

# Emergency plan lessons learned on Hood to Coast

Mother of All Relays offers insight into managing stress and state of mind in less-than-optimal conditions

**By Jolene Guzman**  
The Itemizer-Observer

SEASIDE — I had an opportunity to test some of the food and supplies in my emergency kit while running on a Hood to Coast Relay team last weekend.

Hood to Coast, for those who don't know, is a 199-mile relay run by teams of 12 traveling in two vans. The way it works is one van with six runners takes six legs while the other half of the team rests.

Our team — not a fast one — had approximately six hours in between shifts to rest, shower and eat.

We each ran three legs totaling 15 to 20 miles.

I ran leg eight, which consisted of a six-mile first leg in 95-degree heat; 5.75 miles in the cool and dark of the night, but, alas, it was mostly uphill; and finally a 4.2-mile last leg that should have been easy, but ended up being a delirious push because of what came before it.

I'm not complaining. Hood to Coast was a challenge, but worth every tired step and every minute in a sweaty van.

Due to circumstances that were out of my team's control, we didn't get a lot of rest, so I didn't get to use my

sleeping bag and tent. I really wish I had, because even a few hours of sleep on the ground would have been better than what I got — about 15 minutes of sleep in 36 hours. Again, I'm not complaining. That's what I signed up for.

On the food supplies side, I was pleasantly surprised on how well items like peanut butter and packaged tuna salad and crackers worked as race food. Those items provided plenty of protein and carbs to keep a body under stress going.

They weren't the only items I ate. I remember the heavenly flavor of pasta salad while resting a few hours at a volunteer's home when the other half of my team ran the legs from downtown Portland to St. Helens. By the way, the volunteers and other supporters on the course were awesome. The encouragement — and water — they offered made the journey a little easier.

The experience — my first time running the event — was a combination of exhilaration and sleep-deprived psychotic episode.

I once heard someone describe it as "the best 24 hours of hell you'll ever experience." Yep. That sums it up.

## Week 14

- Whistle
- Extra batteries for flashlights and radio
- Pry Bar

**Action Steps:** Check with your children's day care center or school about disaster plans and contacts.

Source: *The American Red Cross Disaster Preparedness Calendar.*

In some ways it was probably not unlike the stress and physical challenge people would encounter if a wide-spread disaster did strike. Being physically drained and unable to sleep makes it a challenge to keep a good state of mind, which is important for your own sanity and for keeping the peace with your teammates.

I found the food and water or Gatorade, even without sleep, was key to staying focused and in good spirits once the adrenaline of running wore off.

If a days-long emergency situation were to arise, I will remember that lesson learned on the Mother of Relays from Mt. Hood to Seaside.

And no, I didn't see Kevin Hart along the way. Darn.

Now, back to building that kit.



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

The Hood to Coast Relay provided a chance to test some emergency supplies.

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8	4	6	9	3	7	2	1	5
3	9	2	4	1	5	8	7	6
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Sept 29 - City of Dallas - Community Development

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• Hot food vendors: Black Rock BBQ  
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General vendors: Akha Farm • Bermudez Family Farm  
• Birdsong Farm • Butterfly Flower Farm  
• Edie's Design - Sept 1 ONLY • Good & Bready  
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