



V.I. Pace Runners...March 21, 2020...Letter to the Editor...Virtual Runs...

Around 1978 I started the Virgin Islands Pace Runners. Today it's a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation based in St. Croix, Virgin Islands USA. I had a vision, coined the slogan: "Run for Fun...Run for Health...Run for Life..." Some will recall the mid to late 70's and what we know as the "running boom". The V.I. Pace idea was simple, give people an additional opportunity to run. Those Saturday morning runs developed into partnerships with the UVI 4H/V.I. Pace Runners Cross-Country series. More recently with cooperation of additional partners including: the St. Croix Track Club, the Virgin Islands Track and Field Federation, the St. Croix Interscholastic Athletic Association, 300 public and private school children show up for cross-country running on Wednesday afternoons during the season.

With the culmination of the V.I. Pace Runners 40th anniversary, we are taking a look at the annual running calendar of approximately 30 annual events we organize to determine what the future looks like for each of them. Like all non-profits we have depended on and thank the countless volunteers, some whom are still with us; sponsors, community organizations including the V.I. Olympic Committee, the National Park Service, the University of the Virgin Islands and yes, the government of the Virgin Islands which basically allows the use of public streets and roads for runners, walkers and running events free of charge. My latest count has us doing at least 50 different running events over the past 40 years, some with over 35 years without missing a year...a lot of miles...a lot of funds raised for charity...

Running purists will also recall back in the day there was a thing called "Postal Race"; making it possible for one to run a race without being there. You picked a remotely located race, ran the distance of that race wherever you were located, submitted your result on a post card and earned your t-shirt, medal and certificate which the race organizer would mail to you. Today we call them Virtual Races. Tools like smart phones, watches, computers, the internet and other electronic devices make possible these Virtual Races. We've tried the idea before and called them V.I. Pace Runners Net Races. With the Coronavirus pandemic and limits on its predictability, Virtual Races are becoming a popular and viable alternative to postponed or canceled running events. Running is the perfect sport to face this pandemic. All you need are running shoes and a six foot buffer (and be sure to follow regulations of appropriate agency/s).

We have finalized a survey for runners here and abroad to help us decide the status of annual races and runs organized by V.I. Pace, even those that are no longer. We want to hear from you. 50 plus events are listed in the survey. You are asked three questions for each event...continue or do this event?...and/or make this a V.I. Pace Runners Virtual Race?...do not do this event?



V.I. Pace Runners Virtual races can offer an alternative running option for male and female runners of all ages and coincidentally carry on the V.I. Pace Runners legacy as a non-profit community organization. The link to The V.I. Pace Runners Event Survey can be found by logging on to:

<http://virginislandspace.org>

Kind Regards,

Wallace Williams

Wallace Williams, MALS, OLY
Founder