



Katy Fit coaches, Donna Balin, Hillarie Forister, Karla Burman, Christian Markel, Scott Balin, Darcy Stingerie, Jeff Clark, and Craig Becker

# *Katy Fit* for Life

Written by Kelly Isenberger  
& Select Photography by Suzi Issa

**Local Running Group  
Helps Athletes of All Levels**



Katy runners of all ability levels have looked to Katy Fit to help get in shape for 10 years. Many people may think of the club as a marathon training group, imagining its members as lean, fit, and healthy and shying away from working out alongside such elite runners. Katy Fit is actually a welcoming organization for anyone looking for a way to start getting active, no matter their age, size, or fitness level. If you want to start running, continue running, or push yourself to new heights, then Katy Fit is the place for you.

### Fitness and Friendships

Katyites seeking to get in better physical shape and lead healthier lives may find it helpful to run alongside an encouraging group of friends and neighbors who are looking to do just the same. For many, Katy Fit offers a great fitness support group. “Katy Fit is a social group with a running problem,” says Dr. Scott Balin, the group’s new director. “The advantage of Katy Fit is mainly the camaraderie. It is very hard to run alone. You need someone to back you up.”

Every Saturday morning, Katy Fit’s 700 members meet at Terry Hershey Park for long runs. The group is led by coaches who help guide members and give seminars about topics like nutrition, hydration, and stretching. They also meet at various times throughout the week.

### Programs for Everyone

Katy Fit began as a marathon training program, but has evolved into having several different running groups with a variety of goals. “We started as a running marathon group, and we realized that not everyone could run a marathon,” Balin explains. “So then, we added the half-marathon group. Before long, we realized that some weren’t as fast, so we added a walking group, and then, we added the advanced training program for the more advanced runners. Then, we realized we just wanted to get people off the couch and into shape and so we added a 5K program.” Katy Fit will place you with the group that will best help you succeed in reaching your fitness goals.

### Running Towards a Goal

Joy Comeau first decided to run a 5K when her teenage son dared her to. She accepted the dare, ran the 5K, and was not pleased with her results. She knew she could do better, so she joined Katy Fit with the goal of bettering her time in the EP Houston 5K. After training with the group, she improved on her 5K time.

Comeau has since gone on to become an avid runner, joining Katy Fit’s half-marathon training program. “Getting over the mental aspect that you can really go beyond that 5K was hard at first,” she shares. “Going from 3.1 up to 13.1 miles sure seemed like a

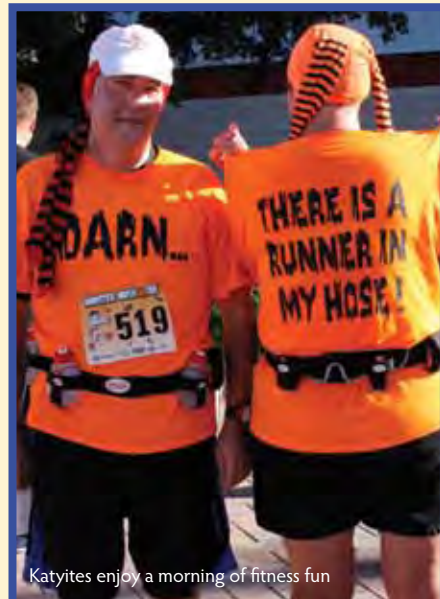
Kyle and Sarah help coach Katy Fit’s Katy Students Run program



Katy Fit coaches, Lynn and Candy



Hayward and Doug enjoy coaching Katy Fit runners



Katyites enjoy a morning of fitness fun



# 10 TIPS

## for Beginning Runners

- 1 Run in good shoes.
- 2 Stay hydrated and eat a healthy diet.
- 3 Walk before running.
- 4 Increase distance and time gradually.
- 5 Mix interval workouts, slow long runs, and rest days into your routine.
- 6 Cross train and stretch.
- 7 Find a friend and join a running group.
- 8 Get plenty of sleep.
- 9 Sign up for a race.
- 10 Don't get discouraged.

Source: Katy Fit

big jump, but you start out small and work up." She adds, "The first time I ran 10 miles, I was in tears!" More fit than ever, Comeau has expanded her fitness goals to include training for a marathon. With the Chevron Houston Marathon now having a lottery, she is waiting to see if she will run the full or half-marathon during this year's race.

### Mentoring Katy Students

In keeping with the inclusive spirit of the club, Katy Fit has extended its love of running to students through the Katy Students Run program (KSR). Led and founded by Jenny Demarest, KSR is a mentoring program for high school students who are selected by their teachers and counselors. "Our objective is to teach the students about setting and achieving goals, overcoming obstacles, and making and keeping a commitment," Demarest shares. "Running and training for a half marathon provides the mechanisms to knit these things together."

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The students train on Tuesdays and Thursdays after school and on Saturday mornings at Terry Hershey Park. Some students in KSR even recently completed the Chevron Houston Half Marathon and are gearing up to run the full marathon.

“The advantage of Katy Fit is mainly the camaraderie. It is very hard to run alone. You need someone to back you up.”

—Dr. Scott Balin, director of Katy Fit

### Stretching the Limits

Katy Fit teaches that you can go beyond what you thought was possible. They encourage you to stretch your goals, and then they run beside you until they are achieved. No matter how slow, fast, small, big, young, or old you are, Katy Fit will guide and assist you in achieving your own personal best. If you are interested in getting fit through running and achieving goals you never thought possible, then Katy Fit is for you. KM

*KELLY ISENBERGER is a marathon runner, who has been a member of Katy Fit. She encourages others to join and be surprised at how far they can go.*



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