

On Track

The Marine Corps Marathon is Oct. 27, 146 days away from when this edition first hits newsstands. And for me, it's right around the corner.

A month ago (give or take a couple of weeks), I decided to start training for a marathon, something I would have never envisioned months, or even a year ago. But after listening to multiple coaches preach goal setting and how it can transform a life, I figured I'd go along.

Which brings me here; to the "On Track" column, which will run in the first week of every month, and only in the "Arlington Connection." I reside in Arlington and am training on Arlington's roads and trails, and the race is annually one of the county's biggest sports stories, bringing in many as 22,000 runners last year.

I vividly recall Oct. 28, 2007—the date of last year's race—and watching in amazement as masses of people, with seemingly different causes or charities, weaved around the corner on Route 27, and then headed up the hill through Arlington Cemetery to the finish-line at the Iwo Jima Memorial.

There were mom's, middle-aged women, toned teenagers and plenty of seniors—all crossing the finish line for personal triumph, sensing they've achieved a feat most of the nation's population marvel at. Inspirational music was blaring non-stop, and a cheesy announcer almost made each participant feel as if "you're a winner, you've done it!?"

So I decided then I wanted to run. But a whacky schedule and the winter delayed the decision, and more importantly the training. Once the temperature (finally) turned warm, I went forward, first purchasing running shoes and accompanying gear, and then mapping a regular regiment.

