



This past October marked the **12<sup>th</sup> year of NATRA**. Our core is still the FREE Saturday group runs, which amazingly have never been cancelled to cold, snow, or rain. In early December, 7 runners braved subzero temperatures to keep the streak of more than 600 group runs alive! We continue to keep the runs lively adding new runs such as Sedona's spectacular Hangover Trail, and running adventures to historic sites in the Williams area such as Dow Springs Logging Camp and the abandoned Johnson Canyon Tunnel.



In 2014, the **Run Flagstaff Summer Series enters its 10<sup>th</sup> year!** This past year we had more than 200 runners participating and more kids than ever. We are all **indebted to Vince at Run Flagstaff**. Vince's sponsorship helped keep the Series at an amazing value. In addition **Salomon Sports** continued their generous donations to Series awards.

We are very excited to announce that Vince has agreed to support the Series another year! The series will open registration early in 2014, so stay tuned to [NATRA.org](http://NATRA.org) or our pages on [Facebook](#).



David Blanchard photo

Our pages on Facebook continue to increase in popularity with 1230 likes and the group page now has 680 members. In addition, NATRA's web site surpassed 275,000 page hits in 2013 and will cross over the 300,000 barrier in 2014! Using our social networking, **NATRA continued to supply volunteers to support local races, trail maintenance events, and letter writing campaigns in support of land**

**conservation and preservation**. In 2012 we celebrated when the City of Flagstaff purchased Picture Canyon and this year, another decade long preservation effort allowed the City to [buy a large piece of land on Observatory Mesa](#). Thanks to those of you who voted for, helped write letters in support of Observatory Mesa, or attended a public meeting. Two of our most popular and oldest races (Sacred Mountain Prayer Run and Big Brothers Big Sisters Half Marathon) take place on Observatory Mesa and NATRA has run endless miles across the Forest above the city's western edge. We can now continue to enjoy this piece of land for the future.



In addition to the regular Saturday group runs, we now support a **repertoire of special FREE events** whose popularity has soared in the past year. Those include the New Year's Day Run, Spring's Saint Patrick's Lap the Leprechaun 5K, Summer's Four on the Fourth July 4<sup>th</sup> Run, Fall's War Dog and Thanksgiving Turkey Predictor Runs, Winter's Solstice Survivor and Christmas Day Runs. We were also happy to partner with **Team Run Flagstaff and the Run**



**Flagstaff Summer Series** to bring you the first ever Flagstaff Running Community Picnic!



Working with Race Director and Distance Coach Ian Torrence, NATRA was also thrilled to facilitate the partners who brought the inaugural [Flagstaff to Grand Canyon Stage Coach Ultra Marathon and Relay Run](#) to life. The race brought together Babbitt Ranches, the Nature Conservancy, and the Kaibab and Coconino National Forests who have been helping preserve the



historic landscape between Flagstaff and the Grand Canyon. The event followed the Arizona Trail and benefited the [Arizona Trail Association](#). There was great local participation, especially in the relay race and this is sure to be a sell out next year. Registration opens January 1 with reduced prices so sign up ASAP at <http://ultrasignup.com/register.aspx?did=26675>



The **14<sup>th</sup> running of the Soulstice Mountain Trail Race** was again held on the heels of a snowstorm. A record 215 runners finished the race and despite a chilly start with snow on the trail, runners enjoyed a warm early afternoon post-race party. Chris Gomez regained his title and in one of the most exciting races in years, Michelle Wesson edged out Sara Wagner for her first women's title. Soulstice runners and the Aspen Sports Raffle again raised well over \$5000 on behalf of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Flagstaff. Thanks to David McKee, the Pay n'Take, Aspen Sports, Salomon Sports, Coconino National Forest, Jim Driscoll of the Coconino County Sheriff's Department, Northern Arizona University Parks and Recreation Management program students, the Coconino Amateur Radio Club, my many friends, mom, and wife Diana who continue to support of the event. ***Following Imogene Pass Run's new policy, I too will no longer allow transfers.*** This past system created headaches for me at a time of year I have my most hectic work schedule. Beginning this year, I will no longer accept transfers and absolutely no refunds, unless you are not chosen in April 1 lottery. So when you register be sure you are committed to October 11 Soulstice Mountain Trail Run. [Registration opens January 1 on our new secure online server at Chronotrack.](#)



Finally, I wanted to wish good luck to ***Gail Hughes of Virtual Roster***. For the past several years, Gail has raised the Flagstaff racing scene to new heights with her online registration and race timing system. Gail will be working with developers on new race event management systems. While Virtualroster.com will no longer host our online registration, we are working with Gail and friends to keep our online registration and timing consistent. Stay tuned to [natra.org](http://natra.org) for forthcoming details about the upcoming changes! Happy Trails to 2014!

Best, Neil Weintraub