

Praise the Lord, my soul. Lord, my God, you are very great; you are clothed in splendor and majesty. (Psalm 104:1)

Quite an exceptional day at my third HL 50K++ - compelled to share my gratitude.

All glory and honor and power belong to the Lord!

I am thankful for the health and resources that allowed me to be at HL for the third year running. I am thankful for the love and support from my wife Linda and our daughters, Lauren and Cara. They are awesome as are my parents, John and Cathy. If you finished in the 5-6 hr range, you may have noticed the pixie that is my Mom cheering madly for you as you left the trail for the final stretch of road to the finish on Saturday.

I am thankful for my brother Craig Penrose who convinced me to give the JFK50 a shot in 2008 – rightfully teaching me that our preparation for the Marine Corps Marathon was sufficient to run that distance. Everyone should have a friend as stout as Craig. I enjoyed the JFK, but it was HL 2009 a few months later that really hooked me. After 15 ultra events, I find HL is just a wonderful combination of fellowship and fun – that plus the cooks at the 4H center make some mean fried chicken! I know Craig and our friends, Theo the Dutch Marine and Karsten the German Army Officer had a great time, too.

I am thankful for Dr. Horton's passion to make trail running accessible and for his clear commitment to excellence. First class!

I am thankful for the overwhelming number of people who support Dr. Horton's efforts. They are gracious, fun people and they always make you feel welcome. Dr. Horton has his quirks, but it is clear to me that only a good man could consistently generate such loyal support. Mrs. Horton is a saint!

I am thankful for the chance to be part of the community of seekers found in trail running. I have met many interesting and impressive people in the Lynchburg crowd, the VHTRC, the Iron Mountain crew among others, high achievers all who are always ready to lend an encouraging word or hand. Being able to find challenging events and basically using each of them as preparation for the next one has worked out well as I have found you don't need high mileage training for a 'finish with dignity' goal, which is helpful with my schedule.

I am thankful for the chance to stretch myself through trail running, to go beyond self sufficiency knowing I must continue to move forward. I have experienced moments of great clarity about the true source of strength in my life.

I hope to see you on the trails.

May the glory of Lord endure forever; may the Lord rejoice in His works. (Psalm 104:31)

Sincerely and Semper Fidelis,

Bob Hagan