

# Legacy Runner Sharon Kerson



I am a legacy runner. My LA Marathon number is 10220.

Thanks to the LA Marathon, I have become so many things. The LA Marathon 25 years ago was the very first marathon that I ever ran. I said to a running friend of mine, "Do you think that I could run a marathon?" He said, "Why not?" I had never run more than 5 miles on the West LA College Track. Well, indeed I did run the first LA Marathon. I can just remember the finish on Exposition Blvd. I finished in five hours. I cried and cried and cried. I was not hurt, but I could not believe that I finished. This was the start of my running career and actually my life. I am a practicing runner although a slow one. The first LA Marathon started me on my life's journey - that was to run marathons all over the country and the world.

I have run a marathon in every state and DC four times. I am a member of the 50 States Running Club and Running Group and a member of the 100 marathon group. However, my life has been so enriched by the people that I have met on my journey in the last twenty-five years. I have friends throughout the United States and throughout the world. There is a special camaraderie that exists among runners. I have friends who will meet me at 1 AM drive to a race with me, and we start together. I have friends who take me to races in remote places. The high that I feel when running is like no other.

I have also run a marathon in five continents. Whether I finish the last two - Africa and Antarctica - remains to be seen. However, the most wonderful accomplishment over the years has been my association with Students Run LA. For 17 years, from the beginning of the program, I was a leader at the Los Angeles Center for Enriched Studies. As a teacher, I trained students, ran with them, got up early with them, rode the bus to a race. We ran in cold, rain, good times and bad, but we finished. This organization deserves all of

the accolades in the world. When you have teachers who are committed to getting up early and just doing it with the kids, that is amazing to me. When educators are not thought of too highly in the media these days, here you have leaders throughout Los Angeles and Orange County who train with their kids and inspire them, what more do you want.

I started with SRLA in 1989 and had three students who ran with me. One did not finish. However, one who is now 34 years of age, has run with me in China, and has run with me when I finished the states the third time around in Rochester, Minnesota, and in Delaware for the fourth time. What can I say?

I have run over 400 marathons. My problem is that I do not keep accurate records but I know that I have run over 400 marathons. I was never fast to start with and am even slower now, but what is important is that I show up and I am there and I finish. I must thank the LA Marathon for this. If LA never had a marathon, I would have never run one. The hype and the adrenalin rush at the start line when there are 25,000 people behind you or should I say near you is amazing.

I have run a marathon in all Canadian provinces and territories. An amazing place! I have run and I have run in China, Russia, Brazil, Canada and all over the place. I feel so fortunate to have a daughter who is a runner and a fast one at that, not like her mother.

This LA Marathon, number 25, will prove to be the best. The route is scenic and the logistics look great. Thank you for being there at the finish.

My name is Sharon Kerson and I live in Culver City, California.

Sharon Kerson  
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