



Photo Courtesy of DeAnn McClure

DeAnn McClure and her kids (center) wait for the start of a race.

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"I would come home and tell them my stories. And I'd bring home medals and t-shirts."

So eventually Brody started running with her.

In October 2010, McClure competed in the Chicago Marathon, which was a goal of hers.

"I came home from that and the girls were like 'we want to run with you. We want to start running.'"

That next January-February, McClure said she started taking her daughters, Emerson and Madison, out on runs with her.

"I was so afraid they weren't going to like it."

They did their first race in April 2011. McClure says she was going to sign them up for just the mile but soon realized her girls had a natural talent for running, so they competed in the 5K.

"All of us did it, but they don't like me to run with them during the race. So I did my own race. I came in and waited for them. They ran the entire thing. I will never forget how proud I was of them."

McClure says that afterwards adults were coming up and shaking their hands and telling the girls how great they did. They each got a medal.

The girls ended up doing six races with her last year.

"They are very good. They are very talented. They get better and better every time we go."

McClure says she is so happy about her girls running because what got her hooked was the positive environment that one experiences at these races.

"Everybody is there to be happy and healthy and doing good things for yourself. The whole environment is addicting, and it's just a positive thing."

"I love it. It just makes you grow as a person in so many more ways than what you would think running does for you. It puts things in perspective."

A lot of times, McClure says when she goes running it gives her the time to put her life into perspective... to put her day into perspective.

"I can choose where I want to go. I can choose how fast I want to go. What sights I want to see. I run at night because you see different things than you would in the daytime. You can just really soak in your environment."

McClure runs every day — sometimes in the morning or after work, or at night when she can take the dog or the kids along.

"It makes me feel better. In the morning, it gets you going and feeling good. At night it can be that stress reliever," she adds.

Every time she is in a race McClure challenges herself to do better. "It's just goals I've set for myself."

She always wanted to do a full marathon. "That was just something I never thought I could do. I learned so much about myself

by accomplishing that goal."

McClure says that she has become a changed person since achieving her goal.

Having the girls running with her give them quality time together, she says.

"Sometimes we talk. We'll chat the whole time we're running. How often do you get to do that with no disruptions, no distractions."

Brody still runs with her occasionally and enters a few races, but he is busy with other sports, she adds.

McClure says they also do a lot of running for causes.

"We're running for people that can't run. We run for people that would love to get up and do what we do and can't. So we know we are running for a lot of great causes and that makes us run harder, run faster, be determined."

McClure would love to do another marathon someday, but says she loves doing the half marathons.

"It has become such a part of me. Finally in my life I feel like I have found something that I love to do and that I can help other people do."

Because of her running McClure says she has become more aware of what she eats, especially just before a race. And the kids have caught onto it.

"It's just done something for me. I never had the confidence that I could do it. And when you can do, when you cross the finish line... that feeling never gets old. It's just amazing."

She has no idea how many races she has done over the years, but says that she still gets that feeling to this day.

"I almost cry when I see them (the girls) cross that finish line. I am just so proud of them."

Most recently, McClure says she and the girls went to a race in Beresford in February. Out of a 135 runners the girls placed 10th and 11th.

McClure plans on running until she can't do it anymore.

"This is my passion. People have asked me questions about it if they want to get started running. I could talk and encourage people all the time because it's such a positive thing. It has done so many good things for me as a person — emotionally, physically."

■ by Heidi Henson

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