

AZ Insider: Who is this VIP running through Scottsdale?

Written by Written by Kathy Shayna Shocket

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"The AZ Insider" with Kathy Shayna Shocket: Get the inside scoop on Arizona's social scene and celebrity news.



This Week: Where is she running and why can she run without athletic shoes?

Pam Kirby is running through the streets of Paradise Valley and Scottsdale. But she doesn't always need a pair of athletic shoes to run. That's because she's "running" both figuratively and literally.

Pam's a runner who has completed five marathons and is also running in the November election. Pam, a member of the Paradise Valley Town Council who was elected in 2008 for a four-year term, is currently running for the Scottsdale Unified School District Governing Board.

This mother of three daughters feels that she can be influential in educating Arizona's legislators about its school system. "Despite heroic efforts in the classroom every day, SUSD is facing the serious challenge of diminishing state support for public education," she explains.



Her morning runs (usually at least 20-25 miles per week over five days) are helping her "run" for the school board. "It's the best time for thinking, and problem solving," she explains. That's why you won't see her donning an iPod while she's running through the streets of Paradise Valley and Scottsdale. "I don't run and listen to music at the same time if I run under seven miles. I don't want any distractions so I can think, appreciate my community and take in what's around me."

The most recent marathon she ran was the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C. She finished the race, but injured her leg. "I was lucky and didn't need surgery, but I've been nursing it for the last year with physical therapy. It's only been in the last three weeks that I've been able to start running again."

She was determined to finish that 2009 Marine Corps Marathon because she had attempted that same 26.2 mile marathon in 2007 and wasn't able to complete the race at that time.

Pam began running seriously in 2006, after she stopped working full time (as a finance manager at Frito-Lay and a manager at Arthur Andersen). "It wasn't until I left the work force that I started to train seriously. I started with a 5k and went on from there."



Pam's pictured here in a marathon in San Antonio, Texas. That's her daughter **Madison** beside her. Madison didn't run in the entire race, but joined her mom for the last 50 yards. Her daughter Alex is pictured behind them.

Mother Pam's first marathon was the P.F. Chang's Rock 'n' Roll Arizona Marathon in Phoenix, and then she ran a marathon in Anchorage, Alaska. "We had wild animals, including a few moose that ran alongside of us at times," she recalls. "I tried to run in places that were interesting, such as the marathon through Napa Valley to Sonoma and the wine country."

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There are so many different experiences. I'd love to run the marathon in Arizona someday that's over 200 miles. It's a marathon with 11 of your closest friends. You form a team of 12 and run about 200 miles over a period of about 24 hours." (Oh, by the way, her choice of running shoes is Mizuno.)

There are currently two seats open on the Scottsdale Unified School District Governing Board. Incumbent **Dieter Schaefer** who was elected to SUSD in 2007 is running, as well as newcomer **Denny Brown**.

Pam's goal is to run a half marathon or marathon in every state and, of course, to win the school board race and make a difference.



Kathy Shayna Shocket is a Phoenix based writer. If you have a good item for The AZ Insider, you can email her at redkarpetgirl@aol.com.