

My name is Robert Gilcrest. I am 41 years old and started running about 17 months ago to cope with some major lifestyle changes. One of which was quitting a 23 year cigarette smoking habit. 10 weeks after I quite smoking I entered and successfully finished the Santa Barbara Pier to Peak ½ marathon in 3:28. Shortly thereafter I discovered trail running in our local front country and quickly became accustomed to running our steeper trails. So far this year I have ran in two 50km trail marathons (both with finishing times of approx 7:20) and the Santa Barbara Pier to Peak ½ marathon (with a PR of 2:37). I am scheduled to run two more 50km's (both before the Javalina Jundred 100 mile ultra marathon) and will finish off the 2007 season with my first running the Santa Barbara 9 Trails 35 mile ultra marathon. I had not planned on running a 100 mile ultra marathon for at least two more seasons.

It was just on a Friday the day my family and I left for the Mt. Disappointment 50 km ultra marathon in San Gabriel Mountains overlooking Pasadena, Ca. that I first read about Miguel Garcia in the weekly published Monticeto Journal. It was the cover photo that caught my attention, I then read the short story about his situation and what Nikki Katz (founder of The Teddy Bear Foundation) and some of her friends were able to do by fulfilling his request for help to acquire a safe and good running automobile for his family. It was particularly the excerpts from Miguel's' poem "the prisoner" that really affected me. I have been sober now for 18 months and actively participate in a 12 step recovery program. It was during my race that I thought a lot about his painful disease and his poem. There were several times when I thought about Miguel's condition that encourages me to work harder to get through that race. In retrospect I realize now that his words have caused me to re-evaluate what a sober lifestyle is about for me and how important it is that I not be hindered by the small things. Several months after getting sober I realized how important it is going to be for me make some emotional and physical deposits back into my community for all the withdrawals I have made over the years. I believe that this is going to be a very special event for an exceptional special person.

I grew up here in Santa Barbara and have chosen to raise my family here too. I have been married to my wife Sara for 9 years now. We have two very wonderful children; Kelly our daughter who is 8 and Robbie our son is 6. Both of them currently go to Washington School on the Mesa. Our daughter Kelly is an aspiring gymnast who trains weekly at Girls Inc. in Santa Barbara. As a family we all share a passion for the outdoors and regularly travel to various states to enjoy

their opportunities. I have been able to enjoy a comfortable lifestyle here in Santa Barbara being a custom builder for the last 20 years and operate my own company.

Since emerging into our local running community I have meet so many wonderful people and feel very blessed to have such a great community of trainers, physical therapist, healers, coaches, sponsors, race directors, race crew volunteers and retailers. Thank you for taking such good care of us!

Sincerely

Robert A. Gilcrest