

**IN MEMORY OF HEATHER FRAZER BOYUM
WRITTEN BY CHRISTOPHER HENDERSON FOR THE MUSSELMAN TRIATHLON, 2012**

Triathletes participating in the half-iron race on Musselman weekend cover 56 miles of road on the bike and a half-marathon on the run, so you can imagine that the training for these events takes them across miles and miles of roadways each year.

Every triathlete, cyclist, or marathon runner has someone who loves them waiting at home, hoping that no harm will come to their loved one as they train.

On Sunday, July 15, 2012, Heather Frazer Boyum raced her first Musselman Triathlon, after several years of doing the mini-Mussel sprint race. Exactly two weeks later she was gone, taken from us after being struck by a car during a training ride.

Heather was the personification of the word "triathlete." She started out training for fitness reasons, but became enamored by the competitiveness of the sport and found herself hooked on it. She would become a part of the Musselman community, regularly helping less experienced triathletes by giving advice on the race's Facebook page and sending in photos from Mussel weekend for posting across the Musselman social media.

When organizers put out a request for triathletes to send us information for the annual Media Guide in 2011, Heather was one of the first to respond:

"I had my second child in 2008 and at that point really missed competition and athletics," she wrote. "I made a goal to run a marathon before I turned 40. Within a year and a half I had run a half marathon and then a full marathon: Rochester in 2009."

Heather would eventually make the transition to triathlon.

"I was addicted to the competition and wanted to do more," she wrote. "At this point my older brother, Graham Frazer, started to get himself back into shape, and he encouraged me to start doing triathlons. I started to swim and bike a bit more, and liked the idea of it. I competed in the mini-Mussel as my first triathlon. I love the workouts, the competition, and the camaraderie of the sport(s)! What a great feeling it is every time I cross the finish line of one of these great events!"

Heather acknowledged that the Musselman held a special place in her heart. She had attended college at William Smith in Geneva from 1989-1993, and she was a member of the diving team. She served as president of the William Smith Athletic Association her senior year. After graduation Heather coached

diving at Nazareth and Frostburg State (in Maryland), and she eventually returned to coach at William Smith until 2005 when she had her first child.

“I especially love this event because it takes me back to my college days, and I feel connected to the area,” she’d written. “I love to make goals, and one of my new ones is to compete in a half-Iron distance before I am 45. Maybe it will be Musselman!!!!”

It was. Heather stepped up her training and, in 2012, became a full-fledged Musselman triathlete, finishing the race in 5:55:31.

Heather Frazer Boyum was a credit to the sport of triathlon, and to the Musselman Triathlon in particular, and she will be missed by the entire Musselman family.

When the organizing committee learned of Heather’s death, they felt it important to find a way to honor her memory. It was decided that, beginning in 2013, the Musselman Triathlon would award a complimentary entry every year in honor of Heather — and that it would be given to an athlete transitioning from the mini-Mussel to the Musselman, just a Heather had done. Nominations were requested and many were received.

The first recipient of this entry is Julie VanDeVoorde, a frequent mini-Mussel competitor whose goal is to complete the half-iron this summer. Julie was nominated by both her husband, David, and her friend, Tracy.

Here, in their words, are excerpts from their nominations:

“In October 2011 our 5- year-old son, Nathan, came down with a terrible case of meningitis which almost killed him,” Julie’s husband wrote. “He spent 11 days in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, with about five of those days in a medically induced coma. The doctors told us after the fact that they did not expect him to live. Not only did he live, he came out of there with no side effects, even though we were told there could have been mild to severe brain damage. We were also told that this was a freak thing and we would never have to deal with something like this again; since then he has contracted meningitis two more times (in April and May of 2012), much less severe, and we spent a total of another 11 days in the hospital. We just found out the other day that he is most likely going to need two brain surgeries to try and fix the issue he has. Our son’s recovery was so incredible that he was named one of the five ‘miracle kids’ for Golisano Children’s Hospital.

“Needless to say, this has been a very trying time for our family. My wife’s motivation for working out and racing hit an all-time low this year, and she is really looking to rebound next year. When I saw this I thought: how perfect for her. She needs to do something like this to get her mind off the situation and relieve all the stress that comes with it.”

“Julie is an amazing mother of three precious children — and wife, friend, and athlete,” Tracy wrote. “This past year her son has survived bacterial meningitis three times and now faces a brain surgery to correct the problem. We have faith he will do well, but much of his strength is due to his very smart, courageous, and loving mother. She remains positive and strong while facing this tough situation.

“Her positive attitude is always seen while she is out on the triathlon course. She is competitive, but also very much a good sport. She never brags about herself or how good her times are.

"These same characteristics can be seen when people ask about her son. She is fiercely dedicated to her child and his care; however, she always has time to ask about the needs of others. She is so humble and a true sportswoman!

"Julie is my inspiration and has encouraged me into participating in triathlons. When I first met her, I was 30 lbs. overweight, and felt old and out of shape. She inspired me to try a triathlon and she always told me I could do it. She believed in me and encouraged me every stroke, pedal, and run along the way. When I finished my first race, she was there with me with lots of hugs and tears. I have now participated in 6 triathlons, one being the 2012 Musselman. I feel I am healthier and in better shape than I have ever been. Julie and I have never done a half-iron, so we would like to do the Musselman together in 2013.

"Thank you for considering Julie to receive this award. Anyone who has Julie in their life is a very fortunate person. I know she would be so proud and humbled to represent this race for Heather."

The Musselman Triathlon will continue to honor triathletes in this manner, with the Heather Frazer Boyum Memorial Entry given annually. And Musselman will continue to honor athletes who set goals, as Heather did, to advance from the sprint race to the half.

Each of us wish we could set the clock back to July 2012 and send Heather on a different route that day, just as much as we wish we could keep all of our athletes safe from harm on future training rides to come. Though we can do neither of those things, we can keep the name of one of the most enthusiastic members of the Musselman family in the hearts of all who participate in our race in the years to come.

That begins this year. Congratulations, Julie Van DeVoorde. Thank you, Heather Frazer Boyum.

In memory of Heather Frazer Boyum

By CHRIS HENDERSON
Musseلمان PR/media

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Submitted photo

Heather Boyum (right) poses with her sister-in-law Melinda Frazer, after they completed the Musseلمان Half-Iron Triathlon in 2012.

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Congratulations, Julie VanDeVoorde. Thank you, Heather Frazer Boyum.

Musseلمان memories

Musseلمان through the years is merely a collection of stories. Each organizing committee meeting becomes longer as the chest of tales grows deeper; each discussion triggers memories of Musseلمان past. Printed here is a collection of remembrances from committee members, many of whom have served for all 10 years.

I don't remember what year it was, but one year it rained pretty much all day of the half-iron. It didn't just rain — it down-poured! Everyone was absolutely soaked from head to toe, not a dry spot anywhere. At that time, the return course on the run came up alongside the bridge over the arterial from Pulney Street to South Main Street and then athletes crossed South Main and ran north. I remember watching a female athlete come up the bridge. When she got to the top, there was a huge puddle on South Main. Rather than just running through it (which wouldn't have mattered because she was soaked), she took the effort to hurdle it. I thought it funny that first, she had the energy at that point to jump over it, and second, that she would bother since what did it matter if she ran through it. It just reminded me that girls will always be girls...

— Donna Loeb, run coordinator

Bernie Carroll (local accountant/cyclist) has volunteered on the bike course as roving flat fixer for almost every year. One year a Geneva Bicycle Center customer, Tom, was doing the half-iron and got two flats. Bernie was johnny-on-the-spot for the first one, and Tom was so appreciative. When he got the second one, the first thing he did was yell, "Where's Bernie?" A second later Bernie pulled up from behind and fixed the second flat. Tom came into the store after the race and couldn't wait to tell me the story, but most of all meet Bernie.

— Jim Hogan, bike coordinator

One of my favorite memories is one year when I was coming down Route 95A by Rose Hill Mansion, on a bright sunny morning, right after the start of the race and seeing all the different colored swim caps going through the water. I wish I had a camera with me because it would have been a great picture.

— David VanAllan, aid station coordinator

One year an entire row of bike racks (filled with bikes) came crashing down at 9 p.m. the night before the race. We put a call out to the committee, and within two hours everyone had come back to the park and the racks were back up. Jim Hogan, owner of the Geneva Bicycle Center and our Bike Coordinator, spent another three hours inspecting each bike to make sure none were broken. By morning some participant's bikes were in better working order than before — and they never knew what happened during the night.

— Tom Reho, site manager

Each specific year becomes a blur over time, but what never fails to amaze me is the hundreds of volunteers who show up with smiles on their faces to help out in numerous ways. I consider myself fortunate to be able to work with each and every one of them.

— Amy Hibbard, volunteer coordinator

The first year of the triathlon, while I was driving along the run course resupplying aid stations, part of the route was on Jay Street. At the end of his drive-way, a young boy was playing his violin to the delight of the athletes as they ran by. We later learned that he was Trevor Burrell, and he continued to play every year until he graduated from high school. He was sometimes joined by his sister, Hannah, and even some of his neighbors. Several athletes who have written back after the race have expressed appreciation for their thoughtfulness and talent.

— Richard Henderson, aid station coordinator

ICE! truckloads of it, wagons of it, ice for the finish line, ice in the baby pools for finishers, ice at the medical tent, and lastly, coolers (buckets) for drinks. Ice and PIZZA make the Musseلمان go 'round!

— Carol Frenay, food coordinator

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