



Thursday July 6th, 2017

TO: 2017 Afton Trail Run Volunteers

Dear Friends,

Those of you that have volunteered with us a couple of times now, have certainly received my post-race volunteer thank you letters and are all too familiar with my love for flowery language and know that I will frequently wax philosophical about the deeper meaning of our events, our unique local trail and ultrarunning culture and the value of trail and ultrarunning at large (ad nauseum perhaps). I have told you this before - usually, at some point during the race, some concept or idea just clobbers me over the head, some kind of sleep-deprived dream-state epiphany and for whatever reason this year's message was a bit more subtle than some others, but by no means was it any less meaningful. FRIENDSHIP... simply friendship, that was the word and corresponding concept that permeated my thoughts for the better part of Saturday afternoon, and provided the framework through which I was living and experiencing the awesome production that is the Afton Trail Run.

This was my and Cheri's tenth year directing the Afton Trail Run. Before we directed the race, I had the opportunity to run the Afton 50K a few times myself and to volunteer for the race director that preceded me, Scott Wagner. Through Scott, his core group of volunteers (many of you who make up the core to this day) and our Saturday morning training group - I created many real, deep and lasting friendships - as I looked around on Saturday most of you were still there, and perhaps even more reassuring - many new friends were abundant and could be seen making connections with old, wow, what an absolute blessing.

So, as we embark on the Afton Trail Run each year during the ever festive 4th of July week, we come together not only as a random group of volunteers but ever increasingly as old friends, and while I do truly believe that the end result of all of this are true, real, life-altering and spiritual experiences for everyone involved (runners and volunteers alike), for this one letter at least, I digress, and will simply say thank you for your friendship. I sincerely look forward too many more years of doing this with all of you - you can go ahead and sign Cheri and I up for another ten at least.

As always, should you ever have any comments, concerns, questions, suggestions, compliments or complaints regarding the event, please let me know. Again, thank you for all that you do to make Afton what it is.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'JOHN STORKAMP'. The signature is stylized with a large, looped 'S' and 'K'.

John Storkamp
Race Director
Afton Trail Run