

Vera Coker was an inspiring participant at area events



It's not often, thankfully, that two people you knew are in the obituary section of the Star-Telegram. Don Kromer was with the Arlington Boys Club and would enter boys in the Golden Gloves tournament in Fort Worth at a time I was covering the regional, state and national tournaments. The other was Vera Coker, who should have been an inspiration for all older runners/walkers, and who passed away April 3 at age 97.

When I met her at a running event I was writing running articles for the S-T, and she was in her 80s or late 70s (don't remember), but she was plugging along in 5K and 10K events. She mostly walked with either friends or relatives. I wrote a couple of stories about her, and we corresponded every now and then via snail mail. She was a very pleasant person and very dedicated to keeping herself as fit as she could.

I doubt if many runners today had ever met her or knew of her, but she was active in many organizations. The obituary noted that she retired from running when she was 84, and had accumulated more than 250 trophies. Vera told me she began walking with friends on farm roads near her farm in Kennedale, and eventually decided to enter some races. She loved it.

After meeting her, it made me realize that it's not always about competition, though at that time I was fairly competitive in my age division. She was a participant, and that to me is a benefit of having so many events in the DFW area. It's easy to be a participant, fast or slow, and enjoy the events while trying to maintain or start a healthy, active lifestyle.

Now that H.B. Wise has taken over Clines Running Corner, more columnists have been added and he has given CRC more of presence on Facebook. I remain involved and write the weekend highlights, among a few other things. Look for more columnists and more positive changes to the website as H.B. continues to add more content to broaden the scope of the website