

G2G Photo Finish

By Susana Young

Matt Brown and his team (Troy Snow, Barry Glazier, and, new this year, Michelle Federkeil), took thousands of photos during G2G 2015. Each contestant will have the option to buy a personalized photo package that Brown puts together. A beautiful slideshow story, beginning with runner check-in and ending at the finish line seven days later, was continuously playing at the final awards dinner at Angels Landing.

The evening was perfect: clear skies, perfect temperature, calm, open bar, catered tasty dinner, and the Burnett Family Bluegrass Band revving up the worn-out runners to a conga line and other antics.

The overall male winner was Tommy Chen from Taiwan, who had some special dance moves and step sequences he enjoyed teaching others.

The second place male finisher, Mohamed Ahanal (42, Morocco), turned a perfect cartwheel across the dance floor as he approached the stage to receive his award for also being the fastest in his age category.

The first place female winner was Sandra Suckling (55, Australia). She had hoped to place, but says she doesn't obsess about winning. Mostly, she

wants to enjoy the environment and do her best. She said she felt it was such a privilege to be allowed to run through the places G2G route goes. "When it hurts and is challenging, I just have to stop and look around me. The views make everything worth it."

An added bonus for Suckling was that her husband was a checkpoint captain. They love this area, and plan to return and explore.

Both of the oldest participants (featured last week), completed the grueling 170 miles. Gregory Castle, Best Friends CEO and former record-holder as the oldest contestant to finish G2G, presented the award to Hans Schmid (75, USA), the new oldest record-holder. Colin Geddes kidded Castle about trying to beat the new record when he reaches age 76.

In previous years, the G2G final celebration was held at a Las Vegas hotel. It seemed the new venue was a much better choice.

Upon returning to Kanab, contestants could immediately check into their hotels, take a shower and relax, rather than enduring the long ride back to Vegas, sweaty and tired. They were awe-struck by the beauty of Angels Landing, re-energized by their new family members, and sad to be leaving the Kanab area. Many have plans to return.



Olle Chen (34, Taiwan) received the Directors' Choice award for: 1) "Best Dressed" runner. He wore a white shirt, black tie, and black pants for the entire race, embellished with a black umbrella; and 2) for being the one who spent the longest on the course, because he patiently waited for his father at every checkpoint, until his father had to drop out during stage 3.



Walking with the Wounded

After running/walking/climbing over 170 miles in the heat, sand, cactus, thistle and ants, the Walking with the Wounded team from Great Britain had become the wounded walking. They all finished the race, inspired by their cause to help those wounded in battle find new careers. Photo by Susana Young.



Matt Brown goes to any height to get just the right photo. Here, he is at the finish line trying to corral 99 hot, tired, sweaty and hungry runners to get together and hold still for a group photo. Photo by Dave Baird.



Just beyond the "tunnel" that goes under Highway 89, the climbing wall is yet another adventure for runners. Photographer Michelle Federkeil is at the top of the climb, capturing unique photos of the runners as they ascend. Two volunteers (both top 10 finishers in G2G 2014), are stationed at the bottom to help competitors get up to the rope. Photo by Susana Young.



Seiji Shishido (45, Japan) found his perfect running outfit at a bazaar in Egypt. He chose it because the colors matched the colors of the G2G logo. Photo by Susana Young.

What a difference a race makes

By Susana Young

Many lives are touched by the (Grand to Grand) experience. Lives of contestants, volunteers, residents, local businesses, and even sponsors.

The AMAN group, which owns and operates Aman-giri, was a sponsor, and this year entered a team of runners in the G2G: Christophe Olivro (47, France) and Jayne Bystrom (55, Montana) and Bystrom's husband Peter Tan (49, Singapore). Peter twisted his ankle in Stage 3 and didn't finish, but was nearby when possible to cheer them on.

Neighbors and friends of our local participants are proud of two of our own, and excited that they did well in the race.

Willow Canyon, a local sponsor, put up a full-size poster in their window of last year's winner, Michele Graglia. Their product displays featured G2G hats, shirts and buffs for sale.

The BLM has been essential to G2G, enabling use of public lands for recreation. Harry Barber, manager of the Kanab Field Office, says these activities are good for our community on many levels. "We want events like this to be successful for the good of our community." Barber had fun running a portion of the event "with these amazing athletes."

G2G wouldn't be possible without an army of volunteers. Driving crews to remote locations along the route can be daunting.

Michael Green, from St. George, recently retired and started a Jeep Club. He was a G2G checkpoint driver and would do it again in a heartbeat. He plans to recommend volunteering to his friends. "I'm impressed with the preparation of the runners and their willing-

ness and determination to keep going forward," said Green. "I'm impressed how everybody gets along and supports each other. Nationality doesn't matter. There is no need to fight or argue. All the runners have a single goal - to cross that finish line. To see their humanity, their smiles, their willingness to challenge themselves ... it's like the Olympics. Everyone gets along without politics."

The camp crew experience was exceptional this year. James (Bear) Barnett said they had a bigger ratio of crew to runners. And the weather cooperated - no wind, no rain, and passable roads. The camp crew puts up and takes down tents, provides water and firewood, and camps out with the runners.

Breana Honey said being on the camp crew this year was fun. "It is hard work, but great for people who love the outdoors."

Lynette Robinson was the life-saving person who provided the Party Poopers. She took them down each morning after the runners left and moved them to the next camp, placing them securely and making sure they were spotless and fresh.

There are many more people who made this event possible: Medical, IT, Media, Search and Rescue, and the Kane County Volunteer and Events Center.

The G2G magic, enabled by our "magically unspoiled" area, attracts people from around the world. Former participants come back to volunteer or to vacation with their families. Yes, what a difference a race makes, and the difference is you, and you, and you ... and maybe YOU next year!

Radio-Controlled Air Show & Fly-In

Saturday, Oct. 3rd

9 am - 2 pm

WWI & WWII Scale Jets
Helicopters
Wing Combat/Swarm

Free Airplane Rides Over Kanab

Kanab City Airport

Sponsored by the Kanab RC Modelers Club
www.kanabrcmodelers.com

Lunch \$5 Provided by Kanab Lions Club