

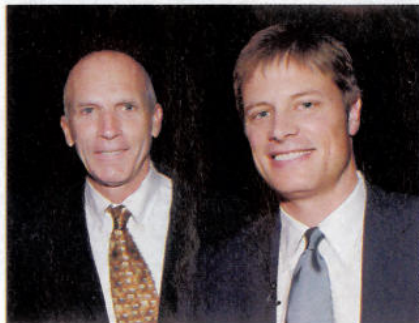
MOVING STORIES

I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER BEEN TO a race, big or small, where someone hasn't asked me about Bart Yasso. Known for decades as "the Mayor of Running" and now *RUNNER'S WORLD's* Chief Running Officer, Bart is the kind of guy you're proud to call your friend even if it doesn't make you feel at all unique. That's because Bart knows everyone, and everyone knows Bart. At expos, at pasta dinners, and in porta-potty lines, they flock to him like long-lost relatives—and he usually remembers not only their names but also their hometowns and marathon PRs.

Bart has done more for runners and had more fun running than anyone I know. I could fill this page with stories, but instead I'll suggest you read "The World According to Bart" (page 82), which was adapted from his new memoir, *My Life on the Run*. Bart has finished more than 1,000 races (he's not even sure how many marathons, but he thinks it's around 160) and run on all seven continents. But what elevates his story is that it's not only about finishing times and training regimens—it's about kicking a devotion to Boone's Farm and Pabst Blue Ribbon, finally earning a demanding father's praise, and seeing the world in a totally new way. Bart personifies running's power to change lives.

Here's another example of that power: Last month we published a feature story about the postelection violence in Kenya's Rift Valley, revered for being the cradle of distance running but suddenly infamous for ruthless ethnic cleansing. For more than a month, members of rival tribes (mostly Kikuyu and Kalenjin) butchered one another, and burned homes and businesses, leaving more than 1,000 Kenyans dead, 300,000 displaced, and the world's most famous running community in shambles.

THE POWER OF RUN Yasso (above, left) and Willey at the RW Heroes of Running Awards in November. Below, Kenyan children running the Shoe4Africa Run for Peace near the town of Iten.



Now, buoyed by a fragile peace accord, the healing has begun, and running is once again a symbol of hope. On March 15, more than 500 schoolchildren—some of whom had been in hiding or mourning just weeks earlier—joined 42 of the country's top runners (including world champions Lornah Kiplagat, Douglas Wakiihuri, and Luke Kibet) at the Run for Peace in the town of Iten. At the start, Kikuyus and Kalenjins carried the Kenyan flag together, and others held twigs from a Cyprus tree, a symbol of peace in Africa. Then the

Determined

In our April issue, I wrote about **Amy Jensen**, a high school runner whose left leg was amputated above the knee after she'd been diagnosed with bone cancer. Amy (above) still hoped to compete in her senior cross-country season but needed a costly running prosthesis, which insurance wouldn't cover. The Jensens immediately heard from two prosthetic manufacturers offering to donate a running leg to Amy. They also heard from scores of RW readers, who sent \$4,000 in donations. Now, however, Amy is shifting her focus to next spring's track season. In March, doctors found a malignant tumor on her lung, and chemotherapy will delay her prosthetic fitting until the fall. Terri Jensen says she's amazed at her daughter's positive attitude, and she encourages readers to follow Amy's progress at carepages.com (search under amyjensenestherville).



kids were off, running the 4-K course in yellow shirts that turned the countryside into a bright, bobbing parade. The race was organized by Shoe4Africa, a charity that collects donated running shoes and distributes them throughout the continent. At the finish line, each child was given a pair by the running legends. "Only a few weeks before, this idea would have been absurd," says Toby Tanser, the founder of Shoe4Africa. "This was really the first event where people came out and celebrated with tears in their eyes." Tanser has other races planned, and if you'd like to support the cause, go to shoe4africa.org. Recently, RW staffers sent the organization 1,000 new and used running shoes. I love the idea that some of them ended up on those kids' feet in Iten.

DAVID WILLEY
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF