Dear Labor Pain Entry;

The weather for this Sunday looks like it’s going to be pretty good for a long run. A record number have preregged, 383 entries, with 30-40 walkups expected that day too; people being able to pay raceday via cash or check. People are coming in from 13 states & Washington, DC so far.

**THE COURSE:** the course is 5 miles long, to the foot; wheel measured with a weighted-down surveyor's wheel, to minimize bouncing. It is about 90% trail, 5% grass and 5% road. The worse parts? Each loop has 1 gradual upgrade at 1.2 mile (about a 2 to 3 percent grade), a 300 ft long gradual hill at approx 1.4M, a 125 ft gradual climb at 3.2 followed by 900 foot of bad footing and a short but painful hill of about 75 yards up the back of the Liederkranz. There are long and continuous downhill sections on the course, especially in the last 2 miles. Please don't ask for a map of the course; you could get hurt reading it while running. Plus, part of it goes thru a person's yard and running that section is only allowable the day of the race. The start and finish of each loop will be at the Liederkranz itself. One key intersection will be manned at the start of the race but after that, all road crossing are unmanned and you have to be diligent, when crossing them. Oh, and despite our every effort, we could NOT eliminate a guard rail that you have to step over toward the end of each lap.

**COURSE RECORDS:** see the app for this info.

**AIDE STATIONS:** Naturally, there will be one at the end of each loop with a full array of ultra-type food and other types of food that is grill-able, including both carnivore dogs/burgers and veggie-burgers (sorry, no tofu dogs. never made one yet that a person can get down). Sports drinks & sodas will only be available at the end of each lap. On the course, there will also be a partial aide station, with some food and water at approx 2.48 miles so there is no need to carry anything during the event. Because so many people have specific types that they like, you must supply your own energy bars and gels. You should also bring any pain medication you wish to take, since we do not plan to provide them due to the ongoing debate about liability when distributing such items. Note: we MAY have a period during the late morning/early afternoon where we supplement the aide station beverages with something cold and yellow that is NOT lemonade. No guarantees but it could happen. It has every year so far!

**PACERS:** you MAY have a Pacer accompany you after you have completed the first 2 laps. This will help keep the first 2 laps a little less congested. For $20 payable the day of the race, your registered Pacer will be issued a race number which allows them access to any aide at the aide stations; water, food, Gatorade, the Pretzel City Sports official shower, our 2 masseuses, etc and post race food afterwards. They do not have to carry anything at all; other than "you" back to the finish. You can pay for them at registration or they can pay us after the race starts. There are two types of Pacers. One is a registered Pacer. If we have extra shirts, they may also buy one for $15 once the event has started if we have their size in hand. Unregistered Pacers are not allowed on the course until the end of the first 2 laps either. But, as unregistered Pacers, they also must provide all of their own water, food, etc; they CAN purchase food after or even during the event, as can ANY spectator you bring with you. Any unregistered Pacer taking aide stuff from an aide station or from the person they are pacing will be warned the first time we see it happen. After that, a second offense WILL get the person they are pacing disqualified.
including the forfeiting of the premium that all finishers get. Same goes with the shower, the masseuses, etc; but they CAN buy drinks at the cash bar. The same ALSO goes if they start pacing before 2 laps, since course congestion for that time IS a concern. We will also have some food available for your peeps, family, entourage to purchase throughout the day; at far lower prices than other sporting events. Note: the same “not till 2 laps are done” rule applies to pets as well; dogs, gerbils, alligators, unicorns, etc. You may run with them after the 2nd lap. HOWEVER, your pet MUST be kept on a tight leash, MUST be an animal that does not get confrontational around other animals or people and you MUST clean up after them.

CAMPING: Our ability to camp is somewhat more restricted this year than in past years. There can be no camping the night before the event; camping afterwards is OK but NO campfires, noise or indoor access is allowed. Plus, you should vacate the grounds before 8 am the next morning; just in case they have an event we are not aware of. Plus, the large grass area in which many have camped before the finish line is no longer available to us. We MAY have 1 strip of it to the right of the finish but not if there is any rain that day or the day before. You CAN camp ANYWHERE after the finish line. But there ARE caveat to that; no campfires, cannot pull your car onto the grass to set up, only have access to porta potties (there IS a water pump there for water). The earliest someone may set up a tent/easy-up/whatever is 6 AM on Sunday.

For better accommodations, the nearest campground to us is at French Creek State Park, a 20 minute drive away. For hotels, google them for Reading. I do NOT suggest the EconoLodge east of Reading since it is 2 doors down from a strip joint; who knows WHAT goes on in those rooms. Although, for some, that MAY be a REASON to stay there. We are not responsible for any possessions anywhere on the property as you run and NO grills, fires, etc. So, lock anything valuable in your car. And NO OUTSIDE ALCOHOL is allowed at the Liederkranz; If you DO bring some, you need to leave the premises to drink it or the Liederkranz, officials MAY confiscate it. We WILL have refreshments that the people that accompany you may buy plus there are places to get food within an easy drive of the Liederkranz and the bar will open about 10 AM. Again, the facility HAS softened their stance on dogs being there and the food area is not open, so it is OK to bring them. BUT CLEAN UP AFTER THEM! AND IF THEY DO NOT BEHAVE WELL AROUND STRANGERS OR OTHER DOGS, LEAVE THEM AT HOME! And no leg-humpers! The indoor bathrooms will be open eventually as the day progresses but that is the only part of the building that will be, so don't plan on sleeping in their air conditioned ballroom. PLUS, we will have the legendary Pretzel City outside shower there. No hot water, just shower! And 2 masseuses that work for tips only will be there starting at 10 am till the finish, I think. Considering the sweaty and aching bodies that they will work on, PLEASE be generous with any tip that you leave. Let’s give them a good reason to come back next year.

THE PREMIUM: Along with the shirt that you'll get at the race, each person entering will be fitted that day for the race premium (a very unique pullover unlike anything we have ever given out before) that will be mailed to you approx 7-8 weeks after the event. Along with the race logo, it will indicate the furthest of the milestone that you passed. People that do not do at least 26.2 miles will just have the race logo on their only. Every prereg entry will get a finishers mug too at the time of registration, since we're 99% sure that if you show up, you'll do at least ONE lap (even if that is where you finish). You’ll also get a race sticker for your car. We will also have
them for the "day of" entries on a first come, first distributed basis. **BE SURE TO TRY ON THE SAMPLES OF PREMIUMS WE HAVE THERE TO GET THE EXACT SIZE; WE'LL HAVE 2 OF EACH SIZE FOR YOU TO TRY ON. ONCE WE PUT YOUR MILESTONE ON THERE, IT IS CUSTOMIZED FOR YOU AND YOU ARE STUCK WITH THAT SIZE. ANYBODY THAT DOES NOT TRY ON A SAMPLE MAY BE STUCK WITH THE SAME SIZE THAT THEY REQUESTED FOR THEIR SHIRT. Also, extremely important; if you have moved since you entered the race or plan to move in the next two months, you MUST give us an GOOD address to which we can mail your premium.**

**NICETIES:** Things we plan to have there that day, some from the get-go and some after the first 2.5 hours, include a trained EMS with bag, a cash bar, food for sale for your peeps, a covered pavilion, picnic tables galore, a playground on site, a cold water shower with 2 heads (no waiting), plenty of parking, two masseuses THAT WORK FOR FREE BUT APPRECIATE TIPS, oncourse surprises, porta potties & indoor toilets, etc.

**PARTIAL LAPS:** There ARE no such things. ONLY laps that are completed by 7:45 PM (or 12 hrs after the minute that we start) will be counted. For that reason, no lap may be started after the 11 ½ hour mark either and based on your previous lap, if we think it is impossible for you to complete a lap in the remaining time, we will forbid you to start another. We WILL allow someone who is trying to achieve a milestone to both proceed after 7 PM and or do a partial lap if they need to pick up a small distance; for that milestone; i.e. the last mile of a 50k. But other than that, counting partial laps holds up the awards and is too confusing for what is expected to still be 30-40 people on the course at the cutoff.

**MILESTONES:** There will be an indication of the spot when you pass a marathon, 50k, 35 Miles (7 laps) 40 miles (8 complete laps), 45 Miles (9 laps) 50 Miles (10 complete laps), 55 Miles (11 laps) and 100k. There will also be signs for turnaround spots if you want to do a milestone that does not divide evenly by 5. So, if you ONLY want to do a 50k, for instance, you will go to the 50k turnaround after doing 6 laps and then return on the course in the opposite direction and enter the chute IN THE FRONT JUST AS YOU DO EACH LAP. Please make sure that the timer acknowledges that they have seen you, recorded you and know that you are stopping. If you do so, keep in mind that you can no longer run any more of the race; you’re done for the day. For those that plan to run past that the various milestones, we will have a sign at that location so you can check your watch for how fast you ran that milestone.

**SHIRTS FOR SALE:** For those that love a good deal or remember when Reading, PA was the epicenter of factory outlets, bring a few extra bucks along. We will have a bunch of old race T-shirts that never got sold available for practically dollar store prices. Stock up on past shirts that may not have made it past 25 washings. Get a smaller one since you lost 20 lbs since doing that race. Or even buy a shirt to wear the 2nd half of the race if yours starts smelling a little “gamey” after a while. Techs at 2 for $5 and cottons at 3 for $5. WHERE are you going to find a deal like that!!! **WE WILL ALSO HAVE BRAND NEW PRETZEL CITY SPORTS REGALIA FOR SALE:** t-shirts, coffee mugs, etc. As with our registration, we are ONLY set up to take cash or checks but we MAY be set up by then to take credit cards. But ONLY for shirt sales. There IS an ATM on site and it normally works.
EMAIL ADDRESSES: We are sending this out to everyone for which we have an email. However, some people did not put an email address on their reg forms. Also, 30-40 of you “unsubscribed” from our list in the past and our service will not allow us to add you back on. So, please share this with your friends that are coming since they may not have gotten it. We’ll also send this out thru another browser in hopes of picking up those people, so when you get a second copy of this, that is why.

FINAL DETAILS: Some of you, just like us, don’t use the good sense that God gave you. For that reason, we reserve the right to remove you from the event if we feel you are endangering yourself. Trust me, we will use this right VERY hesitantly, cause most of you are tougher than a $3.95 24 oz T-bone. Also, based on last year, we expect there to be plenty of light by 7:45 PM but if it is overcast, it may get dark a little earlier than anticipated so you MAY wish to have a light handy just in case. Also, in the case where 2 people in an age group finish the same distance, the fastest time will be used to break ties. Lastly, if at any time you decide that you are done for the day, please let us know at the spot where we will be recording laps. No awards will be given before 7:45 PM, unless we can determine, without a doubt, that you have won that award.

ONE LAST THING!!! YOU AND YOU ALONE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING SURE THAT THE TIMER RECORDED YOUR NUMBER AT THE END OF EACH LAP. WE MAY EVEN STOP YOU TO MAKE SURE THAT WE CAN GET YOUR BIB and will periodically yell out your number of laps to make sure that we agree. IF YOU CHOOSE TO GO TO YOUR TENT OR BAG BEFORE GOING THRU THE FINISH CHUTE AND THEN FORGET TO GO THRU THE CHUTE, YOU WILL NOT GET CREDIT FOR THAT LAP. AS A RESULT, WE URGE YOU TO ALWAYS GO THRU THE CHUTE BEFORE GOING TO YOUR BAG, EASY-UP OR TENT. THEN, ONCE YOU GO TO YOUR TENT, DO NOT GO THRU THE CHUTE A 2ND TIME!

Look forward to seeing you Sunday. Come see just how much of a badass you are and see some of the most heartwarming moments in racing, as people reach distances they once only dreamed of.

Ron Horn, Head Pain