

New jogging trail refreshing for community

By Bill Shaw

The Facts

Published June 8, 2009

“And what is so rare as a day in June?” wrote James Russell Lowell in “The Vision of Sir Launfal” (1848); “Then, if ever, come perfect days.”

It was indeed a rare June day at Brazosport College Saturday with the ribbon-cutting and dedication of the new jogging trail. U.S. Congressman Ron Paul, R-Lake Jackson, did the honors.

I started writing this column in my head as I began a 3-mile run on the new trail after the dedication and ribbon-cutting. I returned to my old stomping grounds where I ran regularly during my 31 years as a faculty member at the college.

When I first came to the college full time in 1972, I ran on the 440-yard cinder track on the northeast side of the campus. Concrete covered the track to make room for college expansion and a parking lot. I continued my runs around the campus and along College Boulevard until the first running trail was constructed in 2000.

The new trail is “improved.” Daryl Beatty, director of road racing for the Brazosport Area Road Runners Association and a BC fac-

ulty member, accurately marked and color-coded three routes of 1.5 miles (white), 2.5 miles (yellow) and 3 miles (blue) for walkers and runners to go the distances that best suit them and their fitness levels.

Millicent Valek, BC president, pointed out that the jogging trail is the first of the projects completed as a result of a recent bond issue and is an important facility for the community.

“I had a lot of phone calls when the old trail was closed due to construction,” said Valek, including a call from Paul, who asked, “What did you with my jogging trail?”

“We want everyone to enjoy this trail,” said Jerry Hinojosa, board of regents’ chair. “It was built with the community in mind.”

“Walking is a wonderful exercise and a private moment for me,” Paul said. “For me, it is 80 percent mental relaxation. It gives me the emotional stamina to deal with all the problems in Washington.”

The trail begins on the northeast side of the campus. The color-coded starting points are located near the tennis courts. Beatty placed distance markers approximately every quarter mile. His instructions for staying on track for the various distances are simple.

“Whenever you have an option, turn to the right,” Beatty said.

When I ran the blue route, the 3-miler, I checked the markers

with the GPS on my Garmin Fore-runner 205; they were all on the mark.

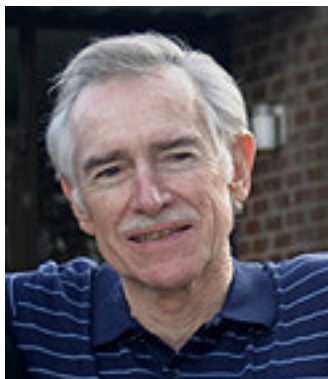
The route of the new running trail does follow some of the old asphalt route. The new part winds around Oyster Creek up to the railroad tracks on the west of the campus, the turnaround point of the 3-miler. When I made the route after the morning ceremonies about 10 a.m., the June morning run was “rare.” The trail is routed so that runners and walkers will have shady spots no matter what time of the day.

Micah Meche designed the kiosk with maps and rules at the beginning of the trail and along the route, including a sign on the west side of the campus along Oyster Creek that marks the boundary between Clute and Lake Jackson.

The trail is open from sunrise to sunset. Get out to the college and give it a try. You will enjoy yourself and be impressed with this college gift to the community.

Footnotes: Don’t forget the Firecracker 4 on July 4, a kids run at 7:15 a.m. and a 4-mile run/2-mile walk at 7:30 a.m. Pick up registration forms at fitness centers, register online www.active.com or download registration forms at www.barrahome.net.

Bill Shaw’s running column appears every other Monday in The Facts.



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