

## 72nd annual Butte American Legion Veterans Day Race

Wednesday, 11 November 2009 - Back-to-back-to-back champs: Hunt, Jodoin win again as recapped by Pat Kearney for The Montana Standard



Defending champions ruled the day at Montana's oldest road race. Thomas Jodoin of Helena and Nicole Hunt from Deer Lodge took the men's and women's titles in the 5.2-mile run, while Michael Cooney of Butte retained his boys' title in the 2.5-mile event for kids 14 years old and younger.

Jodoin ran away from the field on a near-perfect day for running with no wind and temperatures in the mid 30s. Jodoin was clocked in 28:12. He beat 2006 winner, Peter Dan Sullivan of Helena, by more than two minutes. The next three runners were all from Butte. Jeff Braun was third followed by Matt Choquette and Marvin Speece. The 28 year old Jodoin became only the third male runner in the history of the event to win the overall title three years in a row. He matches the record of Lester Sodja 1947-49 and Dave McDougall 1971-73. Sodja was a former Butte High runner and McDougall competed for Butte Central when the race was for high school students. Jodoin received the C. Owen Smithers Award as the overall male winner. Smithers was one of the co-founders of the race along with Charlie McAuliffe back in 1934.

Hunt won with a winning time of 33:17. She beat nine-time champion Susie Kaluza, of Butte, who crossed the line in 36:14. Sarah Slanger of Helena was third followed by Amber Wood-Jensen from Butte and Leigh Holleman of Bozeman. The victory for Hunt is her seventh. Kaluza holds the record with nine wins. Hunt received the Mary Whelan trophy as the overall female winner. Whelan was the first female winner in the open division in 1976.

Cooney just edged Connor McGee by 16 seconds to win the boys' title in the shorter 2.5-mile run. Cooney's winning time was 19:18. He also won the race in 2008. Cooney received the Martin Kearney trophy for being overall boys' winner. Kearney was the 1940 winner of the race and a long-time organizer of the event.

In addition to the overall winners' trophies, a special plaque called the John Wulf Lifetime Achievement Award was given to Eddi Walker of Butte. Walker has worked on registration for the event for a number of years. Walker also completed her 22nd Veterans' Day Race, the most by a female athlete. Two other runners, Susie Kaluza and Jim Lester, both finished their 21st Veterans' Day Race. Lester, who is 73 years old, completed the course more than four minutes better than he did one-year ago.

The event attracted runners from four different states, Montana, Minnesota, Oklahoma and Washington.

Finishers	2.5 M	5.2 M	Total
Female	9	20	29
Male	2	47	49
Male WC	1	-	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>79</b>



**Nicole Hunt of Deer Lodge cruised the streets of Butte for her seventh Vets' Day Race victory.**

### 2.5 Mile Females:

**19-29:** 1, Talia Knudsen, 32:17.

**30-39:** 1, Charissa Bisch, 35:17.

**40-49:** 1, Gay Peterson, 21:28.

**50-59:** 1, Laurel Egan, 25:44; 2, Sheila Franey, Butte, 26:47; 3, Mary Johnston, 28:28; 4, Georgia Cunningham, Whitehall, 34:22.

**70<sup>+</sup>:** 1, Ellen Murray, 47:28; 2, Kay Newman, Bozeman, 47:28.

### 2.5 Mile Males:

**0-14:** 1, Michael Cooney, 19:18; 2, Connor McGee, 19:34.

**Wheel Chair 70<sup>+</sup>:** 1, Dan Casey, 32:05.

**5.2 Mile Females Overall:** 1, Nicole Hunt, 33:17; 2, Susie Kaluza, 36:14; 3, Sarah Slanger 38:19.

**19-29:** 1, Brianna Dudley, Butte, 40:13; 2, Jackie Higgins, 51:29; 3, Katlyn Dean, 52:45; 4, Stephanie Sloan, 52:45; 5, Jenelle Stokken, 55:48.

**30-39:** 1, Nicole Hunt, Deer Lodge, 33:17; 2, Sarah Slanger, Helena, 38:19; 3, Amber Wood-Jensen, Butte, 38:22; 4, Leigh Holleman, Bozeman, 39:44; 5, Elizabeth Rehmer, 42:10; 6, Cyndie Lockett, 42:31; 7, Kari Collver, 45:19; 8, Karen Brynes, 45:28; 9, Leighann Whitworth, 47:12; 10, Kristen Wester, 47:44.

**40-49:** 1, Carrie Holland, 41:39; 2, Lynn Crawford, 44:28.

**50-59:** 1, Susie Kaluza, Butte, 36:14; 2, Jennifer Griggs, Helena, 43:51; 3, Eddi Walker, Butte, 45:00.

**5.2 Mile Males Overall:** 1, Thomas Jodoin, 28:12; 2, Peter Dan Sullivan, 30:36; 3, Jeff Braun, 30:50.

**15-18:** 1, Josh Panasuk, Butte, 31:54; 2, Jared Noyd, 34:04.

**19-29:** 1, Thomas Jodoin, Helena, 28:12; 2, Matt Choquette, Butte, 31:00; 3, Callan Wink, 34:00; 4, Travis Schullenberger, 37:54; 5, Jacob Floch, Butte, 41:56; 6, David Witt, 43:07; 7, Andrew Bender, 43:38; 8, Matt Curran, 46:55.

**30-39:** 1, Patrick Judge, Helena, 31:31; 2, Chris Colberg, Helena, 35:51; 3, Bill Foley, Butte, 41:31.

**40-49:** 1, Peter Dan Sullivan, Helena, 30:36; 2, Jeff Braun, Butte, 30:50; 3, Dan McGee, 37:14; 4, Bill Kearney, Helena, 38:30; 5, Mike Kearney, 39:42; 6, Bart Brazier, 40:12; 7, Paul Babb, Butte, 41:09; 8, Gary Marshall, 41:35; 9, Tony Campeau, Butte, 42:22; 10, Mike McLeod, 42:27; 11, Ray Rogers, 44:53; 12, Mark Parvinen, 52:15.

**50-59:** 1, Marvin Speece, Butte, 31:09; 2, Chris Tippett, Butte, 34:05; 3, David Gregory, West Yellowstone, 34:52; 4, Scott Craigle, 37:04; 5, Howard Morris, 40:26; 6, Tim Near, Whitehall, 40:51; 7, Chris Wareham, Butte, 41:05; 8, Russell Ehman, Helena, 41:15; 9, Joe Griffin, Butte, 42:01; 10, Jim Ryan, Butte, 43:04; 11, Paul Riley, 43:54; 12, Scott Frisch, 44:38; 13, Pat Kearney, Butte, 44:54; 14, Mike Patterson, Butte, 47:27; 15, Robert Kearney, 49:42; 16, Dan Harrington, Butte, 49:47.

**60-69:** 1, Tim Johnson, 41:52; 2, Stuart White, Great Falls, 42:08; 3, Leon Shearman, Bozeman, 45:30; 4, Bruce Robinson, Butte, 48:02; 5, Vern Roberts, Helena, 48:18.

**70<sup>+</sup>:** 1, Jim Lester, Butte, 58:07.



**Butte's Susan Kaluza burning the 50-year age division record with her 36:14 time for the 5.2 miles.**

**In a quarter century of races on this course, no other 50 year-old woman has ever run faster than forty minutes.**

**Longevity:** Kaluza's time also gives her ownership of twenty out of the 50 fastest women's times ever run on the course.



**Thomas Jodoin of Helena rolling out his winning stride in the 5.2-mile race.**

**His 28:12 finish time was the ninth fastest, ever.**