

# Update: Steve's First Marathon

In our 2006 Souvenir Program we ran a story about Stephen Gaudet of San Francisco, a walker with severe persistent asthma who registered to participate in our event in hopes of fulfilling his dream of finishing a full marathon.

We are happy to report that he

achieved his goal despite being plagued with leg cramps for most of the distance—an unfortunate side effect of the medication he must take to control his asthma. Stephen showed true Portland Marathon spirit and prevailed to the finish, and we congratulate him!

Stephen has registered to walk the 2007 Eugene Marathon on April 29th. We wish him the very best in his next endeavor, and hope to see him back in Portland on October 7th!

Below are some excerpts from his 2006 Portland Marathon experience:

*YES . . . I finished my first full marathon . . . and it only took me 9 hours!! (8:50:56 to be exact) . . . Nevertheless, I think I'm stronger than I give myself credit for.*

*. . . I just want to say THANKS! to the event organizers, and to all the volunteers and friendly residents of Portland Oregon... You guys sure now how to put on a marathon! Hands down.. This is the best marathon I've ever been to. Somehow you found a way to treat all 9,000 of us, like we were all elites. You have a beautiful little city and I'll definitely be back . . .*

*. . . My friend and marathon walking partner Anita, aka Phatgirlwalking, was born and raised in Portland. In fact, it was because of Anita's high recommendation and entry into this event, that I chose Portland for my first marathon.*

*. . . Unfortunately, Anita's ankle was giving her tremendous pain and she was unable to complete the entire course. But despite this, she continued to cheer me on all afternoon long and treated me like a super star when I finally finished.*

*. . . The start of the event was awesome—and the crowd was massive. Unlike the San Francisco Marathon, at this event, most of the 9,000 people start at the same time. So, with an inhaler in each hand. . . I waited till they were all in front of me and then I proudly took my place as far back as I could, where I remained for the next 8 hours and 50 minutes . . .*

*. . . The bottom line is that I limped my way through 26 miles—that's why the 9-hour finish. Actually, I'm pretty proud of myself for being able to walk as long as I did. At best, I thought I might be able finish 13 miles. . .*

*. . . By mile 26.2 I felt like I was finally put out of my misery and went to heaven. Everyone was fussing over me like I had just won an Olympic gold medal. Somehow those last few moments make you feel like it was all worth it.*

*As promised, I was treated to my favorite foods and chauffeured directly to my hotel. At which time, I ate, made some phone calls, fell asleep from exhaustion, woke up 4 hours later and drove 11 hours back to the Bay Area.*

**The Bad Stuff:** Being on my feet for 8 hours, 50 minutes and 27 seconds. (3 hours slower than my goal).

**The Good Stuff:** Laughing at this stinking disease and already planning next year's trip so I can make up those 3 hours and cheer Anita on!

Stephen Gaudet,  
2006 Portland Marathon finisher

