

## President's Letter – Spring/Summer 2012

This Sunday - May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2012 - the piggy will fly for the 14<sup>th</sup> time! Many of our Club members will be running in the half marathon or full marathon for the very first time. For others, it may be the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> ...10<sup>th</sup> time running the Pig. A few of you have streaked every single year for the past thirteen years! Many of you will be participating in the 5k and 10k on Saturday; some of you will be leading pace groups, and still others will be chasing PRs. All of us running or walking will squeal with joy when we see that finish swine!

I am one of those people who have been training the past several months for a new half-PR. My current PR was set back in 2007 in Minneapolis when I ran the Urban Wildland Half Marathon in Richfield, MN. Since then I have run several half and full marathons, 5ks, 10ks, and everything in between, yet I've decided THIS was the year to train harder than ever before, and shoot for that shiny new PR. Well.....who am I kidding? I've tried that every time I've run the half since 2007 and each time I failed. Don't get me wrong- I've had some pretty decent times and wasn't far off from my goal. But THIS time, THIS race, I really am going to get there! (I think).

Well, there are *many* of us who have been busting our butts every week since January to run our very best race on Sunday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, so I am certainly no exception. There are also those people whose goal is to finish the half or full marathon and finish strong. One of these people in particular has to be *the* most dedicated runner I've ever known. His name is Richard and he is a member of our running Club. I've seen him at more races over the past three years than I can remember. He is always there at the starting line ready to go, with a smile on his face– and he always crosses the finish line with that same contagious smile – time after time. Richard has been and will continue to be a true inspiration for many of us!

“At the age of 9, Gabbour was struck by a car. He suffered brain damage that left him partially blind in one eye and the right side of his body significantly weaker than the left. Barach (his primary running coach) says his running partner was in a coma after the accident and doctors told his parents he'd probably die. When he came out of the coma and needed a wheelchair to get around, doctors told his parents he'd never walk again. They obviously forgot to tell Gabbour -- he does a half marathon in five hours and a full marathon in 12. In 1992 Gov. George Voinovich presented him the Ohio Athlete of the Year Award. “Proud of all his running times, Gabbour says he doesn't consider himself disabled. "I tell people I never give up," he says. "Like every day, look at what happens. I used to be in a wheelchair. Now I can walk on my own. I had braces on my feet, now no more braces.”

–Cincinnati CityBeat, “We can all run in our own way” - BY MARGO PIERCE · MARCH 28TH, 2007, [HTTP://WWW.CITYBEAT.COM/CINCINNATI/PRINT-ARTICLE-2409-PRINT.HTML](http://www.citybeat.com/cincinnati/print-article-2409-print.html)

Richard's goal is to once again finish the Flying Pig half marathon on Sunday, and several of his running friends from our Club will be there by his side as he runs. Richard's friend Mohamed

posted a request this past week on Facebook to gather some helpers for Richard for the upcoming race. Within a day several of you willingly said you would be happy to run the half with him and help him finish. That's what I absolutely love about our running club! It is full of amazing, caring people who are willing to step up when needed to help each other out. Thank you!

I've been so wrapped up over the past several months in what my split times will be and getting that shiny new PR. How silly! What Richard has taught me is that it doesn't always matter what your time is. If reaching for that faster time is always your main concern, nothing will ever be good enough. What matters most is that you finish the race.

Good luck to all of our runners and walkers participating in the Flying Pig and other spring and summer races. I wish you all the very best, and may you finish with a smile!

Gina M Meyers  
President, RCGC