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Local Sports

Apel has run marathons in 50 states, all seven continents

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By Paul Christian
The Post-Bulletin, Rochester MN

Apel's highlights

Hottest -- Twisted Ankle Trail Marathon in 2006 (87-93 degrees at end.

Farthest from home -- Antarctica 2006.

Personal slowest: Canadian Death Race in 2006. First 11K was a 3,000-foot climb. Was 80 degrees at start at 35 degrees at top of mountain. Finished in nine hours.

Most difficult -- Psycho WyCo Run Toto Run 50K in Kansas. Over 15,000-feet in vertical change.

Largest -- Chicago 2005 (more than 33,000).

Smallest -- Louisiana Trail (nine runners).

Most spectators -- New York 2003 (three million).

Fewest spectators -- Antarctica 2005 (less than 20).

LEWISTON -- September 11, 2001 -- 9/11 -- was a tragic day for all Americans, obviously.

On top of that, it was also the day Win Apel learned he had prostate cancer.

"A double-whammy," he said.

Before that, Apel had completed two marathons.

"My cancer was gone in two months," he said, "and that's when I resolved to run a marathon in all 50 states."

Eventually, he took that one step farther.

"I also vowed to run a marathon in all seven continents," he said.

He completed the United States portion of his vow two years ago this month at the Boston Marathon and on July 25, 2009, he finished the Bush Capital Marathon in Australia.

Mission accomplished; the best guess is that only between 200 and 300 have completed this feat.

Apel told his story Sunday during the social gathering of the 33rd annual Fools Five, which attracted a record 2,977 runners and walkers.

"I want everyone to know that if there's a resolve, there's a way to accomplish your goal," he said. "Just look at me."

Apel has now completed 76 marathons but his life took another wicked twist last November over the Thanksgiving holiday. It was Nov. 27 to be exact. Less than a month before, he had finished the tough Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C.

Apel and his wife Lorrie -- they live in New Jersey and will soon celebrate their 30th anniversary -- were visiting one of his three sons in Concord, Calif.

He just completed a six-mile run with his son and after showering felt a tingle on his left shoulder, arm and fingers.

Stroke?

"That's what we thought at first," he said, "but I had a



Participants take off at the start of the 33rd annual Fools Five Road Race Sunday, April 3, 2011 in Lewiston.

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CT scan and there was a cancerous brain mass in the right side of this brain."

Apel, 62, had surgery within a week and recently completed radiation but he still using a healthy dose of chemotherapy.

"For now," he said, "my running days have stopped, although I did a mile last week. My whole concentration now is to beat this thing."

Apel, who worked in Boise, Idaho for 30 years, is on long-term disability from his attorney's job at General Counsel at Weeks Marine.

"I still have a message to tell," he said. "Cancer may put you down but it doesn't necessarily have to beat you. I proved that once, and hopefully again."

Gilman wins Fools Five

Pete Gilman of Rochester was an easy winner in Sunday's race, finishing the five-mile course in 26:07. Ryan Ping of Winona was second in 28:10 and Jake Hegge of Verona, Wis., third in 28:11.

Mary Chestolowski of Rochester was the women's winner in 31:58. She was 14th overall. DeeAnn Johnson of Winona was second in 32:10 and Laura Edlund of St. Paul third in 32:28.

There was a record 2,977 runners/walkers who finished. Proceeds go to cancer research, and over \$1 million has been raised the last 32 years.

Travis Weaver of Lewiston won the one-mile in 5:37 with Damon Schultz of Stockton second in 5:46. Desirae Lewis, 12, of Lewiston was the female winner in 7:15.

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