OUT & ABOUT from the Resident and Fellow Affairs Committee

Where members of the UCSF Community recommend their favorite scenes outside UCSF

Urban Adventure Racing

Jeff Kohlwes, MD, MPH
Director, PRIME Residency Program

So you don’t feel like you can spontaneously do something athletic anymore? Just wait until you top 50 years old- it only gets worse! Luckily there are ways of staying active, doing fun sports events that even allow you to get a team together and well... work as a team (and break a little sweat along the way).

Adventure racing is a fun way to stay motivated to stay in shape without feeling like you need to train for an ultra-marathon. If you train for a marathon you know you have to run for 26.2 miles; for a triathlon you know you will swim, then bike, then run. When you do an adventure race you may never know what is coming next! I started doing adventure racing with a couple of misguided friends about 15 years ago- and have never looked back as they are just so much fun.

My favorite local race is in September and is called the San Francisco Oyster race - part of the Oyster racing series. Imagine starting your Saturday off in the parking lot of the Sports Basement in the Presidio. You have your bike, your running shoes, a couple of changes of shirts and plenty of snacks set up in your individual team parking space. The energy builds as the start time gets nearer and the other spaces start filling up with other teams, some of them dressed in ridiculous costumes, others just trying to figure out what the heck to do next. Then comes the start... but instead of a rush of bikes or running shoes, out come the cell phones.

You have been given several puzzles that require a QR reader to download. You solve the puzzles to get your first clue on where to go next and then... you are off!

So you jump on your bike and take off down the Embarcadero towards Pac Bell park where you get off at the local Whole Foods and... line up with your team to throw fish to each other- don't drop them or you have to start all over again! After smelling a little like stale fish you get your next clue and it seems to point you towards pier 40. Back on the bike to ride down the Embarcadero towards Pier 39 (must be close to 40, right?).

This is the first big clue to adventure races - know where you are going next before speeding in that direction! Well known fact about the San Francisco piers- they run odd and even in opposite directions- a fact we discovered after getting all the way to pier 39 (we didn’t plan on winning anyway).

OK, so we went back to pier 40 and discovered our next task was to do two laps around the pier 40 waterway on a standup paddle board. Only trick was that we had three team members and all of us had to make the trip and we could go around only twice and everyone could go only once. It was cold lying down on the SUP while my friend paddled. Then it was back on the bikes for a dash back to the Sports Basement where it was time to switch into running shoes to run through the Presidio to a bunker where we had to... solve SAT questions as a group, BUT we couldn’t talk. We noticed the younger crowd was going much faster than we were and only later did we realize that text messaging worked well to help solve the problems. Then it was further into the Presidio to do more stupid human tricks like shoot shoes to teammates using a funnel and surgical tubing to create a slingshot (much harder than it sounds), walking through an obstacle course blindfolded with your teammates giving you directions, and taking spontaneous team photos with tourists on the Golden Gate Bridge. The day ended with a quick game of beer pong which took me 25 years back to college and reminded me why even then I
was a geek. The day is a blast, you travel all over San Francisco doing fun stunts and you have a good workout by the end of the day. It also gives you a chance to raise money for several very good causes so you feel even better about your effort! http://www.oystertherace.com/San_Francisco.php

I have to say that my favorite adventure race is not local, but in Bend, Oregon. It is a 12 hour drive or a 2 hour flight into the Redmond Oregon airport. The race is called the Pole Peddle Paddle and in my mind it is the pilgrimage that all dedicated outdoors enthusiasts should make at least once in their lives. The PPP as it is called, is at the end of May and attracts teams and individuals from all over the west coast to do exactly what the name implies. You start in downhill ski boots half way up Mt. Bachelor and you do a short run up to your skis, click in and race down the hill. Then you or your teammate cross-country ski a breathtaking 5 mile loop through the high alpine pine trees (the snow is usually pretty sloppy by then so this is quite a trick). Then it is off with the ski gear for a 25 mile ride into town (this is almost all downhill and you get to feel like Lance Armstrong on steroids as you race down the Volcano). As you get back into Bend you change from bike to run and take a beautiful run along the Deschutes river that goes 2.5 miles up the river canyon, then back down again. Finally, you get into your awaiting kayak for a 2 mile flat water paddle on the Deschutes before ending up at the finish line where there is a huge party that feels like the whole town has turned out to see the end of the race. Another perk is that the famous Deschutes brewery is just down the street so if you need refreshment after the race it is easy to find. http://www.pppbend.com/

Well I hope this gets you thinking about adventure racing, there is no shortage of opportunities to try one out either individually or with a group of your friends - they are a blast! Have fun out there.

UCSF Clinician Bilingual Certification

Residents and Fellows, keep your eyes peeled for a very brief (2-5 minute maximum) Qualtrics survey from the Office of Graduate Medical Education about your use of non-English languages to communicate with patients.

The UCSF Medical Center is using responses to this survey to determine which clinicians qualify for the UCSF Clinician Bilingual Certification exam.

UCSF policy requires the use of an approved interpreter for clinical encounters with non-English speaking patients unless your oral proficiency in that language has been certified. Don’t miss your chance to get certified. Respond to the survey.

Even if you don’t speak another language, please respond to the survey so the Medical Center has a record.

Remember, you can access Interpreting Services by calling 353-2690

• Option 1 for on-demand telephone interpreting 24/7, 365 days a year, 200 languages.
• Option 2 to page our after-hours Spanish interpreter at Moffitt/Long M-F 5pm – 12am, Saturday & Sunday 9am – 5pm.
• Option 3 to request advance scheduling for an in-person interpreter, all languages, 8am – 5pm M-F.

Coming soon: Video Medical Interpreting for ambulatory at UCSF Medical Center. Stay tuned!