



## Best Foot Forward: After Stroke, Back to Running Half Marathon and 5K

By Mat Kennedy

LEHIGH VALLEY - Matthew Aberant was your typical 45-year-old competitive runner last September when the unthinkable happened.

What he described as a feeling of immense pressure in his head followed by a headache led to his wife Laura rushing him to the St. Luke's Anderson Campus Emergency Room. While en route, he became nauseous and started vomiting.

He was diagnosed with a subarachnoid hemorrhage stroke, a medical emergency identified by bleeding into a space between the brain and the tissue that covers it. Matthew's headache is what is known as a thunderclap headache, one that comes on suddenly and is so intense it is often described as the worst headache of a patient's life.

After spending 12 days in the St. Luke's Bethlehem Campus neuro-ICU with around-the-clock care and two neurosurgical procedures, Matthew was thankfully able to continue his recovery at home. In the long run, he faced no permanent symptoms of a stroke, like facial paralysis, loss of hearing, or arm and leg issues.

On Sunday, April 26, Matthew will make his triumphant return to racing by taking part in the St. Luke's 5K, part of the St. Luke's Half Marathon that starts at William Allen High School in Allentown. He and Laura will be running with a team of friends from all over the East Coast to celebrate his return to competitive running.

"I'm a little nervous," admitted the sustainability consultant from Bethlehem, "but definitely excited to see how it feels when I get back out there."

The couple picked this race "because it was sponsored by St. Luke's and we wanted to show some small support for everything St. Luke's did for us when I was going through my stroke."

Matthew's story is just one of many for runners taking part in either the St. Luke's 5K or the St. Luke's Half Marathon.

From first-timers and people looking to celebrate overcoming odds like Matthew, to running in memory of loved ones, overcoming personal struggles and more, there are plenty of stories of why runners and walkers will toe the line and commit to the finish line for the St. Luke's Half Marathon.

Race weekend kicks off with the St. Luke's Race Expo 9 am - 4 pm Saturday, April 25 at St. Luke's SportsPlex, Home of Pickleball Lehigh Valley at 4636 Crackersport Rd., Allentown.

St. Luke's Youth Run will also take place on Saturday, April 25, at 1:45 pm from the Lehigh Valley Road Runners Clubhouse in the Lehigh Parkway, with four different age groups and distances, from 3-4-year-olds running one-eighth of a mile to 9-14-year-olds running a full mile. Sunday's St. Luke's 5K starts at 8 am, followed by the St. Luke's Half Marathon at 8:10 am. For complete details, go to <https://stlukeshalfmarathon.com/>



By U.S. Senator Dave McCormick

It was great to catch up with representatives from the Pittsburgh Steelers in Washington as we prepare for the city to host the NFL Draft on April 23-25. I know that the Steelers aren't just a football team—they are a symbol of the hard work and resilience that defines Western Pennsylvania. Hosting the Draft is a major win for our region, bringing in thousands of visitors and providing a significant boost to our local economy. I'm committed to ensuring our city has the support it needs to make this event a success and to continuing my work in the Senate to champion the people and the spirit of the Steel City.

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