

The Benefits of CRRC's 501.c3 Status

By Rich Oldrieve

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Last month, I received a phone call from a woman volunteering at the Classic at Mastick 5K. She called to “borrow the Cleveland Road Runners Club’s tax ID number. Her stated reason was that *Giant Eagle* wouldn’t donate bananas for the race unless they were given a valid tax ID number. She also called because she the CRRC is the “only” local running group that does have 501.c3 status. Notwithstanding what the woman said, I imagine that several other clubs in the area who are approaching their fifth decade in business who have 501.c3 status such as the Summit Road Runners Club, the North-East Runners Club, and the Toledo Road Runners Club.

Although the Classic at Mastick 5k is not a formal CRRC race, have sponsored the race in the and many members volunteer at the race. Thus, I gave our tax number to the woman—which at our last business meeting I admitted to my fellow club officers was a mistake, because it would have been better if I as Prez or another officer had gone to the Giant Eagle and shown manager the number.

Which brings me to the point that I’ve made since being elected President of the Cleveland Road Runners Club, I’ve emphasized one advantage and reason for joining our club is its 501.c3. Admittedly, the median age of the club has probably been slowly moving on up for the last two or three decades. Furthermore, it might be good for my ego as well as Mark Oster’s, but there is something wrong when two of the “best” runners in the club, are two guys who duked it out for first place in the third Bay Days 5-mile run almost five decades ago.

So, other than being able to procure donations of food, drinks, and assorted paper products, why do I think being a part of a 501.c3 charity important? Because the 501.c3 status eliminates taxes on many of the non-food items the club purchases before a race, and unleashes the potential for businesses to donate their goods and services to us and write it off as a tax donation on their own book. More importantly, if you volunteer for one of our three formal race events *Spring in the Park*, *Bay Days*, and the *Fall Classic*, you’ll know that you are also helping ensure that the club can continue to donate between 15,000 to 20,000 dollars a year to local charities. And if you want to be influential as to which charities we should donate money to, please come to our business meetings and maybe even decide to run for club officer.

The Cleveland Road Runners Club was founded in 1977 as the Cleveland West Road Runners Club. Our club’s “promotional” name was changed by me just before the 2023 winter banquet—while a formal process of changing our name will begin shortly after our September business meeting.

Since its inception in 1977, the Cleveland West Road Runners Club “published” a monthly, bi-monthly, or tri-monthly newsletter called “Footnotes.” For many years, it was a tradition the club president wrote an article for the newsletter discussing the state of the club. Late last year, the club officers and newsletter officers decided to move away for the newsletter and instead add a blog. Even before a blog portion of the CRRC’s website was added in mid July (which no one has contributed to as of yet), I had written a

couple of blog posts that were edited by one of our former newsletter editors Cathy Leonard. Immediately after posting this—my first President’s blog post, I’ll post a blog about how the new “Super Shoes” such as Nike’s “Vapor Fly,” may cause some runners to tear a tendon attaching their quadriceps muscle to their kneecap.