



Runners compete in the Girls "A" race at the Kiwanis de Amigos Rattlesnake Run. More than 550 athletes representing over 30 teams took part in four races on the 1.66-mile course.

Inside This Issue:

Shhh... It's a surprise birthday party!

In 2026, SAR will celebrate its 50th anniversary—and our history goes back even further. Stay tuned in the coming months for more details and stories.

Also in this issue—just in time for Thanksgiving—you'll find articles on running, food, and mindful eating.

Plus, catch up on the latest SAR Good Neighbor Race.

As always, send any comments or questions to newsletter@runsar.org.

Children's Fitness Fund Update

Southern Arizona Roadrunners recently completed another round of Children's Fitness Fund (CFF) grants. So far this year, SAR has awarded over \$5,000 to organizations that are making a positive impact in our community.

Over the past two years, several groups have received CFF support for programs that help kids stay active, healthy, and engaged. Here are three recipients we're proud to spotlight.

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Children's Fitness Fund cont.



One past CFF recipient, **Beyond Tucson** (<https://beyond-tucson.org>), builds its programs around four simple yet powerful pillars: move your body, eat nutritious foods, spend time in nature, and connect with others.



Happy bike riders from Beyond Tucson's Beyond-Bikes program



The Beyond-Bikes bicycle racing team

SAR supported Beyond-Bikes, a program that partners with select schools and community organizations to teach bike safety and riding skills. Through the program, students from lower-income schools have the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, learn new skills, and experience the joy of being active on bikes.

Some children in the program learned how to ride a bike for the very first time!

Beyond's mission is to improve the health and well-being of our community. The bicycle serves as both a teaching tool and a means of access—helping youth establish lifelong healthy habits while learning safe cycling practices.

Starting in May of this year, Beyond became the new home for an amateur youth cycling program that enables young riders to challenge themselves and build community through the sport of bicycle racing. Like SAR does with running, Beyond sees the bicycle as the perfect tool to achieve its mission—especially among youth.



A second CFF grant went to **Catholic Community Services of Southern Arizona (CCS)**. The grant helped fund mini-clinics

for a variety of sports, supported the purchase of new equipment, and provided healthy snacks and incentives for attendees—most of whom were from low-income families. Kids of all ages (5-18), sizes, and ability engaged in fitness activities and had fun while doing it!

Catholic Community Services (<https://www.ccs-soaz.org>) partnered with the University of Arizona College of Public Health to offer several programs, including:

- Healthy to Be, which focused on nutrition, hygiene and financial wellness
- Yoga, emphasizing balance, mindfulness, meditation, and stress reduction
- CATCH, a University of Arizona Health Zone program promoting nutrition, education, and physical activity for elementary and middle school students

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Children's Fitness Fund cont.

Garden to Kitchen cooking classes, provided by the Garden Kitchen, gave youth the chance to create unique dishes using locally sourced vegetables.



From cooking classes to outdoor play, children enjoyed a variety of CCS mini-clinics.



Volunteers from Merit foods organized rodeo-themed events such as barrel racing, stick-horse racing, and country line dancing.

Members of the Salpointe High School football team hosted a mini-clinic, teaching children the fundamentals of football through drills and games.

BICAS (Bicycle Inter-Community Art and Salvage) introduced children ages 8-12 to safe street riding and basic bicycle repairs.

John Valenzuela Youth Center (JVYC) staff created opportunities for youth to participate in organized sports such as kickball, baseball, and basketball. When the summer heat made outdoor play difficult, JVYC hosted a Summer Prom, where participants learned new dance routines and showcased their moves. Staff and teen volunteers also led a series of Olympic-style indoor activities.

When the weather allowed, JVYC sponsored

Water Days, complete with obstacle courses, water balloon tag, and other outdoor games.

Two Nex Playground systems let kids enjoy motion-sensing games like karate, dance, yoga, and basketball. Over 150 children participated.

Access to these programs not only promotes lifelong health and a love of fitness, but also offers many children a life-changing introduction to fun and activity.



A third CFF grant went to **Kiwanis de Amigos** (<https://k10163.site.kiwanis.org>) of Tucson, which sponsors both the Rattlesnake Run and the Kiwanis Relays.

The Rattlesnake Run is a cross-country event for middle school students from Tucson and across Southern Arizona. The Kiwanis Relays, held at the University of Arizona, is the largest middle school track and field meet in the region, drawing more than 30 teams each year.

Kiwanis believes that when you give a child the chance to learn, experience, dream, grow, succeed, and thrive, great things can happen.



Boys "A" teams compete in the Rattlesnake Run at Danny Lopez Park.



My Running Journey

By Joshua Cabe



Joshua before his journey

I was a big boy from the island of Guam. We loved our rice. Growing up, I didn't think much about my weight or my health. My parents always said, "Finish your food or no dessert!" So, I finished all my food so I could have dessert.

As an adult at my heaviest, I weighed more than 350 pounds. That was back in 2019. My knees hurt. I had difficulty breathing, and occasionally

experienced asthma attacks. I ended up having to walk with a cane—slowly.

When I finally decided to try to lose weight, I tried the Atkins diet, a no-carb diet, and a juicing diet. I didn't exercise because I was the lazy type. It took a few years, but I was able to get down to 300 pounds, and that's where I stayed—until ...

I saw a Facebook post that said, "Walk 1 mile a day for 30 days in February 2025 to honor our Veterans." I didn't share the post because I felt insecure about what others might think. "Oh, he's doing another diet challenge again." Things like that bring people down. After I saw the post, I wanted to do it on my own—with the support of my family. Along with walking, I started cutting out certain foods and started dieting as well—no carbs, no sugars, no beef, and no pork. I was only eating fruits and vegetables, fish, chicken, and

protein shakes from time to time.

At the same time, I thought of my friend Beto Corella. I'd run into Beto a few years before. My family and I were on a picnic in the Chiricahua Mountains. Beto was out hiking, and I said to myself, "Why in the world is this guy hiking in Arizona?"

Having committed to my Veterans Walk, I sent Beto a message about hiking. I wanted to start hiking too. Maybe it could help me lose more weight. So, apps were downloaded, places were discussed, and the planning began. I started hiking on trails and mountains close to home. It was hard, but my mind was made up. I encouraged family and friends to join me on my journey. It was an amazing feeling knowing I could inspire others. I was changing other people's lives as I was changing mine.



Joshua with his youngest son Kai, and brother-in-law Jovani Ruiz

After a few weeks of walking, hiking, and dieting, I didn't realize how much my body had changed until a photo revealed the difference—and I loved it!

I was having a lot of fun until it was race day.

I never liked to run! I walked and avoided running or took mass transit whenever I could. Then, in

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My Running Journey cont.

March, I learned about 5Ks and thought to myself, "Why not?" You get a free shirt, a cool medal, and all the bananas you can eat! And there was always a reason or cause for the race. I thought this was something I could do with my family, and they were up for doing it with me. Bringing the family, and knowing they supported me 110 percent, was important. We all signed up for a 5K. I couldn't believe how many people wanted to run in a race! It was amazing to see so many people come together for an event like this. Then there was me. I walked most of the event. After this first race, I was hooked on more free bananas and shirts and wanted to start actually running.

I began doing homework day and night to learn everything about running a 5K. There are so many things I never knew that help with running. During that time, I was on social media sites, watching videos, saving pictures, visiting websites, subscribing to YouTube, and soaking in everything and anything I could. It wasn't enough, so I kept looking for more. Eventually, I learned that keeping my heart rate in zone 2 could help me run an entire 5K without stopping. That became my new goal. After finishing my first race in over an hour, my motivation shifted to improving my 5K time with each race.

I completed over 19 races between March and August and was scheduled to run 20 more races by the end of the year. One race weekend, I drove up to Phoenix, stayed overnight, and completed two separate races the next day. Then I rushed home to do a 5-mile bike ride before heading to the Meet Me Downtown 5K that evening. I volunteered and then ran the race as well. I wasn't getting any better, but I was very motivated and felt I couldn't be stopped.

At this point in my journey, I decided it was time to start running with a group. I wanted to have

conversations while running, meet new runners, and share ideas. Are my shoulders loose? What about my stride? What's the best way to run up and down hills to avoid injuries? I wanted to continue to make progress with my running but was at a plateau and still had many unanswered questions.

I happened to meet Autumn and Brandon Ball, along with the SWET team, and decided to run with them. I was excited to meet coach Autumn and the team, and I wanted to be a part of it. This was the next step I needed to take. I was still hungry for information and needed continued work on my endurance. I've learned so much more with this group than I did online.

I am now at a stage where I focus only on getting to the next mile and finishing the goal set for that day. I don't worry about being first, second, or third. I want to finish the race.

I have started volunteering at races in Tucson to help the community and will be racing the Garmin Series Tucson Marathon and the Phoenix Marathon as my big races for this year.

Thinking back to that Facebook post, I have always honored our veterans for as long as I can remember. I am from the small island of Guam and have family members with military backgrounds. I wish I could have joined the



military, but due to my weight and physical condition at the time, I was not fit to serve. That's why, on race days, you can find me running with Old Glory, the American flag.



Be Mindful...About Food!

By Tia Accetta

I'm not going to lie; I am not a person who has any business writing about food on a blog. I eat when I'm hungry and don't put much thought into it. I can make pretty good scrambled eggs and have been known to get creative with salads and smoothies, but cooking is not my thing. Given that I fancy myself an athlete and a responsible parent, I often find myself hunched over magazines, cookbooks, and blogs to find inspiration. Currently, my favorite cookbook is titled *Quick and Tasty Recipes for Young Chefs*. It's perfect for me and my nine-year-old!

My friend and registered dietitian, Joanie, assured me that there's hope. She shared with me a little secret about food; it's just as important to focus on how you eat as on what you eat. Whoa! She was talking about the practice of Mindful Eating. According to Michelle May, MD, mindful eating is "eating with intention and attention."

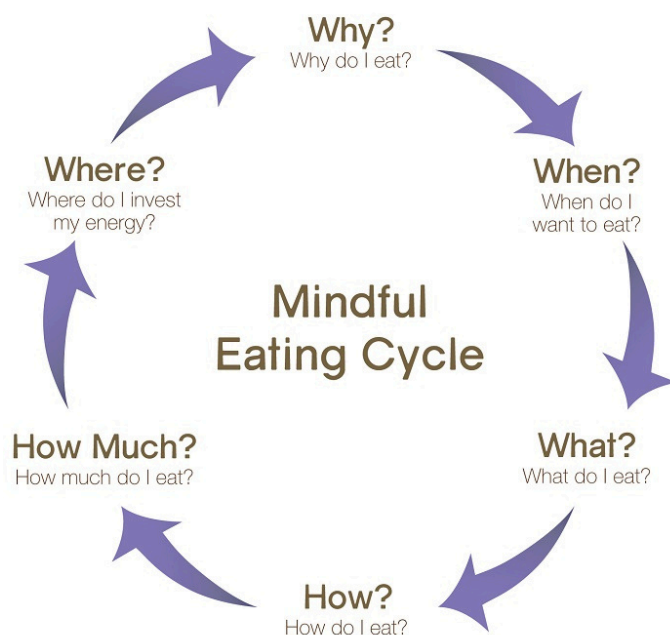
I'm only going to mention the "best effort" strategy about 100 more times before this blog runs its course, but it is worth repeating. My best effort mantra for running is also my new mealtime theme. The practice is the same for both, training the brain to focus and attend to the present moment. Eating with an awareness of sight, smell, taste, sound, and feel of the food on our plates has been quite the experiment for my family.

We no longer eat with the TV on (oh, yes we did!) and there are significantly less table-side shenanigans. Our conversations often revolve around where the food comes from and why it's considered "healthy" or "not-so-healthy." We practice noticing cues to eat (grumbling tummy, grouchiness) and cues to stop eating (full tummy, tiredness). The "no multi-tasking at the

table" rule has officially been enforced, which is really hard since it serves as my office and the kids' homework hub.

I'm worried I've let this post get a bit long, but I'd like to sign off with these key mindfulness practices (because I am in love with them!).

- Paying attention to the present
- Noticing internal processes and external environment
- Letting go of reactive, habitual patterns of thinking, feeling and acting
- Promoting balance, choice, wisdom and acceptance



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A look back: This article originally appeared in the Summer 2016 SAR Newsletter. The "Roadrunner," our club newsletter, has been sharing stories and news—on and off—since before 1980!



Long Time Running

ACROSS

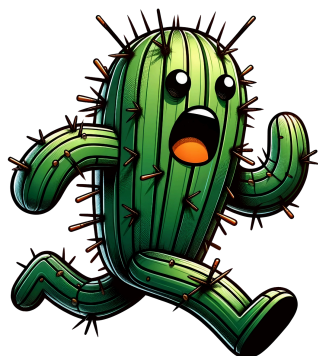
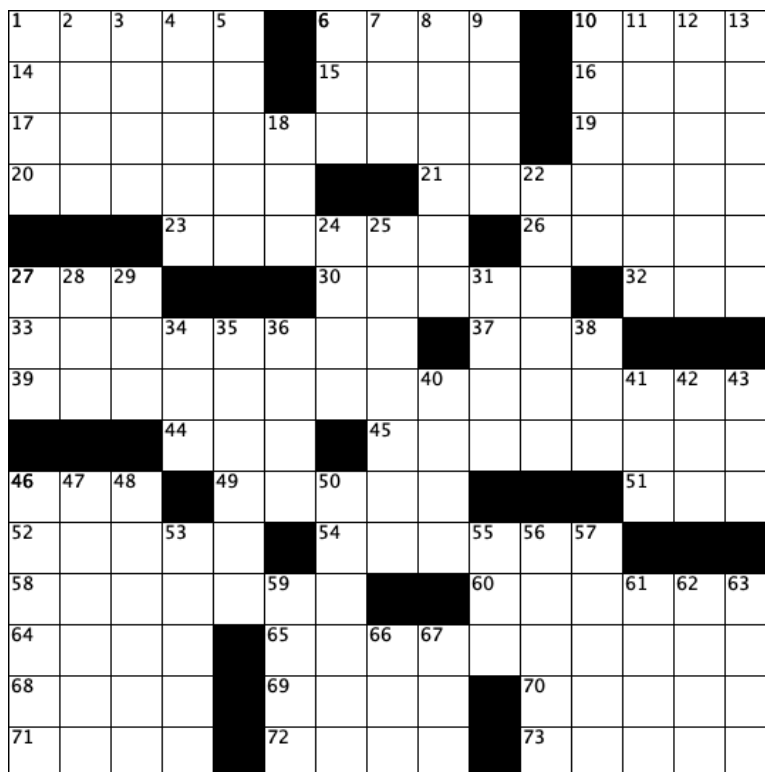
1. Parking garage unit
6. Fruit with a pit
10. Short for Starbucks beverage
14. Passageway in Panama
15. Cerveza ingredient
16. "Prefontaine" star Jared
17. SAR Members prior to 1976
19. First name in English tea
20. As originally found
21. A car, street, or former SAR president
23. Latin for birch tree genus
26. Freeze over, as a windshield
27. They result in two outs, in MLB
30. Hockey venues
32. Rattlesnake's warning
33. Lemmon or "A"
37. Suffix with real
39. "Arizona" road race
44. Pre-snap signal
45. Lunar light
46. "Don't text and drive" ad, e.g.
49. Woods of golf fame
51. "Flowing" language that pretties HTML
52. Of the kidney
54. A high gloss paint
58. Obscure an important message
60. Horse-like animal
64. Below Houston street in NYC
65. SAR member
68. Romans called him Cupid
69. Flows into the Trent River
70. Plaza for Plato

71. Container allowance
72. Indy 500 engine supplements
73. Banks and libraries do them

DOWN

1. Old-school storage interface (abbr.)
2. En passant victim
3. Sometimes picnic participants
4. Guyana native
5. Extract with a solvent
6. S. or N. follower
7. Grow old gracefully
8. Wrapped headdress
9. Lessen in severity
10. NCIS special agents go to school here
11. Tucson waste repository
12. Agamemnon's dad
13. Growths sometimes removed
18. Dropped from the squad
22. Juke manufacturer
24. Gout related acid
25. Utility workers
27. DDS equivalent
28. Mashed taro root
29. Questionable or dishonest
31. About 2.2 pounds
34. Last in a math series
35. Without any slack
36. Dissenting position
38. Bit that matters most? (abbr.)
40. Lady Grantham's first name
41. Instant, informally
42. Cockpit stat

43. A 5K has 500,000 of them
46. Radio button, e.g.
47. Madame, in Madrid
48. What departing sailors weigh
50. "Hit the road!"
53. ". . . by any other name would . . ."
55. Jacques Cousteau's milieu
56. Of the same status
57. Leap suddenly, or exercise a runner might do
59. Highly competent sorts
61. Not excluded from
62. Wonkish one
63. Really long times
66. Lethal snake
67. Paris's Pont ___ Arts



Crossword Answers



The Hot Cocoa Run

Not only does Southern Arizona Roadrunners (SAR) stage great races throughout the year, but we also maintain a **Community Events Calendar** on our website (<https://runsar.org/community-events>) that lists Good Neighbor Races and other locally produced running events.



Good Neighbor Races are promoted and organized with the assistance of SAR. The next Good Neighbor Race on the calendar is the Hanukkah Hot Cocoa Run 5K, 1K, and 1-Mile, taking place on December 7, 2025. The race starts and finishes at The Tucson J, in the Jill Rosenzweig Memorial Sculpture Garden (3800 East River Road). The course is an out-and-back route along the scenic Rillito River Path.

Hit the trail, enjoy a warm cup of cocoa, and be part of the community!

For additional race details, visit the Tucson J race website or register directly at <https://runsignup.com/Race/AZ/Tucson/HanukkahHotCocoaRun5k1k1mile>



2025/EARLY 2026 SAR RACE SCHEDULE

- **November 2nd: Dave's Run for ALS 8K & 5K + FitKidz Mile**
- **November 27th: Thanksgiving XC Classic 5K & 1.5 Mile Fun Run/Walk**
- **January 11th: Beyond Saguaro National Park West 4 Mile Run**
- **January 18th: Sun Run: La Primera 5K/10K Roadrace + FitKidz Mile**
- **February 8th (tentative): Fine Valentine Relay 4 Mile & 2 Mile + FitKidz Mile**
- **February 22nd: TMC Old Tucson Trail Run 4 Mile & 1 Mile**
- **March 8th: TMC Arizona Distance Classic Half Marathon, 6.55 Mile, & 5K**

About SAR

The Southern Arizona Roadrunners is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting health and fitness in Tucson and Southern Arizona through running and walking.

Our vision is to strengthen and support the running and walking community in Southern Arizona through high-quality, affordable, and family-friendly events and programming that empower people of all backgrounds, abilities, and ages to pursue a healthier lifestyle. We promote community engagement by celebrating the joy of athletic achievement, individual and group participation, philanthropy, and volunteer service.



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