"Recognition in honor of that individual who has over the years exemplified a selfless dedication and commitment to the Baltimore Road Runners Club in support of the spirit and sport of running."

2011 Lifetime Distinguished Service Award

Dave Cooley

Dave is a fixture in the Baltimore running community. As a runner, leader, volunteer and professional, he has been a loyal member of the Baltimore Road Runners Club where he has devoted his time and talents for over thirty two years.

Dave started running in January 1978 while recovering from major knee surgery. He joined the BRRC that year and ran his first race, the Constellation Classic, in the spring. His running career lasted for 22 years before his knees signaled him to a halt. During that time he ran five marathons including three "mean Maryland Marathons" with a 3:40:09 PR, the Marine Corp and Shamrock Marathons.

In the early 1980's, along with then Club President, Mike Pierre, Dave co-directed the Zoo Zoom for several years. When the original Maryland Marathon closed down, the BRRC continued the tradition by establishing a new race, the NCR Trail Marathon, in northern Baltimore County. Dave was a catalyst in launching this new race and has served as volunteer race director (or co-director) for nearly two decades now.

Dave's interest in running led him to establish his own successful race management business, Finished Product, after helping out with the first Bud Lite Triathlon in Baltimore. As a second career after retirement and over twenty plus years in the business, Dave directed hundreds of races for non-profit entities. Among the events that still exist today are the GBMC Father's Day race (23 years and counting) and the Komen Race for the Cure.

Working with local survivors, Dave started the Race for the Cure in Baltimore. 2500 women ran in this inaugural race in 1993 which continued to grow over the years, realizing as many as 25,000 participants under Dave's watch. Dave directed the Race for the Cure for eight years after which he became the race director for the Baltimore Marathon for its first eight years, an event with an equally storied history of growth and success.

As a visionary, Dave was instrumental in bringing Avon to Baltimore in 1998 as a sponsor for the evolving "Lady Equitable" race. Working with the BRRC, Dave directed Avon Running for Women and oversaw its accompanying training program for four years. This event grew to over 1200 participants before Avon discontinued its sponsorship.

Dave retired from "full time" race management in 2005 yet manages to stay very connected in the running community and remains an active volunteer with the BRRC. Dave can be seen at race events, working registrations, packet pick ups, and finish line timing. He is a tireless worker for our NCR Trail Marathon working in multiple capacities. Dave has served as a delegate on the BRRC Executive Board, as treasurer for three years from 1981-1984, as president for two years: 2008, 2009.

Dave has represented the BRRC well in so many ways and continues to do so long after he hung up his running shoes and should be enjoying "the good life". Dave's contributions to the club have been unconditional marks of distinction and deserving of the Lifetime Distinguished Service Award.

Congratulations, Dave!