



Lenox Marathon Trip Notes
With Lake George, Saratoga and Kingston with Marie
May 23-31, 2012

Tanglewood is known throughout the world as the home of music and this was the start and the finish of the Memorial Day Marathon (MDM) in Lenox Massachusetts in the heart of the Berkshires. The grounds and the views of the lake are lovely but the actual stage (above) is rather non-descript. The numbers who attend are more prone to be spectators while picnicking on the massive lawns.

Marathon Pros

- Lovely area for a vacation in heart of the Berkshires with lots of tourist sites such as Norman Rockwell's museum and studio; Edith Wharton's estate; lakes; Mount Graylock where you can see five states from the top after you drove or hiked the 8 miles up; Stockbridge home and site of Rockwell's paintings; West Stockbridge old historical village; Pittsfield; Botanical Gardens; Chesterwood home of famous statue artist (Abe Lincoln in DC); Kripalu Yoga Retreat.
- Registration is super cheap if early and easy and funds go to a veterans group.
- Email reminders and instructions were excellent though somehow I had trouble figuring out the course map since it was a Google Map overlay.
- Easy bib pick up at starting/finish area on Tanglewood grounds with loads of close parking.
- Start and finish easy and at same location again on Tanglewood grounds.
- No need for porta-potties at start or finish since Tanglewood is set up for zillions.
- Friendly volunteers that just couldn't do enough to help.
- T-shirt was well designed and a good quality tech shirt; also shirt for volunteers (brownish color) was nice and it was tech too.
- Course is very interesting with view changes continually.
- Finish line is left open for 7 hours if needed and last year a 7:23 even got counted. Cones get pulled up at a 6:30 rolling time however.
- Medal is a cute dog tag that's personalized. Yes, the medal is on the white shirt but pretty small and hard to see.
- Maniacs come in droves so I wonder if there's limited number of MA marathons. See pics below.



Marathon Cons

- Pasta dinner is not recommended. Though it was at the famous Red Lion Inn in Stockbridge with white tablecloth and candles, plus excellent food, it was to be at 5:30 cocktails and 6:30 dinner but no food started until 7:15 after lots of announcements; noted speaker was



disappointing and gave all of 5 minutes if that; the room was extremely noisy and the cost was \$27.50. We left after the main course and that was about 8:40.

- Spectators are pretty limited. However, runners are well entertained with good course scenery.
- Food on course is non-existent and I mean not even GU. Limited Gatorade too.
- Course is extremely hilly and some headlines say it's the "toughest on the east" which I can't believe but it was very, very hard.
- Weather can be hot and we got to at least 88 degrees.
- Volunteer numbers are sufficient but limited. For instance, Marie was alone with the 20 mile fluid station for set up, fill up and clean up before some of the earlier fluid station folks came along to help at the end.
- Bugs can be a problem, especially for volunteers. We all got multiple bites and should have had bug spray.

Marathon photos

Such cute picture of Carol and me on page 2 of the pictures but I'm not into buying them! Darn. And they wisely keep us from copying even the proofs.

<http://orders.racephotonetwork.com/QPPlus/Images.aspx>



The Starting Line was about as simple as you can get. Remember there were only 138 runners. Best of all, this would be near the finish line too. And near our expo, and our car, and the real toilets. All very positive and convenient.



Almost across the street and at the first of our marathon course is the famous Kripalu Yoga Retreat where I've been many, many times, and as recently as late January this year. I will go again soon. Said to be one of the best spas in the country but a world apart from Canyon Ranch which is in the same town, it's situated on old Indian Burial Grounds; not until a Jesuit Seminary built this building did anything last very long. There were a series of deaths, fires and disasters to include some old ruins from a Carnegie mansion that still remain.



Views from the course and then came Lisa and her husband, friends of Diane from the Albany area, who were our saviors with the only food we would get on the course. Well, other than that which I begged from another spectator later. Lisa brought us orange segments and PB&J sandwiches. Bless them!



This guy was probably the winner but I bet he set no records in the heat. Then came the fire engine being polished for the upcoming Memorial Day Parade, then more lovely scenery which just kept getting oooohhhs and aaaahhhs.



We were certainly into taking our time. We knew the finish line would stay open, it was hot, it was hilly, there was good company, Carol had a knee situation (with injected rooster comb), and I rather preferred not having to hurry. We did come in something before 7 hours -- maybe around 6:54. There were only three of us in the 60-69 age group and Barb took 1st place as age 62 then Carol and I came in together for the only others in that age frame.



A couple of these houses were up at Prospect Hill where Marie and I drove up the day before with wonderment that the car could make it but admiring the view all the same. There is a Retreat at the top with a Lourdes Cave and Holy Water too. We filled up just in case.



Yep, you are seeing those porta-potties correctly. It took guts to go into these Leaning Towers of Toilets and it reminded me of returning to the Yakima River Canyon course route and seeing our porta-potty having been blown down the cliff and into the river.

Into Touring

As a reminder, some of us do these marathons as much for the touring and refuse to go to any marathon not worthy of a few days with good tourist offerings. We all have different goals and sometimes we get confused – like when I start counting the numbers of marathons or think of joining one of the many number counting clubs. Something about keeping one's feet on the ground ? Husband Tom helps remind me after I'm with too many Maniacs that are so Maniac that I find myself returning to the 'counting' mode. But make no mistake, while I don't get it (well, part time I do get it) I DO support it and I'm all for different goals and I've been to plenty of 50-state and/or 100 marathon events/celebrations and taken many gifts and celebrated folks making THEIR goals. Certainly my goals could change too and I've been careful to Never Say Never.



We drove up to Mount Graylock which is the highest point in the area and where generally you can see five states from up on top. This day we would be in the clouds and as you can see we climbed

up to be more in the clouds. The last picture is a picture of a picture as we didn't see any blue skies here. Some hikers were on the Appalachian Trail and had just seen two bears wander through moments before we arrived. The Lodge accommodates hikers and simple overnight accommodations. There were various turn out and look out points on the drive up, and then the drive down the other side of the mountain was long and tiring but worth it. One can hike up. Here is Marie at the Lodge.



This was my third trip to the Norman Rockwell Museum and I'd go again. The museum is an AAA GEM and has changing exhibits. We took the docent tour and also went through his studio that's on the grounds as are other special homes.



Rockwell painted himself into pictures oftentimes and this one was not available this time but on loan to a museum in Montreal.



These church structures – all different – are in Stockbridge which was Norman Rockwell’s home, site of his original studios, and home to many of his models. We all first knew the Rockwell pictures from the front of Saturday Evening Post and then Look magazines and most all had messages implanted. He didn’t like when he was commissioned to paint the Presidents as there was no message potential. NASA has a collection of his work too.



We drove to the special city of Great Barrington and walked the pedestrian streets and bought tickets for a famous Flamenco Dancer show that would be after the marathon. We would later be inside this Mahaiwe Theatre but Saturday was our touring of the town. Judy had called it another Boulder and I agree.



Up on top of Prospect Hill, where we would go on the marathon course, was this Site of Religious Retreat yet to be fully figured out. Here Marie wanted Holy Water but was afraid to venture out. I did. We needed it. I’d had champagne in the high-80s temperatures of Great Barrington and was fairly dehydrated.



After the marathon we would venture back to Great Barrington about 45 minutes away to this historical theatre and see the Flamenco dancers. They were said to be the best traveling show of dancers known.



With Diane's sister Heather, resident of Lake George, guiding us, Lake George area a couple hours north into the Adirondacks, would come alive. An old estate had been converted to an antique store that was fuller than anything I'd ever seen since my folk's home who had been in the antique business for much of their adult lives and couldn't part with anything.



In Bolton Landing (no relation apparently) a garden center had not only flowers but wine holders in the form of boozed up moose. Plus the Bolton Museum.



From the landing where everybody but Diana put their feet into the water we could see the island with Sagamore Hotel located on it and where we'd go later. The town of Bolton Landing had chairs for every size and everyone had to check them out.



Diana and Marie, then sisters Heather and Diane, and still another giant chair/swing for Marie.



The Sagamore, front and back, situated on a huge plot of land that's an island but connected with a small causeway.



That's a croquet set. Here we are sitting in the back yard but lake side of the Sagamore waiting to get beer poured onto our laps. (God help that cute young waiter!) Laura and Diane, then Sisters Diane and Heather who claim they didn't intend to dress alike that day.



Marie had a Shirley Temple. We needed the hard stuff by then. Here's the back side of the hotel, then an old wooden boat that's used for tours and also as a floating restaurant.



Marie wanted her picture taken with the Ferrari (a California model) with the intent of buying one herself one day. This is good. She needs to make a very lot of money.

Next day we are off to Wiawaka Women's Retreat on the shores of Lake George closer to the Village. It was good timing for us because a couple hours later the storms would come and many of the trees would not be left standing and damage was said by the news reports to be extensive. All so sad in that they had just worked days to get ready for the opening. We toured inside and out and walked the grounds.





Some of the birch trees had been carved into Birch Women. Here are two of them plus a close up. Pretty unique and well done. You'll see by Diane's pictures later here that we walked the boat house and water's edge too.



The weather was pretty dismal for a boat trip but the sights were great nonetheless and the commentary was good.



This is the boathouse of Wiawaka that would be damaged in the hour after our boat trip. Some of the boathouses matched the estates and had won awards.



A cute wee passenger on the tour boat who wasn't too interested in the estates we were passing.



The middle picture was a private island with one house on it. The last is the Broadway restaurant, managed by Dan, Sister Heather's husband, and sitting just feet away from their house in the middle of Lake George Village. Soon to be very damaged Lake George.



From sun and cruising, to a drive to Lake Luzerne which got diverted by the hail, to sitting under the underpass with row after row of cars trying to avoid the damage, to Heather picking up her peonies that would be devastated for the year and deciding to at least enjoy them in a vase.

It had been 94 degrees when we started the tour cruise, then the storms came and it reduced to 67 degrees. Here we are with piles of hail about 3 ½ hours after it had come down but still nearly golf ball size.



Heather's home shingles looked like bullet holes. All her car windows and one side of her house windows were gone. Diane's rental car was flooded in the trunk and backseat with glass shattered into the front seat. Eventually the rental car company would send a wrecker and then a substitute car so she could catch her plane back to Nashville. It would be a day all of Lake George would remember.

Weather report from the scene as sent to Tom

Sister's house devastated. Holes all over the wooden shingles. House windows broke. Her car has most windows cracked. Pieces off it. Limbs and leaves all over the place. Diane's car back window gone and back seat and trunk full of water. Despite the earlier 94 degree heat piles of hail remain at the fence. Its a couple hours later. I have picture of nickel size balls. Oops now it's about three hours later and I just took picture of hail almost golf ball size. Sister Heather has good attitude. Just picked up piles of peonies to save in a vase. We are sitting on her back porch with wine. Everyone needs it. Don't know if rental car replacement will get here in time but I can drive them to airport. Just found limbs from the red maple a block away.

Still touring the next day

Though the destruction was everywhere it was just messy and roads were clear enough so we went up to the top of Mount Prospect where we allegedly were to be able to see 5 states and 100 miles around. We drove part and hiked part.





Can you tell? We're in Saratoga home of the horse races. The tracks were not yet open but we drove around them anyway. After a tour of downtown we found the visitors center and a walking tour of the springs, both mineral and spring waters. Marie sampled each and every one. The downtown park is a treasure and one I remember from Tom and me walking the city.



Still in the downtown park, the water flows freely.



We would next do the Circular Drive walking/driving tour which features a number of big estates turned into B&Bs.



The North Broadway tour was best done by car as the estates were on huge lots and on the far end of town. At the end it took us into Skidmore College.



Before leaving our tours in Saratoga we got a very kind lead on an old 1600s building at the edge of town for a meal at Old Bryon Inn.



Next up but last stop on this sightseeing trip before heading home was Old Kingston, the first state capital of New York. We had a docent led tour of the Senate House and here's Marie sampling a unique chair, writing feather with solid ink and wax seals. Next up was the museum followed by another old building from the 1600s also called the Hoffman House where we ate Our Last Supper of the Trip outside on the patio in perfect weather – finally!



Diane's photos of Lenox and Saratoga



From the start of the marathon, then into Saratoga where we would later do the walking tour of springs – both mineral (heavy sulfur smell) and spring waters. Diane and Laura enjoyed the Saratoga Memorial Day parade.



In and around the Saratoga parks where the majority of the spring waters flowed.



Columbian Spring is a replica of a famous Greek fountain. Marie would sample from each and surprisingly thought the mineral waters with the heavy iron and sulfur was much like water she had purchased.

The fountain statue is by the creator of the Abraham Lincoln statue in DC and his home and gardens are available to tour near to Lenox. Called Chesterwood. Of course the Adirondack chair is famous in the area and we all took turns posing in this huge one on Lake George in the little village of Bolton Landing.



At Lake George, out on the island with the famous Sagamore Hotel. We had a drink. Well, some had a couple of drinks with the poor waiter having spilled the first two all over Laura and the ground and then offering to not charge for those. Honest. Laura didn't let him off the hook.



All taken at the Sagamore Hotel with the pool almost qualifying for an Infinity Pool.

Lake George weather - Thank heavens this didn't happen for the marathon. I heard other marathons were canceled for the heat but ours went on despite the 88 degrees at the end.

http://m.poststar.com/news/local/storm-lashes-region-with-high-winds-hail-and-rain/article_197b1ab6-a9e0-11e1-8fda-0019bb2963f4.html

LAKE GEORGE -- A fast-moving gale hammered the region late Tuesday afternoon, flooding roads, toppling trees and leaving power lines snaking across roads throughout the area. The National Weather Service earlier Tuesday issued a severe thunderstorm warning with the potential for tornadoes. No tornadoes were reported by area emergency officials, but the flooded streets and downed power lines stressed area responders. "We're overwhelmed," exclaimed one Washington County 911 dispatcher at about 5 p.m. The westerly gale slammed through Warren County, hitting the northern towns shortly after 4 p.m. before continuing its march through Saratoga County and Washington County. "There's at least 1 foot of water covering Beach Road," said Dave Harrington, village of Lake George Public Works superintendent. "It's flowing right across the road." "Golf ball-sized" hail smashed car windows in Lake George and injured a man caught outside when the storm hit, local emergency officials said. About 1 inch of water fell in Glens Falls between 3 and 6 p.m., most of which fell between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. when the storm ramped up, according to meteorologist Craig Borquin of North Country Weather. As the swift-moving low pressure system kept marching eastward, local emergency crews responded in geographic order. Lake George fire and emergency crews were dealing with downed lines and a few flooded buildings as early as 4:15 p.m., followed soon after by crews in Horicon and Queensbury. Hudson Falls crews rushed to toppled trees and a sparking power transformer at 4:57 p.m., while Greenwich squads took their turn at about 5:20 p.m. Almost every area town had multiple incidents of downed electrical wires, local officials said. Lightning strikes were blamed for multiple tree and power pole fires, officials reported. More than 5,000 area residents, largely in Glens Falls, Greenwich and Lake George, were without power as of 6 p.m., according to National Grid. Dix Avenue in Glens Falls was under about 6 inches of water, shortly after the squall blew through, as were Darwin Avenue and Sherman Avenue. Saratoga Springs city Police reported widespread flooding and damage as of 5:30 p.m. The worst of the system had passed through the region by 6 p.m., according to the National Weather Service. In Lake George, which was left waterlogged last year by Tropical Storm Irene, the way the recently installed infrastructure performed, and the overall lack of widespread damage, caught the attention of local officials.

Diane's photos of Lake George area and storm damage



Bank Café is on main Street of Lake George and right in front of Sister Heather's home. The doorway is a real bank safe. Never figured out why they had a collection of race award mugs.



Wiawaka is a women's retreat on the lakeshore. These are birch trees carved into statuary. The big trees would not be standing a couple hours later after the hail and wind storm. More on that subject.



Marie took our picture: Laura, Diane and Diana on the boat house dock which would be heavily damaged shortly thereafter.



We took the boat tour of the lake and at the end it started to rain. The next group out on the lake must have had a BIG experience with golf to tennis size hail raining down on them and heavy winds. I'm surprised they went out as tornado warnings were in the area.



The first car is mine while we were at the Outlet Stores. Meanwhile much heavier hail was pelting downtown Lake George resulting in Diane and Heather's cars being totally ruined. The hail was large enough to break most of the windows. My car was part time protected in an underpass resulting in only small pockmarks though some are larger than parking lot dings.

Someone else's words:

At mile 20 I thought I was dead.

At mile 22 I wished I was dead.

At mile 24 I knew I was dead.

At mile 26.2 I realized I had become too tough to kill.

Itinerary

Wed May 23

9:45pm Marie arrives to New Jersey from Kansas City

Thu May 24

Only free day to check clothes and prepare for car trip; eyeglasses appointment.

Fri May 25

Am Depart Middletown via car

Hotel Hampton Inn Lenox – 3 nights
445 Pittsfield Road, Lenox, MA 01240 Tele 413 499 1111

Directions in file: NY Thruway 87North to Exit 21A to 1-90 East Mass Turnpike; Exit 2 for US-20 West towards Lee/Lenox/Pittsfield; Right onto Main Street/US-20 West; Left onto West Center which is still US-2- West. Hotel on left after about 7 miles. 4-5 hours.

Sat May 26

9:30am Expo and bib pick up at Tanglewood

Also look in at sponsor Arcadian Shop, 91 Pittsfield Road, Lenox 01240

5:30pm Cocktails on Porch

6:30pm Pasta dinner at Red Lion Inn in Stockbridge (paid for 2.) “This year’s Pre-Race Pasta Dinner will once again be held at The Red Lion Inn and will again be hosted by Joy Bauer from The NBC Today Show. Only 85 tickets are available @ \$27 per person. In an effort to improve last year’s dinner we will have a private cocktail/appetizer area outside followed by the dinner upstairs in a private room. The dinner will sell out.”

Sun May 27

7:30am Line up – latest time

8:00am Starting time of 3rd annual MDM – Lenox – starting across street from Tanglewood
<http://www.memorialdaymarathon.com/> at Route 183 and West Hartshorne Road; 6:30 time limit

Parking lot: 283 West Street, Lenox on Tanglewood in East Lot.

Participants: Diane and Judy did Inaugural; Diane and Laura staying in Albany, Barb Wnek at host hotel Apple Tree; Kathy Kass

The course will start out on the road in front of the Saranac Mansion, just a short distance up the road from Tanglewood where late registration and parking will be. Runners will head up Richmond Mountain Rd. for .57 before making a right turn into the trail system. Runners then head North up the Baldhead Rd. Trail before making a left at Monk's Pond. Runners will then follow that trail before crossing Richmond Mountain Rd. and doing a 1.77 mile loop at Olivia's Overlook on the Walsh Trail. Water Station and EMT will be at the Olivia's Overlook location. Runners will then continue N by following the Burbank Trail for 1.93 miles before making a left turn onto the dirt portion of Reservoir Rd. After a short .4 miles, you will have a beautiful view of the Lenox Watershed, where a water station also awaits. Runners will then turn around and head back to Tanglewood by making a right turn back into the trail system and following the back side of the Burbank Trail which will lead back to Richmond Mountain Rd. Runners will exit the trail system and head back on the road for .67 miles before making a left turn and snaking their way up behind the Apple Tree Inn before a stunning downhill finish onto the grounds of Tanglewood.

Mon May 28

Depart via car to Lake George, home of Diane's sister

Directions: I-90 West towards Albany; I-787 North at Exit 6A towards Troy for 5.8 miles; Rt 7 West at Exit 9W towards I-87 Schenectady and Saratoga for 3.5 miles; I-87 North towards Saratoga and Glens Falls for 47 miles; Rt 9 North and South at Exit 21 towards Lake Luzerne/Hadley for .1 1/2 miles; left onto Rt 9 North. About 2 hours.

Hotel Hampton Inn and Suites Lake George – 3 nights
2133 Route 9, Lake George, NY 12845 Tele: 518 668 4100

Diane's sister Heather within a walk; Saratoga about half hour.

<http://www.lakegeorgesteamboat.com>

Re Lake George From Diane: some suggestions from my sister Heather. Holiday inn, Wyngate (both at beginning of village and longer walk you prob would not do if raining) marine village(old but I hear clean and right next door) the quality inn is directly across from fort William Henry and is definitely walking distance newer seems decent, then there would.

After Marathon –From Diane: Yes a trip into Saratoga, Lake George & Bolton Landing ...not sure which days best for this...thinking after? I will be staying at my parents race morning and drive up from there being that it is an hour away. After the year let's discuss options of things everyone would like to see. My sister has an older home in Lake George and would graciously tour around with us some. She also has a large dog...

I'd love to fit a few things in such as in Saratoga the Yaddo - <http://yaddo.org/yaddo/history.shtml>

Lake George a ride around the lake on the Minniehaha - www.lakegeorgesteamboat.com and travel into Bolton Landing enjoying a few quaint shops, and seeing the Sagamore grounds - <http://www.thesagamore.com/>

Lunch depending where we are. Also <http://www.fortticonderoga.org/>

From Judy: Hi. I liked the marathon, and the area was beautiful and interesting. The marathon was difficult for me because of the EXTREME uphill at the end...maybe they'll change that. Only 2 girls behind me when I finished! I rented a car and stayed in the town just town the street from Stockbridge (going AWAY from Lenox) called Great Barrington. I stayed at the Comfort Inn and it was fine, friendly and had a free breakfast. More important is the local casual brewery/restaurant that is across the street and down a little way from hotel (toward Stockbridge). Forgot the name, but you'll recognize it by how crowded the parking lot is. Great casual food and the locals go there! There is also a Holiday Inn Express nearby. "Downtown" Great Barrington is the other direction going away from Stockbridge. I have a special gift for making directions sound more complicated...it's not complicated...and the little towns are close to each other. Downtown Great Barrington had cute shops and restaurants. It reminded me of Pearl Street in Boulder, Colorado. There is a famous pricey-ish old inn, The Red Lion Inn in Stockbridge, on Main Street I think, where some stayed. Where did Diane stay? The only place I remember that MAY be close enough to walk to marathon start/finish would be the Kripala - something retreat which may be where you said you stayed/visited a bunch. Didn't know Diane Bolton was there, but of course I don't know what she looks like either. If you go, be sure to "dine"/visit the original Alice's Restaurant from Arlo Guthrie's song (in Stockbridge near Red Lion) and Rockwell's museum/studio down from Kripalu (is that the name? I kind of

remember that it sounded a little like the children's song "Skip to my lou"). Smallish race (probably bigger next year) and nice people.

From July 5/15/12 about Lenox area: Did you pick out some fun and interesting places for your upcoming time with Marie? Are you still going to Lenox, MA? I enjoyed the Norman Rockwell Museum and grounds, as well as the gift shop. I AM A GIFT SHOP JUNKIE. They moved Rockwell's artist studio from where he originally lived, to the area where the museum is. Of course, you may already know that, if you visited. I had a yummy lunch at the museum's little cafe, just outside the gift shop...sandwiches and the like.

The LITTLE old town of Great Barrington is not to be missed ...which I almost did! (Well, not to be missed if you like quaint little old touristy towns as I do.) It's in the direction away from Stockbridge and Lenox. The "downtown" reminded me a great deal of Boulder, CO, and of the street in Boulder called Pearl Street. Lots of ice cream parlors, shops and things that tourists like. If time allows, be sure to get a bite at the unimpressive looking restaurant/brewery across the street and down a little bit from my Comfort Inn. "My" Comfort Inn was between Stockbridge and "downtown" Great Barrington (no man's land I guess). The restaurant is a "Solar Brewery." That "solar brewed beer" info, along with the PACKED parking lot, should help you find the place.

In the city of Stockbridge, and just a hair down the street from The Red Lion Inn, and tucked down a path/driveway way in the back, is the original, one and only, honest to goodness "Alice's Restaurant" from Arlo Guthrie's song. The owner is younger than we are and bought the restaurant from I forgot whom...but said that he went to school with Arlo Guthrie's kids. It's a tiny tiny place with pizza, sandwiches and beer, etc. I went twice, because I felt "right and comfortable" in there.

Oh, and when you go pick up your bib, IF YOU ARE STILL PLANNING TO DO THE MEMORIAL DAY RACE...are you?...be sure to get some of the "COOKIEHEAD" brand cookies if they are there again with free samples, as well as cookies for sale. This is a delicious and very healthy cookie.