



**December 12, 2023**

**Contact: Jeff Darman**, 610-925-1976, (610-299-4436  
cell) [jdarman@rrm.com](mailto:jdarman@rrm.com)

## MarathonFoto/Road Race Management Lifetime Achievement Award Honors Gar Williams

**December 12, 2023** — Gar Williams will be honored with the annual MarathonFoto/Road Race Management Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2023 Road Race Management Race Directors' Meeting in Hollywood, FL on December 12. The award is made for contributions to the sport of long-distance road running over the course of a lifetime. Scores of nominations were received that read like a Who's Who of running. The 10-member committee had the difficult task of reviewing the nominees.

Phil Stewart, President of Road Race Management, said, "Gar is an unsung hero and far too few know of his importance. Before and at the dawn of the 1970s Running Boom, he quietly molded leaders and helped build the foundation and structure for



*Gar Williams is being honored with the 2023 MarathonFoto/Road Race Management Lifetime Achievement Award for his many contributions to the sport of long-distance running. Gar was instrumental in transforming the Road Runners Club of America into a strong, supportive body with many successful clubs, which helped to fuel the running boom of the 1970s and enabled the sustained growth the sport enjoyed for decades.*

the sport's success at the Road Runners Club of America during his time as president."

Without Gar's enormous contributions to the sport in the 70's, the running boom may never have happened. His tireless efforts resulted in the creation of many RRCA clubs that recruited new runners and put on numerous races.

A National Marathon Champion, he devoted countless hours to building the DCRRRC into one of the country's largest and most successful clubs at a time when long-distance running was in its infancy.

In 1973, he took over a moribund RRCA. He worked tirelessly and inspired many others to help, and a corps of leaders was born. Along the way, he also recruited sponsorship and the famed Credit Union Cherry Blossom was started, which is now one of the country's premier races.

Gar took several actions that brought the RRCA closer together and developed an excellent communications network. *Footnotes*, the RRCA newsletter that later grew into a newspaper, was revived, and put on a regular quarterly schedule. At Gar's urging, regional newsletters were also started by several vice presidents during this time. These letters were designed to keep the club presidents abreast of what was happening in their area. Additional communication was accomplished via Gar's personal phone calls, letters, and special president's newsletter, which was published periodically and sent to all national officers and chapter presidents.

The recruitment and establishment of new clubs became much more aggressive. A packet dubbed the "RRCA kit" was put together and sent to anyone inquiring about how to start a local RRCA chapter. The kit gave people a step-by-step plan and was instrumental in getting many new clubs started.

Early in his term Gar saw the need for a "How To" compendium of information and administrative guidelines for club administrators. So, he compiled and edited the *RRCA Handbook*. Nothing like it had ever existed, and its hundreds of pages were of great help to clubs and their leaders.

To help cope with the traditional problem of finances, Gar started an RRCA marketing program in cooperation with *Track and Field News*. This program provided a steady source of income to the RRCA. Another new source of funds, inaugurated at the 1976 convention, was the sale of booths for displays at the RRCA annual meeting.

On the publicity front, a new brochure describing the RRCA and its programs was designed and printed. The RRCA received national attention in several magazines.

Under Gar a new benefit was obtained for local chapters: tax-exempt status. Under a group exemption the RRCA was able to grant 501(c) (3) status to those chapter clubs desiring it (and qualifying). This meant that chapters could accept tax-deductible contributions as well as qualify for other privileges such as non-profit mailing.

Gar created a cadre of state RRCA representatives to assist the vice presidents in recruiting and generally servicing the RRCA chapters and potential chapters.

Gar's enormous impact cannot be overstated. His non-stop efforts inspired leaders over the years.

The award will be presented on December 12 at the Road Race Management Race Directors' Meeting keynote dinner. Gar has endured several health issues and is unable to attend the presentation.

Road Race Management ([www.rrm.com](http://www.rrm.com)) is a member-based organization that publishes a newsletter and many other publications designed for race and industry professionals and conducts a prestigious annual national race directors' meeting and trade show in Florida. MarathonFoto ([www.marathonfoto.com](http://www.marathonfoto.com)) is the leader in race and endurance sports photography.

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**Road Race Management, Inc.**

Jeff Darman 610-925-1976

610-299-4436 cell

[jdarman@rrm.com](mailto:jdarman@rrm.com)

[www.rrm.com](http://www.rrm.com)

