

ZUMBRO

Monday April 10th, 2017

RE: Zumbro Endurance Run 2017 Thank You Letter to Volunteers

Friends,

As Winter puts an end to each Northern trail and ultra season and we go our separate ways for a few months of respite and recovery, I can't help but wonder if when Spring returns, *will the magic return as well?* Maybe some of our veteran leaders won't return or maybe there will not be enough new volunteers to carry on the tradition. I have said it many times, I don't want to do this without all of you. Before we know it, Zumbro sneaks up on us and the next thing I know, the trucks are being loaded and in a blink of an eye, we are there. As old friends start to arrive on Thursday and the eager faces of new volunteers appear - together we greet nervous and excited runners to Zumbro. The old familiar energy starts to build, and it is obvious, we are once again amongst family and not a thing has been lost - to the contrary we will find that it has only gotten better.

"I left on Saturday feeling like I had stumbled upon this magical place that I didn't know about before and now wanted to share with everyone."

This was the sentiment of Kate (a first time Zumbro volunteer) that I found in my email inbox this morning - nothing makes me happier than to hear this, this is the motivation for all that I do... to create community and to help others, help others.

Most of you know her, but for those that do not... Ava Hoff is a young lady who's mother Stephanie is a good friend of mine and a good friend to many of us. Steph has run our races and has volunteered just as much, maybe more - as a result, so has Ava. Ava is growing up in and around these events and the associated lifestyle has become a part of her life. At the young age of 10, after already having volunteered at Zumbro for quite a few years - Ava started the weekend by volunteering on Friday, then ran and completed the 17 mile race for her first time on Saturday. As is often the case there will be those outsiders who wonder if that is "good" for someone as young as Ava, after all *"isn't that hard on a developing child's knees"* they will ask. I have never seen evidence to support that but what I have seen evidence to support is how good running and our community / fellowship is for one's spirit. I have said it a million times, we are not saving the world by running loops in the woods but what I have come to know is that the positive things that come from our own running and the spirituality* that surrounds these events ultimately shapes who we are... as we carry that forth in our day to day lives the world is a better place for it.

It is hard to believe that another year is already in the books, around here we consider Zumbro the "season opener" and what a way to kick it off! I know that most of you are probably physically exhausted on this dreary Monday but am also guessing that you are emotionally and spiritually recharged - I know I am. You all went above and beyond again this year, I cannot thank you enough for your long hours, your diligent care for your fellow runners and for sharing your diverse set of skills with us in order to make Zumbro a first class event. I invite each and every one of you to Zumbro again next year; to volunteer, to run or to just hang out - one way or another I want you there, you are part of family "Z" and each and every one of you will play a role in creating the magic from here on out.

Sincerely & Gratefully,

John Storkamp

Race Director - Zumbro Endurance Run

*Spirituality

Spirituality is a broad concept with room for many perspectives. In general, it includes a sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves, and it typically involves a search for meaning in life. As such, it is a universal human experience—something that touches us all.