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NEWS

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Contact: Mike Casper
(814) 238-5918

Local Female “Supra” Duo Ready for Tussey Relay

STATE COLLEGE, PA—Vicki Fritton is no stranger to marathons or the Tussey Mountainback 50 Mile Relay and Ultramarathon, but this year the Mountainback race will be a new experience for her. “I just wanted to do something different - and fun,” confesses Fritton. This year she and teammate Shannon Palma will take on the fifty-miles of the Mountainback as a Supra, or two-person relay team, passing the baton back and forth 11 times and each logging marathon-level distance.

“I’ve done the race all but the first year (when I didn’t know about it) with a combination of teams from Raytheon,” says Fritton. “By far the most fun I’ve had was when we ran as a three person team in 2003. It was also the hardest.”

Fritton says another Raytheon runner had been talking about forming a two-person team as long as he could “find someone stupid enough to run the even legs.” The single-loop course is composed of 12 legs of varying lengths, and the 6 even legs are generally longer and more hilly than the 6 odd legs, so the runner doing the even legs logs some of the toughest hills and almost 28 miles, the other runner about 22. Fritton stepped forward to take the more challenging role last spring. “Stupid reporting for duty,” she said, and started training. Her colleague was excited, but ultimately didn’t get enough training in during the summer to feel comfortable committing to it. “So I asked Shannon, who is insane and will run anything - I mean that to be very complimentary - if she would run with me.”

“I told her my goal was simply ‘to finish on the same day that we start,’” says Fritton, “and I really wasn’t looking for a fast finish or time or anything like that. She loved it, and here we are.”

Fritton says she and Palma even have running-suitable Super (Supra) Hero costumes at the ready.

The Central Pennsylvania Convention and Visitors Bureau is a major sponsor of the Mountainback event, with key support from Tom Cali and Steven Bodner of Re/MAX Centre Realty. For information on participating or volunteering at the event, call 814-238-5918 or send e-mail to info@tusseymountainback.com. Complete details and online registration are available at www.tusseymountainback.com. For information about the event’s beneficiary, the Centre County Youth Aid Panel Program, send e-mail to cacj@chilitech.com or call 814-234-1059.