

September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021 update.

I heard that some of you have already pledged for the facilities challenge and sent in the money! Wow, your generosity is incredible. Thank you all for believing in me, I promise to cross the finish line; if I can walk.

I am sure many of you think I am crazy for committing to Spartan races. Tina would agree with you, even if it didn't involve Spartan Races. So why do I do it? One reason: it is a challenge for me to conquer. There is something about undertaking a challenge, training for it, and completing it. The harder the challenge, the better the feeling of accomplishment.

Still sounds crazy, right? I mean I could accept a challenge to watch football games for 12 hours every Sunday, but that would be awful. Giving up a day outside to sit inside? Not my thing. How about hiking, sounds good. What about hiking with some climbs, like Flat Iron in Lost Dutchman Park? That's better, but I did that. Then I tried running it. What about a hike with obstacles? Maybe some rock climbing, some trails to run, some cactus to dodge? I'm in, but that gets to be routine. The next thing was a Spartan Race, which is just all the other things combined. The first 2 were short sprints, only 5K each. I did well in them but felt I could do more. So that brings us to next month, a 13.1-mile race with 30 obstacles. Now we are talking, a real challenge.

So now for the last reason. I spend a lot of time asking you to use your God given gifts for the Glory of God; so maybe I should walk the walk. So here we are with the first SOH facilities challenge. I am going to use God's gifts of health, strength, and craziness to help SOH continue to honor its mission of Make Christ Known. I have been training hard, eating good (sometimes), and watching training videos to do my best in the race. I was slowed down this week by a blister on my toe but will be back at it this week. Tina is an excellent trainer! God has also blessed me with a job I love that pays me well for what I do. I am going to share that with the church by matching the first \$1,000 pledged to the church. Another church member has also pledged a \$1,000 match. If you can contribute \$1,000 the church will get \$3,000. That is better odds than Vegas! Our goal is \$8,500 to cover the cost of the AC unit. I think we can do it. But if we don't, I have 4 races this fall and I will keep running as long as you support me.

Thank you all for your support!

Duane