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### Runners share special bond

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Both are Bethel residents. Both are 63 years old. Both are training for this year's [Boston Marathon](#). And both men -- for the third time each -- will be running in today's half marathon in the Fourth Annual Stratton Faxon Greater Danbury Road Races at Rogers Park in Danbury.

One other thing they have in common: they both found it hard to believe that they were the oldest of all the half marathon's pre-registered runners.

"There are a lot of older runners," said Morrison. "I'm surprised that I'm one of the few that's running this."

"I'm surprised to hear it," added Rorick.

Actually, there was one other runner, age 68, who pre-registered. But that New York City resident neglected to check the train schedule from Manhattan before sending in his registration form. With the earliest train arriving after the race is scheduled to begin, he decided to stay in the city today. That leaves Morrison and Rorick as the half marathon's senior citizens, barring any day-of-race registrants.

The 13.1-mile main event features a strong, international field. Among the elite contenders are Kenya's [Stephen Chemlany](#), winner of last year's race, and Ethiopia's [Demesse Tefera](#), the 2006 New York Road Runner's "Runner of the Year." Also competing will be Solomon Too of Kenya, Joseph Ekoum and former Danbury High star [Joe LeMay](#), who won the Ridgefield half marathon last autumn.

On the women's side the top contenders are expected to be defending champion [Claudia Camargo](#) and Ethiopians Abeba Tola and Firehiwot Tesfaye.

While neither Rorick nor Morrison expects to be sharing the rarified air with those runners, they nevertheless fully anticipate getting as much or more enjoyment as any of the 1,000 runners projected to compete in today's event.

"There's a certain feeling you get," said Rorick. "There's no doubt that your endorphins kick in. There's a natural good feeling. As you get older the challenge is to yourself to put your shoes on, get out the door no matter how cold and windy it is. It's like a personal challenge

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thing I suppose."

"I know I'm not going to win so there's no pressure except to do what you can do and feel good," said Morrison. "It's addictive. If I miss a day I really notice it. Because I can run at lunchtime, I usually feel better in the afternoon than if I just don't. It just feels good."

That's not to say that Bethel's sexagenarians don't feel the aches and pains from the hundreds of grueling miles they've committed to training for Boston. They feel it alright.

"You just live with the pain," said Morrison. "Everything hurts."

"Injury-wise something always hurts," said Rorick, who missed last year's half marathon in Danbury after suffering a stress fracture training for Boston. "I'm on the floor every night stretching."

Rorick, however, has found relief from Newtown doctors. He credits Dr. [Brian Fullem](#), a sports medicine podiatrist, and Dr. [Eugene Zeitler](#), who practices ART (active release techniques), a treatment that helps break down and repair damaged tissue in muscles, ligaments, tendons, fascia and nerves caused by either acute trauma or repetitive stress injuries. Rorick swears by it.

"I've been feeling like a spring chicken for the last five months," Rorick said. "There are things out there that can help tremendously."

Rorick is also quick to concede that good genes have something to do with it. He said his grandmother lived to be 100 and his mother just celebrated her 85th birthday.

"And my dad will be 90 in a couple of months," he said. "It's outlook. It's diet. It's a lot of things. If I sat around eating bon-bons all the time I'd weigh 190 instead of 153."

Whatever Rorick's doing, it's obviously working. After running a 2:05.12 in the 2005 half marathon, he shaved almost seven minutes off that time in 2006 with a 1:55.32

And Morrison clocked in at 2:03.08 in 2006.

Good times are obviously another thing they have in common.

NOTES: Today's festivities begin at 10 a.m. with [The Savings Bank of Danbury Kids Run](#). The half marathon starts at 10:20 and the 5K goes off at 10:30. ♦ Race-day registration is \$10 for the kids run, \$25 for the 5K and \$35 for the half marathon. Entry fees will be waived for those raising \$100 or more for the Western Connecticut Chapter of [American Red Cross](#).



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