

Racing for recovery and a cure

[Story](#) [Comments](#) [Image \(2\)](#)

[Print](#) [Font Size:](#)

0

3

Posted: Tuesday, September 3, 2013 2:00 am

[Previous](#) [Next](#)

By Courtney Mabeus News-Post Staff | [0 comments](#)

Posted on September 3, 2013



by [Courtney Mabeus](#)

It's somewhere around mile two, along a stretch of South Seton Road with cars whizzing by during rush hour that Korey Shorb admits he is not chasing another high.

Rather, it's recovery Shorb is after.

The miles fall away as Shorb puts one foot in front of another along a black ribbon of pavement in Emmitsburg. Each footfall is another closer to completing the New York City Marathon Nov. 3, adding greater distance between the man who served terms behind bars on drug charges and the man who now has a steady job, a roof, a fiance and a baby girl on the way.

"Today, I feel like I'm chasing my recovery," Shorb said during a five mile run around his home in Emmitsburg recently. "I believe that. Somebody told me early on, they said, if you chase your recovery like you was chasing the drugs, you shouldn't have any problem keeping clean."

Shorb started using drugs as an adolescent, graduating from pot to crack and then, finally heroin. He's been clean since 2008, the

year he graduated from Frederick County Drug Treatment Court. Shorb now works full time at Mountain Manor in Emmitsburg, helping people whose shoes he used to fill. He's working toward a degree at Hagerstown Community College in social work and plans to specialize in addictions.

"I can remember laying in bed in prison, dreaming of stuff like this," Shorb said. "I wanted to pay bills."

Shorb started running in 2010 to lose weight gained after giving up cigarettes. He'd run a few miles at a time, adding more and more. He ran the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, D.C. in 4:51 on a whim in 2011. He ran the Richmond marathon last year and shaved 50 minutes off that time.

Now, the running is an addiction. His two-year-old pit bull, Kaige, often accompanies Shorb, stopping for water breaks in creeks along the way.

"I love getting the metal," Shorb said. "I feel like it's a sense of accomplishment. Plus it gives me more reason to buy shoes."

Shorb doesn't entertain thoughts about using drugs. There's too much at stake. The miles between the drug addict he was and the distance runner he's become has humbled Shorb and given him clarity. He's lived two lives and can lean on the past to inform his present.



"Me entertaining that thought would be like dumping gas on a fire that I'm trying to get out of," Shorb said. "That's just crazy. And, I know if I was to use again, I'll lose everything I have. I know I will."

Along with the house, Shorb has a Chevrolet Malibu parked in his driveway with a "26.2" sticker on the back, telling the world, or at least other drivers, that he's a marathon runner.

"Now I want the 50," Shorb said.

First, there's New York.

"I'm excited," Shorb said. "I'm very, very excited to do this. It's just big. It's New York."

Shorb planned to run the marathon last year but Hurricane Sandy tore through the region, canceling the race. Like last year, Shorb sought entry by fundraising for the Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation to bypass the race's lottery system. Multiple myeloma is an incurable blood cancer—a disease that Shorb knew little about before choosing to raise money for it to gain entry to last year's race. He's since met several people whose lives are affected by it.

Shorb raised a little more than \$3,000 last year. As of late August, he'd reached about 16 percent of his goal toward this year's event.

"It keeps me humble," Shorb said.

Like last year, the IHOP on Buckeystown Pike held fund raisers to help Shorb. The Chick-fil-A on MD. 355 also held one in August. Shorb said he is not sure yet how much he raised as a result of those events and would like to add more to help him get closer to his goal.

Frederick County Deputy State's Attorney Nanci Hamm prosecuted Shorb before he went through drug court but also watched him stumble through the program, questioning multiple times whether he would make it. She's now a two-time contributor to his marathon fund.

"I'm just happily so surprised that it's going so well," Hamm said. "He hasn't stagnated at all. Every year or so he's doing something new."

Shorb's complete turnaround is also proof that the frustrating elements of working on behalf of addicts who sometimes cannot help themselves can pay off.

"This is why this program works," Hamm said. "This is why we spend so much time talking about these participants."

Follow Courtney Mabeus on Twitter: @courtgabeus.

To donate to Korey Shorb's fundraising for multiple myeloma, go to:

http://www.active.com/donations/fundraise_public.cfm?force_a2=yes&ckey=2012mmrfNYC&key=NYCKShorb