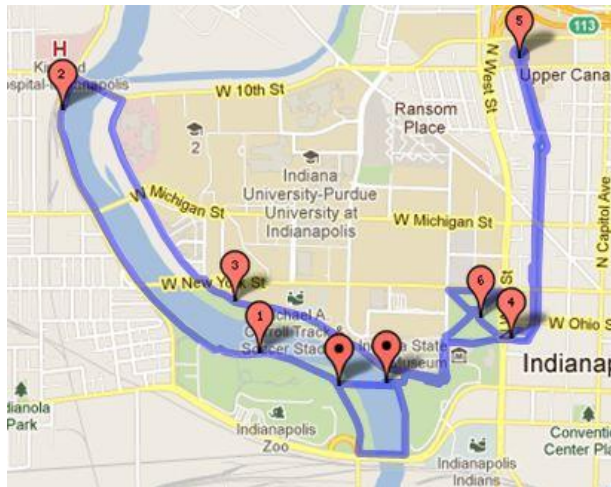


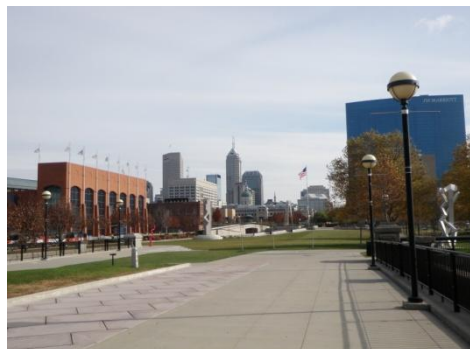
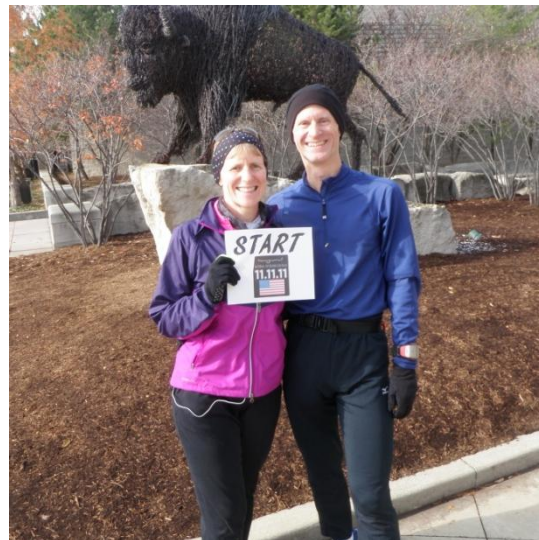
11.11.11 Veteran's Day Race

There's an old saying, "There's a sucker born every minute." I guess that two of them ended up in our household. A few days ago I thought I would find a race to do on 11/11/11. This date was extra special since it was also Veteran's Day. I thought that I saw one advertised in *Runner's World* and that there might be a local option. Unfortunately the only ones I could find were too far away. As I was looking at the Web site (NationalVeteransDayRun.com), I noticed they offered a Virtual Race for people not near a city with a live race. For a reduced fee you could stage your own race and get a tee shirt, race bib, pin, lanyard, and (for a nominal additional fee) a medal. We decided to "drink the juice" and signed up. They also offered a kit to advertise to get others to join in your race. With just two days notice, we decided to just do our own race.



We planned an 11K route that would start behind the Indianapolis Zoo and follow the promenade to White River Parkway. Our route continued north to 10th street and returned on the east side of the river. We would then continue behind NIFS and follow the canal up to St Clair Street. We had to include a little extra at the beginning and a crisscross of Military Park to get the correct distance. We would finish on the pedestrian bridge by the zoo. Our 11K race would start at 11:11. (Julie was excited to get to sleep in and wait for a slight warm up.)

The day was clear and crisp with a heavy frost that looked like snow on the roof tops. We enjoyed the later start so that we didn't have to get up at 4:30 as we have done so many other times. We listened to a 1914 version of the National Anthem before leaving the house. This was a modern race with our GPS virtual partners setting the exact pace. Rather than water stops, we had an on-demand Gatorade system (aka "carry your own"). GPS technology eliminated the timing chip hassles and made worrying about tangents a thing of the past. We took a traditional start line photo and got started at 11:11.



The route was beautiful with fantastic cityscape views over the river. It was quite peaceful with only a few other runners out. It provided time to reflect on the significance of the day and to think about all of the veterans and active military personnel and their sacrifices.

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The sections along the canal included some of the best underpass murals I have seen. Some were vibrant, others serious, and some were fun. Around the half way point, my virtual partner encouraged me to pick up the pace and go for negative splits, so I went on and finished on the pedestrian bridge.



After I finished, I walked back to find Julie along the course and took over camera duty. I took pictures then ran to catch up with her. She also beat her virtual partner. Our goody bag at the end had peanut butter sandwiches, apples, bananas, candy, and energy drink, but we decided to celebrate at Fazoli's instead of just snacking. Unlike most races, we went to the Web site to *enter* our race times, rather than *looking up* our race times.

Our finishing pins and medals should arrive within a couple of weeks. They are sent after entering your race results.

It was a fun race and a great option for people that don't like a big race. Maybe we'll have more entrants at our Veteran's Day Race next year?

