



ARRnews

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President's Message

By Kurt Coonrod

It is clear that while this pandemic has caused understandable uneasiness in the short term, at least for now, the vast majority of event participants look forward to racing again.

Bernalillo county is still under yellow restrictions for COVID-19. We have seen only a few days where the county has been below the new case threshold that would move us into the Green. Under the current rules, Bernalillo needs to average fewer than 55 cases a day for the two-week evaluation period. On Wednesday our count was 125. Currently our mass gathering rules remain the same – limited to 10 persons / 80 vehicles. The outdoor mask mandate has also not been modified...so not much has changed.

After last week's modification of the COVID thresholds for small counties, I have heard rumblings that large counties (Bernalillo, Dona Ana, and Sandoval) may also get some relief. We will see.

Here's how things stand now for our Club's four Races:

- **Forever Young Run** – In February, we were informed by the Forest Service and Sheriff's Dept that there was no way to get permit approval for the run this Spring. We are exploring the possibility of holding the run in the Fall.
- **Women's Distance Festival** – The state would need to be at the Turquoise Level for any chance of holding this event. This seems unrealistic giving the current rules and status of Bernalillo.
- **La Luz** – We did get a response from Senator Heinrich's office to the letter submitted on our behalf by Norm Gagne, as reported in the February E-News. (*See more on next page.*)
- **Mt. Taylor 50K** – We had a good meeting with the Forest Service at the Mt. Taylor Ranger District. They are confident that by the Fall we should be able to hold the event with minimal modifications. We are proceeding with expectation that this event will be held and will have a flexible plan in place.

With the total case counts diminishing and vaccinations proceeding, herd immunity should be near and we hopefully will be back to normal this late Spring. Until then it is difficult to make any plans. So we'll continue to monitor and keep you up to date!

Kurt

The Future of La Luz Trail Run

Sadly, the news is not good

Here are excerpts from an update from Norm Gagne, Attorney and ARR friend.



I recently had a lengthy phone discussion with Mike Sullivan from Senator Martin Heinrich's office. Here is a summary.

..An outfit from Missoula, Montana named Wilderness Watch is on a campaign to prevent all competitive events in all wilderness areas. They want to preserve the experience of solitude in wilderness. While I agree with this idea in general, I confess that I snorted when Mike said this and I reminded him of what a summer Sunday afternoon looked and sounded like on La Luz Trail. We both had a chuckle and agreed that there is wilderness and then there is *real* wilderness... .

Steve Hattenbach, who had been Cibola National Forest Supervisor, was transferred to Wisconsin... [but] is either already back or is coming back. It was his decision to deny the 2020 [La Luz Trail Run] permit. Mike has spoken at length with Hattenbach...[who] is not backing down. Hattenbach says...he is stuck and can't do anything without [specific legislative action]. Mike said it would likely take several years to get new legislation passed with an exemption. There would likely be opposition from outfits like Wilderness Watch and maybe others.

On behalf of Senator Heinrich, Mike has kicked the issue up to the top of the Forest Service but he expects that the local decision will be supported and no further permits will be issued without a specific legislative exemption.

...The outlook is not promising. ... I think that getting anyone to buy the argument that this was a pre-existing and therefore exempt event is doomed. If there is a path forward, it likely lies in a legislative exemption.... There is no easy and fast fix and there may ultimately be no fix at all.



What is a Virtual Race and Should You Run One?

September 3, 2020 / Sports Health & Fitness

<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/what-is-a-virtual-race-and-should-you-run-one/>

As the majority of races across the country have been canceled or postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic, runners of all shape, size and age have turned to the concept of “virtual races.” Gone are the pre-race jitters and porta-potty lines. There’s no race day traffic or starting gun. And unfortunately, there’s no post-race beer or banana. “Virtual races offer a more flexible race experience,” says one exercise physiologist. “Runners sign up for a race, run the distance on a specific date or by a deadline, then they upload their finishing time online and are mailed a medal a few days later.” Some races even offer race bibs to make it feel more official or provide swag bags to their participants.

But why would someone want to run a virtual race?

The pandemic has been hard on everyone, including those who love to participate in physical races. And since people can’t run together right now, many are finding it challenging and fun to participate in a simulated race instead.

This version of racing gives runners — from beginners to veterans — something to train for and work towards. Often times, races act as motivation to stay active, which is important, but even more so now in the midst of a global pandemic. It might not be the same experience as before, but...it could be the jolt of inspiration you need.

EDITOR'S NOTE:
Here's another reason for participating in virtual races: it's a great way to continue supporting causes that are important to you. *And this is a very good reason to be a virtual racer!*

Other people like the flexibility that a virtual race gives them. Maybe you hate physical races due to the ungodly hour you have to get up at. Or maybe you work weekends and couldn't attend most races. Now, you can race in the evening, or maybe you prefer a quick 5K at lunch during the week.

If you're a competitive runner, these virtual events are a great time to experiment with new training plans or even equipment and nutrition strategies. A virtual race can help you practice for your actual race, almost like a dress rehearsal (because yes, eventually this pandemic will end).

Treat your virtual race just like you would a physical race. Determine what clothes you will wear, lay out aid stations and water stops and plan a route that is exciting to run. Have some fun with your race and get your family involved, either running some of the distance with you or positioned at cheering stations on your course. Maybe even route your race by a friend's house.

You can also get creative in your post-race festivities. Plan a special dinner that night or simply enjoy that post-race beer or banana in your backyard as if you were at a real race.

To make things more interesting, encourage friends to sign up to compete against. Putting a small wager on it (like the loser has to mow the winner's lawn) could be the competition you're craving.

So where do you race?

With a virtual race, you get to call the shots and act as both a runner and race director. The organizers will typically give you a deadline for when you'll need to complete your race (or set a goal to run a certain amount of miles in so many days), but ultimately, you can decide when and where you run. You can run in your neighborhood, on a treadmill, on a track, at a park, at the beach. You choose the starting line and map out your route to cover the distance. You can also pick the day and time you prefer to race. At the very least, even if you don't like it, trying a virtual race will give you something to do during quarantine!

Four Ways to Run Safely during COVID

Excerpts from an article by New York Road Runners Club

FEB 27, 2021

<https://www.nyrr.org/Run/Photos-And-Stories/2021/New-Runner-Resource-COVID-Safety>

As runners, we have always had a responsibility to protect our health and safety on the run. Now more than ever during the coronavirus pandemic, it's vital to take steps to protect both our own health and safety and that of people around us.

• Run When It's Safe

The most important thing to keep in mind is to run only when and where it's safe to do so for both you and your local community. Local regulations vary from state to state, and even neighborhood to neighborhood, so learn how your community is impacted and what rules and guidelines are in place. When you run, always follow CDC best practices. If you are unsure or feel unsafe, stay inside. It is possible to get the benefits of exercise while staying indoors. Many runners are using this time to rest or focus on a different aspect of their training through online yoga or strength work. Find exercise that works for you and your space, whether it is treadmill running, cycling, or following along with a virtual dance or fitness class.

• Know and Follow the Latest Face-Covering Guidelines

If you are working out outdoors, be aware, too, of local rules and best practices regarding face masks. Runners should refer to [their local and state Health Department] as well as the Centers for Disease Control [for] guidance about types of masks.

• Keep 6 Feet Apart

Always run where you can maintain at least six feet of distance between you and another person. "Running solo or with someone who you live with and share the air every day is the safest," said Dr. Weiss, New York Road Runners' medical director. "It's hard to maintain social distancing with a running partner who is not part of your everyday life." Maintaining social distance may also mean changing your favorite running route or the time of day you run and being flexible in the moment with how far or how long you run.

Keep your eyes on the streets ahead of you and read the scene. Throughout your run, ask yourself, "Can I pass safely if I keep running in this direction?"



• Keep Others Safe

Make smart real-time decisions to avoid others by changing direction or stopping and waiting for another person to pass. While running routines are comforting, catch yourself if you start thinking "I must run my normal route today" or "I must run five miles." Instead, ask yourself how you can make those you run past feel safe. This will mean making lots of space when passing or by varying your speed to pass safely. Being flexible with your running plans and generous in sharing the sidewalks and paths with others is important to staying safe and keeping those around you safe.

Running right now is not about breaking records, even personal ones, or accumulating distance or time. Running during this pandemic is about keeping yourself and others healthy. Yes, you are staying healthy by running, but you can take basic precautions to avoid spreading the virus, particularly if your runs take you onto crowded paths or trails. What we recommend here are strategies to help maintain public health, not achieve a personal best. This is a time to slow down a bit, stick closer to home, and help keep everyone safer.

