



Sports

Oberlin woman ready to run in Boston race

By **KIMBERLY DAVIS**
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 An Oberlin woman is ready to hit the pavement in Boston —

Mrs. Pratt, “but I run up the hill just straight south on Penn Avenue, so I really did not notice the hills.”



Peggy Pratt

Peggy Pratt says she has been a runner since she was a junior in high school, although she took off a few years while she had kids. Instead, she said, she would take the kids out on her bike. Then about 18 years ago when her youngest, Whitney, was 3, she started to run again.

Since returning from Texas, she’s been training for the Boston Marathon. That has meant one long run a week. Her longest recent run has been 28 miles. Some weeks, she will do a 10-mile run once and then an 18-mile another day. On the other days, she runs her normal five miles a day.

Since then, she has run in the Goodland Marathon, the Boulder Boulder, in the Topeka-Auburn race and the Abilene 10 K.

She also goes for bike rides, including riding to Kearney and Red Willow Lake in Nebraska. This spring, she plans to do trail bike rides with friends.

In December, she traveled to Dallas, where she ran 26.2 miles in three hours, 49.52 minutes to qualify for the Boston Marathon next month.

Mrs. Pratt said she really enjoys running. She doesn’t listen to music; she just listens to everything. It’s a time to unwind and think about other things.

To qualify for the Boston Marathon, said Mrs. Pratt, people had to finish in three hours, 50 minutes in a sanctioned marathon race.

She said she is actually trained now and ready for the Boston race, although it isn’t until April 20.

She said she ran in Texas with 17,000 other runners.

When she gets to the last month, she won’t do anymore long runs. It takes too long for muscles to heal. The last couple of weeks before the run, she will do a lot of “carb loading,” eating to get ready for the race.

They started in waves according to their projected finish time, and each runner wore a band on his or her ankle. Electronic grids along the route would pick up the ankle bands to trace the runners.

During the marathon, she said it’s important to take water and Gatorade about every two miles after the first seven.

It gave people at home a way to track each runner over the internet, said Mrs. Pratt, but it also let the race officials know that each runner had made it through all of the check points.

Mrs. Pratt said running is relaxing to her. There is no one asking her questions and she can set her own goals. It isn’t a competition.

Since being home, she’s gone online to see how her times were at the check points and how many people she passed in the last three miles.

To anyone wanting to start a running program, it’s important not to give yourself a choice to get out, she said. Also, start out slow or you will hurt yourself. Then gradually build up to where you want to be.

She was told that it was windier than normal on race day, although it was nothing like running in the Kansas wind.

“There were some hills,” said

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 Per OBH

Business group looks for members

Members of the Oberlin Business Alliance are extending an invitation to all businesses in town to join the group.

looking good before Mother’s Day.

The members talked about the group when they met for lunch last Wednesday at the LandMark Inn. Gary Walter, with the Bank, asked how the membership numbers compare with last year. Tina Watson, Chamber of Commerce manager, who serves as secretary for the group, said she thought there are more members this year than last.

After some discussion at the meeting last Wednesday, however, it looks like businesses are on their own this year to order the flowers and get them planted.

There are some people who say they won’t join the alliance because it duplicates what the Chamber does, said Mr. Walter, but the two aren’t the same.

It would be nice to get some kind of perennials in the planters, but most of them are not as colorful when they come up each year, said Laurie Wasson, with Prairie Petals. It does look nice when all of the planters are done, she said, but it’s a busy weekend for her to be ordering flowers, separating them into groups and making sure people pick them up or deliver them.

Maybe the groups need better communications, said Deanna Castle, a Chamber board member. Does the alliance have a newsletter? Do people know what the group does?

In other business, the alliance members:

That information should be covered in the Chamber news by the secretary, said Connie Grafel, marketing director for the Oberlin-Decatur County Economic Development Corp. There are lots of people who don’t read the newspaper, said Mrs. Castle.

- Heard that the banners for spring are in and now just need a pocket sewn in them to be hung downtown.

Kurt Vollertsen, owner of Ward Drug Store, said the members have talked about having the secretary send out the minutes of the meetings to people who can’t make it.

- Anyone who wants to make donations to the banner fund can take a check made out to the alliance to the Chamber office, noting on it what it’s for. The banners only last two to three years, said Mr. Vollertsen, but look nice hung around town.

He added that they certainly invite all the businesses to send someone to the meetings, whether that business is on the highway, on Main Street or in someone’s home.

- Heard that the Economic Development board had held a strategic planning meeting. Ms. Grafel said the state requires the group to have one every three years. The information from the meeting will be used at the Decatur Tomorrow community conversation on Monday, March 23, at the high school.

Does the alliance invite people with new businesses to the meetings? asked Mrs. Castle. That is the Chamber’s job, said Ms. Grafel, because a person can’t be a member of the alliance unless they are a member of the Chamber.

- Decided to hold a fish fry from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Good Friday, April 10, in the drive-thru of the Business Entrepreneurial Enhancement Center.

Businesses are invited to send a representative to alliance meetings, said Mr. Vollertsen. Members meet at noon the first Wednesday of the month at the LandMark.

- Talked about gathering donations for a gift basket for the college basketball championship contest coming up.

In past years the alliance helped organize ordering flowers and getting the planters on Main Street

- Mentioned that Santa Bucks expire at the end of March. People who haven’t spent their bucks, a kind of scrip issued for Christmas promotions, need to do so soon.

