



# The StrideRight

[www.floridastriders.com](http://www.floridastriders.com)

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## Presidents Corner

By Joni Neidigh



Hello Strider Family!

It's been a busy couple of months with the Gate River Run activities, OPHS track volunteer requirements, and our Run to the Sun 5K. I am so appreciative of all of the time and energy that many of you have dedicated to help make these events successful. It is so important to know that we have members that we can count on to step up and fill the needs of our club. As always, I encourage every member to sign up to volunteer for something. It is the absolute best way to get to know your Strider family and give back to our wonderful club. While your membership greatly helps to support our Children's Running Program, getting out there provides an opportunity to show leadership, contribute to problem solving, and inspire others, including the children and youth we support. Most importantly, as inconvenient or tiring as it may seem at times, it is always personally fulfilling to know that by stepping up you have contributed to a club with meaningful values and goals.

As summer has arrived and we are moving into the month of May, we will begin a new year for the Florida Striders. Serving as Board President of the Florida Striders this year has been exciting, challenging, busy, and extremely rewarding. It's been an honor to serve with such a wonderful board with creative ideas many of which have come to fruition. While a few will be stepping down, I am sure that they will agree that those who are stepping into their positions will serve our club honorably. Thank you to everyone past and present for being willing to take on these important roles. I appreciate you and will be honored to serve another year. Our 2024-25 board members will be posted on our Florida Striders Members Group Facebook page and listed in our next edition.

Reflecting on this past Florida Strider year, we have made many significant changes while keeping a great share of tradition. With the help of a strong executive board and board of directors, some of the changes include:

- Created a Synchronization Matrix
- A new club logo
- Created new on-line merchandise and apparel
- Amended Bylaw
- Initiated a membership change to include Senior Membership starting at age 62
- Created a new Student Athlete Membership category
- Advanced social media to include a members -only Facebook page and a Tik Tok presence.
- Created a Strider Trail Day and Secured the use of the OPHS track on Wednesday evenings.

Moving forward, I am confident that we will continue to grow in ways that are best for our wonderful club. Our membership is thriving and we could not have done that without all of you. Keep inviting your friends and families and letting them know about our wonderful mission.

Finally, our Run to the Sun 5k and Fun Run event was amazing! It was great to see everyone having fun, racing well, enjoying the beautiful River Road, and cheering each other on. Let's make our Memorial Day 5k on May 27<sup>th</sup> even better!

With Gratitude,  
*Joni*

## Meet Your Board of Directors 2023-2024

### *2023-2024 Officers and Board of Directors*

#### **Officers**

**President:** Joni Neidigh  
[president@floridastriders.com](mailto:president@floridastriders.com)

**Vice President:** George  
Barthelmes, IV  
[vpresident@floridastriders.com](mailto:vpresident@floridastriders.com)

**Secretary:** Britta Fortson  
[secretary@floridastriders.com](mailto:secretary@floridastriders.com)

**Treasurer:** Adam Cross  
[treasurer@floridastriders.com](mailto:treasurer@floridastriders.com)



#### **Coordinators**

**Children's Running:** Carol MacDougall  
[cmacdougall@bellsouth.net](mailto:cmacdougall@bellsouth.net)

**Track Coordinator:** Mike Tibble  
[striderstrackop@gmail.com](mailto:striderstrackop@gmail.com)

**Membership:** Eugene Biala  
[membership@floridastriders.com](mailto:membership@floridastriders.com)

**Social:** TBD

**Scholarship:** Kim Lundy  
[scholarship@floridastriders.com](mailto:scholarship@floridastriders.com)

**Race Volunteer:**

**Registration:** Kathy Murray  
[registration@floridastriders.com](mailto:registration@floridastriders.com)

**Equipment:** Suzanne Baker  
TBD

**Race Advisor:** Bill Krause  
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**StrideRight Editor:** Michelle Colina  
[striderighteditor@gmail.com](mailto:striderighteditor@gmail.com)

**StrideRight Proofreader:** TBD

## **Race Directors and Coordinators**

### **Race Directors**

**Resolution Run 5K**  
JD Dillaberry  
[resolutionrunrd@floridastriders.com](mailto:resolutionrunrd@floridastriders.com)

**Run To The Sun 5K**  
Adam Cross  
[rttsrd@floridastriders.com](mailto:rttsrd@floridastriders.com)

**MD5K**  
Adam Cross  
[md5krd@floridastriders.com](mailto:md5krd@floridastriders.com)

**The Angry Tortoise 25K/50K**  
[george.barthelmes@icloud.com](mailto:george.barthelmes@icloud.com)

**Hog Jog 5K**  
TBD

**Striders Summer Classic**  
[Treasurer@FloridaStriders.com](mailto:Treasurer@FloridaStriders.com)

## Say Hello to George

By Joni Neidigh



Meet George Barthelmes, who has served as our Vice President for 2023-24. George was born and raised in Leicester, MA and moved to Lake City with his family when he was 17, in 1987. He married his wife Wanda in 1995 and they have lived in Bryceville, FL since then. They currently have 3 dogs (Zeke, Marley and Buddie). From 1989 until November 2011, George was on Active Duty with the Florida National Guard and retired as a Sergeant Major. While with the Florida National Guard he served in many assignments including 2 years with the Special Forces Battalion in a support role, 9 years as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technician (aka Bomb Squad) and the final 11 years coordinating Florida National Guard support to the State of Florida in response to natural disasters and security operations. Towards the end of his military career, he took up running again and qualified for the National Guard Marathon Team. In 2012, George received the State of Florida Governor's Hurricane Conference Distinguished Service Award for extraordinary leadership, professionalism, dedication, and commitment in the field of emergency response and disaster relief in the State of Florida.

After his military retirement in 2011, George became a defense contractor and led a team of emergency management and military professionals to develop and facilitate natural disaster and terrorism scenario exercises for the Department of Defense to respond to. In addition to creating the scenarios, his team also replicated FEMA and the scenario state response, developed their documents and products, and role-played FEMA and state officials to create a realistic training exercise for the DoD. George retired in May 2022 although he did return last spring for 2 exercises and he is once again retired.

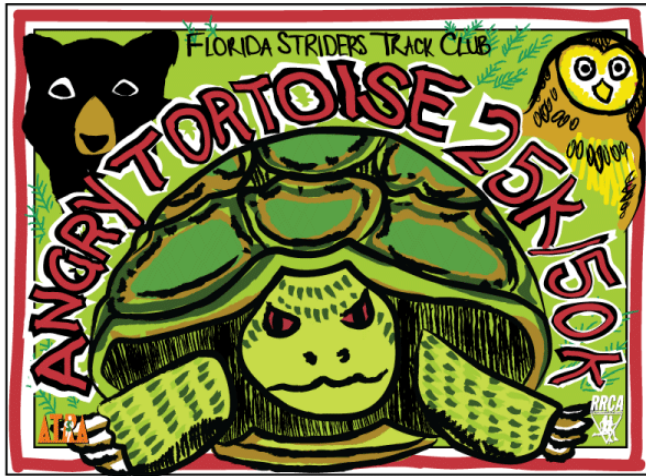
As for running, George has run over 36,000 miles since 2007 including 46 marathons and 13 Ultras. He has won 2 marathons (2016 Ocala and 2017 Soldier Marathon) and has a PR of 2:51 and won 4 Ultra Marathons. His longest Ultra Marathon was the 260-mile Race Across Georgia in 2014 which he finished 2<sup>nd</sup>. George has also served as a Pacer for 19 marathons. He truly enjoys serving as a Pacer as he finds it so rewarding to help others achieve their goals.

George stepped up this year to serve as the Vice President of the Florida Striders and at the time he expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve and improve the club like the Boards and Officers he has served since 1978. Now it is the time for us to express our appreciation for him. He has gone over and above to support me as a first-time president and helped to implement changes and improvements that will benefit our club for years to come. Thank you, George! Thank you for your service to our country and for your time and service to the Florida Striders Track Club.



# Angry Tortoise 25K & 50K

By: George Barthelmes, IV



Date: Saturday, Feb 24, 2024 at 7:30 AM  
Location: Cary State Forest, Bryceville, FL

Although it rained well over an inch on Friday, we still had several runners camp out the night before the race. This is the only Strider race where we offer free camping the night before. One of the reasons we offer free camping is we always attract runners not only from around the state, but the country as well. This year was no exception with runners from Alabama, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas and Ontario, Canada. We were

truly blessed with great weather on Race Day with a low of 48 and a high of 71. It turned out to be a great day and a great race! The weather and course conditions were so good that we had 4 new Course Records set!

Congratulations to the new Course Record Holders who are Regina Soeey, Kevin Sweeney, Eva George, and Allen Altman! This is the first year that we gave new Course Record Holders a custom plaque acknowledging their athletic achievement.



Regina Soeey who previously held 2 course records (50k Female Overall and 50k Female Masters) lost the 50k Female Overall record but gained a new one with the 25k Female Grand Masters record.



Regina was extremely gracious and presented the new 50k Female Overall Course Record Holder Eva George with her Course Record Holder plaque.



In addition to the new Course Record Holders, we also had some excellent athletic performances by several runners who finished their first Ultra Marathon. Now that they've completed their first, I'm certain it won't be their last.

The runners not only got to experience the beauty of Cary State Forest, but they also got to eat plenty of great food. At the Main Aid Station in addition to being well stocked with typical Ultra Marathon food, Florida Strider Mike Martinez with Sombrero Running Events and his crew were serving his famous chorizo and egg burritos. At our Pavilion Aid station, we served Ultra Marathon food and pulled pork sandwiches and potato salad for lunch.

Throughout the day and several days afterward I received so many positive comments as all the runners thoroughly enjoyed their day and the race. Of course, we



couldn't have an outstanding event without the help of our great sponsors and volunteers!



I would like to personally thank our great sponsors who provided funding, products, or services to this event. Regina Soeey with Regina Runs Real Estate (<https://reginarunsrealestate.com>) was our main sponsor, Poochies Dog Park, Boarding, and Pet Spa (<https://poochiespark.com>), PRS Race Timing (<https://www.prsracetiming.com>),

AIRWAAV Performance Mouthpieces (<https://airwaav.com>), Semper Fi Photos (<https://www.facebook.com/SemperFiPhotos>), LMNT (Electrolyte Drink Mix) (<https://drinklmnt.com>) and Sombrero Running Company (<https://sombrorunning.com>).

I would also like to thank our great volunteers!!! Thank You Florida Striders Gary Lewis, Dawn Sumner, Courtney Hardage, Kathy Murray, and Sandy Gottlieb.

Thanks to Florida Strider Board Members Jakob Irwin and James Vernon Frost (Jack) for your help. Jack was out there all day and did a tremendous job, even changing a fellow volunteer's flat tire.



Again, a Special Thank You to Florida Strider Mike Martinez with Sombrero Running Events and his Aid Station All Stars who ran the Main Aid Station. We call it the Main Aid Station as the runners pass by it 3 or 6 times depending on the distance they're running. I can't tell you how many great comments I received about our Main Aid Station. The Angry Tortoise wouldn't be the great event that it is without the help of Mike and his crew.

Here are the current course records for the Angry Tortoise 25k / 50k:

#### Angry Tortoise 25K / 50K Course Records:

**25K (Female Overall): 2015 1:47:25 – Julie Stackhouse**

**25K (Female Masters): 2022 2:05:40 – Sara Pleasants**

**25K (Female Grand Masters): 2024 2:12:07 – Regina Soeey**

**25K (Male Overall): 2022 1:41:37 - Joseph Jaramillo**

**25K (Male Masters): 2016 1:45:28 - George Barthelmes, IV**

**25K (Male Grand Masters): 2024 1:51:42 – Kevin Sweeny**

**50K (Female Overall): 2024 4:12:17 – Eva George**

**50K (Female Masters): 2017 4:24:47 – Regina Soeey**

**50K (Female Grand Masters): 2023 4:28:19 – Britta Fortson**

**50K (Male Overall): 2023 3:30:59 – Wrigley Longstreet**

**50K (Male Masters): 2023 3:58:51 – Brock Walaska**

**50K (Male Grand Masters): 2024 4:50:03 – Allen Altman**

The 2025 edition of the Angry Tortoise 25k / 50k will take place at Cary State Forest on 15 February 2025. Registration will be open on 01 June 2024!





## Run To The Sun 5k and Fun Run By Joni Nedeigh

Our 2024 Run to the Sun 5k and Fun Run was a great success! The weather, beautiful scenery, participants, spectators, and volunteers all added up to a fun-packed event. It was great to see people of all ages racing, laughing, cheering for each other, and helping out.

This year we had 450 participants in our Fun Run which is an increase of 50 compared to last year.

The following schools received monetary awards based on participation numbers:

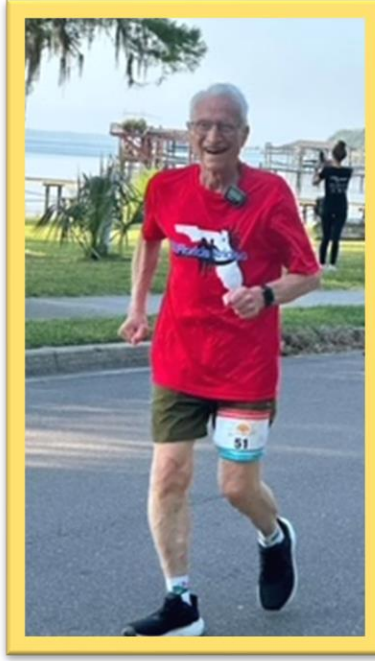
- Orange Park Elementary
- Montclair Elementary
- Coppergate Elementary
- Thunderbolt Elementary
- Swimming Pen Elementary
- Oakleaf Village Elementary
- R.M. Patterson Elementary
- Lakeside Elementary

Congratulations to all!

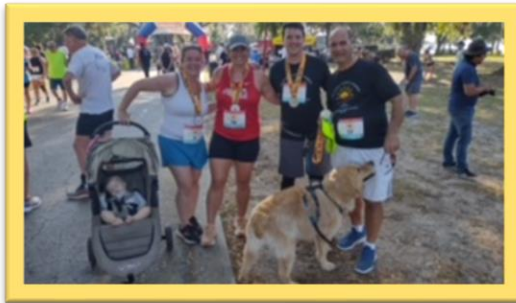


Kathy Murray with the hard working volunteers.





Run to the Sun youngest and oldest runners:  
Asher, 4 years old and Augie, 94 years old



## Where are your Striders?



Florida Striders continue the tradition of the Sunday morning IHOP meet-up.

Florida Striders Planning for 2024-25 at Metro Diner.



## Track workouts are going strong!

Where: Orange Park High School

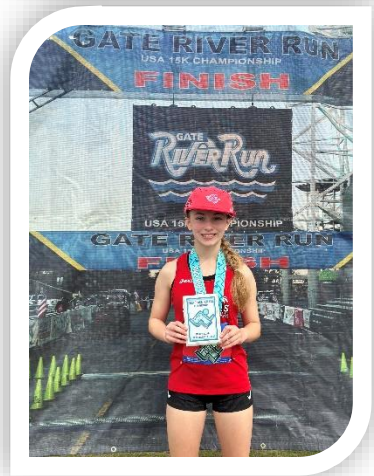
When: Wednesdays at 6:30pm.

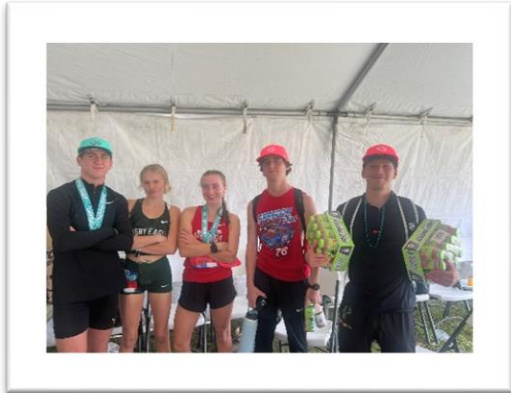
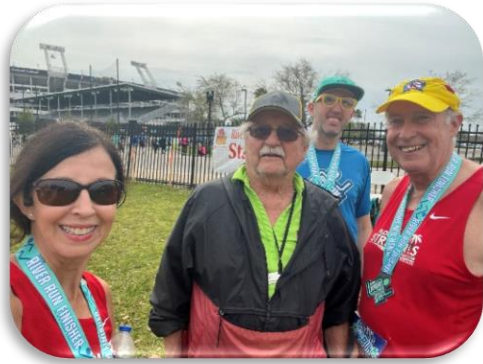
All ages and levels welcome with a Florida Strider Membership.





Florida Striders enjoyed socializing before and after the Gate River Run 2024 in our private member tent. Here are some pictures during the event.





MEMBERSHIP

Welcome and thank you to our new and returning members!

[Click here to join](#)  
[Click here to renew](#)



Joanie Barrett  
Katherine Bible  
Jesse Breeding  
Lisa Casson  
Kim Crist  
Tecumsia Dorce  
Andrew Gapinski  
Craig Goble  
Andrea Haack  
Hannah Harris  
Cassady Hewett  
Rebecca Hewett  
Bruce Jackson  
Tyler Jump  
April Lawson  
Brian McGready  
Christina Mitchell  
Robert Nones  
Kaylee Park  
Sarah Patrick  
Tracy Pfuntner  
Kim Rife  
Jenna Rodgers  
Frank Samu  
Andrea Sessions  
Tracy Skipton  
Kerri Standerwick  
Joanie Teofilo  
Josue Velazquez  
Katie Vlasek  
John Weber

Tessa Bates  
Harris Blackwell  
Megghan Brooks  
DiOnne Clark  
Mamie Davis  
Stephen DoRego  
Anna Gapinski  
Charles Goodyear  
Leslie Hague  
Amie Harvey  
Clay Hewett  
David Hon  
Laurie Johnson  
Nina Kannatt  
Eddie Levine  
Andrew Melzak  
John Mitchell  
Beth Norman  
Mindy Park  
Tes Patterson  
Dustin Phillips  
Bertha Rivera  
Terri Rose  
Judy Sastre  
Bradley Shepherd  
Amber Slimp  
Stacie Stemm  
Michael Tibble  
Alicia Vlasek  
Lucie Vlasek  
John Wisker

Matthew Belobraydic  
Sarah Blackwell  
John Caba  
Mark Corpuz  
Alice Derreberry  
Sonya Dudley  
David Gapinski  
Sandra Gottlieb  
Gary Hallett  
Sarah Hernandez  
Dave Hewett  
Emily Horan  
Melissa Johnson  
Geoffrey Klimas  
Dennis Magruder  
Brooklyn Melzak  
Joseph Morris  
Steven O'Brien  
Anne Patrick  
Kim Pawelek  
Anthony Pizzi  
Joe Rivera  
Cinzia Rothrock  
Kristie Schneider  
Tara Showalter  
JD Smith  
Reagan Strong  
David Townsend  
Amarie Vlasek  
Meagan Vlasek  
Ava Wysocki

Paul Berna  
Bruce Bradley  
Dalton Carter  
Gabby Costabile  
Caleb Dorce  
Josue Fernandez  
Matt Gapinski  
Mads Grandal  
Jennifer Harper  
Darryl Herren  
Glenda Hewett  
Jakob Irwin  
Lesley Jones  
Carolyn Krall  
John (Tim) Martin  
Renee Melzak  
Alma Nick  
Jaden Park  
Asher Patrick  
Emilee Perdue  
David Pizzi  
Joel Rivera  
Marcelino Ruiz  
Michael Schoenfeld  
Gordon Simms  
Kathy Soucy  
Jennifer Szala  
Donna Trumble  
EllyMae Vlasek  
Paul Vlasek  
Tom Zicafoose



27 May 2024 - 5K starts at 8AM Fun Run at 9:30AM  
Town Hall Park  
2042 Park Avenue, Orange Park, FL  
Orange Park, Fl. 32073

3rd leg of the 2024 Florida Striders Championship Series  
1st Place Sports Grand Prix Race

Striders get a \$5 discount for online registration.

Click [here](#) to Register