

# The Empire Runner

## Water to Wine Half Marathon

By Rob Main

I was recently talking to a friend about why he signed up for the Tough Mudder extreme 10 mile event at Squaw Valley this Fall ([www.toughmudder.com](http://www.toughmudder.com)) – he said he was at a bar one night with some friends... Ok, so it sounds like alcohol and peer influence played a role. Another friend signed up for the same reason I did – “my son wanted to do it with Dad”. However, as I explained to my son, in the long run he and I might wind-up doing more events together if dad didn’t do the Tough Mudder – Oh well, at 20 I didn’t listen either. My point here is pondering why we do certain events. Certainly the reason varies from event to event. Some reasons are: We are drawn to the grandeur of the event, to be with friends, to win or place well, to raise money for a cause, as a challenge, to win a purse, etc.



**Shelli Main with her award for 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the 50-54 age group**



**Peter Kirk and Daughter Jennifer near the finish**

After discussing this topic with a number of brethren runners at this event I caught a glimpse of some of the reasons that brought 500 runners together on this beautiful August morning. For some, including myself, there was the desire to run a half marathon at this time of year, and the Water to Wine Half Marathon ([www.eventswithsole.com](http://www.eventswithsole.com)) had the most appeal; the rolling one way course overlooking the Dry Creek vineyards combined with the post-run food, music, and free wine tasting at Alderbrook Winery made this event stand out. For 14 ladies who do Boot

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**14 Boot Camp ladies during the post run party at Alderbrook Winery**

Camp together it was another common challenge and reason to party. However, my favorite cause for running was shared by our own Peter Kirk and his 18 yr old daughter Jennifer. Jennifer had a goal of running a half marathon this summer. She enlisted Peter to coach her and run the event with her. However, she had the desire to do more, so she solicited donations for Susan G Komen breast cancer research and raised \$450. Peter said coaching Jen and doing this event with her was a highlight of his year. I am sure there are a number of other stories as well. Running with people with these stories and causes is one reason I love being connected to this great sport.