



Thursday May 26th, 2016

TO: Superior 25KM and 50KM Trail Race Volunteers

Dear Friends,

Obviously you don't volunteer for the "thank you's", t-shirts are pretty inexpensive to buy on your own and everyone loves sandwich cookies but since when did that become a legit form of payment! You help because our event touches people. Among this years 85 volunteers some of us are friends, some acquaintances and some relative strangers with no previous connection to the others that are volunteering or racing. Everyone's contribution is so valuable that I rarely (if ever) make mention of specific volunteers, I think we all realize that we are the sum of our parts, it works because we are a team - that is our strength. But this year, I really saw the manifestation of the example that you have all set over the years as dedicated, selfless volunteers. I saw this in a lot of places but none as striking as with two specific volunteers - each of whom had no personal ties to, or experience with our Northern trail running community other than what they had gotten "word of mouth" from others or from media etc. that told them what we have around here... something uniquely special.

Maria drove over from Madison, not knowing any of us, stayed with Cheri and I and other volunteers in close quarters in our rented townhome, volunteered the day at Oberg and left inspired with dozens of new friends and is richer for the experience - she was ecstatic. Colin from Texas was supposed to run the 50KM but instead an injury had him sidelined, I can't tell you how many times I get the email from runners "I am injured and can't run, can I get a refund" - but what did Colin do, he stepped up. About a week before the race he writes me "I am injured, I cannot run but I am still flying there, renting a car, paying for lodging and want to take the opportunity to give back to this community that I have heard so much about". You all are the gatekeepers of the community that made him want to come and run in the first place... and how did he cap off his day after volunteering with the legendary crew at Sawbill, he somehow hooked up with Harry Sloan, founder of the Superior 100 and had dinner with him. All I can see is, "wow" - nowhere else, nowhere else.

So I will keep this short and leave you with this thought... you are the ones that create the great reputation our community has - the reputation that transcends Minnesota, the North and the Midwest - yes, of course the trail is great, yes the medals are cool but the community and the culture of which you are the fabric and the glue, you are the reason that we are what we are, the reason we attract more great people, both runners and volunteers and the tradition continues. I very humbly thank you all for that.

It has become tradition to provide you with some words from our runners and I will do so again before I close:

"Just a quick note to again thank you for a most WONDERFUL race / time / experience. It never seems to get old and in fact, seems to get 'better' with each year. I had the most fun (to date!) this year and have already begun my 'prayers' for entrance into next year's event.... hopefully. Regardless of what happens, please know that I TRULY appreciate everyone's hard work, energy and commitment to putting on such a fantastic event for so many of us."

Thank you all for your ongoing friendship and support of the Superior Trail Races - it would be impossible to do without each and every one of you. As always, if you have any questions, comments, concerns, suggestions, compliments or complaints, please feel free to drop me a line.

Sincerely,

John Storkamp
Race Director
Superior Trail Race