

Who'll make a beer run?

There are frighteningly fit running clubs composed entirely of tri-athletes and marathon runners. Then there are those that bill themselves as "drinking clubs with a running problem." A local technology consultant and a commercial real estate agent have found a happy medium between the two.

This spring Scott Higgins and Michael Lang, both avid runners, established Happy's Running Club, a group that meets on Third Street each Tuesday at 6 p.m. near Happy's Irish Pub. The group runs a 5K route downtown, then relaxes over dinner and drinks on the Roux House patio. More than 100 joined in the first month.

"The main focus is to get downtown and do something fun," he says. "We've got a real mix of serious runners, joggers and walkers."

Pennington researcher Stephanie Anaya ran track at Arkansas State and says the group is a real motivator for her. "There aren't many opportunities like this in the area," she says. "It's something that helps you get out there."

For a \$30 membership fee, runners get a dry-fit club-crested T-shirt and access to post-run food and drink specials with the group. Merrill Lynch associate Eric Waechter has been the biggest recruiter for the club, bringing in more than 20 new members. "If you're working downtown it's an easy way to stay downtown and do something healthy and social at the same time."

happysrunningclub.com

—TEXT AND PHOTOS BY JEFF ROEDEL



Scott Higgins (right) and Michael Lang established Happy's Running Club.



Stewart Jones shows off the running club's T-shirt.

Kelly Nelson stretches before the regular Tuesday run.