

Arkansas Runner Interview – Cody Jones

This interview initially appeared as part of an interview with Cody and his wife Leigha in the March-April 2014 Issue

The interview was updated in July 2015 following his election as Treasurer

AR: Tell us about yourself, where you are originally from, where you grew up, how long you have lived in the Benton area, and any other places you lived, schools attended/degree(s):

Cody: I was born in Little Rock and I have lived in Benton since the first grade. My family moved to Benton when my parents opened a pharmacy. They owned and operated the Medicine Shoppe for twenty years. I graduated from Benton High School. I earned accounting and finance degrees from the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville.

AR: Occupation & employer (and how long):

Cody: I work as the staff accountant for EAST Initiative in Little Rock. EAST is an educational nonprofit. I started working at EAST in 2012.

AR: How long have you been running and what got you started?

Cody: I started running in 2008. I originally started (like a lot of people) to try to lose weight. I ran my first 5K and was instantly hooked to feeling of accomplishment and the race atmosphere.

AR: Do you do any cross training, biking, weights, etc.? If so, what sort and how often?

Cody: When I first started running, I lifted weights just about as much as I ran. Slowly that has turned into very little weights and much more running.

AR: Are you a member of any running clubs other than the Saline County Striders?

Cody: I'm a member of the Half Fanatics, Marathon Maniacs, and 50 States Marathon Club.

AR: You have started running some marathons, what got you interested in that and what are your goals?

Cody: Jonathan Young got me interested in running marathons. He told me about the maniacs and it sounded like something I would really enjoy. Right now I'm trying to run a marathon in all 50 states. Also, I am trying to get under five hours. As a back of the packer, that is a pretty aggressive goal.

AR: Most memorable race? Explain.

Cody: Two races stand out to me. The first race is my first 5K – Jingle Bell 5K in 2008. That race literally changed my life. I didn't realize it at the time, but because of it I have a completely different identity. For example, when my coworkers introduce me to people the first thing they say is, "He runs marathons." If it wasn't for the first 5K that wouldn't be the case. The second race was my first half marathon – Soaring Wings Half Marathon in 2009. Crossing the finish line at that race really erased a lot of self-doubt I had about running.

AR: What have been some of your other most memorable events, moments, or achievements in running?

Cody: I have had lot of memorable moments, like seeing a sea turtle during the Maui marathon, but really my most memorable moments are watching/helping other people achieve their goals. My mom, my wife, my brother and my sister-in-law have all finished marathons and I was able to complete each of their first marathons with them.

AR: Are there any runners you particularly admire or respect, or perhaps who have helped you in some way? Explain.

Cody: There are so many runners that admire that I'm sure I'll leave somebody off this list so I apologize in advance but here are a few: Jonathan Young - since he got me started, Maurice Robinson - what he is able to accomplish at his age is incredible, Carol Earles - she does so many races in so many places that it's hard to comprehend and she has a smile on her face during every one of them, Jayme Butts-Hall - because if you leave your running wife off of this list then you have a lot of apologizing to do over 26.2 miles :))

AR: Favorite non-running spectator sport?

Cody: I like all sports, but watching anything Razorback and soccer are my favorite.

AR: Favorite non-running leisure activity?

Cody: Soccer and fishing

AR: Running goals for the current year? Long term?

Cody: Current year - Get my marathon time under five hours. Long term - Complete 50 states, sub two hour half marathon, iron grand prix season, maybe just maybe a 100 miler (not an official goal yet so I can't be held accountable).

AR: Anything else you would like to say to your fellow Arkansas runners?

Cody: Set some goals, you would be amazed at what you can accomplish. I'm preaching to the choir here, but join running clubs, you can meet a lot of like-minded people that run at your pace, which makes it more fun and also hold you accountable. Run a race in a banana costume, nobody has ever had day when they race dressed as their favorite food. :))