

SUPERIOR 100|50|26.2

Wednesday September 14th, 2016

RE: 2016 Superior "Fall" Trail Race 100MI, 50MI & 26.2MI Volunteer Thank You

Dear Friends,

Enigmatic, magnetic, intangible and magical. Endless attempts are made after each years race to describe the Superior Trail Race but most efforts fall short - it's one of those things, you just have to experience for yourself. How could you even begin to describe something so beautiful, so complex, so rewarding, so painful so layered and textured - it just does not conform to sound-bites. Things that are "easy" are rarely "worth it" - every runner gets to a point in their journey, during their darkest hour, where their body and mind are fatigued, where they ask that one simple question - "is this worth it"? I feel that volunteering for Superior brings many of us to the same threshold. An event that asks much of its competitors asks just as much of its volunteers, as you know we are not asking for a few hour commitment at a water stop - the mechanics of it alone require blood, sweat and tears! A 38 hour cutoff, 100, 50 or 26.2 miles of point to point racing, 13 aid stations spread out over a remote area and the best interests and well being of our runners, spectators, crews, pacers and fellow volunteers made our priority and our responsibility - all of this, rain or shine the show must go on. It is natural for runners and volunteers alike to question "is it worth it" but in the end, in those closing hours the answer comes with little effort for runners and volunteers alike - as the sun sets and we bring those last runners across the finish line there is nothing quite like it, simply put, it is powerful and any lingering doubt is easily erased. After some much needed sleep, Sunday morning rolls around and most of us can already conceive of doing it again. I have been to, participated in, volunteered at and directed many races but nothing that measures up to Superior - heck, it's right in the name. Runners, volunteers and spectators alike talk about "feeling" something different at Superior that exists only at Superior. Don't let me lose you here and please do not mistake this for melodrama but I have ventured before that what we experience is spirit, team spirit for sure and perhaps even a spiritual experience (which can apply if you are religious or not!) Whatever it is, I know that I find this in few places and there is no shortage of runners, volunteers and spectators who corroborate this - as is tradition, I will leave you with an excerpt from one of dozens of emails I get after each years race that does just that.

"Due to extreme blister problems I could not have had a worse physical experience at Superior. Conversely, I could not have had a better relational and community experience at Superior. The course was rugged, relentless and remote, as it should be. The people were relentless in caring for runners and rugged in being out in weather hours on end. One thing they were not though was remote. Instead, genuine community oozed from each aid station, each volunteer. With that, how can you possibly give up when pain rides your back all day and night? You don't and I chose not to. Now I am a very small piece of this legacy called Superior and I am humbled by it."

As many of you know, I fight tirelessly each and every year to coax you into coming back to volunteer, our legacy is built on those that have come before us and continue to show up to provide veteran leadership. Our future is being built by having new volunteers stepping up to the plate in ever increasing numbers, with ever increasing frequency. The consistency that comes from having these two groups back year after year results in skill and tradition being handed down with everyone working together on this grand project that we call Superior. The envelope and culture that it creates results in all you have read above. We do not do it for accolades but make no mistake our reputation is second to none, the word is out - this is something special and the credit falls squarely with you.

We invite you back next year to continue to be a part of this tradition; as a volunteer for sure or a runner, a crew-person, a pacer or at a minimum we hope a spectator - we are all a part of this and it just would not be the same without you. Should you have any questions comments, concerns, compliments or complaints, please do not hesitate to reach out, I am always available via email, for a chat or a run - if you need something just ask and I will do my best.

Sincerely,



Race Director
Superior Trail Race