

Olathe Kansas Marathon Plus
March 25-31, 2009

Some updates since Little Rock:

- Charlotte NASCAR marathon last December was more exciting than I realized. Supposedly, my friend Monica Nop and I are in the 2009 registration/save-the-date brochure with a front page picture of a NASCAR race car.
- Guess what they gave me as an award for the Masters of the Year? A bar stool. Laugh when you think of me in my Lady Liberty crown, carrying a bar stool home for 8 blocks. It was nicely inscribed.
- Photo Shows for last month's Las Vegas and Death Valley trip are finally available on www.photoshow.com/members/tomskoj.

Straight to the headline - The Olathe Marathon was canceled

It was canceled due to a sudden and quick snow storm. Were we disappointed? Yes. Did we have a good weekend anyway? Yes. Would we find fault with the marathon organizers? No. (At the end I'll add my thank you note to the organizers as well as the press announcement of the cancelation.)



Disclosure statement

On my last marathon report I seemed to have failed to mention that the other Liberty Lady was with me. But please. It's a given that Maricar is with me. We ARE the Liberty Ladies. It's a headline and point of panic, disappointment, and shock when one runs without the other. I normally wouldn't be there without her. I wouldn't be a Liberty Lady without her. I might be home on the couch. So read all my reports as though they come from the BOTH Liberty Ladies. She gives input and goes through the trip reports before they are sent out. Always. Remember my 6 in '06 for my 60th? It was her idea and I never believed it possible. That 666 resulted in my often saying The Devil Made Me Do It!

We've adopted a third Liberty Lady – Marie, pictured here.



Shout-outs for the Olathe Marathon staff:

- Early-entry marathoners received a Garmin sponsored fleece hat in the mail prior to the marathon.
- Race shirts were ladies sized. Though the registration shirt was cotton, the finisher shirt (which they granted to us despite the cancelation) was high tech.
- Expo was at Bass Pro Shops and though the expo was small it was larger than expected, and who cares the size when you've got one of the biggest sports shopping extravaganzas around. If you haven't seen a Bass Pro Shop, check the web as they are worthy of a trip.
- Pasta dinner was low priced at \$7.95 with a choice of two restaurants, one within the Bass Pro Shop. There was a choice of pasta with salmon or chicken.
- Potential for the finish line was good with food, beer and massage offered.
- Hotels were well priced and we were amazed at the bargain and excellent service at the local Fairfield Inn who had even arranged for early breakfast.
- Kansas people are exceptionally kind and helpful.

- Kansas City is within a half hour with a few days worth of good tourist sites to see.

Can you trust the weather man?

It was just an oddity. It was such bad luck. The prior day and the day after would have been excellent weather for a marathon. Even worse luck, while the National Guard and the police were canceling out, there was no bad weather that day so it was at first hard to understand. Had there been the 6-12" of predicted snow on the ground the day before the marathon it would have been easier for the runners to accept but it was only a prediction and one that didn't come to fruition until later the marathon morning when it was 11 degrees wind chill factor with rain and sleet coming down sideways.

Confession: we were grateful that someone else canceled this marathon or we would have. Runners are famous for going out when they shouldn't and hypothermia would have been rampant.

Lost marathons

DNS stands for Did Not Start. I have some of them (NJs). I have DNSs as in Did Nothing Stupid (Boston where other friends ended upon the sag wagon and/or with pneumonia.) I also have DNFs as in Did Not Finish (Chicago, WV 50K up and over muddy hills and trails in the woods). This might be a good time to confess, or is it bragging? I like to remember the story of the 90 year old man who, when asked how he kept running marathons, thought a bit and then said "well, when it hurts, I stop." Sometimes that's the smart thing to do. I think he was a good example and I'd like to be too. But sometimes Mother Nature just plain ole gets in the way even when we're ready to run.

To add to my some 35 marathons, I would have a few more: In '03 and '04 for New Jersey's Marathon I volunteered the days before and worried my legs were too tired, so withdrew, running only portions with my friends; Chicago in '07 was canceled for the heat; Boston in '07 was the worst northeaster in 25 years and despite being there and ready to go, I backed out at the last minute; Lewis & Clark at St Charles in '08 had Hurricane Ike come through for just the few hours of the marathon and it was canceled but I quit prior to the cancellation; Capon Valley WV 50K in '08 suffered 7" of rain the few days before and we had 42 stream crossings and mud hills to climb (or slide down) but I quit after 4:30; and now Olathe's snow storm and cancellation. I sort of think there were more. . . . It all started with my very first marathon in '02 having been a terrible northeaster with rain coming down sideways. You have to start wondering if

I bring bad weather?

What to do? It was NOT to be a lost weekend!

All was not totally lost with the cancellation. It took a few minutes to calm down but quickly we realized there was plenty to do and we were lucky that someone else was causing the cancellation.

- Run our own marathon. We decided the Friday weather was okay and we'd simply go out with a Garmin and run our own 26.2 miles. In Lady Liberty crowns of course so we garnered attention which we like. Good intentions but after about 7 miles, getting lost, heavy and cold winds, and night coming upon us, we gave up and vowed to try after the snow melted. But it never melted while we were there. Some tried to get more miles on the treadmill but I don't think anybody got their mileage completed.
- Friendship saved the day. With us was new runner and brother in law Carl from Columbia MO (top) and he was game for the running effort. David Parker from Palm Beach (at the children's kaleidoscope museum) and now from Huntsville AL was there with his sister Loudean Marks (at the pasta dinner), a Parkville MO resident. We



were all together two weeks prior at the Little Rock Marathon. Jeffrey LeBlanc of NYC was at our hotel and is our new-found friend who we hope to see again. These are all people I would travel to visit even if there weren't a marathon so the weekend was a success.

- Marathon morning found us commiserating over breakfast from 9am to noon. It turned out to be a very expensive breakfast. Or you could say a very expensive marathon cancellation. With laptops in hand, runners egging on runners, we committed to three more marathons (Lake Placid or God's Country PA, Albuquerque, and Omaha) in addition to coming back for Kansas next year.
- Touring on Saturday, marathon afternoon, included Kansas City's Crown Center with its glass skyways, home of Waddell & Reed Marathon in October (Diana will return), their unique hotels, the Hallmark museum, Hallmark's Kaleidoscope for the kid in everyone, shopping, and Union Station. Fortunately it was all enclosed because there was a lot of snow and ice on the ground. From there we went on a driving tour of the Plaza's fountains and temporary Easter bunny sculptures (think Chicago's cows) despite the snow and ice. The Plaza is designed to look like Seville and is famous for the 200 fountains.
- Touring on Sunday was to the Truman Library in Independence MO, an endeavor that went over so well that we're relooking at marathons with a view towards seeing all the Presidential Libraries (did I hear somebody say any excuse?).
- Marie, Loudean's 10 year old niece, stayed with us Saturday and Sunday. She's a jewel and bright and turned out to be a highlight that helped us all feel like kids. Here's Maricar and Marie modeling new ponytail holders.



Home again – Home again

My folks live in Riverside, north of Kansas City but south of the airport, (coincidentally near to Loudean), so I visited family both before and after the marathon. My daughter lives more north in Plattsburg near to Smithville Lake, and she came in for a family dinner prior to the marathon and then gave me unusual sympathy for the cancellation later. Grandson Joseph was missing in action I guess.

What's next?

Maybe I'll attach an updated 2009 schedule. I'm next off to Illinois Marathon with BIL Carl (without the other Liberty Lady – a rare occasion); the LLs are reunited at Louisville's Kentucky Derby Marathon the end of April. Mid-May takes me solo to try the Capon Valley WV 50K again; followed by the LLs in Buffalo Marathon the end of May. It would have been 9 marathons in '09 before the end of May but that headline will have to be tried for a later date. To keep San Francisco being our 40th marathon we might add a June marathon in Lake Placid or God's Country PA. We have booked a week's hiking trip to Yosemite and an attempt to ascend Half Dome the week before the San Francisco Marathon, an effort one of us (the Devil) dreamed up back in '06 when hiking Yosemite before running the San Francisco Marathon.

Thank you

I appreciated all the kind replies about staying on my mailing list. I don't expect you to read it all and I'm clear that much of the writing is for me.

Itinerary

Wed 3/25/09 Diana

12:10pm Depart Newark via CO#2484
2:22pm Arrive Kansas City (MCI)
Pick up rental car

Thu 3/26/09 Maricar

4:30pm Depart Newark via CO#2837
6:50pm Arrive Kansas City (MCI)

Hotel Fairfield Inn and Suites
12245 S. Strangline Road, Olathe, KS 66062
Ph. 913-768-7000 800 228 2800 Fax 913-768-1610
Approx 4 miles from start/finish line

Fri 3/27/09

12:00noon Packet pick-up until 8pm at Bass Pro Shop Outdoor World.
12051 Bass Pro Drive at the intersection of I-35 and 119th Street.

Pasta Party Islamorada Fish Company Restaurant, located inside Bass Pro, will be offering 2 special pasta dishes for \$7.95 during packet pick-up.

Sat 3/28/09

7am Start of full marathon at Garmin Headquarters
1200 E. 151st Street, Olathe, KS 66062

Post race Eat great food at the taste of Olathe, relax with a massage, or quench your thirst at the beer tent. Free Smoothies will be provided to runners by Smoothie King.

7th annual - www.olathemarathon.com – new course

Pacers up to 5:10 (not so friendly to slow runners)

Course changed in '09 to accommodate Garmin and their headquarters who is a new sponsor.

50-states marathon club reunion was in '08

In '08 there were 326 marathoners (clocked to 6:24) with 150 females. Women 60-64 1AG was 4:27 up to 8AG at 6:16. There were 644 half marathoners (clocked to 3:40)

Sun 3/29/09 Maricar

5:55pm Depart Kansas City (MCI) via CO#2914
9:47pm Arrive Newark

Tue 3/31/09 Diana

5:55pm Depart Kansas City via CO #2914
9:47pm Arrive Newark

Participants:

816 547 4113 Loudean Mark – lives in Parkville area
561 721 5093 David Parker cell – arrives Thursday night at 8:24pm, departs 4:39pm Sunday
732 804 7514 Diana Burton cell – arrives Wednesday at 12:10pm, departs Tuesday at 5:55pm
908 907 5054 Maricar Korff cell - arrives Thursday night at 6:50pm, departs Sunday at 5:55pm
573 999 2119 Carl Greeson cell –arrives Thurs night, departs Sunday

Sent to the race committee and added to www.marathonguide.com.

[Added the pros above for Marathon Guide]

I'm a marathoner. I'm in 50-States Club, qualified 5-star Marathon Maniacs, Marathon & Beyond follower, and I've served on two separate marathon staffs. This would have been my 36th marathon. Thus I have a bit of experience with marathons. I'm writing this to commend you for handling a very difficult situation in a most professional manner.

While I'm sorry to think that you heard discontent marathoners, I'd like to reinforce that you handled this sudden storm in the best way possible. Every Olathe Marathon volunteer and staff member we encountered at the Friday Expo was most professional, courteous, and a calming force to the upset runners. Many of us traveled great distances and were counting on "getting Kansas" under our belt. While we were disappointed, we understood. Please forgive those of us who complained. I can assure you that those who complained undoubtedly softened thereafter and commended you on your professional stance and also on the following email. Your cell phone cancellation-message was as well received.

My sincere appreciation for a job well done, and my sincere sympathies for the weather giving such a challenge. I don't know if I'll see you again next year or accept another registration but all of my group are in full agreement that you offered us the most that you could in a difficult situation and the PR will be good.

Best regards,
Diana Burton

Olathe Marathon cancelled; Half Marathon & 5K rescheduled

We are sorry to report that the Olathe Marathon has been cancelled and the Half Marathon, 5K and Children's race are being rescheduled because of the weather. The Olathe Chamber of Commerce (race organizers), in consultation with the Olathe Police Department, have determined that weather conditions are worsening and may well compromise the safety of runners. Further, the Olathe Police and other City personnel could no longer patrol the race route because of the need to handle weather-related tasks and potential emergencies throughout the city. In effect, many City workers will now be running snow plows, and many volunteers will be unable to negotiate icy and snowy conditions.

Marathon runners only

The Marathon **will not be rescheduled** this year, although the other race events will be (see below). We will be able to reschedule the shorter races with available volunteers and city personnel, but additional support we were relying on for the marathon will be unavailable. In keeping with standard practices in running events like this and as described in our race literature, **the Olathe Chamber of Commerce cannot refund marathon fees**. However, to accommodate our marathon runners, please consider one of the following options:

- Your marathon fees for this year can be transferred to the 2010 Olathe Marathon and we will keep your registration for that event and provide you with race information. Please e-mail Ashley Holverson (aholverson@olathe.org) if your desire is to run in next year's race.
- You are invited to run in the half marathon (rescheduled for April 4, 7 a.m., at Garmin). If you choose this option, the Chamber, in good faith, will reimburse you for the difference in cost between the marathon and the half marathon.
- We will be looking into the possibility of transferring your registration in the Olathe Marathon to another marathon in the area.

In addition, **the Chamber will send your marathon t-shirt and race medal to you** at the address you provided at sign up. If you have already received your chip and do not plan on running next week, please return it in the envelope pre-addressed to the chip supplier (RaceDay Timing Solutions, 6600 Wyoming Street, Kansas City, MO 64113).

Half Marathon, 5K, and Children's Race only

The Half Marathon, 5K, and Children's Race are rescheduled for **Saturday, April 4**, beginning at Garmin International. The Half Marathon will begin at 7 a.m. and the 5K and kids race, at 7:30 a.m. If you have already received your race packet, no further action is needed. If not, you will be able to pick up your packet that morning.

We regret any inconvenience cancelling/postponing the March 28 races may cause you. The Chamber appreciates the volunteers, staff, City personnel, and event sponsors who have worked for half a year on this event. We look forward to next weekend's races and to the 2010 Marathon and trust we will not likely encounter again an unseasonal winter storm of this nature.

Visitors Guide request at www.olathecvb.org or 800 921 5678. See AAA book with Kansas City

Race Highlights

"Amazing", "fantastic", "mainly flat" course.

Finishers Medals to all marathon and half marathon finishers - "big-'ol medal, a terrific keepsake."

Course USATF certified and sanctioned

Boston Marathon qualifier

5k MARA Grand Prix Race

Chip scoring and timing

Expanded post race offerings

Other races - Half-Marathon & 5K

FAQ from website:

What Participants are Saying

I thought the organizers did a great job with this race. The course was fantastic. The support was phenomenal with plenty of stops close to the end of the course. I would recommend this race to anyone. D.R. Nebraska

I was very pleased with everything from packet pickup, transportation and the route. It was a well organized event. I left Olathe with a very positive experience. R.P. Iowa

This is the 4th time I have run this race. It gets better each year. They have fixed the issues from past years. I like this course. It is flat. This may be the best set up finish line for spectators and family from all the races that I have run. This was a great race. I highly recommend this run. J.B. Kansas

This was my 7th marathon and I thought it was well done. I enjoyed meeting people from all over the United States (plus 2 foreign countries were represented). The course was varied and well manned with traffic flow well orchestrated. I love the T-shirt and wore it on race day. I'm sure I will be wearing it all summer. The medal is beautiful with a uniquely Kansas logo. I liked the finish line in downtown Olathe. I hope to return next year with family members. C.P. Kansas

This was my first marathon, and overall, I enjoyed it very much. The race was well organized and very enjoyable. The big-'ol medal given for completing the marathon was also a terrific keepsake. S.H. Kansas

Olathe Marathon The marathon will start at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 28, 2009. With a USATF certified and sanctioned course, the Olathe Marathon serves as a Boston Qualifier. Course protection provided until 1:00 p.m., after which participants must use sidewalks. Finish line open until 1:00 p.m. We must ask all participants to be able to finish in 6 hours (13:44 per mile pace.)

Half Marathon The Half Marathon will start at 7:30 a.m.

5K The 5K will start at 7:30 a.m.

Route Due to road and bridge closures, all races will have new courses in 2009.

Aid Stations Aid stations will be located on the marathon course offering you water, sports drink and further fuel. Port-a-potties will be located at every other aid station.

Safety Races are limited to registered participants only. No rollerblades, bicycles, skateboards, dogs or headphones are allowed. Non-compliance will result in disqualification. Olathe and Johnson County law enforcement officers and course marshals will control traffic, but runners should take extreme caution. The City of Olathe has determined the course is not susceptible to wheelchair participants. This category has temporarily been discontinued. For details about accommodations for disabled runners, call the race director, 913-764-1050.

Weather Based on average temperatures, on race day the temperature is likely to reach a high of 60° F (15.5° C) with a low of 40° F (4.5° C). The weather in Kansas can change with little notice. We recommend training in all conditions and with appropriate clothing.

Registration Register online before midnight on March 26 at www.active.com.

- Or register at package pick-up Friday, March 27, from 12pm to 8pm in the Great Mall of the Great Plains food court. There will be no race-day registration!
- With questions, contact: 913-764-1050, ext. 238 or 800-921-5678
or **E-mail:** kturner@olathe.org

Confirmation For entries received before March 20, your confirmation will be e-mailed to you.

Chip Timing Runner's times will be registered through chip timing. Participants must attach the chip to his or her shoe prior to starting the race. The last runner of relay teams will wear the chip. **A \$60 fee will be charged to runners/teams who do not return**

the chip after the race.

Race Packet Pick-Up Packet pick-up is in the Great Mall of the Great Plains in the food court. The mall is at 151st and I-35. From I-35, take the 151st exit (Exit 215.) Go west to the mall. Enter the mall through the Entertainment entrance - the one by the movie theatres, then take a left. A map of Olathe can be found on page 17 of the Official Olathe Visitor Guide [[PDF here](#)].

Packet pick-up will be on Friday, March 27, from 12 to 8:00 p.m. If travel or circumstances absolutely prevents you from picking up your packet on Friday, packets may be picked-up Saturday, March 28, from 5 to 6:30 a.m. in the Park Cherry Building, corner of Park and Cherry in Downtown Olathe. (The finish line is at that corner.) **Do not go to the starting line without going to packet pick-up for your bib number and chip!**

Awards Marathon Awards will be given to:

- First three overall male and female finishers
- First three male and female masters
- 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places per Age group.
Age group divisions are as in 5 year increments.
- All marathon participants who finish will receive a commemorative medal as they cross the finish line!

Half Marathon & 5K Awards will be given to:

- First three overall male and female finisher
- First three male and female masters
- 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places per Age group in 5 year increments
- All half-marathon participants who finish will receive a commemorative medal as they cross the finish line!

Capture the Moment - Photography Photography provided by [Action Sports Images](#)

Added Fun in Olathe & Kansas City Before or after the Olathe Marathon, you and your family will want to take advantage of Olathe's great shops, hotels, dining, and attractions. Explore the following during your visit:

- [Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm Historic Site](#), the only remaining stagecoach stop on the Santa Fe Trail still open to the public
- [William Marra Museum of Deaf Culture and Deaf History](#)
- [The Great Mall of the Great Plains](#), I-35/119th Street retail and other shops
- Bass Pro Shops
- Sadlers Indoor Racing, Advanced Laser Tag, Cosmic Mini Golf, and other fun and games.
- plus "All of Kansas City at Our Doorstep!"
- [Click here for Official Visitor's Guide](#)

Hotel Accommodations See [Marathon Hotel Information](#) for special rates; please call your selected hotel and mention the March 28 Olathe Marathon to secure these rates!

Visit www.olathecvb.org for more information about Olathe's safe, friendly, convenient hotels. You can also make hotel reservations online.

Need Help or Information If you have questions about the Olathe Marathon, please do not hesitate to call us.

Runner's Hot Lines

913-764-1050, ext. 34 or 800-921-5678 or **E-mail:** kturner@olathe.org

[From Marathonguide.com](#)

Number of comments: **79** [displaying comments **1 to 11**]

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

★★★★★ **Decent Race** (about: 2008)

Course: 4 Organization: 4 Fans: 2

R. K. from Overland Park, KS (11/28/08)

6-10 previous marathons | **1** Olathe Marathon

I moved to KS in February, and have run both the Olathe and KC Marathons. Both have an issue that I don't care for: a marathon course that merges with a half-marathon course to finish. If you are running sub-3 or thereabouts, you will be dodging and weaving walkers and joggers, often in pairs or small groups at that point, especially in the aid stations. This could be an easy fix (e.g., split the finish, which would be logistically more difficult for organizers; or split the road in half, and put marathon aid stations on left, half on the right). The course was fine, but definitely be prepared to suffer through the Kansas wind. The food at the finish was lacking. I know they were sponsored by Krispy Kreme, but when I asked for someone to open a box, the person said they were for sale! That was silly, to say the least. Finally, the massage line was long, filled with half-marathoners, so it would have been nice to split that line as well. I will run again; I hope they will iron out the kinks.

★★★★☆ **The usual Kansas wind on a flat course.** (about: 2008)

Course: 4 Organization: 3 Fans: 5

C. F. from Wilson Lake, Kansas (4/4/08)

First Marathon

i actually ran in the half (my first ever) and everything about the race was very well organized it seemed to me... except one thing: There were only 2 porta-potties at the starting area for the half. With over 600 people there to run, that was huge problem. Also, the man on the PA system did nothing to help this by not explaining what to do about it. with the last shuttle getting there about a half hour before the race's start, I would expect that I wasn't alone in planning on using the bathroom before I ran.

Besides that major problem, everyone was very helpful and encouraging along the course, and i would definitely run this race again.

★★★★☆ **cold and boring** (about: 2008)

Course: 2 Organization: 4 Fans: 2

B. S. from Missouri (4/4/08)

11-50 previous marathons | **1** Olathe Marathon

This was my 14th half marathon, and my take on it:

Packet pickup was fast and easy, and I loved the mall! We got a good deal on a hotel in Lenexa, which was a short drive to the start. There was plenty of parking and plenty of buses to take us to the halfway point where the half marathon began. But at that point, it was terrible. We were so cold waiting on the race start that our teeth chattered and we shook uncontrollably! We sought refuge from the bitter, fierce winds next to a building but it was of little help. Our "quads" were frozen from the start. There was no timing mat at the start... didn't like that. There were plenty of aid stations, porta-potties and water stops with friendly volunteers. The course was very boring, which, in conjunction with the brutal winds, made for a long race. Some of the roads were in bad shape, but traffic control was good. Post-race food was lacking - to say the least - but the massage was very good. The t-shirt was plain but the medal was ok... although, not everyone got the same medal for the half, which was weird.

★★★★☆ **We shall not talk about the wind** (about: 2008)

Course: 2 Organization: 5 Fans: 3

J. G. from Asheville, NC (4/3/08)

6-10 previous marathons

I ran the half and thought I would add my two cents worth since I haven't seen any comments about it. Organization was good. Police and traffic control were excellent. Aid stations were great even though the wind and cold disoriented some volunteers who couldn't tell water from red Gatorade ;-). Having only two port-a-potties at the start was unforgivable. Having no place to get out of the cold and wind until the start was bad until some kind soul let us in the main building for 5 or 10 minutes. The post-race massage was like showers and dishwashers (a gift from God). Medals and T-shirts were ho-hum, but okay. If you are in the area, run it.

★★★★☆ **Few reasons to run this one** (about: 2008)

Course: 4 Organization: 2 Fans: 2

Honest Feedback from Midwest (4/3/08)

4-5 previous marathons | **1** Olathe Marathon

Course was pretty flat and could be fast without the wind. Plenty of water and Gatorade. Few fans, but no big deal for me. T-shirt was cruddy. Seriously 100% cotton? Post-race food: plain bagels and very green bananas. Not that I eat a lot after 26.2, but that was ridiculous. Pre-race bathrooms were very inadequate.

★★★★☆ **No Headphones? Disqualified??** (about: 2008)

Course: 3 Organization: 3 Fans: 3

L. B. from US (4/3/08)

11-50 previous marathons

Their website said that those with headphones would be disqualified, but the picture of the female winner crossing the finish line clearly shows her listening to her iPod.

Why wasn't this an issue?

★★★★☆ **What a fun freakin' race!** (about: 2008)

Course: 5 Organization: 5 Fans: 1

[Aaron Pendergraft](#) from springfield, Ohio (4/2/08)

11-50 previous marathons | 1 Olathe Marathon

Yep... the Kansas scenery was a blast: Beautiful open sky, spacious country roads. I had 2 problems, both of which could be construed as my fault. First, screaming like a girl at the sight of a dead deer on the side of the road. I just saw it out of the corner of my eye and I nearly soiled myself. And there was a good-lookin' lady there to see my unfortunate reaction. :o(So much for being studly, eh? Then came the guy who almost hit me with his truck around 22-23. Still, the police did a good job of protecting us, and the course was well marked. I really liked the medal. I also liked how the last 1/4 mile on an uphill kind of separated the winners from the losers. Freakin' awesome! I have crossed Kansas off my list and probably won't be back because it's so far away from home, but the race itself and cool medal make it worth returning. If you're thinking about doing Kansas, do it in Olathe! The sunrise and open country in the first few miles seemed to epitomize what this race was all about: Splendor and hills. This was my first of 2 in 2 days, and it was a great warm-up for the race in Xenia, Ohio the next day.

★★★★☆ **Well organized, great support** (about: 2008)

Course: 4 Organization: 4 Fans: 2

L. B. from Riverview, MI (3/31/08)

50+ previous marathons | 1 Olathe Marathon

The organizers went all out. Excellent volunteers and police support, and a well marked course. There was a very high wind and the course is not particularly scenic. I came to run and collect this state though, and I couldn't have asked for a better welcome.

★★★★☆ **1/2 marathon needs a lot of work.** (about: 2007)

Course: 3 Organization: 1 Fans: 4

C. E. from Olathe, ks (3/31/08)

1 previous marathon | 1 Olathe Marathon

After completing the 2008 1/2 marathon, I was very dissatisfied, but to be fair, most of my negativity resulted from the ridiculously poor preparation at the start of the race. (1) The idea of being transported to the start is silly; just create a course where you start and finish in the same place. Or at least organize the pick up so the lines of people are broken up by race (marathoners to the right, 1/2's to the left, etc. - we got on the bus for the 1/2 almost by accident). (2) Having only two restrooms available at the 1/2 marathon start is beyond ridiculous; anyone who has attended a race in their life knows there is always a run on the restrooms prior to a race, and many (30) racers did not get to use the restroom prior to start and some stayed after the start to use it. (3) Of course, this wouldn't have been a big deal because we have chips, right?! Wrong - there was no "mat" at the 1/2 start, so the chips were useless to us - but we were responsible for them. The organization for this race has to improve; it has been going on for too many years now to have these types of problems.

★★★★☆ **Not bad, but not great...** (about: 2008)

Course: 2 Organization: 5 Fans: 1

A. S. from Omaha, NE, USA (3/31/08)

2 previous marathons | 1 Olathe Marathon

As another comment states, the 2008 race was very cold and very windy! The wind was so bitter that I wore a hoody with the hood UP for the entire 26.2 miles due to the chill! The first 80% of the course was through the country on highways with traffic, which can get boring and irritating after a while. There was a lot more uphill running than I expected. There were NO spectators aside from aid station personnel and a few family/friends of participants here and there. On the positive side, the aid station organization/supply, event staff, and police presence were all EXCELLENT! Overall, it was worth running once, but I probably won't repeat the Olathe Marathon.

Fun Facts

Call them the little tidbits that make Kansas City life just a bit more interesting. Here are a few fun facts on Kansas City as you plan your visit to our great city:

- The Kansas City Barbecue Society reports that KC has more barbecue restaurants per capita than any other city in the nation.
- Jazz has been a staple of the KC music scene since the 1920s with artists like Count Basie, Bennie Moton and Jay McShann. Charlie "Bird" Parker, who was born in Kansas City, Kan., grew up during this era.
- KC ignored Prohibition during the 1920s, leading to an abundance of jazz clubs, brothels and gambling halls. This earned KC the moniker "The Paris of the Plains" after one journalist wrote "If you want to see some sin, forget Paris and head to Kansas City."
- The jam session originated in Kansas City. Jazz musicians would gather after their gigs and play together into the wee hours of the morning.
- In 1910, Joyce Hall began selling postcards out of a shoebox in KC. Today, his company has grown to the world's largest greeting-cards maker, Hallmark Cards.
- KC is home to the largest maker of boxed chocolates in the world. Based here since 1932, Russell Stover Candies still hand dips more than 25 million pieces of chocolate each year.
- Walt Disney opened his first animation studio in Kansas City, Laugh-O-Gram Studios. He fed a small mouse in the building, which he later said was his inspiration for Mickey Mouse.
- The Country Club Plaza opened in 1922 as the nation's first shopping district designed for the automobile.
- Kansas City's Municipal Auditorium has hosted more NCAA Final Four Championships than any other venue in the country
- Local advertising agency Bernstein-Rein invented the Happy Meal for McDonald's after the owner noticed his son staring at the cereal box during breakfast.
- The scoreboard at Arrowhead Stadium, home of the Kansas City Chiefs, was the first to transmit instant replay.
- By 1949, 86 factories were manufacturing garments in KC. It was said that one in seven American women wore clothing made here.
- A young Ernest Hemingway worked as a cub reporter for the Kansas City Star from 1917 to 1918. He returned to the city for the birth of his second son and wrote the tragic ending to his World War I epic "A Farewell to Arms" while here.
- Interstate Bakeries, which makes Twinkies and Wonder Bread, is based in KC.

33 for Free

For travelers on a shoestring budget, Kansas City offers many free adventures. The following list provides 33 free activities that offer something for everyone.

1. 1827 Log Courthouse. Once the only courthouse west of St. Charles, Mo., it later served as a mercantile operation, home and gathering place for the early Mormon settlers.
2. Board of Trade Visitors Gallery. Observe the fast-paced world of trading.
3. Boulevard Brewing Company. Tour the largest specialty brewer in the Midwest. Call for reservations.
4. Bruce R. Watkins Cultural Heritage Center. A tribute to the city's early African-American pioneers.
5. Cave Spring Interpretive Center. A 36-acre nature park on the Santa Fe Trail.
6. Children's Peace Pavilion. Hands-on museum focusing on world peace.
7. City Market. Saturday and Sunday mornings bring one of the largest farmers markets in the Midwest.
8. Crown Center. There's always something going on at this entertainment center. Check out the free outdoor movies and concerts during the summer months.
9. Deanna Rose Children's Farmstead. A great place to see and feed an array of barnyard friends and other animals native to the area.
10. Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City's Money Museum. Learn about the nation's financial system through interactive exhibits.
11. First Fridays. This 40-gallery art crawl has quickly become a local and regional favorite, drawing thousands the First Friday of every month.
12. Frontier Army Museum. Focuses on Fort Leavenworth's role in westward expansion.
13. Hallmark Visitors Center. Catch a behind-the-scenes peek at one of the world's largest greeting card companies.
14. Harley-Davidson Vehicle and Powertrain Operations. Tour the facility to see how hogs are made.
15. Haskell Indian Nations University Cultural Center & Museum. Preserves the vast history of Haskell's evolution from boarding school to university.
16. Johnson County Museum of History. See what has lured people to the suburbs for the past 175 years.
17. Kaleidoscope. From the minds behind Hallmark, a free creative workshop for kids aged 5 to 12.
18. Kauffman Memorial Garden. Showcases sculptures, fountains and colorful beds of exotic plants.
19. Kansas City Zoo. Free admission for KCMO residents in October and November with proof of residency.
20. Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art. With the famous contemporary pieces it houses, this museum is a city gem.
21. Lakeside Nature Center. Learn about the natural world around us through live native-animal exhibits and workshops.
22. Lanesfield School Historic Site. Practice your penmanship or cipher math problems on a slate with a costumed schoolteacher in a school built in 1869.
23. The Legends at Village West. Take a self-guided audio tour of the entertainment district's tribute to more than 80 legendary Kansans.
24. Legler Barn Museum. Built in 1864, this museum stands as one of the few remaining limestone barns.
25. Liberty Jail. Historic site for both Clay County and the LDS Church due to the five months Joseph Smith, founder of the Mormon church, spent here.
26. Linda Hall Library. One of the largest privately endowed scientific and technical reference libraries in the country.

27. Martha Lafite Thompson Nature Sanctuary. Experience nature preservation through trails and the Nature Center.
28. Mormon Visitors Center. Learn about the key role the Mormons played in the early and tempestuous history of Independence, Mo.
29. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Enjoy of the finest general art museums in the country.
30. Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art. Featuring major exhibitions of renowned artists, the Nerman is the only contemporary art museum in Kansas.
31. Overland Park Arboretum. A 300-acre park dedicated to the preservation of indigenous plants and wildlife.
32. Penguin Park. This fun and playful park has everything from a 26-foot kangaroo slide to a 23-foot penguin to play inside.
33. Shoal Creek Living History Museum. A village of more than 20 authentic 19th-century buildings dating from 1807 to 1885.

Visitors' Choice Awards

Best of Kansas City

Visitors looking for advice on the most unique places to visit in Kansas City now have a little help from fellow travelers. The KC Visitors' Choice Awards honor the city's finest in 20 fun categories like Favorite Kids Attraction and Best Midwestern Hospitality. This is the only awards program in Kansas City designed with the visitor in mind.

Announcing the 2008 Visitors' Choice Winners ...



Favorite Restaurant: [Stroud's](#)

This KC staple is famous for its mouthwatering pan-fried chicken. Stroud's family-style meals have earned nearly every award in the culinary world — including honors from *Bon Appétit*, Zagat and the James Beard Foundation. (And now, the coveted Visitors' Choice Award!)

Favorite Steakhouse: [Hereford House](#)

Sample the sizzle. The KC Strip may have not been born at this famous Kansas City establishment, but Hereford House has helped perfect this juicy steak native to KC. Try it for yourself at one of Hereford House's four metro locations.



Favorite Barbecue Restaurant: [Fiorella's Jack Stack Barbecue](#)

Barbecue is a way of life in KC, and Fiorella's Jack Stack Barbecue is the top choice for Kansas City visitors for the second year in a row. Our recommendation? Start with the burnt ends and then work your way down the menu.

Favorite Performing Arts Venue: [Starlight Theatre](#)

A warm summer night under the stars is synonymous with Starlight Theatre. Home to Broadway shows and major concerts, Starlight is the second-largest theatre of its kind in the nation and the area's oldest performing arts organization.



Favorite Jazz Venue: [The Blue Room](#)

Steaks, barbecue and jazz. It's the Kansas City version of the triple crown. Few nightclubs hold the allure of The Blue Room, set in the classic 18th & Vine Historic Jazz District. It was named one of the top 100 jazz venues in the world by *Downbeat* magazine.

Favorite Nightlife Spot: [Kelly's Westport Inn](#)

The city's oldest building. Once a general store ran by Daniel Boone's grandson. And a favorite haunt of painter Thomas Hart Benton. Kelly's is full of history, and is now home to one of Westport's most popular watering holes.





Favorite Shopping Center or District:
[Country Club Plaza](#)

This entertainment district features many Kansas City favorites. Walk along the tree-lined sidewalks, shop at one of the many name-brand shops or dine at one of the Plaza's fantastic restaurants.

Favorite Shop or Store: [Halls Kansas City](#)

Long known for exceptional service and an elegant atmosphere, Halls has provided generations of residents and visitors with an unforgettable shopping experience. Created by the founder of Hallmark, the store's two locations both house an extensive and eclectic selection.



Favorite Hotel or Bed & Breakfast:
[Hyatt Regency Crown Center](#)

Top-notch service is a way of life for this hotel. An oasis of quiet luxury, the Hyatt Regency offers 731 generously appointed and newly renovated guest rooms overlooking the downtown skyline and the Crown Center complex.



Favorite Attraction: [Worlds of Fun](#)

Providing visitors with chills, thrills and laughs for 35 years, Worlds of Fun boasts more than 175 acres of family entertainment. Your thrill-seeking adventure starts here.



Favorite Museum or Historical Site:
[National WWI Museum at Liberty Memorial](#)

Kansas City's fully-restored, 1914 train station was a hit with voters. This landmark is home to an interactive family science center and a railroad museum, as well as shops and restaurants.

Favorite Art Museum or Gallery:
[The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art](#)

One of the nation's top art museums just got better. In June 2007, the Nelson-Atkins unveiled the stunning Bloch Building—equivalent to a 67-story office building lying on its side.



Favorite Professional Sports Team: [Chiefs](#)

Whether you're enjoying the world's largest tailgate party or witnessing one of the loudest stadiums in the NFL, for Chiefs fans this is just a normal fall Sunday at Arrowhead Stadium.

Favorite Kids Attraction: [Kansas City Zoo](#)

Celebrating its 100th year in 2009, the Kansas City Zoo offers visitors the unique experience of seeing more than 1,000 animals in naturalistic setting. Check out the playful North American river otters, new in 2008.





Favorite Casino or Gaming Venue:
[Ameristar Casino & Hotel](#)

Frequently named Missouri's best casino, Ameristar is a premier property characterized by innovative architecture, a state-of-the-art casino floor, and outstanding dining, lodging and entertainment options.

Favorite Festival or Special Event: [Irish Fest](#)

Was it the luck o' the Irish or this festival's huge popularity with visitors that secured its place among KC's best bets? Maybe both. More than 70,000 people attend the event every fall, making it one of the largest Irish festivals in the U.S.



Favorite Holiday Experience:
[Country Club Plaza Season of Lights](#)

What started as a single strand of lights in 1925 has grown into an impressive display of more than 80 miles of holiday lights outlining rooftops, archways, towers and street corners. Just don't forget your camera.



Favorite Day Trip from Kansas City: [Lawrence, KS](#)

Forty-five minutes west is charming Lawrence, home to the University of Kansas. Take a stroll down Massachusetts Street and you'll soon understand why "Mass" has been called one of America's loveliest main streets.



Best Midwestern Hospitality: [Gates Bar-B-Q](#)

A family business for more than 60 years, each Gates experience begins with the restaurant's trademark phrase, "Hi, may I help you?" As for the menu—it's all special, try a little of everything.



Best of Kansas City: [Country Club Plaza](#)

What better way to close out this year's winners than with the grandeur of the Country Club Plaza? With its beautiful fountains, murals and statues, the Spanish-inspired Plaza features more than \$1 million in outdoor artwork.



Olathe visitors guide needed. Suggested --

- Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop and Farm Historic Site, the only remaining stagecoach stop on the Santa Fe Trail still open to the public
- William Marra Museum of Deaf Culture and Deaf History
- The Great Mall of the Great Plains, I-35/119th Street retail and other shops
- Bass Pro Shops
- Sadlers Indoor Racing, Advanced Laser Tag, Cosmic Mini Golf, and other fun and games.

Kansas City Area Attractions

Arabia Steamboat Museum:

Address: 400 Grand Blvd., KC, MO 816-471-1856

The steamboat was one of many to sink in the Missouri River between Kansas City and St. Louis. Over 200 tons of cargo was recovered from the Arabia and is the largest collection of pre-Civil War artifacts in the world.

Visit @ www.1856.com

Casinos:

Ameristar Casino Kansas City: 3200 N. Ameristar Dr., KC, MO 888-499-4961

Argosy Casino: 777 N.W. Argosy Pkwy., Riverside, MO 800-270-7711

Harrah's Casino: One Riverboat Dr., North Kansas City, MO 800-427-7247

Isle of Capri: 1800 E. Front St., KC, MO 800-946-8711

Country Club Plaza:

Address: 4745 Central St., KC, MO 816-753-0100

The 14 block area is home to more than 180 shops, restaurants, and an outdoor museum featuring architecture, European art and fountains.

Visit @ www.countryclubplaza.com

Crown Center:

Address: 2450 Grand Blvd., KC, MO 816-274-8444

Entertainment and shopping center at the world headquarters of Hallmark Cards. Houses Hallmark Visitors Center, Kaleidoscope, the American Heartland Theater, shops, and restaurants.

Visit @ www.crowncenter.com

Kansas Speedway:

Address: 400 Speedway Blvd., Kansas City, KS 913-328-3300

The Kansas Speedway welcomes drivers from the Nextel Cup, Busch Series, Indy racing, and Track series. It's a 1.5 mile tri-oval track which seats nearly 82,000 spectators in the grandstand. The track is open on non race days for tours and summer driving schools.

Visit @ www.kansasspeedway.com

National World War I Museum at Liberty Memorial:

Address: 100 w 26th St., KC, MO 816-784-1918

Kansas City is home to the only museum solely dedicated to WWI in the country. What was once called the Liberty Memorial has officially been changed to The National World War I museum at Liberty Memorial due to Congress dedicating it as "America's National World War I Museum."

Visit @ www.libertymemorialmuseum.org

Negro Leagues Baseball Museum:

Address: 1616 E 18th St., Kansas City, MO 816-221-1920

The Negro National League was founded in Kansas City in 1920. This 10,000 square foot exhibit features multi-media computer stations, film exhibits, hundreds of photographs, and a growing collection of baseball artifacts.

Visit @ www.klbn.com

Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art:

Address: 4525 Oak Street, Kansas City, MO 816-751-1278

At the Nelson you will find one of the country's finest Asian collections. The Museum lawn contains the country's largest collection of monumental bronzes by British sculptor Henry Moore outside of England.

Visit @ www.nelson-atkins.org

Mahaffie Farmstead & Stagecoach Historic Stop & Historic Site:

Address: 1200 Kansas City Rd., Olathe, KS 913-791-5111

The Mahaffie Stagecoach Stop is the last remaining Stagecoach Stop remaining on the historic Santa Fe Trail still opened to the public.

Visit @ www.olatheks.org/Mahaffie/About

Truman Home & Farm Home:

Address: 219 N Delaware St, Independence, MO – Home

12301 Blue Ridge Blvd., Grandview, MO – Farm Home

816-254-9929

During the Truman administration the home was known as the "Summer White House". These homes are National Historic Sites operated by the National Park Service.

Visit @ www.nps.gov/hstr

Truman Presidential Museum & Library:

Address: 500 W Hwy 24, Independence, MO 816-268-8200

One of only 11 U.S. Presidential Libraries, the museum's two permanent exhibits chronicle Harry S. Truman's private life and political career. Also includes exhibits of his most difficult decisions like using the atomic bomb, the Cold War and recognizing Israel.

Visit @ www.trumanlibrary.org

Truman Sports Complex:

Arrowhead Stadium & Kauffman Stadium

Address: I-70 & Blue Ridge Cutoff, KC, MO

Chiefs: 816-920-9300 Royals: 816-921-8000

On August 12, 1972 the Kansas City Chiefs and the St.Louis Cardinals played the inaugural game at Arrowhead Stadium. Kauffman Stadium opened as the Royals Stadium in 1973 and is recognized as one of the game's most beautiful ballparks.

Visit @ www.kcchiefs.com or www.kcroyals.com

Union Station:

Address: 30 W Pershing Rd., KC, MO 816-460-2020

Union station is the second largest working train station in the country. Union Station is home to Science City, an interactive science center. It is also one of Amtrak's busiest stops in Missouri.

Visit @ www.unionstation.org

Village West:

Address: I-435 & I-70 in Kansas City, KS 913-321-5800

The Village West was built around the Kansas Speedway. Village West includes The Legends at Village West, an outdoor shopping center. Cabela's is also one of the many attractions that can be found at Village West.

Visit @ www.visitthedot.com

Worlds of Fun/Oceans of Fun:

Address: 4545 Worlds of Fun Ave., KC, MO 816-454-4545

More than 175 acres of exciting rides and fun filled attractions. Oceans of Fun is the largest tropically themed water park in the Midwest.

Visit @ www.worldsoffun.com

Maricar's message to Carl about running 26.2 miles:

. . . . the games I play in my head when running a marathon...

1. Get to the half marathon mark
2. Get to mile 17 and I'll be in single digit countdown
3. Get to 20 and I have a 10K
4. Get to 22 and only 4 more
5. Get to 24 and there's only 8 laps around the track left.

That's how I deal with the mental mind games of the mileage. Oh...and PS:
for the first 13, run with your brain (don't go fast, etc...)
until 20, run with your legs
the last 10K, run with the spirit in your heart.

We're working on a list of our favorites. Tough. Maybe our top 5 would be

Oklahoma City Memorial
Flying Pig
Mardi Gras in New Orleans
San Francisco
Las Vegas
Little Rock

But what about Boston and NYC or are they in a world apart?
What about Steamtown, Charlotte, Philadelphia?

This is hard to do, like choosing which kid is the favorite. Have you noticed that our most recent one is usually our favorite?