

THE SMOKY HOLLOW HALF MARATHON

Sunday, October 20th, 2019

Newport, NY

Local Runners take note,

I am writing this letter to warn you, something is afoot. In the rural nether-regions known as the Kuyahoorra Valley something is stirring... again. An energy, an inexplicable force rising. There are whispers of an upcoming movement of souls through the dark hills of this foreboding landscape. Locals anxiously refer to it as...The Smoky Hollow Half Marathon.

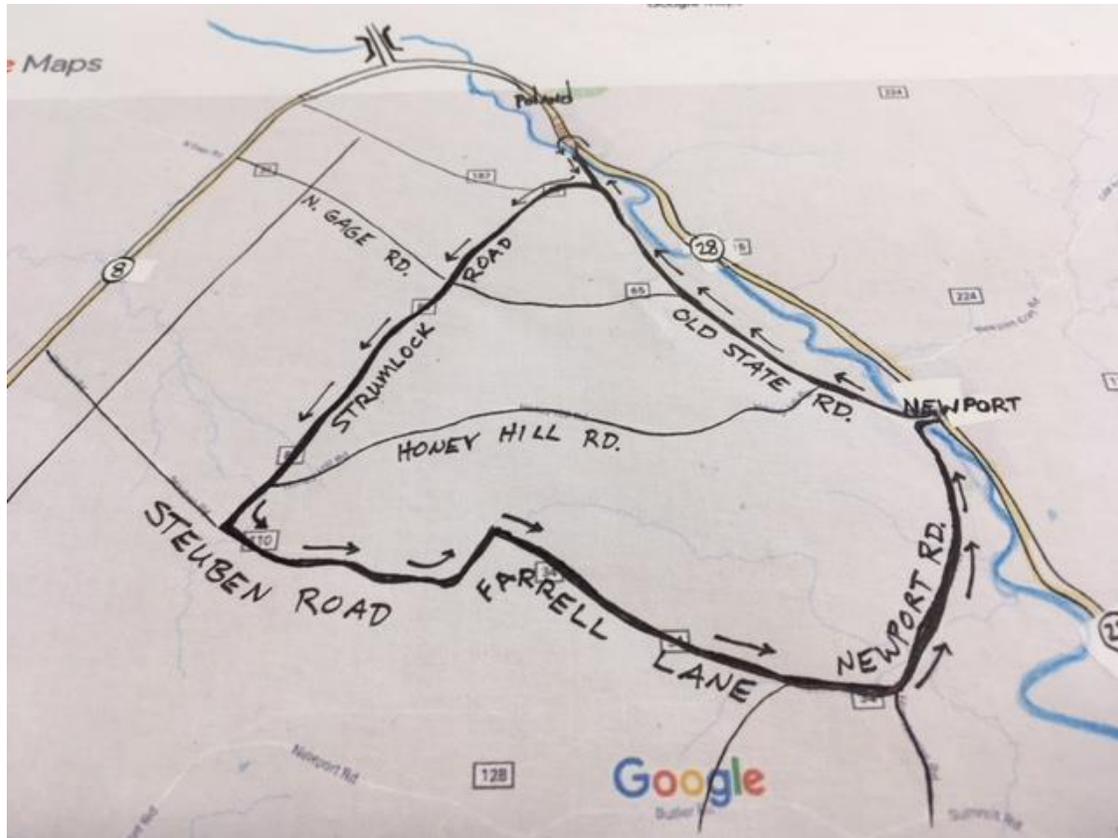
According to legend, five area running clubs once gathered on a cold, blustery October morning to face a grueling challenge. They boldly had the audacity to race for club supremacy on the hills of this daunting valley. They faced rolling byways and stubborn ascents. Winds swept across the fields as feet clutched the pavement, desperate to stay the course. Swaths of humanity seemed to be swallowed by the Hollow as they dropped back into the valley, bringing the hard fought contest to an end.

Not much is known about the rest. There are nervous whispers and vicious rumors, but nothing is known for sure. The words "Smoky Hollow" just raise questions and prompt conflicting accounts. You will find precious little on those flashy devices you carry around. Folks say they've seen Smoky Hollow shirts here and there, but this is all hearsay.

Despite the intrigue and feelings of unease, the legend of Smoky Hollow only grows stronger with time. Make no mistake, this dark quest for competition between the clubs has not been put to rest. In fact most local runners seem to know this autumn calamity will occur again.... and soon!

There are claims that day will arrive on the morning of October 20th in the unsuspecting village of Newport NY. Pre-competition rituals (such as the collecting of a \$10 race fee and the pinning of numbers) will take place in a creaky old haunt called the Masonic Temple. This towering structure looms over Main Street (Route 28).

According to an anonymous source, this reckless assembly will depart from a start line at 10:00 AM on Bridge St. No one seems to be willing to divulge any details about the path these runners will take. However, our best guess is laid out on the map below:



Small bands of friends (the good folks from those clubs I spoke of) will be placed throughout to assist you on this fool's errand. Expect these saviors at miles 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11.

Some of you will survive this escapade and will want to commemorate this triumph with the wearing of a special garment that marks the occasion. Smoky Hollow shirts will be available, but you must order them through your club captain. The captains will send out their own details on this matter. Note: There will be no shirts available on race day.

In closing, dear runner, the best advice I can give is to find a good book and nice warm fire and steer clear of this wretched place on October 20th. For heaven's sake, don't tempt fate! Then again, I know your type all too well. No warning will dissuade you. These pleas for sanity only make your desire stronger. So go on then, get on the starting line and have at it...but don't say you weren't warned.

Sincerely, a Concerned Citizen

PS: If you're experiencing apprehension, anxiety and worry. If your nights are filled with portentous dreams that won't let you sleep. Type this code into your fancy device and ask this old hermit for assistance. Some say he's not quite right, but he just MAY be able to help you.

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