

## Almost time to sprint into spring

By Bill Shaw

*The Facts*

Published March 16, 2009

I was out for a 4.3-miler Saturday morning. The weather was brisk, with a temperature of 42 degrees, a northwest wind of 17 mph and a wind chill of 38 degrees. When I returned, I thought of the concluding lines of Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" (1820): "O Wind, / If Winter comes, can spring be far behind?" (69-70).

Better weather and warmer temperatures are predicted this week. At 8:44 a.m. Friday, the vernal equinox signals the arrival of spring. I hope to be out running at that exact minute to herald spring's arrival.

With winter's passing, the spring races begin in Brazosport. Runners and walkers have a full April of activities, beginning April 4 with the Run for the Cure 5K Run/Walk in West Columbia.

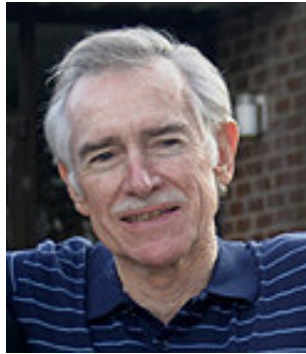
The Race for the Cure benefits the American Cancer Society. The 5K course is the most scenic and tranquil in the area, with the start at 13th and Jefferson streets and a romp out to the Varner-Hogg Plantation and back on a certified course. The run and walk start simultaneously at 8 a.m.

Online registration is available at [www.active.com](http://www.active.com). Registration forms are available

on [www.barrahome.net](http://www.barrahome.net). Entries fees through Friday are \$22 for adults, \$15 for children 12 and younger and \$59 for families, and respectively after Friday, \$25, \$15 and \$64. Race-day registration and packet pickup begin at 7 a.m. All entrants receive T-shirts; the first 30 entrants qualify for three gym bags and door prizes. For additional information, call Teresa Holland at (979) 491-2181.

The San Jacinto 5K originally scheduled for April 11 in West Columbia has been rescheduled for some time in the fall. Runners have the weekend off or might find a race outside the area.

The 29th running of the Brazosport College Gator Gallop follows on April 18, with a 1-mile run/walk at 7:30 a.m., a BASF-sponsored, noncompetitive Kids Run for 12 and younger at 8 a.m. and the 5K at 8:30 a.m. Online registration is available on [active.com](http://active.com). Registration forms are available on [barrahome.net](http://barrahome.net). Early registration is \$14 for the 1-mile, \$14 for the 5K (a special \$20 for those who want to run both the 1-mile and the 5K) and an optional \$1 for the Kids Run. Race-day registration and packet pickup begin at 6:30 a.m. with registration fees \$16 for the 1-mile, \$16 for the 5K, \$23 for both the 1-mile and 5K — and the same for the Kids Run. Youngsters 17 and younger must have the signature of parents or guardians to participate. For additional information, call (979) 230-3355.



Wildcat Stadium hosts the Relay for Life of South Brazoria County on April 24, an all-night event to raise money for the American Cancer Society. The event begins with a reception and a light meal at 5 p.m. For additional information, contact Relay Survivor Chairwoman Leigh Ann Lintelman at [leighann\(at\)parabletechnology.com](mailto:leighann(at)parabletechnology.com).

The 19th annual Freeport Flapjack 5K presents runners with a unique challenge on April 25, the Velasco Memorial Bridge. The bridge is the closest thing to a hill in area races. The bridge is a big surprise for flatlanders who haven't run stadium stands or overpasses for hill training. A flapjack feast and juice await participants. The 5K registration fee up until April 10 is \$18, and \$20 after that date. Race-day registration begins at 6:30 a.m. in Memorial Park in Freeport, at Park Avenue and West Second Street. Registration forms are available on the Main Street Web site [www.freeportmainstreet.com](http://www.freeportmainstreet.com). For additional information, call (979) 233-3526 or e-mail [mstotler\(at\)freeport.tx.us](mailto:mstotler(at)freeport.tx.us).

Mark your calendars. See you at the starting lines in April.

**Bill Shaw's running column appears every other Monday in The Facts. Contact Shaw at [runwriter@sbcglobal.net](mailto:runwriter@sbcglobal.net).**



