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We are **BACK, again!** Summer is here, and we're STOKED that we have a bunch of fun stuff coming up.

As you all know by now, mark your calendar for the race on **NOVEMBER 4TH, 2017!** [Registration is now OPEN here.](#) Also, ICYMI, be sure to check out the POR website, which has been given a facelift. Here's what we got coming up for Summer 2017 and beyond:

- **July 4th:** 4th of July at Meerkat Manor HQ w / DJ White Jade
- **July 16th:** [Napa to Sonoma Half Marathon](#) - even if you're not running, come grab some vino and enjoy Sunday RUNDAY with us!
- **July 28th:** POR Movie Night @ South Coast Botanical Gardens in Palos Verdes - the movie will be Moana... more info on this below
- **August 9th:** Bingo at Hamburger Mary's @ 9pm, be there by 8:30pm to get a seat
- **August 12th:** [Lululemon Seawheeze Half Marathon](#), Vancouver, Canada
- **August 26th:** [Santa Barbara Triathlon](#)
- **Sept 16th & 17th:** [Malibu Triathlon](#)
- **Nov 4th:** [POR Race!!!](#) Sign up as a team and get your friends to sign up too!

If you want to see what other events we are posting about make to follow us on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#).



Solvang Half Marathon: May 13, 2017

This was our **5th year in Solvang** wearing Meerkat costumes and running like we are **out of control**. Each year we have runners that come in under the 90 minute barrier. This year both Pronkbird, aka Pat Amato, and Komodo Jr., aka Chris Hendricks, made it through the wind in the first 6 miles to finish **sub 90 minutes**. POR took home some wine as they both placed in their age groups.

We had some newbies in the crew, and Uncle Nate came down from **Oakland**. The town of Solvang had missed us, and we left an imprint at Solvang Brewco, Saarloos and Son, and Carhartt. I think they thought we were back for another wedding party for Mike and Leah Smith!

Here are some pics of your **stinky, sweaty, sauteeing meerkats!** **#legday**
#sautesolvang





Tour De Pier: May 21, 2017

This event is always amazing, it supports **3 local cancer foundations** and we get to see many of the people we have met over the years. The Fischer family was out there riding bikes for 5 hours. It was fun to see Geoff and Alex sweating it out right there on the Manhattan Beach pier. Alex Nuttall Smith came out in **honor of her mother**, along with some other random locals we ran into.

The event **raised over \$1MM**, definitely something that we hope to do some year! Where's there's hope there is help. Keep on spinning and fighting the good fight.



Lustgarten Foundation

Super great news from one of the big foundations supporting pan can! We have done their race and know the LA contingency pretty well. Here is something that is super amazing and just the start of **progress** that we hope to see more of in the near future. From their email to us:

We are delighted to inform you that late yesterday afternoon, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) **approved the use of pembrolizumab** (anti-PD-1 monoclonal antibody) immunotherapy for pancreatic cancer patients whose tumors have a unique mutation called a mismatch-repair deficiency (MMR). The **Lustgarten Foundation played a critical role** in bringing this new treatment to patients.

If the tumor has this deficiency, then it is very likely that it will respond to this drug regardless of how advanced the cancer is at the time of treatment. It is estimated that approximately 1 in 50 advanced pancreatic cancer patients have mismatch-repair deficiency in their tumors that make them candidates for this type of therapy. Pembrolizumab is the first cancer drug based on a predictive cancer marker, rather than tumor type, to be approved by the FDA.

[Learn more](#)



MOVIE NIGHT: Friday, 7/28 @ 5pm – [South Coast Botanical Gardens Movie Night](#)

This is a night that we have been planning for some time. We have been looking for a good way to honor some people that mean so much to us. This night we will honor 2 of our recent losses, Luby Stankovic and Young Kim.

The **South Coast Botanical Gardens is one of the most reclusive places in LA**. It sits in a corner of the South Bay, but is a sanctuary to all those that have been there. Recently we have discovered it, and upon reaching out to the SCBG they were excited to team with a group like POR. They want their name to grow and for others to realize what this space is all about.

To give you more about the venue, it is a beautiful garden at the foothills of Palos Verdes. It occupies about 60 acres and has been open to the public for 50+ years. It is a **place where you go to forget about anything else**, as if you are in a different city. The safety and beauty of this place are unmatched, with gorgeous flowers and plenty of expansive gardens to run through.

We took the tour and we were in awe that this existed in LA. It's a place you want to return to and when we were invited to be involved in their event this summer, we were on board right away.

Come join us to see [Moana](#) in July for movie night!



Farewell to Aaron Laviana

Not to deviate too far from the Meerkats underlying joy for running, several recently took it upon themselves to run the **Redondo Beach Triathlon on June 11th, 2017**. Fellow meerkat, Aaron Laviana, thought it would be fun to try open water swimming for the first time after not having swam at all for many years. Thankfully, after remembering the basics again, and subsequently making sure not to fall over with the clip-ins on the bike, he was able to pull through for a **respectable finish**. All-in-all it was a fantastic day, and there will likely be more of these events in the future planned for fellow Meerkats and Meerkittens.

We also want to wish him a **super decent luck in Nashville**, where he's taking his urology talents. We'll miss him during **Electric Flight Crew** on Mondays, drinks at Shellback's, and his ridiculous presence overall. Hit him up if you're ever in the music city and want to race him through Nashville's finest trails. Or if you just want to watch him in a urology case while eating some BBQ.

We'll miss you Lavs! Come back to Cali soon.

The Fischer Family

(Pat Amato reporting): On June 4th the Fischer family celebrated the life Leslie by unveiling her headstone at Mt. Sinai Memorial Park. It was a perfect day, and if you had the feeling that Leslie was there you would have imagined the little bird flying over the ceremony was her. It was nice to remember Leslie and see a group of her friends and family come together for this tradition.

I may have been the only one in attendance that didn't know the tradition or custom of unveiling the headstone. I was confused since it was not the 1 year anniversary of her death. I did get a nice

explanation of this from Aunt Marcia, she told me that it isn't appropriate to suffer for someone for over a year so this takes place before the 1 year mark.

Another custom that is frequently part of the unveiling is placing stones or pebbles on the monument. This custom has many origins and interpretations, but in its simplest context, it is a representation and reminder that the family was at the gravesite. Geoff, Emily, and Alex decided that in addition to the traditional pebbles people leave on the headstone, they would place guitar picks and seashells (see picture).

Say a prayer for the Fischer family, I'm sure they are feeling the love right now, but it has to be difficult. Leslie was a pretty amazing meerkitten ever since the day we met her! It's not often you meet some and they cry the first time you meet, not in sadness but happiness! "Tweets and hugs" was the phrase she started, feel free to share.



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