



## **The Training Story of Timber Ridge Resident Bill Weertman and Team Timber Ridge**

By Tina McNeilly, Timber Ridge Fitness Instructor

For the past three years Team Timber Ridge has participated in the 5K (3.1 miles) run at Issaquah Salmon Days. The first year we had 12 participants with six residents and six staff. The following year we had a few more join in. This year we had 21 residents and 10 staff members, as well as five family members, participating with team Timber Ridge.

This brings me to my story. Willem (Bill) Weertman, one of our residents, signed up for our very first Team Timber Ridge and has been a participant every year since. His times have been as follows: October 4, 2009: 57 minutes, 38 seconds; October 3, 2010: 52 minutes, 12 seconds; and October 2, 2011: 34 minutes, 47 seconds.

There was a fellow competitor in Bill's category (the age 80-99 division) that was not a resident of Timber Ridge and his statistics for the last two races were as follows: October 3, 2010: 42 minutes, 49 seconds and Oct 2, 2011: 41 minutes, 59 seconds. This year Bill was determined to beat or at least meet the time of his opponent from the previous year.

Bill needed to shave about 10 minutes off his time from the previous year in order to match his self-proclaimed challenger. This was Bill's spark, so he began his training. In July 2011 I started the "walk around the corner" program - a once per week training walk for our residents to get into shape for the 5K in October. Bill joined in all of the group walks. Then in August 2011 he started training on his own as well. First he began walking the actual race route and soon discovered that walking faster would not be enough to bring his time down to a sub-42 minute time. So he began to run/walk. He trained almost daily so he could reach his goal.

Bill kept track of his progress as the days grew closer to the October 2<sup>nd</sup> race date. Bill felt certain that he could indeed meet or even exceed his goal of a 42 minute race time. Finally the day of the race came. Bill was ready and confident. After crossing the one mile mark Bill looked at his watch and to his astonishment he had run a 10 minute mile! He crossed the finish line, coming first in his division, at 34 minutes, 47 seconds! He

had accomplished what he had set out to accomplish. As a matter of fact, besides the gentlemen that Bill had set his sights to beat (who came in 2<sup>nd</sup>), all of the other top winners in this division were from Team Timber Ridge! All of the winners in the women's age 80-99 division were from Team Timber Ridge. We also had winners in the women's age 75-79 and 70-74 divisions and in the 75-79 and 70-74 male divisions. Importantly, every person from Timber Ridge who started the race finished the race.

Discovering your inner strength is possible. I am very proud of each and every one of our residents with their willingness and their inner power to train and complete a 3.1 mile race. I can think of no better feeling than watching them improve their health and help them learn the potential within themselves.



Timber Ridge Resident Bill Weertman