

Greetings from the Laurel Ultra. I am Ted Massa, and I have been associated with the Laurel Ultra since its founding in 1980.

Next Saturday, June 9, will be the 39th running of the Laurel Ultra 70 mile race – the 3rd oldest continuously held trail ultra in the United States.

Let's go back in time for a moment –

Saturday June 14, 1980 at 5:30 a.m. in Ohiopyle. A small group of us were at the starting line of the first Laurel Ultra 70 mile race. That first race had 8 starters and 4 finishers. Standing there, we could not imagine a race like next week's, with over 350 runners in the 70 mile, 50 kilometer, and relay races – numbers that would be even higher if it weren't for limits on entries.

This year, runners from 25 states and three countries will come to the race to enjoy the beauty of the Laurel Highlands. The race is consistently listed as a “must do” race by ultra runners for its beauty, and its difficulty.

The Ultra would not be possible without this magnificent trail, provided and maintained by DCNR for hikers (and runners) to enjoy. Nor would it be possible without the dedicated efforts of the many volunteers who help maintain the trail.

The race is delighted to support this shelter rehabilitation project - a way of giving back to the trail in appreciation for the fantastic support we have received over the past 39 years.

The donation from the Ultra to the shelter project was made in memory of Paul Butchko. Shortly after the trail was completed, Paul and his brother Joe had the vision to attempt to run the length of the trail in one day. Once they were satisfied it could be done, they organized the first race in 1980, and were active supporters of the race throughout its history, with Joe being race director for the first 20 years, and Paul providing timing services for the 70 mile every year. Paul passed away unexpectedly last October.

Thank You to everyone for your support of this great trail.