

BOOK REVIEW: *Our Life on the Run—A Story of Running 50 Marathons in 50 States: A Family Quest*

By Marlin Keesler — Reviewed by Anita Finley

Marlin Keesler, author of *Our Life on the Run—A Story of Running 50 Marathons in 50 States: A Family Quest* entered his first marathon never imagining that it would become the first leg of a six-and-a-half year race across America that he and his family would embark on—one in which the benefits of travel would do far more for his two children than any classroom could offer.

This is story about a family, but one that has both of the children in the family afflicted with a rare disease called Asperger's Syndrome, the autism-spectrum disorder that not only affects the person that has it but the entire family in their trying to have the children live normal lives. Though Keesler and his wife tried their best, they were losing their children and their family was unraveling. They knew they had to do something or face some very harsh consequences. An unconventional idea came to Marlin when he met runners from the "50 State Marathon Club," a group whose goal is to run a marathon in every state in the country. He would make marathons the vehicle that would help him reconnect with his family. His journey, including what the marathon travel experiences taught his kids, is the reason and power of this book.

Actually, this book is about running marathons but it came from a different perspective than of an athlete winning them. It was a family affair, where Marlin's wife, Jeanne, made



sure that all arrangements were made, the children were being cared for and that the family rejoiced and suffered together. The reader will learn a lot more about what it's like to try to educate children with this disease and to plan a road map of what their futures could be. The Keeslers believe that these marathons have had a very positive effect on their children.

Keesler's goal is to get a Curriculum Guide in every school, to share the values and lessons learned. In his "Acknowledgements," he pays a tribute to teachers and educators: "If you are a teacher or an educator, there are times you have experienced the emotion of having a sometimes hopeless and thankless occupation. In most cases it takes years for the fruits of your labors to be realized, and often you will never know since students don't stay in touch with their teachers. The challenges become even greater when dealing with special needs students. My hat's off to the teachers of this nation."

About the author:

Marlin T. Keesler to date has run 60 marathons—a total of 1,572 miles. He holds degrees from both Hawaii Pacific University and The Community College of the Air Force. Marlin is currently a Cargo Service Manager for Continental Airlines.

(To purchase *Our Life On the Run...*, go to www.ourlifeontherun.com or for more information contact m.keesler@comcast.net. The cost of the book is \$14.95. The book design was by Arbor Books)