

## The 2013 WSCC Bunny Run

by Ken Frey

At the beginning of the year, we started to get our events set and there were no takers for our Spring Bunny Run. I was just fresh off of co-chairing the Turkey Tour with Jesse Lipscher and did not want to see the Bunny Run not happen so I foolishly volunteered to Chair the Bunny Run. I have participated in our rallies now and then over the years, but never put one on until the Turkey Tour with Jesse last fall. A few years back, I had gotten lost on a rally and DNF'd for the second or third time in a row and was rather disappointed. Jesse was very kind to offer to spend the following Saturday afternoon taking Phyllis Miller and me out running through the rally from start to finish and going over all the details involved with it like how people write instructions and the tricks the rally masters do to throw you off the course. We learned a lot that day from him and started to finish rallies again. A couple years ago, I started helping Jesse take down Turkeys because Barbara Gebala was getting more heavily involved with the Westchester Pet Rescue and she did not have the time to do all there is to do with a rally. She was thrilled that I saved her that day on the road of picking up the Turkeys. Last year, I volunteered to Co-Chair the Turkey Tour with Jesse and save Barbara all the time involved and hoped to learn more about the goings on of a rally. Jesse did all the heavy lifting of designing the course, writing the first level of directions, figuring out the average speed, the total time, scoring it, etc. Once again, Jesse mentored all the way through it. I did the easy work of pre-running the rally several times with him, putting up and taking down the Turkeys and coming up with some instructions. So I now knew just enough to be dangerous and foolishly volunteered to Chair the 2013 Bunny Run. I had to schedule it far in advance knowing I would not be able to devote one minute to it until after Mother's Day due to a heavy schedule of things on my plate. Jesse was running the Tough Mudder the morning after the rally so he did not think he could run the rally and offered to help me. Dave Trezza also offered to help me knowing I needed an experienced person to work with me and back me up. Jesse, then, realized he could run the rally if he finished somewhat early and asked to back out of helping me knowing Dave had offered. So a couple days after Mother's Day I sat in my office with a Hagstrom's map and software of streets that Jesse had given me and started to design a course. I called Jesse that evening saying, I don't know what I am doing, but I am having a lot of fun doing it. It took me all evening to design the course. The result seemed OK on paper and I was happy with it, but had no idea how long the course was until I applied Jesse's software and thought it needed another 6-8 miles to be where I thought we usually were in the low-mid 60s. So I revised the course in a number of locations adding about 8 miles.

A few years back I was rather vocal in saying that we had gotten away from the direction we should be taking with our rallies. The rally masters had gotten caught up in trying to throw tricks into the events and we ended up not having good finishing percentages. This frustrated people and our number of entrants at the rallies dropped. I asked that the instructions be made simpler so we could have a higher finish rate. Everybody jumped on board and the finish results started to climb back toward better numbers. With what little knowledge I had of rallies, I had two objectives. One was to take people on some new roads, but more importantly was to have a good finish rate. After my first run, there were a couple instructions I just could not verbalize as to what I wanted the rallyists to do. I knew I needed Dave to write a few directions I could not do on the next run. As we ran the rally, we revised more of the "cheater directions" into rally directions with the objective of not wanting to lose people. We welcomed Frank Cardone's expertise when he cold ran the rally and made a couple more changes. We even put a Bunny in an island to attract attention to that island so people would not go off course. I heard from a number of people that it helped a lot. All the time and work was worth it when we got a good finish rate on the rally.

Some of the email comments sent to me were: wonderful route, thanks for providing a challenging and fun rally, had a great time, were impressed with the work your whole team accomplished to put together such an event, Congrats.

Let me first give a huge thank you to my mentor Jesse. Whatever knowledge I brought into the rally, I owe to Jesse for taking the time to teach it to me. I have to thank Dave a ton for all the stuff I don't know that he did or is doing like setting the average speed, the total time, scoring the event, writing instructions that I could not figure out how to verbalize and revising some of the ones I had done and teaching me more about rallies. I thank Frank, our rally expert, who tweaked a few of our instructions on his Cold Run to make sure we did well and working the check point with us and teaching me more about rallies. I, also, thank Debbi and Gary Kanzler for doing registration for us, as well as Mike Carroll for doing the Novice "class" talk.

The results show excellent finishes for the club with Barbara and Jesse finishing in second place, Donna and Gary Proft in third place, the Kanzlers in fourth place and Mike Carroll and Claritza Sanabria (as driver!) in seventh place.