



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Run concludes / The Cause continues

The Run: On May 9, 2011 a Pennsylvania man finished a one-lap 1,022-mile run around the state to raise awareness about political redistricting and to inspire reform in this once-a-decade process. The Run started on April 1, 2011, the deadline for the U.S. Census Bureau to publish the data required for states to do this decade's redistricting. The runner passed through hundreds of communities while symbolically extending a relay baton to those who would help to fulfill the Run's goal. Members of the news media reported extensively on the Run. Thousands of people joined the runner in person and many more participated virtually, including through social media and the popular GPS-tracking tool. The Run succeeded beyond expectations in raising awareness about redistricting among millions of citizens.

The Cause: While the Run has concluded, the (bigger) cause continues. The Cause's overarching goal is to assure *transparency* and *independence* in the redistricting process. Legislators have long used redistricting as an opportunity to select their constituents, rather than empowering voters to elect their representatives. A goal in Pa. is to create an independent redistricting commission. Reform efforts in other states vary. Learn about nationwide redistricting at www.redistrictingthenation.com.

- **Why is redistricting -- and redistricting reform -- important?** Political redistricting may be the single most important act of American government at all levels every ten years. Proper redistricting enables fair elections, reduces voter cynicism and attracts better-qualified candidates for public office, which leads to better government and a better society. In Pa., under current law, redistricting is controlled by state legislators. Allowing elected officials to draw their own districts is a conflict of interest. See the **Blue Paper** at www.pjmathison.com/pennultimaterun.
- **What needs to happen in order to reform Pa.'s redistricting process?** Amending the Pa. Constitution, a *major* undertaking, although one not without precedent (sort of like running a lap around the state). The goal is to replace the current legislature-driven approach with an independent commission in future decades.
- **Is there some "group" behind the Run / Cause?** This effort is being pursued by the **pjmathison** firm in cooperation with allied organizations and individuals.
- **What are the ongoing efforts of the Cause?** Ongoing efforts are based on time and resources and generally entail: analyzing redistricting news & data; educating the public about redistricting reform; acting upon requests for assistance; and developing the **National Gallery of Redistricting Art™**. See www.pjmathison.com.

- **Is there a “political agenda”?** Yes and No (how appropriate). Yes, because this effort deals with *how* people are elected to public office. No, because it’s non-partisan.
- **Is financial support to the Run / Cause tax deductible?** Not for charitable purposes. the Run / Cause is NOT a 501(c)3 charity or the like -- it is a professional undertaking.
- **Is the Run / Cause considered lobbying?** Some limited elements of this effort may fall under one or more lobbying disclosure laws. Standard registration and reporting requirements will be complied with where applicable.
- **If I support the Run / Cause, will my name appear anywhere?** In Pa., if an individual or entity provides support (money or in-kind) in the amount of \$250 or more during a 3-month period to this effort, then that supporter’s name, address and phone no. *may* – but not necessarily – be included in reports submitted to the State as per Pa.’s lobbying disclosure law (this depends on applicable amounts raised & expended). Otherwise, unless you give us prior permission to disclose your info, we will hold it in confidence.
- **Will you accept a check?** Yes. Checks payable to “p. j. mathison,” 100 S. Broad Street, Box 22334, Philadelphia, PA 19110. Please include name, address and tel. no.
- **Will funds raised be used for political campaign contributions?** No.
- **What else can I do to advance the Cause?** Participate in a redistricting public hearing convened by government officials. Join a redistricting reform group, e.g., Common Cause or the League of Women Voters. Ask your legislators (current and potential) to explain their position on redistricting. Talk, Tweet, text, and otherwise communicate about this topic. Oh, and support the Gallery (see www.pjmathison.com)

Enough about redistricting (for a moment); tell us more about the Run!

- **Was the Run accomplished alone?** The lead runner is indebted to a nationwide support team who assisted with technology, logistics, communications strategy, social media, and physical & mental conditioning. During the Run, bystanders spontaneously provided assistance (e.g., pointing us in the right direction), and walked, jogged, or bicycled with the runner. Others drove along side. That said, there was no in-Run support vehicle or crew so the runner was, at times, alone.
- **What about the runner’s “companion”?** You must mean “Babe,” the anthropomorphic jogging stroller. Babe attracted throngs along the route, and nationwide on the Internet. Babe is a BabbyJogger.com brand stroller and was matched with the runner via Craigslist. One of Babe’s key features is her 20” wheels. Scientifically, this larger-than-average wheel diameter meant fewer encounters with the road, thus less friction, which resulted in more distance covered each day with less effort.

- **Selected metrics about the Run:** The runner covered 1,022-miles over 39-days, averaging 26.2-miles, or one marathon, per day, which we proclaim a “record” (*Guinness Book* people please take note). Longest day: actually *two* at 37.5-miles. Days 30-miles or more: 16. Fuel consumption: 7,000-8,000 calories/day. Flat tires: 0. Nights in a motel-33, bed & breakfast-2, private residence-2, and VFW post-1. Nights slept outdoors-0. Pa. counties passed through: 29 (out of 67). Bears encountered: 3.
- **Were there any “days off”?** Yes, two. Day 10, due to protestations from a basketball-size ankle. Day 37, *only* because we were closing in on busy Philadelphia near the end of the Run and needed an entire planning day before entering the city, and besides...
- **Toughest part of the Run?** The *combination* of elements as follows: harsh weather (snow, sleet, rain, cold, wind, lightening), mountainous terrain (traversed the Appalachian mountain chain...twice), after-dark perils (because reaching indoor lodging each day was paramount), command of a 70lb jogging stroller (physics lesson: restraining a boulder from going down a mountain requires as much energy as pushing it up), hostile traffic conditions (like a squadron of airplanes landing and taking off within arm’s reach all...day...long), un-navigable roadways (narrow, corroded or non-existent shoulders, mounds of winter residue, plus road-kill and its manifestations), and the ever-present worry of whether or not there would be suitable lodging ahead.
- **What else was going on inside the lead runner’s head?** The runner mostly was in good spirits, which can be attributed to adrenalin, endorphins, vanity, Boy Scout training, and having an ever-so-small screw loose. The runner never *felt* in imminent danger. (Editor’s note: we’re not sure if the runner would *recognize* imminent danger.)
- **“High point” of the Run:** The daily bliss of “living in the moment.” Also, the amazing recurrence of miracles, e.g., finding adequate shelter every night, and friends that appeared out of nowhere when needed (yes, we know, someone was watching over us).
- **“Low point:”** Truly, losing the “Official Shirt of the PennUltimate Run,” which fell out of Babe on the way down a mountain east of Connellsville (we know, don’t sweat the petty stuff). Days later, a supporter drove us to a store and purchased an exact replacement.
- **Biggest surprise/s?** In no particular order: One, never once sleeping outdoors, after extensively preparing for such circumstances. Two, finishing sooner than expected (39- vs. 50-days). Three, the *extra* friendliness of Pennsylvanians everywhere (OK, this has to be #1). Four, the popularity of the GPS-tracking system. Five, no chafing.
- **Interaction with the news media:** Interacting with the news media was a delight. We support both a free press and the right of anyone to say sometimes-dorky things to these fine professionals.
- **Interaction with the State Police:** On three occasions (twice in one day) Babe and the runner were “pulled over” by members of this equally fine profession who, we later learned, were deluged with calls from horrified drivers (e.g., “OMG, there’s a man with a baby in a jogging stroller running in the rain towards the hospital!”).

- The first incident occurred on Route 30 near Bedford Memorial Hospital in cold, driving rain, with Babe's safety lights ablaze. Exiting *her* vehicle, the trooper exclaimed: "Why, there's no baby in there!" Consequently, the runner presented a calling card and launched into a spiel about redistricting reform, which ultimately convinced the trooper that she was dealing with merely a lunatic.

- The third incident involved being pulled over in response to calls police received while the runner was heading north out of Pittsburgh, where the only option was (we swear) to run in the roadway of a busy four-lane corridor. Fortunately, this incident occurred just a quarter mile before the next county, where the shoulder opened-up. The trooper here insisted on escorting the runner across the county line (like who hasn't had that happen to them before?).

On a fourth occasion a trooper parked along Route 6 asked the runner, who was traveling *with* the traffic, to please move to the other side of the road and *face* the traffic, where it would be "safer." This presented a conundrum: Does a runner with a jogging stroller heed statutes related to pedestrians, bicyclists, both or neither? Prior to the Run we obtained copies of relevant statutes and brought them along for reference, if needed. During the Run, out of necessity, we pondered continuously about jogging stroller public policy, e.g., Can conditions at-hand override rule-of-law? Prudently, here, we chose not to openly debate this fascinating issue.

NOTE: All interactions with the state police were friendly and mutually respectful. Troopers were polite and helpful and just wanted to make sure that everybody was safe and was obeying the rules of the road. The runner was never asked to, in so many words, "park the stroller and buy a bus ticket home" (not that that wasn't a worry).

- **Interaction with lawmakers:** The route passed by dozens of district offices of state and federal lawmakers, which provided opportunities for visits or to leave a card. Interactions occurred mostly with district staffers who graciously hosted their panting interloper. In Wellsboro, the runner learned from staff that the barn-size female black bear encountered the day before is well known in those parts by name (oh-kayy).

- **Did the Run make any donations as previously suggested?** Yes. Camping supplies were donated to a Boy Scout troop. Safety lights were given back to a bicycle shop to re-gift to cherub-faced kids. Financial gifts were made to American Legion PA Post 668 (overseers of the memorial that served as the start/finish of the Run) for veterans in need and to a foundation that supports children's cancer research. Babe was adopted by a chapter of the national MOMS Clubs organization, during a tearful parting ceremony.

See www.pjmathison/pennultimaterun for additional information, including ongoing efforts, news feeds, press releases, photos, media coverage, actual route map with daily highlights, a "blue paper" on Pa. redistricting reform, how to contact and support the Run / Cause, and information about the [pjmathison](http://www.pjmathison.com) firm.