

Wearin o the Green

Lexington Hash House Harriers Announce First Annual Green Dress Run

By Kim Thomas

"Never stay up on the barren heights of cleverness, but come down into the green valleys of silliness."

— Ludwig Wittgenstein

The Horse's Ass Hash House Harriers, a Lexington group devoted entirely to fun and frivolity, is looking forward to Saturday March 14, when they will once again gather to walk, run, and drink to life's unexpected pleasant surprises.

They'll begin in the late afternoon (after the St. Pat's Parade) at the Green Lantern (at 3rd & Jefferson), and will head to parts unknown, marked with laughter and an occasional tip of the elbow. This band of merriment-instigating runners/walkers/drinkers characterize themselves as "a drinking club with a running problem." This Saturday, in honor of St. Patty's day, the group will don green dresses for their walk-run, silly, and it's possible there will be some drinking of beer, possibly green, involved.

HAHHH?

What the heck is a Hash Harrier anyway? Grand Master of the group aptly abbreviated as "HAHHH", Heather Auman explains, "The group is called the Horse's Ass Hash House Harriers and formed a little over two years ago from other displaced hashers from other kennels (group of harriers).

Terry (Rock Hardson) Franey, Betty (Rack N Lube) Nigoff and myself (Crotch Thumper) have been there from the early runs.

Gillian (Dr. Bollocks) is fairly new, and this is her first time leading or haring a trail.

Although Auman will be in Rome, Italy, and will miss this Saturday's run, she found a way to take part there, explaining, "I get to run with the Ides of March: Rome Hash House Harriers and run around Rome in togas and re-act killing Caesar with a professional director!"

According to Auman, the name of the Lexington organization came about, "After a few pitchers of beer and after a five-mile run through ditches, storm water pipes, railroad tracks and fields of poison ivy on Hash #5 (October 9, 2005). Someone suggested 'Bluegrass Hash House Harriers' and was quickly shot down by another member bellowing, 'I'm so sick of hearing Bluegrass this, Bluegrass that ... we're so different from a traditional group ... how about, Horse's Ass!?' All six of us thought this was hilarious and the name stuck."

Auman offers a quick lesson on what goes into the making of the runs, or hashes: "Trails are typically three to five miles and have one beverage or beer check and the trail is sniffed out by the 'hounds.' We never force people to drink or run. If a trail is laid correctly, the walkers and runners end up at the same place at the same time since the runners have to scope out a true trail and whistle or bellow, 'On-On!' to fellow hashers. The only thing we ask to be a member is that you be at least 21 years of age and have a sense of humor. Our start is in the late afternoon to early evening on 14 March and at Green Lantern (near your place [the Ace office]). Two years ago, we had an average 'pack' of five...now we're averaging 15-20."

True to their word, the members set all seriousness aside and let their trails take them to interesting and diverse places.

Betty Nigoff believes there is value in belonging to a group devoted to free spirited fun. She laughs as she relates one of her favorite memories, "We ran through all the downtown fountains during one hash, and some hashers jumped into the water at the park at Main and Midland, and pulled

"I have been running in Lexington for 27 years, and would never have run through most of the places I have while hashing."

—Betty Nigoff



others in with them. During another hash, we ran through the History Museum, Mary Todd Lincoln House, and the bowels of Rupp Arena ... I have been running in Lexington for 27 years, and would never have run through most of the places I have while hashing."

Auman has her own recollection of fun in hashes past. "During a Full Moon hash, we got to go into the Children's Explorium and visit the moon exhibit. Guess what we had to do while on the moon exhibit to the camera? Another time, one of our hashers, Dances with Mules, helped with the Rolex course and had permission to set a hasher course after the horses had finished with it. It sure gives you a different perspective of the size of the obstacles and going through water jumps too got our shoes nice and wet."

One of Auman's favorite occasions was entitled, "World Peace Through Beer" (celebrated by many hashes throughout the world). There were five stops, sampling five different beers from five countries — they were not your typical beers, either!"

Nigoff serves as the Hash-Cash and helps with the Haberdashery. She defines a hasher as "someone who likes to be outside, running or walking, likes to drink beer (or not), someone who likes to have a good time, someone who likes to get away from their everyday life, if only for a few hours every other week, and be silly."

Why green dresses? Auman says that "most established hashes have dress runs. Most are Red Dress runs, which was started in the San Diego Hash. Once in awhile there are other colors, like DC hash has a blue dress run (which hash to have a stain) and many hashes, including St. Louis and Cincinnati have Green Dress runs on or near St. Patrick's Day." She jokes, "Perhaps this Saturday, the group will stop and put on a green dress fashion show for Ace Weekly! We were discussing that when the group runs by Ace, we could do an impromptu Fashion Show since we'll be donning gorgeous our Green Dresses. I gave mine to Lowell, aka Goonie, Rack's husband, and definitely want to see photos and see how he accessorizes this 99 cent eBay win of a velvet green dress."

The nicknames, like the group, reflect the degree of their signature silliness. Auman's nickname was given to her years ago. She was named "Crotch Thumper— named after my one cylinder motorcycle which is called a thumper. I got named in 2003 at Portland (Oregon) Hash House Harriers," she remembers fondly.

More Than Fair Weathered Friends

The Harriers run in any weather. Auman advises, "Nothing stops us from a fun, challenging run and the delight of drinking a favorite beverage afterward. A recent hasher, Corrigan, in Nashville said when he was in Guam, they had hashes during typhoons...naming the event, 'Moon the Phoon.'"

Nigoff tells of the time the Harriers held a Big Liebowksi Hash starting from Joyland Bowling Alley — "and ending there while we bowled some games, and there was probably a foot of snow. The trail was marked with pink Kool-Aid. Also, one of the worst hashes was done in the rain, we thought there would be no one there, but we had about 20 people —no one wanted to be called a wuss!"

Founded in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 1938, Hashing is a mixture of athleticism, sociability, hedonism and hard



work; most of all it's a refreshing break from the grind and a chance to drink beer with great friends. There are about 2,000 hashes worldwide.

Kentucky will now have three hashes, and the Lexington group is branching out, forming a new one in Louisville at the end of the month (Lexington, Licking Valley, and Louisville). ■

The Horse's Ass Hash House Harriers' Hash #116: Green Dress Run, Saturday, March 14, 3:30p.m. (after the parade); The hash starts at 4pm at the Green Lantern, corner of Jefferson and West Third .

Wear walking or running attire, and wear a green dress for St. Patrick's Day (prizes for best dressed).

Website, www.geocities.com/lexingtonhah3

History

The trail is "scouted" by the hare(s), and then marked with chalk and/or flour before the hash starts. There are various internet sites that some people have used to scout trail, bikes are used occasionally to scout and mark trail, and just watching out for good "trails" while driving becomes second nature to a hasher. It takes a lot of time and energy to scout the trail, lay the trail, and finally to run trail during the hash and making sure no one gets lost!

Goals of the Hash

From the 1938 Kuala Lumpur Hash House Harriers Charter:

- * To promote physical fitness among our members;
- * To get rid of weekend hangovers; and
- * To persuade older members that they are not as old as they feel.

'The Hash House' was the mildly derogatory nickname given (for its unimaginative, monotonous food) to the Selangor Club Chambers, by the British Civil Servants and businessman who lived and dined there. ■