

# Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

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## “Jim Dooley- Marathon Runner”



Norfolk Fire Department operations manager Jim Dooley could run circles around most people. Those circles could be pretty wide, too, as the sixty-year-old prepares to run in the Lincoln Marathon May 1 and qualify for the Boston Marathon.

“I had taken a Boot Camp class at the YMCA and a lot of people there do full and half marathons so it sparked my interest to try it,” Dooley said.

He trained last year and ran in the Omaha Marathon in September completing the course in 3 hours, 54 minutes and 40 seconds. He ran the half marathon in Lincoln last May and came in 12<sup>th</sup> out of 97 runners in the males 55-59 age group and came in 645<sup>th</sup> out of all the 6,124 runners.

“I felt pretty good about that. My son, David is 29 and I told him my goal was to beat him and I did by seven minutes,” Dooley said with a laugh.

As a firefighter for 30 years, Dooley has always worked at staying fit. There is a mandatory physical fitness test that all Norfolk firefighters have to pass which also helps motivate Dooley through a grueling training process.

To prepare to run the 26.2 mile race, Dooley racks up 43 miles every week. On days he isn't running he does Body Pump cross training. A marathon training schedule he found online is his guide for how far to run each day. Some days it's eight miles, others it's five and then there are the twenty mile days.

Dooley has run in about every kind of weather there is- rainy, windy, snowy. He has spikes for his shoes that he wears so he doesn't slip on the ice. One day the weather was just a little too nasty so he ran the whole twenty miles scheduled for that day on a treadmill. That's three and a half hours of constant running on a treadmill. Enough to wear a treadmill out and a few pairs of shoes so Dooley runs mostly outside and switches out shoes every 800 miles or so.

When he's outside, Dooley uses a GPS device to measure how far he's run.

“The GPS is a real advantage because it lets me run anywhere. I've run when I was in Tennessee at a wedding and another time when I was in Wyoming. I don't listen to music. I just enjoy the outdoors,” Dooley said.

He admits that the training is a time commitment. Most days he runs from 5:00 am to 8:00 am. On weekends he may spend at least half of one day running down the road.

He also is careful to eat a diet of 50% carbohydrates, 25% protein and 25% fat to keep his body in optimum running shape. He no longer has high glucose or high cholesterol readings like he used to.

“Diet’s a big part of training. I did some research on how to train and knew I had to bump up the carbs. I also learned to work up to distances. Once I went too hard too fast and got shin splints,” Dooley said.

His favorite place to run is on the Cowboy Trail, along the flood control or around Skyview Lake where there isn’t traffic to worry about. Dooley said running helps relieve stress and gives him time to think. He’ll soon taper off a bit on the miles as he gets close to race time on May 1.

“It’s tough and it takes mental fortitude to make it happen but I love the atmosphere of the races, the camaraderie. I’ve always enjoyed running,” Dooley said.