



Small Steps Add Up

# planet action

February 11, 2009

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### Who We Are

The Run for One Planet is an ongoing run endeavour focused on "Inspiring Environmental Action, One Step at a time."

### Our Goals

To run one marathon each day, inspire one million new Actions for Earth and raise \$1 million for our Legacy of Action



Two Canadians, Matt Hill and Stephanie Tait, on an 11,000 mile run to inspire environmental action.

[www.runforoneplanet.com](http://www.runforoneplanet.com)

## Born on the Bayou

**That familiar song from CCR keeps running through my head as I write from Lafayette, after we crossed one of the largest bayous yesterday, leaving Baton Rouge.**

The Deep South is full of this swampy land and yesterday we were foiled in our attempt to run across it because the only way through is along Interstate 10 – read: vehicles blasting by at 70 miles per hour. Not too safe for two runners ripping up the pavement at 6 miles per hour!

So our day was cut short at a half marathon each, which, in the heat and humidity, we all welcomed. Our route around The Lakes, as they're known, was suggested by members of the local running group at our 2nd event with Libby, Kristina and company at Whole Foods in Baton Rouge. They were spot-on that we'd find beautiful scenery and many people doing what we were: running along two lakes right in the heart of this really cool southern city.



We spoke to many people who'd seen both of our TV interviews (which covered our fun event with Whole Foods), giving us the opportunity to just hang at the RV awhile, telling tales from our almost 6,900 mile journey thus far.



Precocious environmental fan wishes Steph and Matt a Happy New Year at New Orleans Whole Foods!



Whole Foods Baton Rouge host, Christina's extended family.

# Texas, too, is BIG on hospitality!

**We ran into the great state of Texas on Steph's birthday under sunny skies and BIG temperatures.**

82 degrees welcomed us, as did Michelle and her husband Michael, owners of a turn of the century Bed and Breakfast called Madison House, just across the state line in Orange.

The day before, Michelle had received a panicked call from me while Steph was 'freshening up' between runs (another four-day marathon without showers folks). I had already cooked bad eggs for breakfast, and Steph's only wish for her birthday was a chocolate ice cream cake. So, Michelle the angel said, "No problem, and would ya'll mind if we had a dinner in ya'll's honor?" Would we mind? Are you kidding me?!! I hugged her through the terrible cell connection.

So, Michelle and Michael offered us an incredible night to clean up and sleep comfortably, but they also cooked up a feast of fish and invited an assortment of friends and neighbours over to her Mom's house. What a way to enter Texas. Michelle's Mom and her aunt have transformed their house (another former B'nB) into the place to gather, complete with outdoor Mexican fire pit, long table with more than 3 people (unlike the RV) worth of room and a meal with chocolate ice cream cake that Steph, Simon and I will never forget.

Thank you Michelle and Michael, for making our 1st day in Texas so memorable. We instantly knew why we'd run so far, for so long, to get here and experience what everyone's been talking about for so long now. Texas is not



*Matt freaks out over Run For One Planet brand roast, courtesy of Billy Claxton.*



*Michelle, of Madison House in Orange County, TX wishes Steph a Happy Birthday!*

only big (we'll be 24 running days through) but big on hospitality too! It's heartwarming to keep sharing in the lives of people who are inspired by our endeavor, and it completes a circle to be welcomed into theirs.

Meanwhile, for my birthday, Steph surprised me with a night out eating incredible Italian food with Evan and Louisa, friends we made way back in Charleston, and my old friend Rick, from my Ironman days in Penticton. Louisa and Steph had traded emails for weeks, teeing up what turned out to be a memorable night at Louisa's grandfather's restaurant. At Carmelo's, a southwest-themed eatery in the oldest building here in Austin, I got my favorite desert: ice cream cake, as well as Happy Birthday by accordion! What's more, earlier in the day, Steph gave me the most unique gift I've ever received. Everyone knows how much I love coffee. Well, she conspired with our friend, Billy Claxton (the guy who invited us to get off his property in South Carolina), from Island Coffee, to brand and package our very own Run For One Planet organic roast. Now that's a birthday!

[www.runforoneplanet.com](http://www.runforoneplanet.com)

## Take the Action Challenge

Just pick ONE

- 1 Eat Local and Organic. 2 Turn Off Your Car.
- 3 Eliminate Plastic Bags – Bring Your Own Bag.
- 4 Use Green Cleaners. 5 Turn Off the Lights. 6 Turn Off the Taps.
- 7 Reduce. Reuse. Recycle. 8 Compost.
- 9 Bring Your Own Bottle. 10 Teach Your Children Well.

Our vision is to inspire 1 million North Americans to commit to one new action for Earth.

Environmental Actions Taken to Date: 10,275



## More “Green Kids” in Houston!

**Alright folks, we calculated (ok Steph calculated) and realized with sixteen weeks left we have a mere 112 days – and likely four more pairs of runners – to inspire and use what’s now known as ‘The Trickle UP Effect.’ That is, us teaching kids to live greenly, and them teaching their parents to enact green education.**

In Houston we were supported for four nights at a very special place called “Modern B ‘n B.” Here, local hero Lisa Thompson shares her amazing and unique house with many recurring guests, as well as people like us looking for a shower after nine days of marathon running. Lisa set us up for our whole time in Houston and made us feel (here it comes again) like old friends. Please check out her B ‘n B, and if you’re ever in Houston, stop by.



You’ll never want to leave.  
www.modernbb.com

We popped into five schools in Houston: The Regis School of the Sacred Heart, KIPP Polaris Academy for Boys, Shlenker Jewish School, Yorkshire Academy and KIPP Liberation College. Every single one welcomed us with enthusiasm, enquiries about how our feet and bodies were holding up, and an eagerness to join their favorite “Ed” on-stage to help “Sparkly Stephanie” take the Action Challenge! In fact, we were so welcomed that Steph went to dinner with a family and captured some video footage speaking volumes about why we’re out here. (You’ll have to wait for the DVD to see it ...)

On a personal note, I even got to fulfill a boyhood dream by spending an afternoon being ‘Matt the Space Geek’



at the Johnson Space Center, courtesy of Steph (for my 14th birthday - ok, my 41st birthday, I get the numbers mixed up). While there, I learned that NASA is also paving the way towards better stewardship of the Earth.

Let’s get Environmental Action rockin’ and use the power you possess to teach those around you by your example of green living!

## Kids having fun learning Green and 15 weeks to go!

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**Our time in San Antonio was a two-day opportunity to present to about 2,000 more kids about the simple daily actions they can take to grow up green! We even did our very first church presentation in Shurtz, TX with 500 kids who were so eager to participate that we missed our weekly call in to QM-FM radio in Vancouver (our school show went 90 minutes instead of the usual 45)!**



*Steph gets fives from two Perpetual Help fans in San Antonio, TX.*

**As I write these words I am feeling a sense of urgency at the importance of our mission out here on the Run For One Planet Highway. If I could, I’d just keep running everywhere, everyday, in order to keep our message alive and current. It’s not from an arrogant place I say that our work is vital, it’s from the knowledge in our almost nine months out here running and speaking just how many people are just starting to talk about ‘going green’ by linking the current events realities of the Planet to some of their personal daily habits and buying choices.**

**Our tour alone won’t solve major climate crisis issues, however we passionately believe that our ability to connect with people by literally connecting with the pavement has allowed us entry into the grassroots movement teaching this upcoming generation about total conservation, and total shifting of how we live day to day. We’re always learning that small steps truly do add up, and as long as we keep that as our mantra, we continue fuelling our running, our tour, and our mission.**

## The Lewis Family Blog

**A few weeks ago (1/13/09), Brandon came home from school very excited about a presentation he had seen there.**

From his explanation, it was clearly an environmental group. He told me: "Our planet is like a leaky life-boat ... and when this planet is gone, it's not as if we can say 'Oh well, that was nice ... and go and find another planet'." He was clearly quoting the speakers or video he had seen, and with tears in his eyes he implored, "Mom – this is about our FUTURE. I'm really concerned."

"OK, show me their website." (<http://www.runforoneplanet.com/>) I really didn't have to read it because he'd already quoted most of what was on there, including their entire video. So I called David to say that plans had changed: we were off to Whole Foods instead of Tae Kwon Do. Brandon insisted on taking money he had set aside for Tzedakah (charity) – of course then Mirka did, too. He was so passionate; this was clearly more important than TKD.

When we met Steph and Matt, they immediately remembered Brandon as "the really interested kid from the front row" at school. Their message is simple: **each person can do ONE thing to reduce their carbon footprint.** And they're running through Canada and the US to spread the word. The money they raise will then go to seed child-initiated environmental programs.

We all got so wrapped up in Brandon and Mirka that they forgot to get video footage ... so Steph came to our house the next day to video me and Brandon. We talked about how the environment is something Brandon is really passion-



Mirka and Brandon Lewis

ate about, but Brandon was holding back a bit. Finally he whispered to me, "Mom, I'm afraid I might lose my composure." I convinced him that it was okay – showing emotion was how he could show people his passion. Then we talked about how he could

work to put his dream into action (just like Martin Luther King, Jr., who they had been learning about in school). I'm so proud of him. He's a crazy storehouse of knowledge – he remembers everything he reads, and shares his knowledge freely – but this passion and emotion on the environment was beyond that. The whole experience reminded me to talk to the kids more about why we do what we do, like buying local produce (<http://home-sweetfarm.com/>) and bugging them to turn off lights. And the kids reminded me to ignore what's on the calendar every once in a while and go with what inspires us. I am still awed by their willingness to give tzedakah to a cause they believe in.

<http://blog.runforoneplanet.com>

## 5 ways to keep up to date

Aside from this newsletter, there FIVE other ways to keep up-to-date with Matt and Steph during their year-long run:

Visit our Official Run for One Planet Blog  
[www.runforoneplanet.com](http://www.runforoneplanet.com)

Visit our Province Blog  
<http://communities.canada.com/theprovince/blogs/oneplanet/default.aspx>

Visit our Vancity Blog  
[www.changeeverything.ca/blog/run-one-planet](http://www.changeeverything.ca/blog/run-one-planet)

Join the Official Run for One Planet Support Group on Facebook  
[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

Find us on [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) <<http://www.twitter.com/>>  
as "R41Planet" to follow what we're up to  
[www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)

Visit our website to purchase the official Run for One Planet bamboo tshirt. 100% of proceeds will go towards the Legacy of Action.



## Fast facts

Days Into the Run  
253

Miles Run  
7,065

Where are WE Now? Visit:  
[www.WatchMyRace.com](http://www.WatchMyRace.com)

Facebook Members  
880

Regular Media Spot  
Vancouver, BC's 103.5 QMFM  
Radio with Terry and Tara  
in the morning at 8:15 am PST  
every Friday

## Racy Verna is racing again

Just inside the New Mexico border is a little family owned operation called Lowe's RV. And all you need to find it is an evening tow from an out-of-state hydraulics whiz named Henry, another Ford service bay experience, and a breath-holding drive across the border into The Land of Enchantment. Once you arrive you'll likely get on alright with the good people there, eventually even come to know Grandpa's history and, if you stay long enough, make the front page of the local paper.

That was the case for us, facing another frustrating and mandatory halt to travel that has been plaguing us since, well, the start of the journey. Indeed it's taken this long to learn the details of Racy Verna's electrical system. Another afternoon of near-desert sun that made no effect on our solar power – in fact drained our entire battery source to empty, hence the roadside stranding



Lief Johnson Ford staff at Buda, TX.

and a towing trip – led us to Thurman and Richard et.al.

Hobbs, New Mexico, more specifically the Lowe's lot, became our home for a few days while we learned about convertors, invertors, solenoids, and entire vehicle wiring systems, really. With a service crew like this one, there was no doubt that we would leave when repaired, and only once repaired. Thorough and relentless, Thurman and Richard spent hours of physical labour, and likely countless mind-hours into figuring out our auto-ailment. A double-grounded current, four sulphurized (that is, crystallized) solar batteries, and mucho phonecalls later, we finally had an answer that resonated.

Soon enough we'll be properly equipped and heading west to soak up the sunny skies of Arizona.

## Legacy of Action REVEALED

Upon completion of the tour, Run For One Planet will use the funds donated to the Legacy of Action to lead the emerging field of environmental and lifestyle education for kids – grades 2–7. The Legacy of Action will consist of two main parts:

### 1. Funding

Direct funding will be provided to empower kids to take environmental action within their own

communities through green initiative classroom projects that educate, rehabilitate and spread environmental awareness and lifestyle change.

### 2. Education

Direct training and environmental education for kids will be offered in a medium they understand – the Internet. Kids that sign up for training will be armed with knowledge about the environment and the simple things we can do

to in order to be greener citizens. In turn, they act as "Action Ambassadors" by educating their peers using the training that Run for One Planet provides, motivating other kids to spread the message to parents and siblings. So essentially, kids train kids who then teach their families about lifestyle changes that reduce our ecological footprint – a trickle up affect.



Lowe's RV staff at Hobbs, NM.

## Upcoming Route Schedule

Do you know of anyone, individual or group, along our route who would want to meet us (i.e., events, accommodations, media, etc.)? To host an event with us, email Michelin at [Events@RunForOnePlanet.com](mailto:Events@RunForOnePlanet.com).

### ARIZONA

Willcox	Feb. 15
Tucson	Feb. 18 – 19
Phoenix	Feb. 22 – 24
Tempe	Feb. 22 – 24 (Included with Phoenix dates)
Yuma	Feb. 28 (Weekend)

### CALIFORNIA

San Diego	Mar. 4 – 7
La Jolla	Mar. 4 – 7 (Included in San Diego dates)
Ocean Side	Mar. 4 – 7 (Included in San Diego dates)
Dana Point	Mar. 9 – 11 (Included in Laguna Beach dates)
Laguna Beach	Mar. 9 – 11
Santa Catalina Island	Mar. 9 – 11 (Included in Laguna Beach dates)
Newport Beach	Mar. 9 – 11 (Included in Laguna Beach dates)
Long Beach	Mar. 12 – 14 (Included in LA dates)
Los Angeles	Mar. 12 – 14
Santa Monica	Mar. 12 – 14 (Included in LA dates)
Malibu	Mar. 12 – 14 (Included in LA dates)

## See the Route They've Travelled!

Matt and Steph have conquered Canada and are now more than halfway done with inspiring others to take ACTIONS for the earth throughout the USA. Here's where they've run so far.



## Our new look courtesy of Far Gone Greetings

**Far Gone Greetings' niche-driven humor caters to people addicted to a hobby or special interest such as running, triathlons, cycling and yoga.**

**Far Gone Greetings' humorous greeting cards provide a moment of sports levity during a period when news cycles are filled with grim economic reporting. The company's niche-driven humor caters to people addicted to a hobby or special interest such as running, triathlons, cycling and yoga. "It's not the same-old jokes about aging or gender," says Victoria Primicias, founder of Far Gone Greetings.**

**By tapping into people's passions and using terminology recognized by participants of these specialty groups, Far Gone Greetings' appeal is in the shared experience that's captured in the phrase, "It takes one to know one."**

**Far Gone Greetings offers its cards through running stores, as well as on its website, [www.fargonegreetings.com](http://www.fargonegreetings.com).**

– courtesy Chicago Athlete magazine, December 2008

