

The Grungy Shoe

Alchemist

The Indianhead Track Club banquet in January was a gala event, with members decked out in everything from furs to Gore-Tex. Craig Moore, our featured speaker, showed some slides taken during his family practice residency in Eau Claire. Two of the most hilarious included Dave Fitzgerald during puberty and an unidentified pair of moonshots (rumor has it that Van Es and Marjala).

Our "Runners of the Year" were Lily Alberts and Al Douglas, two very impressive speed merchants. Kim DePrenger-Gottfried was the "Most Improved Runner of 1988," illustrating that motherhood can improve running.

The Grungy Shoe Award was presented by last year's winner, Don Marjala. I was indeed flattered to receive this unofficial Club booby prize. When you don't have a prayer of winning a legitimate award, you settle for the Grungy Shoe.

The first winner of this elegant trophy was Ken Van Es in 1982. He was followed by Lloyd Fleig and then Joe Duerre. The award was not given in 1985 because Joe came to the banquet under the influence and forgot where he left his car containing the trophy. Chris Peterson "won" the award in 1986 and passed it on to Van Es, our two time loser. He awarded it to attorney Marjala for his ambulance chasing skills after noting that Don's daily runs took him past the emergency rooms at both Luther and Sacred Heart Hospitals.

You may wonder what it takes to qualify for the Grungy Shoe. I was told that it is given to recognize bizarre running behavior. And all these years I thought I was normal!

In the event that you aspire to add the Grungy Shoe to your running resume next January, I shall make a few comments about the selection process.

First, I pledge to fully consider all female members of the club. I am convinced that some of

you ladies (or women or girls) are guilty of past indiscretions while running. You will be watched closely and perhaps even called late at night.

In view of Eau Claire's Obscenity Ordinance, runners must wear proper attire. Running topless, bottomless or naked, even after dark, will surely make one very eligible.

If you are chased by a dog, shooting the animal is not to be tolerated. The owner, however, is fair game.

Moonshots at passing cars are counted against you, along with obscene gestures and uncouth words or phrases. Refrain from relieving yourself in public.

If you run during your lunch break, you earn points if you return to work without a shower. It is also bad form to run in shorts and T-shirts that have not been laundered. That also applies to socks.

Running in worn out shoes is a negative, and running with unmatched shoes is a double negative. Smoking will earn you great scorn and several points. That also applies to chewing.

Failure to shovel your sidewalk is a definite point-getter, and when driving you must yield to runners. Abandoning your spouse to run on the run on the spouse's birthday, your anniversary, Mother's Day, or Father's Day is debatable. So is running against your doctor's orders.

Shame on you if you've not yet paid your club dues. And finally, running with a can of beer is not acceptable, unless it is above 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

I reserve the right to deem other types of running as bizarre and assign whatever points fit the crime. Meanwhile, I am honored to host this beautiful trophy in our humble home. Our two cats gave it the sniff test and they're not so sure.

Addendum:

Please welcome Pearly Johnson, head host and bartender at the Camaraderie, to the Indianhead Track Club. Many of you perhaps do not even know that Pearly is a runner. He tends to avoid the big races.