

## Cora Turner selected as 2013 Female Masters Runner of the Year



**Note:** Because of all the talented runners in the DFW area, it is difficult and nearly impossible to select Runners of the Year without feeling I've slighted someone. But Cora Turner, 44, an unassuming teacher from Alvarado, notched impressive overall and masters victories, usually against stiff competition, and has been selected this website's 2013 Female Runner of the Year. What put her a step ahead of the other candidates was her masters victories at the DRC Half, the Dallas Race For the Cure, the FWRC Labor Day 15K and the Lake. She had at least six overall female victories to go along with her at least eight masters victories in DFW races. Cora uses running to present herself as an example to her children and others, but doesn't place running at the forefront of her life. She puts her running in perspective with family and career.

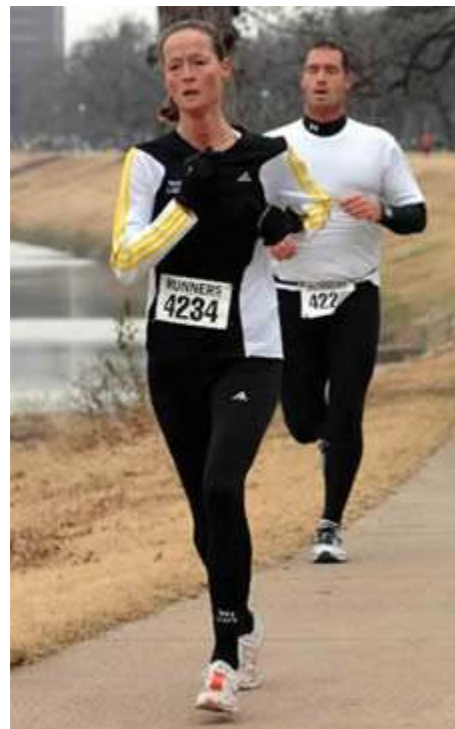
By Cora Turner



I started running as a child. Without divulging too much of my personal life, I'll just say that when I was running, I wasn't at home. Home wasn't a good place to be when I was a kid. Prior to my adult running life, the last time I ran for time was to pass my APFT in Fort Rucker, Alabama in 1987. It was two miles, and the farthest I had ran for time up to that point. After I got married and started a family, I didn't run. But I missed it; would have dreams about it; think about it.

As an adult, I started running again in April of 1999. It was right before I turned 30. I would take my kids to the track with me. They would play while I ran. Sometimes they would run too. My son was 6 and my daughter was 9. I had a dachshund then who would run one lap with me, rest for a lap, then run another with me. One day while I was running, a lady that always brought her son there to run stopped and talked with me. She asked me if I ran 5Ks. Honestly, I had to go home and look it up on the computer. I had no idea what a "5K" even was. But as soon as I did my first one, I was hooked.

The highlights of the past year include, first and foremost, my daughter joining the Army and completing basic training. She currently is training to be a combat medic at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio. While this is not my own personal accomplishment, and has little to do with running, it is by far the the one event that defines this past year for me. My running highlight of 2013 was having the opportunity to be a pacer at the Allstate Dallas 13.1 in



Cora Turner was off to a good start in 2013 by winning the female overall title at the Resolution Solution 5K at Trinity Park on Jan. 1.

October. It was my first time as a pacer and something I enjoyed thoroughly and hope to do again, soon and often! Running has been very good to me, and I relish any opportunity I can to give back.

One of the main reasons I have continued to run is so that I could set an example for my kids...an example of work ethic, strength and commitment. Kids learn what they see; they forget 90% of what you tell them. My daughter is a strong, independent woman who is sacrificing for her country and for her child. On New Year's day, she accompanied me to the Resolution Solution 5K and placed in her age group. Another highlight. I won. Perfect first day of 2014. After the race, we drove to San Antonio so she could report on Jan. 2. That night we shared a bottle of champagne.

My son continued to amaze me by making the Dean's List at UNT for the third year in a row. While I might not do great things in my life, I've raised an Electrical Engineer and a US Army soldier/medic. That's all any of us want or can hope for...for our children to be successful, independent and happy; and to have a purpose.

At my age, and for as long as I've been running, something is always aching or hurting. I know I walk that fragile line between injury and health like all long-term runners do. I just try to run smart and conservatively. A good friend turned me on to the fine art of ice baths this past spring, and it has been a saving grace. My injuries have included hamstring pulls, tendinitis, groin injuries. If there's a running muscle or ligament involved, I've tweaked it at least once.

I'm always mindful of not letting my running inconvenience my family. It's easier now that my kids are grown. I typically do my weekly runs before sunset; after I've made supper for my husband. I have allotted every Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday as "Lilly Day" (my granddaughter) to help her deal with the absence of her mother while she's away. In the summer, I run at 4:45 a.m., before work, so I can pick her up after work and spend the evening with her. In the winter, I run immediately after work so I can pick her up by 4 p.m. I do my long runs on Sunday, early in the morning on country roads here in Alvarado. Like everyone else who runs, I just squeeze my run in whenever I can if I'm on vacation or out of town.

(Because Cora lives in Alvarado, she has more distance than many other runners to race in a DFW event.) I like to arrive to any race an hour before starting time, and I allot an hour for travel. So, whatever time that ends up being -- that's when I leave. I travel I-35W or Hwy 67, so travel is not much of an issue.

**Special recognitions for other female masters runners:** Others in contention in this category included Laura Nelson, this website's 2010 Female Runner of the Year. Laura again had an impressive year racking up at least 36 masters titles and at least 21 overall victories in DFW races. ; Fiona Green, a regular contributor to this website and who won at least 15 masters titles and finished first overall at least 14 times.; Frances McKissick, who has rebounded from a health setback by collecting at least six overall victories and at least 15 masters awards.; Cathy Buchanan, last year's female masters of the year winner, who was sidelined at the end of 2013 but who won at least 11 masters and 7 overall titles.; and Sheila Natho, who always challenges who picked up at least 8 masters titles and 8 overall trophies