The highest honor the Huntsville Track Club bestows on a member is being selected as an Honorary Lifetime HTC Member. In the 45 years of the club, this honor has been bestowed upon just eleven members.

To receive this award requires the member provide many years of extraordinary service and leadership in a manner to have made a major long term impact on the club and its members. It is my pleasure tonight to make the case to you, that the member the Board has selected for this award, meets that requirement.

The past recipients of this honor:
1980 - Steve Johnson  2008 - Lawrence Hillis
1982 - Tom Bolt  2011 - Wayne & Joyce Smith
2002 - Norm Harris  2014 - John DeHaye
2004 - Earl Jacoby  2015 - Buck Jones

Tonight we are honoring Ray and Nancy Sheppard. Ray joined the HTC in 1980 and Nancy joined in 1984.

They quickly became involved in the HTC volunteering for races. They were also very active runners. An example of their running would be 1985 when they were featured in *The Huntsville Times* Extra Section. In the Rocket City Marathon that year they ran together finishing in 3:33:06 to place 5th of the 24 Husband-Wife Teams entered. Nancy was the 2nd finisher on the HTC's Winning Open Female Team.

This award however is not about running, but the contributions made to the HTC and the sport of running in Huntsville. That has been recognized a number times by the awards they have won.

They both were recipients of the Norm Harris Outstanding Achievement Award in 1987 and Ray won that award again in 1998. They both were recipients of the Tom Bolt President’s Award in 1991. This award led then HTC President Lawrence Hillis in his presentation to tell an interesting story of Ray’s dedication.

Ray is an OB-GYN physician, an occupation which can have irregular and long hours. Hillis stated the following: John Dennison, Cotton Row Director at that time, and Ray were working late one night and Ray was called to the hospital for a delivery. To John’s surprise, Ray returned afterwards and they worked until the wee hours of the morning to get the job done.

Ray was the HTC Treasurer from 1988 through 1991. Nancy directed the HTC Women’s Distance Festival 5K Race from 1986 through 1993 when it was one of the HTC’s big summer
turnout events.

In addition to volunteering for most HTC races from time to time, they were major supporters of the HTC’s Spring Fever Kids One Mile Runs and Autumn Chase Kids One Mile Runs. Although not an HTC event, they were heavily involved in the Big Spring Jam 5K for the years that event was held.

Their most time consuming involvement were as Committee Task Coordinators for both the club’s Rocket City Marathon and Cotton Row Run. They were Invited Runner Hosts for both of those races from 1984 through 1992. They also provided the Cedarhurst Clubhouse from 1986 through 1992 for the Cotton Row Run Invited Runner Sunday evening Supper and the Monday afternoon Post Race Dinner Party.

Ray and Nancy did the computer data entry for Cotton Row from 1986 through 1998. And in 1998 when marathon director Malcolm Gillis didn’t have anyone to do the computer data entry Ray stepped in to do it that year.

They were the Task Coordinators for the Rocket City Marathon photography team from 1988 through 1993. This was a major task because it was during the period when we did the finish line photography ourselves.

From 2009 through 2015 they were the marathon task coordinators for the finish line runner handlers.

Nancy is an educator and quilting artist and one of the t-shirt quilts she made was a gift for the retiring marathon directors in 1996.

One of the most fascinating tasks they took on was directing a Double Ironman Triathlon. It was a tremendous endeavor to orchestrate that was held over two days. It involved a monumental amount of work and an unbelievable degree of responsibility. Just imagine having participants swimming 4.7 miles in the Tennessee River from the Whitesburg Marina to the Civilian Recreation Center on Redstone Arsenal, bicycling 224 miles on the roads, and running two marathons for another 52.4 miles on the streets in Huntsville.

This was 1984 and it was the first Double Ironman to be held anywhere in the world. Since it was the first one in the world it wasn’t just a national event, but an international event drawing competitors from foreign countries.

What is most interesting is how Ray and Nancy became the directors. I should note that this was not an HTC sponsored event.

A local business man who had run the Hawaii Ironman got the idea to have a Double Ironman in Huntsville with the hope of getting it on national TV. He setup a course, solicited and acquired HTC support, advertised the race, and worked on setting up the event. As the race date approached and he was not able to get the TV coverage, he decided to cancel the race.

By this time many athletes had been training for the event and had made plans to come to Huntsville. To save face for the city of Huntsville and knowing how hard those athletes trained for this effort, the Sheppards stepped forward to direct the first ever Double Ironman Triathlon.

That first year there wasn’t time to make changes and athletes actually biked to Birmingham and back with no course sentry help and they ran two loops of the Rocket City Marathon course. The following year the Sheppards set up a 28 mile loop on Redstone Arsenal that was biked 8 times, and 6.6 mile loop on Bailey Cove Road that was run 8 times. This was a much safer course that could be sentried and supported with aid stations.

They directed the event for 12 years. Over those years Nancy made hundreds of overseas
telephone calls which seems simple until you realize all the various time zones those athletes live in and trying to communicate with foreigners.

The event ended after the Oklahoma City bombing when Redstone Arsenal no longer allowed the race to be held on their facilities. It was transferred to an ex-Navy Seal who still conducts the event in Virginia Beach.

Here are several other civic functions they have been involved in: Part owner of the Huntsville Stars Baseball Team and the Huntsville Lasers Basketball Team. Nancy was manager of the Lasers from 1991 through 1993. These two endeavors were to support having minor league sports in Huntsville. They are donors and supporters of the Hudson Alpha Genetics Research Foundation.

Ray and Nancy recently returned from Spain where they walked the Camino de Santiago, a pilgrimage across Spain as depicted in the 2009 movie, “The Way”, with Martin Sheen.

It's a 1200 year old path (first walked during the Crusades) that a quarter of a million people start each year. Nancy hiked from the southern French border over the Pyrenees through Spain and onto Santiago de Compostella, on the western border of Spain. It was a 790 km pilgrimage which is approximately 500 miles. It took Nancy 35 days to complete and Ray joined her for the last 200 km (around 120 miles) finishing the walk together.

On behalf of the Huntsville Track Club I am honored to present the Honorary Lifetime HTC Member award to Ray and Nancy Sheppard.
The RRCA Rod Steele Memorial Award is a national award presented by the Road Runners Club of America at its annual convention to the Most Outstanding Club Worker in the Nation. This award is named in memory of Rod Steele, who was the DC Road Runner Club President in 1974 when a plane crash took his life. This award is in memorial to his contributions to the sport of running as a volunteer and supporter of the RRCA. Each of the more than a thousand RRCA chapter clubs can nominate one of its members, other than the current club president, for this award from which the finalist is selected by the RRCA Rod Steele Memorial Award Selection Committee. The HTC has had eight of its nominees selected as the national winner.

Past HTC nominees for this award are listed below with the eight national winners noted with an *.

- 1975 - Harold Tinsley *
- 1982 - Louise Tinsley
- 1983 - Louise Tinsley
- 1984 - John Hickey *
- 1985 - Louise Tinsley
- 1986 - Louise Tinsley *
- 1987 - Jack Ward
- 1988 - Jack Ward
- 1989 - John Dennison
- 1990 - John Dennison
- 1991 - John Dennison
- 1992 - Norm Harris
- 1993 - John Roberts
- 1994 - Lawrence Hillis *
- 1995 - Beth Edwards
- 1996 - Beth Edwards
- 1997 - Beth Benefield *
- 1998 - Keith Young
- 1999 - Jim Oaks *
- 2000 - Kris & Randy Whorton
- 2001 - Beth Edwards *
- 2002 - Carl Smith
- 2005 - Suzanne Taylor
- 2006 - Earl Jacoby
- 2007 - Carl Smith
- 2008 - Dink Taylor
- 2009 - Dink Taylor
- 2010 - Dink Taylor *
- 2011 - Carl Smith
- 2012 - Carl Smith
- 2013 - Carl Smith
- 2014 - Carl Smith
- 2015 - Carl Smith

The following is the information provided to the Nomination Committee:

For the third year in a row I am honored to announce the Huntsville Track Club nomination for the 'RRCA Rod Steele Memorial Award.

The Huntsville Track Club has many fantastic volunteers so it is a tall order to become the best of the best. This year our selected volunteer has been an active volunteer with the Huntsville Track Club for the last twenty years and is one the most knowledgeable members we have on race timing and database entry. This volunteer supports almost every single, of
the now 25 HTC events, and has a critical hand in making sure results from races are correct and timely. The time spend on the job of race timing is not just the day of the event but the days and weeks leading up to a race where countless hours of organization and data entry is require. So, on behalf of The Huntsville Track Club I would like to nominate Carl Smith, for the third year in a row, for the 2016 RRCA Rod Steele Memorial Award.
BROWNING ROSS SPIRIT OF THE RRCA AWARD NOMINEE - JIM OAKS

Presented by Eric Fritz

The Browning Ross Spirit of the RRCA Award, which began in 1999, is a national award presented by the Road Runners Club of America at its annual convention. The award honors an individual who is an unsung hero in their club. This award is named in honor of Browning Ross who founded the RRCA in 1958. Each of the more than a thousand RRCA chapter clubs can nominate one of its members for this award from which the finalist is selected by the RRCA Browning Ross Spirit of the RRCA Award Selection Committee, chaired by the RRCA President.

The past HTC nominees for this award are listed below with the national winners noted with an *:

1999 - Beth Edwards  
2000 - Beth Edwards  
2001 - Saundra Baker  
2002 - Harold Tinsley  
2005 - Harold Tinsley

2006 - Harold Tinsley *  
2007 - Jeff Kyser  
2008 - Ann Oaks  
2009 - James Hurley  
2010 - Jim Oaks

2011 - Rick Doke  
2012 - Wanda Franklin  
2013 - Louise Tinsley *  
2014 - Wanda Franklin  
2015 - Wanda Franklin

The following is the information provided to the Nomination Committee:

The RRCA's National Running Awards are a significant achievement and the Browning Ross, Spirit of the RRCA is among the top of these awards. The award honors an individual who is an unsung hero. Those that champion the RRCA tirelessly and enthusiastically, but prefer to stay in the background, letting others bask in the spotlight. It recognizes a lifetime volunteer service over a period of many years to the running community. It is my honor today to suggest that this best describes Jim Oaks.

Now Jim has not always been the one to "stay in the background". I mean, it seems everyone knows Coach Oaks. You know... that guy who taught them algebra back in High School. I mean, seriously... Jim has appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show! Who knew? But I'm not here to commend Jim for his math or his singing abilities. I'm here to talk about the HTC and running. And don't get me wrong, Jim has had his fair share of being "out front" when it comes to running. I mean he's run a 33 minute 10k at age 44 and a 2:33 marathon at age 45. He was the Cotton Row Runs Race Director, one of our most visible events! He's already won just about every award we give:

2006 HTC Dedication Award
1994 HTC Media Award - having written much of the clubs press, back when Huntsville actually had a newspaper, not one but two of them.
1985 and 1997 the HTC Norm Harris Outstanding Achievement Award
2007 Honorary Lifetime HTC Member

Also the RRCA’s Rod Steele Memorial Award Nominee (outstanding club volunteer) in 1999 and was the RRCA’s Rod Steele Memorial Award winner that year to be the Outstanding Volunteer in the Nation.

And was inducted to the Huntsville-Madison County Athletic Hall of Fame in 2001.

Jim has served as a club race director for a total of 11 years. He has served on the HTC board for 10 years. Jim was the one responsible for getting the HTC "on the internet" way back when and continued to help with that until only a couple years ago.

And when you think of all the smaller races we put on, I dare say that he's made more announcements at the start of our races than anyone... even more than Wayne Smith! Yes, Jim has made a name for himself. But that was then, and this is now.

Now I dare to say Jim stays on the sidelines and basks in the shadows. But you know... he is still working just as hard for our club. He is still there timing many of our races. And even when you don't see him on race day... he's been working on data for weeks in advance to make sure everything runs smoothly. I have tried to not call on him for help but he keeps popping up and doing a good. Carl may have gotten the excitement of race day timing at the Ribbon Run, but come to find out, Jim was working on the data with him for weeks in advance. And when I need to have a difficult discussion with the city or when I need to meet the athletic director for the city schools.... Jim is there to help. He is just always there with the answer that you need.

I don't think there is anyone here that would say that Jim is in anyway not deserving of this award. For over 37 years Jim has been the go to guy for our club. Whether out front or in the shadows you cannot deny his many years of service.

I came across an old quote from Norm Harris from when he was presenting Jim with the Outstanding Achievement Award back in 1985. I think this sums it up nicely:

“This is one of those “behind-the-scenes” jobs that require unbelievable hours of hard work for which there is little reward. Much of his time is spent researching and writing articles for the newspaper. A task such as this can’t be done by just anybody no matter how much energy and enthusiasm they may have. It takes a special person who can project his enthusiasm into you; a person who you naturally like, respect and want to help; a person who has an obvious and deep concern for what he is about; a person who comes across as so honest that you simply must believe them. People like that are not that way as a result of a conscious decision, but rather because it is simply “what they are”. There is a genuine quality about them that cannot be taught or learned and that commands respect. Jim Oaks is one of these people.”
NOR MAN  HARRIS  OUTSTANDING  ACHIEVEMENT  AWARD  -  LINEA  SCAVARDA

Presented by Kathy Youngren

The Huntsville Track Club "Outstanding" Achievement Award has been presented to a member, or some years, members, every year dating back to 1984.

Although there were some earlier awards presented by the club, it was with this award that the club, under then President, Norm Harris, began the annual recognition of club members for their contributions to the success of the Huntsville Track Club.

In 2002 this award was renamed the “Norman Harris Achievement Award” in his honor for his exceptional leadership for so many years. This award is given to recognize extraordinary volunteerism in regard to not only the HTC, but running in general.

The recipients of this award are:

1984 - Bill Edwards  2000 - Carl Smith
1985 - Jim Oaks & Wayne Smith  2001 - Dan Bond
1986 - Denny Coyle  2002 - Joyce Smith
1987 - Ray & Nancy Sheppard  2003 - Mark & Sheryl Dummer
1988 - John & Rosemary Gregg  2004 - Dink & Suzanne Taylor
1989 - John DeHaye  2005 - Tab Barnett
1990 - George Franklin  2006 - John DeHaye
1991 - Jack MacPherson  2007 - David Purinton
1992 - Louise Tinsley  2008 - David & Ashley Cain
1993 - Beth Edwards  2009 - Rob & Kathy Youngren
1994 - Beth Benefield  2010 - George DeWitt
1995 - Malcolm Gillis  2011 - Wanda Franklin
1996 - Carl & Lynda Senkbeil  2012 - Joe Francica
1997 - Jim Oaks  2013 - Marty & Carol Eaton
1998 - Ray Sheppard  2014 - Rick & Katie Maeahlmann
1999 - Lawrence Hillis  2015 - Paul & Debbie Erickson

Someone once said, “No one can do everything, but everyone can do something.” This is a true statement, but this evening we are here to honor those who do more—who go above and beyond and do more to make our running community the best.

I am here to give the Norm Harris Outstanding Achievement Award to one of these over achievers.

Here are five qualities of an outstanding achiever:
1. They are **Ambitious**.
   Achievers are ambitious, self-motivated and willing to take on new challenges. They want to create progress.

2. They are **Reliable**.
   People with high Reliability are conscientious, consistent and known for their follow-through. They complete duties with a high level of dependability.

3. They are **Dedicated**.
   The top achievers are completely committed. They believe in the rightness and the goodness of what they’re doing.

4. They are **Detail-oriented**.
   They review every detail in advance and do things that the average person is not willing to do. They make sacrifices most people are not willing to make.

5. They are **Passionate**.
   They love and believe in what they do. Passion cannot be bought or sold. You won’t find it in a bottle. No one can give passion to you—it must be within you, and this person has that excitement and desire inside her that shines through in her actions.
   Stand up if I was just speaking of you……Just kidding.

   The winner of the Norm Harris Outstanding Achievement Award goes to Linda Scavarda, for she possesses each of these traits and is an over achiever.

1. She is **ambitious**. She is the Race Director of Winter Winds, is on the Cotton Row Run and Rocket City Marathon committees by being in charge of packet stuffing, and is the queen of volunteer spot—she finds and organizes volunteers for most of the HTC races.

2. She is **reliable**. If she says she will do it, she will do it. You don’t have to bribe her or offer her incentives for taking on more responsibility or volunteering.

3. She is **dedicated**. There are very few HTC races that she has not helped with in some capacity. Many races she is one of the last to leave, for she is typically there breaking things down and cleaning up—the jobs that most don’t want to do.

4. She is **detail-oriented**. Winter Winds is run with precision. The Cotton Row Run and Rocket City Marathon packet stuffings have been completed in record time the last couple of years, due to Linda’s preparation.

5. Finally, she is extremely **passionate** for running and for encouraging others, and helping to create a top-notch running community in Huntsville. Linda is a competitive runner who likes to throw it down in races, but before, after, and even during races, she is always encouraging others, pushing them to do the best they can do. She is a positive influence in our running community.

   I have been friends with Linda for years and have had the opportunity to observe her ambition, reliability, dedication, and passion, and it is very uplifting and exciting. She doesn’t let anything stop her and if she believes in something, she fights for it. If there is a job to be done, she does it with excellence. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, “Life’s most urgent question is: ‘What are you doing for others.’” When we apply that quote to Linda, I think the answer is, “a lot.” This is why we are honoring her tonight with the Norm Harris Outstanding Achievement Award.
TOM BOLT PRESIDENT'S AWARD – KIM HOLMES

Presented by Eric Fritz

This award was originally named the President's Award. In 1994 the Executive Board approved a change to rename the award the Tom Bolt Award in honor of the founding President of the Huntsville Track Club who served as President for the first four terms of office (eight years). The purpose of this award is to allow the President to recognize a person, group, or organization that has made a significant contribution to the Club or proved especially helpful in the conduct of club business. The President selects the recipient for the award without restriction, which includes consideration of the board members.

Previous winners of the award:
1986 - Linda Harris  
1987 - Harold Tinsley  
1988 - John Roberts  
1989 - Louise Tinsley  
1990 - Norm Harris  
1991 - Ray and Nancy Sheppard  
1992 - Bobby Johnson  
1993 - Richard Doke  
1994 - Jeff Weitenbeck  
1995 - Dan Bond  
1996 - Mike Allen  
1997 - Lawrence Hillis  
1998 - Andy Leonard  
1999 - Ken and Ovella Jessee  
2000 - Ray and Alice Moses  
2001 - Clare Purinton  
2002 - Cheryl and Shahin Hadian  
2003 - Malcolm Gillis  
2004 - Beth Benefield  
2005 - Craig Armstrong  
2006 - Wayne and Joyce Smith  
2007 - Marty Clarke  
2008 - Michele Savage  
2009 - Dick & Wanda Franklin  
2010 - Brent Smith  
2011 - Eric Fritz  
2012 - Craig Armstrong  
2013 - Jim Oaks  
2014 - Suzanne Taylor  
2015 - Regena Moore

I think you all probably know by now how much I like giving out this award. I know it's silly but, I enjoy the suspense. Perhaps it's a power trip (for what power I have no idea) but I like that I get to pick this one and no one else gets to know. I know that this is likely much more exciting for me that it is for you but... humor me.

Today I'm going to give this award to someone else who stays in the shadows. Someone who doesn't get much credit for all the work they do. Heck, I would suspect that outside of myself, and possibly her husband, no one really has a clue of everything she really does for the club. (Yes. that's your first clue, she's a she)

This person is not at every event we put on. Not an expert at putting up tents, washing
out coolers or timing races, but I dare say that what she does is every bit as important and quite possibly even more work when you add it all up.

Yes, she is not the fastest runner. I'm not going to spill secrets of her dominating times from the past, but she gets it done and encourages others along the way. She has a passion for our sport and shares it with those around her. She has taken to embracing all runners, encouraging them to join in the fun and eliminating any fear that they may get left behind.

But the real reason I am giving this award to her is because she has single handedly done what we on the Board have been unable to do for the past 7 years that I've been involved. Yes, Kim Holmes has moved us to a modern online presence.

Kim came into this job with little knowledge of the mess we had created trying to get this done already. But she sat down, listened to, and understood, everything I tried to say about what we had wanted to do, what we had tried to do and where we had struggled in the past. Digested it, made it her own, and pushed it across the finish line.

She has had to deal with a tense situation with our site provider, lost contacts with our domain manager and content that hadn't been updated in many years. We still don't know who manages one of our domains, but it's all working and she has patiently taken it step by step.

For doing what I could not. This award is for you Kim.
ADMIRATION AWARD – MIKE O’MELIA

Presented by Suzanne Taylor

To be honored with the HTC Admiration Award requires that the person be admired by a significant segment of the club membership.

In the past our admiration has been be-stowed on the following members:

1988 - Cele Coyle  2002 - Ernest Ray "ER" Ritch  2009 - Laura Charette
1996 - Grady Edwards  2003 - Brent Smith  2010 - Eric Charette
1999 - Betty Harris  2006 - Grady Edwards  2013 - Rob Youngren
2001 - Lou Hovatter  2008 - Alice Moses  2015 - Katie Beth Pierson

M – This person is MUSICAL and I am not.
I – He is pretty dang INTELLIGENT Too.
K – He is always KIND of CRAZY but fun.
E – His ENERGY is over the top.

O – OH he is a RACE DIRECTOR Too!
M – He is very MOTIVATED to help me with the marathon. He found us two new sponsors this year.
E – ENCOURAGING, ENTHUSIAST and ENTERTAINING.
L – He LOVES his dog Fenway.
I – He has lot of IDEAS but be ready for lots of texts, especially late at night.
A – But truthfully we ADMIRE him for is commitment to the Track Club as a Race Director, Volunteer and Friend!
DEDICATION AWARD – MELISSA HOPPER

Presented by Kim Holmes

One definition of dedication is defined in the dictionary as devotion to or the act of giving wholly or earnestly. Each of the previous winners more than met this criteria and it surely fits this year’s winner. There are many HTC members who fit this definition and the other award winners each year have surely demonstrated a dedication to the club and to their many achievements. The Dedication Award has traditionally been awarded to a club member, who for many years has silently and unassumingly contributed considerable time, effort and talent to our club that has been a significant benefit to the membership.

Previous winners of this award have been:

1987 - Beth Edwards
1989 - Lynda Senkbeil
1990 - Buck Jones
1991 - Graham Gallemore
1992 - Jim Randolph
1993 - Cele Coyle
1994 - Dink Taylor
1995 - Paul Goode
1996 - Earl Jacoby
1997 - Keith Young
1998 - John DeHaye
1999 - Ron and Alice Clements
2000 - Vickie Meader
2001 - Rick Doke
2002 - Joe Francica
2003 - Gene Simonson
2004 - Valerie Connaughton
2005 - Diann Tolbert
2006 - Jim Oaks
2007 - Randy McFarland
2008 - Steve Rice
2009 - Susanna Litkenhous
2010 - Steve & Jennifer Carter
2011 - Linda Scavarda
2012 - Louise Tinsley
2013 - Forrest Callicutt
2014 - Josh Kennedy
2015 - Todd Parsons

We have the unfortunate problem of a large group of volunteers that show up repeatedly for events and races, this means we have to find unique ways to filter through the support to give out awards. And that rings true especially for this year’s Dedication Award.

We think about WHY people volunteer, and many do it because they also make use of the club by participating in races the HTC puts on. So, when someone volunteers even though they’ll not reap the benefits of the work by running races themselves, they stand out in the crowd.

The person receiving the Dedication award is one of those people. She has spent a lot of time recovering from injuries preventing her from participating as a racer in many HTC events. However, she still shows up to help, often carrying her camera to chase around the runners. Nothing makes you feel bad complaining about the cold more than seeing an injured volunteer still helping with a smile on her face.
That’s another thing that makes Melissa stand out, the smile on her face. She always shows up and brings with her an energy that is contagious. She always has the best attitude, even when dealing with injuries. I recall her one time after a successful injury-free race saying, “I’ve now raced twice as many half marathons as I’ve had stress fractures!” You can’t help but laugh with her and enjoy her company on the sidelines with an attitude like that.

Thank you, Melissa - for helping the Huntsville Track Club even when facing injury. You are always willing to step up, with a small one on your face and laughter in your heart. We are lucky to have you on our team.
APPRECIATION AWARD – RICK DOKE

Presented by Dink Taylor

The Huntsville Track Club began the Appreciation Award in 1989. This award is made to an individual, company, municipal or civic organization for outstanding contributions to the club and sport over an extended number of years.

The Appreciation Award is most often presented to our major race sponsors or product sponsors for contributions which save the HTC money allowing us to conduct a first class race and pass the savings on to those who enter our events.

Past winners of this award have been:

1989 - Mayor Steve Hettinger
1990 - NIKE
1991 - The Mill Bakery and Eatery
1992 - WZYP Radio
1993 - Huntsville Hospital
1994 - Monte Sano State Park
1995 - City of Huntsville Rec. Services
1996 - Buffalo Rock - Pepsi Cola
1997 - Papa John's Pizza
1998 - Great Harvest Bread - Chris Lang
1999 - Huntsville Lung Associates
2000 - Dr. J. Will Baker
2001 - Huntsville Police Department
2002 - Custom Graphics - BobResta
2003 - Bill Dunnavant
2004 - Southwood Presbyterian Church
2005 - University Of Alabama Huntsville
2006 - Sgt. Mark Shahan, HPD
2007 - Lou Hovatter
2008 - Monte Sano State Park
2009 - Brent Wren
2010 - Holiday Inn, Patricia Hurston
2011 - Kim Balzer
2012 - Gregg Gelmis
2013 - Courtney McCool
2014 - Kent Wilborn
2015 - Bruegger's Bagels

If you have ever volunteered to work a Rocket City Marathon or Cotton Row Run expo, Chances are it was being organized by a member of the Doke family. I have been a member and volunteer for the HTC for over 30 years and when I think back as far back as I can, the Doke family was always in charge of the HTC’s two biggest expos of the year.

In the early 1980’s, I lived in Gadsden AL. I frequently traveled to Huntsville to visit family and participate in HTC road races. One of the first families I got to know was the Doke family. They were at all the HTC events and Rick, we called him Ricky back then, was my age. We raced each other a lot and often dueled for age group Division awards. Ricky and I always had a lot to talk about. I lived in Gadsden and did not have a lot of competition in my age division while Ricky lived in Huntsville and had tons of competition from both Huntsville High and Grissom runners. Ricky was at Lee High school where cross country was not as popular
of a sport and the Doke family participated in many road races so naturally Ricky did too. I always looked forward to seeing Ricky.

I am not going into details about Rick’s running background, but I can tell you off the top of my head that Rick has accomplished a lot in the running over the years. I remember one year at Cotton Row Run he ran somewhere in the 33 minute range for the 10k if my memory is correct? Winning or placing high in a very competitive 16-19 age group. Even after Rick grew up, got married, had kids and began his coaching career at Decatur High School where he is still the current Head coach, he completed the Huntsville Slam; Dizzy 50’s, Rocket City Marathon, Recover from the Holidays 50k, and Mountain Mist. Running has always been a part of Rick’s life and his kids have followed him in his footsteps.

Rick’s father, Richard Doke headed up both the Rocket City Marathon and Cotton Row Run expo’s for many years, so many that I can’t even tell you. When Richard decided it was time to let someone else take it over, naturally his son Rick took it over. How long ago was this? It had to be more than 10 years ago? I do not have the number of years in my head but Rick has been doing this for a LONG time! Rick organizes the expos, makes sure the volunteers have plenty of food and drinks in the hospitality area while they volunteer. I know I appreciate what Rick and his family having been doing for many years. The HTC does too. We would like to recognize Rick Doke tonight as the recipient of the HTC’s Appreciation Award, thank you Rick for all your years of service to the club.
The Huntsville Track Club began the Service Award in 1989. This award is made to a club member, civic organization or supporter for outstanding service contributions to the club and sport over an extended number of years.

Past winners of this award have been:

1989 - Huntsville Police Department
1990 - Huntsville Emergency Medical Services Incorporated (HEMSI)
1991 - Boy Scouts of America
1992 - Huntsville Amateur Radio Club
1993 - Alabama A&M University
1994 - Girl Scouts of North Alabama
1995 - Chapter 74 of the Vietnam Veterans of America.
1996 - Dr. Mike Linder
1997 - City of Huntsville, Mayor Loretta Spencer
1998 - Lee High School ROTC, Major Harold Chafin
1999 - The Rack Cafe, John Bzdell
2000 - Hilton Huntsville
2001 - Computer Renaissance, Melinda and Chris Ponder
2002 - HiWAAY Huntsville Sprint Triathlon, M. D. Smith
2003 - HEMS Industry Team, Ed Nicholas
2004 - Papa John's Pizza, Tom Van Ladingham
2005 - Fleet Feet Sports Huntsville, Dink and Suzanne Taylor
2006 - Nesin Therapy, Janine and Michelle Nesin
2007 - Coca Cola, Mike Sokol
2008 - Purity Dairies
2009 - Dr. Darla Cowart
2010 - Domino’s Pizza, Tony Osani
2011 - Bruegger's, Maynard Mitchell
2012 - Eric Enchelmayer
2013 - Holiday Inn, All Employees
2014 - Publix
2015 - Nesin Therapy Services

Coca Cola has providing the Coke trailer, Powerade, and cups for HTC events for many years. Especially for Rocket City Marathon that requires 40,000 cups and 12 cases of Powerade. They have been a great supporter of the HTC for the entire 23 years I have been race directing the Mountain Mist Trail run.
OUTSTANDING MALE PERFORMANCE AWARD – GRATTAN O’NEILL

Presented by Chelsea Schiavone

The Outstanding Male Performance Award is given to recognize the performance aspect of running. It is one of the few awards set aside to recognize the runner’s ability and not his years of service, etc. This year’s recipient joins a long list of runners who have at one time or another exhibited extraordinary talent in the field of running.

Past winners of the Outstanding Male Performance Award have been:

1985 - Jeff Harwell 1996 - DeWayne Satterfield 2006 - George DeWitt
1988 - Carl Nicholson 1999 - David Purinton 2009 - David Riddle
1989 - Dink Taylor 2000 - DeWayne Satterfield 2010 - Josh Whitehead
1991 - Lawrence Hillis 2001 - Marty Clarke 2011 - Donald Bowman
1993 - David Mayo 2003 - Donald Bowman 2013 - Josh Whitehead
1994 - Phillip Parker 2004 - James Howell 2014 - Rob Youngren

This next award recipient is pretty unique among most of the people in this room. Not only because he might be one of the youngest people we’ve ever given an award to, but also because there aren’t many people that can call themselves a world record holder.

Let me read you a short list of this runner’s accomplishments earned within the past two years:

He has won his age group in 5 HTC races this year.
He won the AAU National Cross Country Championship for his age group.
He holds the state records for the 5k, 8k, 2 mile, and 4 mile distances.
He holds the world record for the 10k, 15k, and half marathon distances.

Oh, and have I told you how old he is yet? He’s 9! Our award recipient for the Male Performance Award is Grattan O’Neill.

Grattan started running at the age of 3 and hasn’t stopped since. He has stated that running is his “second” favorite sport, after soccer. Imagine what would happen if it was his first favorite! It’s impressive when an adult can accomplish this many race wins and records, and even more so for someone who’s not even 10 years old yet. He is a national class runner and has had a national class year, achieving more in the sport of running than most will in their lifetime. I am honored to present the Outstanding Performance Award to him on behalf of the Huntsville Track Club. Grattan, we wish you the best of luck in your running future, and look forward to seeing you smash more records!
OUTSTANDING FEMALE PERFORMANCE – JUSTYNA MUDY-MADER

Presented by Chelsea Schiavone

The Outstanding Female Performance Award is one of the HTC's oldest and most prestigious awards. The list of previous winners reads like a rollcall of local running legends.

Past winners of this award have been:

1990 - Margaret Robinson   2000 - Kathy Youngren          2010 - Kathy Youngren
1992 - Natalie Fahey       2002 - Anne Park                  2012 - Melissa Wood
1993 - Meshelle Pate       2003 - Brooke McDaniel          2013 - Kylie Lemon
1994 - Cathy Tooker        2004 - Katie Maehlmann         2014 - Rebecca Byers
1996 - Sandra Berg         2006 - Gail Whelan

A few years ago, I was participating in my first multi day stage race. I was a nervous wreck in the days leading up to it – I wasn’t really sure if I was cut out for such an event. It was at this race that I met our next award recipient – Justyna Mudy-Mader. She wasn’t running the race, but handing out water and food to hungry trail runners. As I ran up to the first aid station I said something apologetic about being in dead last place, "You’re doing great!” she said with a big smile, “Keep going, you can do this!” I spent less than 5 minutes at the water stop, but even in that short time I was left with an impression that she might be one of the nicest people I’ve ever met; I had no idea I was being cheered on by a running powerhouse with an impressive resume because she was just so down to earth and relatable.

Just to give you a little background: Justyna was born in Poland where she ran on the Junior National team; she came to the US in 2007 and quickly became one of the most impressive runners in the southeast. She was a five time NAIA National Champion, and has twice been invited as an Elite to the Boston Marathon, where she recently finished as the 51st female overall.

Justyna has won more races than I can list here, but to name a few of her local accomplishments: she is a two time winner of the Rocket City Marathon, first local finisher of the 2015 Rocket City Marathon, winner of the 2015 Huntsville Half Marathon, the first local finisher at the Cotton Row 10k… I could keep going but I don’t want to keep you here all night!
When she isn't winning races and running circles around the rest of us, she's in the trenches volunteering and coaching other runners on towards their goals.

While I was getting to know her I was surprised to learn of all her accomplishments – not because she doesn't seem capable, but because she is one of the most humble, gracious people on earth and truly believes that every runner has the potential for personal greatness.

It is my great honor to present this award for Outstanding Performance to Justyna, someone I am proud to know and who I admire greatly. This award is something she would never ask for or expect, which is what makes it such a pleasure to recognize her for being an incredible athlete and asset to our running community.
OUTSTANDING HTC HIGH SCHOOL CROSS COUNTRY RUNNERS
ANDREW DODSON & ABBY ZANE

Presented by Coach Lea Bryant

This awards began in 1983 as the first annual award presented by the Huntsville Track Club.

The purpose of this award is to recognize our young HTC members who excel in high school cross country.

The winner of this award is the highest finishing male runner in the AHSAA Regional Cross Country Championships that is a member of the Huntsville Track Club.

Past winners were:

1983 - John Walthall Janice DeHaye 2000 - Jeff Turner Emry McKay
1984 - John Walthall Jenny Henze 2001 - Aalok Sharma Emry McKay
1985 - Terry Young Jenny Henze 2002 - Aalok Sharma Emry McKay
1986 - Rob Allen Chrissy Jennings 2003 - Jackson Wilson Gwen Kyser
1987 - Kenneth Pugh Chrissy Jennings 2004 - Mark Temple Gwen Kyser
1988 - Pat Sefton Kristen Roberts 2005 - Mark Temple Gwen Kyser
1989 - Mark Jones Ashley Patrick 2006 - Mark Fisher Gwen Kyser
1990 - Chris Alley Margaret Robinson 2007 - Keith Buell Alissa Fisher
1991 - David Cain Margaret Robinson 2008 - Mark Fisher Alissa Fisher
1992 - Cameron Brown Margaret Robinson 2009 - Keith Buell Brooke Sherman
1993 - Richard Harris Martha Hoelzer 2010 - Jacob Fuller Alaina Norman
1996 - Philip Wiles Louise Provancha 2013 - None None
1997 - Philip Wiles Catherine Williams 2014 - None Abby Zane
1999 - David Riddle Natalie Fahey

ANDREW DODSON

Varsity sports serve as an excellent forum for developing moral character and for learning life lessons. Andrew’s development and journey through our cross country and track program at Huntsville High has clearly demonstrated this.

Testimony about Andrew’s character comes from Coach Myles Scarano. “He pushes himself harder in a race than anyone else I know.” He never quits, overcoming injuries the last few years to still be one of the best in the state. He was runner-up at sectionals and finished 8th at the state cross country championships.

Coach Borden describes Andrew Dodson as “an all-around great guy who manages his priorities well. A hard worker in the classroom, not just out running. Andrew is
reliable, diligent, accountable, coachable, leads by example, brings 100% effort and focus.”

He developed steadily over his high school career, overcame personal injury, challenges, and persevered. Today, Andrew signed an athletic scholarship to run for the University of Tennessee, Martin. Andrew is a true gentleman, mature, likeable, polite, hardworking, and perseverant.

ABBY ZANE

Abbey is a member of a very special class of athletes this year. Every coach remembers their first. A little over three and a half years ago when I came aboard to coach at Huntsville High, Abbey was a freshman. Her unique build and athleticism quickly caught my eye, but even more amazing was her competitive spirit. Together, we share many fond memories, ones that will last for the rest of our lives.

As a freshman, Abbey earned a spot with three upperclassmen on our 4x800 meter relay team to compete at the State Outdoor Track and Field Championship Meet in Mobile. I selected Abbey to race the first leg of due to the aggressive way she runs (with full heart and will). I recall the conversation of two sport commentators from Birmingham covering that race. Soon after the start of the gun they were speaking of the competition between Hoover and Mt. brook getting to that race. Then, all of a sudden appeared Abbey, she passed a Hoover athlete. One commentator asked, “Well, who is that?” “I am not sure….I think it’s Huntsville.” Abbey helped our team surprise the traditional track power houses of Birmingham that day and captured a State Championship race that day. She clocked a sub 2:20 in the 800 helping Huntsville High to break a 25 year old school record in the 4x8.

Next year as a sophomore Abbey won an individual state championship in the indoor mile. As a front runner, she aggressively ran away with the race from the very beginning to the end and set a school record of 5:10.

And just last week, Abbey Zane was a critical team member in helping Huntsville bring home the Class 7A Cross Country State Championship. The first in 27 years. She broke her personal record in the 5K by 15 seconds with a time of 18:23 finishing third in the state, helping Huntsville to put an end of Mountain brook’s 13 year State Championship winning streak.

Most importantly, Abbey is a wonderful, compassionate, team leader. She has developed into a very strong, confident and well-rounded young lady, one that is forever special to me as being among my first. She is being heavily recruited but has not decided where she will attend college yet. Whichever program she chooses, she certainly has what it takes to be successful. I have been very blessed to be her coach.
30TH ANNUAL HUNTSVILLE TRACK CLUB GRAND PRIX OVERALL WINNERS

Scored by DeWayne Satterfield

Open – Jamie Hankins & Eric Charette
Masters – Carol Phelps & Shane O’Neill
Grand Masters – Elaine Sillivant & Tim Vinson