings and Queens of the Road! The marathon course consists of two 13.1 mile loops that start and end in the heart of Kings Mountain State Park. Those participants in the half marathon will complete just one loop. This is a rolling course (think the difference between a golf course and the little engine that could.) The good news is the last two miles of each loop is downhill!

This race has become a benefit event as we have found something better than ourselves to support. A large portion of the proceeds from this race will be used to support our fellow runner and beloved friend Cierra Burchfield. This summer after graduating from Clemson University with a B.S. in Biological Sciences Cierra will embark on The World Race, an 11-month Christian mission trip to 11 different countries around the world. Connected with an organization called Adventures In Missions (AIM), The World Race is an 11-month Christian mission trip to eleven different countries around the world. However, it is not your typical mission experience. Through adventure, ministry, community, and self-discovery, teams of 50-60 young men and women, broken into squads of 4 to 8, are challenged to abandon a traditional lifestyle in exchange for a dramatic paradigm shift, swarming the planet for nearly a year, serving in orphanages, medical clinics, economically-depressed and spiritually-oppressed areas of the world. The best part of the World Race is that it is only the start of a life-long journey.

Awards: Top three overall male and female for each race; Best Theme dressed participant; GeezerJock (oldest finisher); Age group awards will be determined based on the size of the finishing field.

Mon Apr 12 - Diana

5:05pm Depart Charlotte via CO#1408 (no meal)
7:09pm Arrive Newark

- David

5:55pm Depart Charlotte via CO#2565
7:48pm Arrive Houston

Participants

Annette Wulfte, IL (MM 813) *****) Arriving CLT 9:28am; depart Sat 5:00-5:50

David Reid, CA (MM 107 ***) – 50th** Arriving CLT at 9:40am (Delta from ATL); depart 6:20 AM Sun. I have a CAR Fri AM till Sat PM. Staying Fri at Holiday Inn Express Kings Mt sharing with Rob and Sat at Comfort Suites at CLT sharing with Lis - they have a shuttle for Sun AM flight.

Tracey Newenhouse, NJ (MM 1793 **)** Arriving CLT 10:13am (CO from Newark) depart 3:30pm Sat flight.

Diana Burton, NJ Arriving CLT 10:13am (CO from Newark) depart Monday afternoon Fairfield Inn, Gastonia sharing car with David W. flight.

Elisabeth (Lis) Cooper, OR (MM 1224 ***)** Arriving CLT 10:57 (Delta 1619 from ATL); depart 6:20 am Mon 4/10 flight.

David Williams, TX (MM 1955 ***)** Arriving CLT 11:02am (CO from Houston) depart Monday afternoon Fairfield Inn, Gastonia CAR

Rob Klein, CO (MM 641 ***) – 50th** Arriving CLT 11:56 am (US Air) depart Saturday at 6:15 pm. Staying and riding with David Reid flight.

Diane Bolton, TN (MM 1233 ***)** Arriving CLT noon Fri, depart 5:50pm Sat CAR flight.

Mary McDonald, VA
John L. Snuggs, VA (MM 2045 **)
Jean Reid, KY (MM 1047 ***)**

Participant contact info – see above for current flight info:

Diane Bolton – cell 615 330 3425 - arriving Charlotte Friday at noon and departing at 5:50 on Saturday. Staying at Holiday Inn Express Kings Mountain - dee1444@comcast.net
Instigator of this marathon.

Diana Burton – cell 732 804 7514 but does not work at home which is 732 671 7045 - see travel schedule above – dianab@juno.com

David Williams – cell 713 962 3394 - see travel schedule above - dowsley@sbcglobal.net

Lis Cooper – cell: 503 891-4374 - Traveling from the west coast on a red-eye Thursday night arriving Charlotte via Delta at 10:57am Friday morning. Rooming with Kathy Kass at the Holiday Inn near the race. Departing CLT via Delta Sunday morning at 6:20am. Staying near CLT airport Saturday night with David Reid. dougnlis@teleport.com “Not sure who all I'm sharing cars with - probably depends on who arrives in CLT close to my time -- most likely Diane Bolton. Return share with David Reid.”

Annette Wulffe - arriving in Charlotte 9:28am Friday and driving in w/Diane Bolton and staying w/her at Holiday Inn Express Kings Mountain. We both depart between 5 and 5 50 pm Saturday.
annettewulffe@yahoo.com

Tracey Newenhouse – cell 732-539-9213 tanewenhouse@aol.com – arriving CLT on same flight as Diana above and departing at 3:30pm Saturday - staying at Holiday Inn Express Kings Mountain - has Budget rental car. Asking for early start.

David Reid – celebrating his 50th state – Home: 909-338-5061 or Cell: 909-645-7062 - runner92325@verizon.net – arriving from California on red eye arriving CLT at 9:40am Friday and departing 6:20am Sunday. Rooming at Holiday Inn with Rob; Saturday at Comfort Suites at CLT sharing with Liz. They have a shuttle for Sunday AM flight.

John Snuggs – cell 804 398 8602 - john.snuggs@capitalone.com - driving to Charlotte with family on Friday arriving around 6 PM - happy to shuttle anyone to the airport on Sunday morning.

Rob Klein - rockymtnrunner131@comcast.net

Jean Reid - jmreid4521@gmail.com

Race Directors: Jefferson Nicholson, 864-247-6735, jeffern@clemson.edu
Kristen Thomas, 803-487-1052, kfthoma@clemson.edu