



## Courtenay doctor runs 200th marathon

**Jeff Bell**

Victoria Times Colonist

*Sunday, October 12, 2008*

Tucked into the field for today's 29th Royal Victoria Marathon was a Courtenay physician whose race number had special significance.

Dr. Janet Green, wearing No. 200, was also taking on the 42.2-kilometre marathon distance for the 200th time.

She completed her first marathon in 1988 in Victoria, her 100th in 2001 - also in Victoria - and was back to take part today despite three broken ribs suffered in a mishap at St. Joseph's Hospital in Comox.

"It's from trying to fall down the back stairs," Green quipped, looking remarkably fresh after a 3:54 clocking.

Getting to today's milestone in Victoria meant a lot to her, she said.

"I really wanted to do my 200th here, so it would be 20 years after my first one. But I didn't expect to have the broken ribs."

Green was low-key about her accomplishment, preferring instead to tout her friend John Mahoney, a retired pilot from Vernon who knocked off his 300th marathon in the same race.

"He was leaving right away and he didn't want any publicity," Green said.

She said her marathon-running career began at the age of 35. Her best-ever time has been a 3:17 in the Toronto Marathon, while she has managed a pair of 3:18s in Victoria - the latest coming in 2001.

It was friend and running partner Evan Fagan who arranged for Green to get No. 200 for her run. He also greeted her at the finish line with a bottle of champagne, while friends and family had flowers and a sign.

All helped her down her bubbly in a group toast at the corner of Douglas and Belleville streets.

Green completed marathon 199 just last weekend in Leavenworth, Wash., to set the stage for today, said Fagan, whose personal marathon total sits at 134. She had her broken ribs during that effort, too.

As for Fagan, he was satisfied being a volunteer for the Victoria event, helping to keep the record field of 10,324 (including runners in the marathon, half-marathon, eight-kilometre run and kids' races) heading in the right direction.

Race general manager Cathy Noel said it takes a team of 1,350 volunteers to make the event happen, including an organizing committee whose dedication seems endless.

"They have average experience of 10 to 15 years for this event. Some of them have been here since Day 1."

There is also the crew that hits the race course at just after 3 a.m. to set up cones and barriers, and see that everything is as it should be for the day ahead. For the races themselves, many volunteers return year after year to the same intersection or station, considering it "their spot", Noel said.

Schools and community organizations are also part of the volunteer effort, she said, noting that Mount Doug Secondary's leadership students were back at their usual place just over the finish line to clip timing chips off runners' shoes.

Amy Earnshaw was nearby, handing out the plastic "space blankets" that keep sweat-soaked finishers warm.

"This is such a class event to volunteer for," Earnshaw enthused. "It is so much fun. I'm a bit of a sports junkie, and I just really enjoy the people, the energy."

Some interesting marathon facts:

- . There are 86 porta-potties spread over the course and start/finish area.
- . Runners will consume an estimated 10,000 energy bars and 4,000 packets of energy gels.
- . Close to 80,000 paper cups, suitable for recycling, will be used by thirsty competitors.
- . The bags used for the race packages are biodegradable.

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