

THE SOCIAL LIGHT

Casting a beam on the Central Kentucky out-and-about scene

This group jogs more than memories



KELLI PATRICK
CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST

"If you want to know what Kentucky looks like," **Judy Duncan** will tell you, "come out and run with us."

Jogging through the countryside of Clark County with **Martin Ginocchio**, "grand poobah" of the Todds Road Stumblers, and Duncan, a Stumbler of nine years, it's obvious she speaks the truth. Granted, my eyes usually can't focus at 7-something on a Saturday morning, but the chill in the air as we run the 6-mile course — which covers a stretch of Todds, Basin Springs and Combs Ferry roads — is enough to wake up the senses.



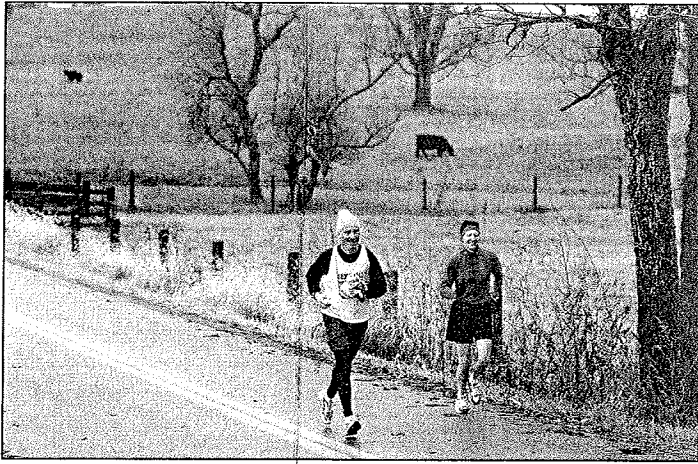
Ginocchio

As we run through gorgeous farmland and rolling hills, Duncan and Ginocchio share stories about the club, and Duncan throws in a point of running etiquette while waving to a passing car: It's always a five-finger wave, she coaches me, never one finger.

On the last Saturday in October, the Todds Road Stumblers — who roll out of bed early on Saturdays to share fellowship and a love of running — gathered after their run for the Harvest Homecoming, an annual breakfast that brings together members and alums. The club, which formed in the mid-'70s, meets at a quaint Todds Road farmhouse decorated with "500 Mile Club" plaques (displaying names of those who've logged at total of 500 miles during Saturday runs). There also are charts where members can track their mileage.

Bob MacIn, an early Stumbler who ran with the club into the early '90s, came back to see old friends. "We ran lots of miles together," said MacIn, who turns 84 this week. "This is the first time I've been here in probably 10 years." He shared memories of bus trips to races and of midnight runs on New Year's Eve. "We had lots of camaraderie."

Lynn Phillips, who joined about six years ago, enjoys that same spirit. "It's just such a wonderful group of people," says Phillips, who talks about



DAVID PERRY | STAFF

Todds Road Stumblers Phil Waters, left, and Steve Olson ran along a Clark County road last weekend.

Todds Road Stumblers

What: An informal running group that meets each Saturday morning. The group has no dues. Members are incredibly welcoming, and joining is as easy as showing up.

Where: The club meets in a farmhouse at Pine Grove, about 6 miles east of Lexington, near Todds and Combs Ferry roads in Clark County.

When: Starting time is 7 a.m. Runners can choose 6-, 9-, 12-, 15- or 21-mile courses, and runners and walkers of all abilities are welcome. If you don't want to run the whole course, just turn around and head back.

Online: www.toddsroadstumblers.com.

"part of Ernie's harem."

Peel acknowledges diversifying the membership. "I'm not very good at getting guys out here," he says.

Peel, a Stumbler since 1996, says he likes inspiring people to meet their goals. He ran his first marathon in his 40s and enjoys sharing his experience with those training for their first.

Ginocchio, 74, figures he's logged about 7,500 miles during club runs, although he stopped keeping track years ago. "My wife used to claim that this was my biggest social event of the week," said Ginocchio, who took up running in his late 40s because of health concerns.

Phillips says everyone is welcome to join the Stumblers: "If you're out here to run, we're here to support you."