

Cowtown's first runner to enter the Ultra helps the event each year

Heidi Swartz, executive director of The Cowtown, said Father Bernard was the first to enter the Ultra when registration opened in June for the February, 2009 event. Father Bernard, a running enthusiast, has issued himself a running challenge that will raise money for a worthwhile cause. He also coaches a school team from Cistercian Prep School that he takes to Cowtown each year. The difference with his team from most is that each participant pays a little extra to enter, and the extra money goes toward Cowtown's Kids Program, which underwrites kids that can't afford an entry fee. Heidi said Father Bernard's team helps underwrite several youngsters each year.

To meet a new challenge

By Father Bernard



Without goals everyday living can become a bore, the routine can become stale and meaningless; a firm goal set in front us can invigorate and lend resolve to our activities.

Many different aspects of life and death can inspire us: I for one am always touched by the patient suffering of the elderly, especially those who are inflicted with some incurable disease. Some years ago, I have accidentally come in contact with an organization that seeks to alleviate some of these diseases and have dedicated some of my own energies to raise funds for the research and elimination of Multiple Sclerosis. To that effect I decided to train for and run in a number of long distance races, asked my friends to match the number of miles I needed to run with a certain, small amount as I prepared for those runs.

Thus in October of 2003, I have successfully completed the Chicago Marathon—and raised close to \$10,000 during my preparatory runs, then in April of 2006 I did the same in the Boston Marathon, with another \$10,000+ raised for the *Accelerated Cure Project*, an official, non-profit research group that is active in finding a cure for MS. Since then I have met many people, including some of my older acquaintances, who have revealed that they are burdened with this debilitating illness.

I am again itching to get involved in doing something positive and raise some more funds for the aforementioned group. I have a few milestones behind—and in front of—me: in the month of May I reached 10,000 miles in training runs that stretch back to 1996. This year, and by the beginning of the next, I intend to have run 1,000 miles, or 100 per month, leading up to another race on February 28, 2009, in Fort Worth: the Ultra section of the Cowtown Marathon. Granted, it is not as glamorous as either of the two past races

I was privileged to participate in, but it is a real challenge—a distance that I have never attempted before.

I am asking you to sponsor either my preparation, say \$0.1 per mile, or my race of 50K itself, by pledging a certain amount for each kilometer the course requires. My intention is to raise another \$10,000. If you sign up, I will keep you posted about the progress and, at the end of the race, I will give you a blow-by-blow account of “How I survived the Ultra.” If you'd like to help Father Bernard, e-mail him at BMarton@cistercian.org.