

Scroll for Important Safety Information and Indications.

Important Safety Information:

All prescription NSAIDs, like CELEBREX, ibuprofen, naproxen, and meloxicam have the same cardiovascular warning. They may all increase the chance of heart attack or stroke that can lead to death. [Full Prescribing Information, including Boxed Warning](#)


[Subscribe to the Houston Chronicle](#) | Shopping | Classifieds | Obituaries | Place an Ad | La Voz

[Lite](#) 107k
[Register](#) | [Sign In](#)

Wednesday October 8, 2014

86°F Scattered Clouds | [Houston Weather](#)
[Search](#)
[Chron.com](#) [Local Directory](#)
[Home](#) | [Local](#) | [US & World](#) | [Sports](#) | [Business](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Lifestyle](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Cars](#) | [Real Estate](#)

[Katy](#) > [Katy News](#)

Katy veteran now can say 'it only gets better'

David Thurman completes local triathlon as physical activity helps to keep him on the right path

By Natalie Harms | October 7, 2014

Comments 0

E-mail

Print

Share 67

Tweet 8

g+1 0

0



Photo By Diana L. Porter/Freelance

1 of 2

Katy resident David Thurman of Team RWB gets ready in the water for the swimming portion of the Katy Triathlon at Firethorne.



On a freezing February day in 2005, David Thurman got out of bed and looked in the mirror and decided to change the way he was living.

The then 210-pound U.S. Navy veteran, who had been an alcoholic and "done every drug put in front of him," drove to the Conroe YMCA and swam six laps before he stopped to catch his breath. He felt like he was dying.

Near him was a man with a U.S. Army hat. The fellow veteran encouraged Thurman to continue and said, "It only gets better." That moment inspires him every day.



Follow Katy Community Extra



Newsletter Sign Up

Get news about Katy-Fort Bend sent to your inbox.

Email:

[Access RSS Feed for Katy](#)

More Katy News



Latest Videos

And it did get better for Thurman. He got healthy and trained hard, and he has completed several races and triathlons - the most recent of which was the Katy Triathlon on Sept. 28 at Firethorne.

The 22nd annual event, sponsored by the city of Katy, attracted almost 700 competitors, who swam 500 meters, ran 3 miles and biked 13 miles. Thurman joined about 20 other veterans on Team RWB, said Vicki Rao, triathlon coordinator for the Rotary Club of Katy, which organizes the annual event.

Team RWB, named for the nation's colors: red, white and blue, is a national nonprofit with regional chapters dedicated to bettering the lives of veterans by connecting them to others and encouraging physical and social activity.

"Physical activity is at the core of Team RWB's mission," said Dean Bradley, athletic director for Houston's Team RWB chapter and a fellow Katy triathlon athlete.

"Planning and executing consistent opportunities for the chapter to exercise together is critical to the chapter's success."

Bradley said that he sees a disconnect between veterans and civilians in the community, and Team RWB provides a place where veterans can feel like they belong.

"By helping to get our veterans involved in physical and social activities in their communities, we can help bridge that gap by helping to create opportunities for our nation's veterans, some of whom feel like they cannot deal with the pressures they are feeling or the physical and mental injuries they have suffered and continue to battle," Bradley said.

A retired Marine, Bradley got "addicted" to marathons and triathlons after running his first marathon and joined Team RWB after missing the camaraderie of fellow servicemen.

Thurman, 55, who now lives in Katy, joined Team RWB to help raise awareness for older vets like him who feel forgotten.

He learned about the Team RWB through a local volunteer/organizer Alain Ducante. Training for triathlons is great for his mental as well as physical well-being.

Thurman said he is also glad to have found the camaraderie of Team RWB, but he had a long, rocky path to where he is today.

In 1983, he served in Lebanon during the Beirut barracks bombings. He lost a few friends and saw even more returning home missing limbs, but carrying the weight of war on their shoulders.

"I had a man, a Marine, who couldn't take it anymore - his wife was leaving him, and he committed suicide in front of me. This was traumatic and affected me - still does."

For 30 years, Thurman has been suffering from nightmares, anxiety and depression, but it was only recently that he was diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

"Back when I was in the military, they diagnose you one of two ways," Thurman said. "They'd either diagnose you as with borderline personality disorder, as my psychiatrist put it, or as schizophrenic, which I wasn't. But, they didn't know what PTSD was. In Vietnam, they called it 'Battle Fatigue.'"

"They really didn't know what to do with us."

Thurman said that when he left the military, he felt like he was on his own. He said that he sees the resources that veterans have today and wishes they would've been around when he was discharged.

"A lot of the decisions I've made in life have been bad decisions because of what happened to me back then. It's affected my life for 30 years."

Thurman said exercise has been his therapy and credits it with saving his life. He trains once - sometimes twice - a day except Friday. He has a great support system and training mate in his wife, Holly. She was his high school sweetheart and six years ago they reconnected and fell in love all over again. She's an experienced marathon runner and constantly inspires him to continue to work hard.

He is working toward completing the Ironman Texas triathlon, but he hopes it goes a little better than his recent

This video player must be at least 300x170 pixels in order to operate.

You Might Also Like



Ali MacGraw Has Embraced Her Gray Hair at 75: 'About Time, Wouldn't You Say?'
(People)



11 Celebrities Who Say They're Not Black
(MadameNoire)



9 Dog Breeds Gaining Popularity
(Vetstreet)



A New Kind of CPAP to Help You Breathe and Sleep Better
(Easy Breathe)

Most Read

- Dallas airport rail not very popular and reducing city corruption
- Houston Legal Links 9/10/2014
- VIDEO: Who is liable if you receive the wrong prescription due to a doctor's poor handwriting?
- VIDEO: Why is it important to have someone with you at a hospital?
- Odds and ends and HCRP follies
- VIDEO: Can a doctor prescribe medical marijuana?
- Nicki Minaj was totally naked under unzipped VMAs dress

experience.

During the triathlon, Thurman got "mugged" in the open water swim portion. He feels most at home in the water – due to his experience in the Navy, but he was kicked twice in the ribs and once in the head while swimming. He said he knows this is always a risk and it slowed him down, but he was still able to beat his record from last year's competition.

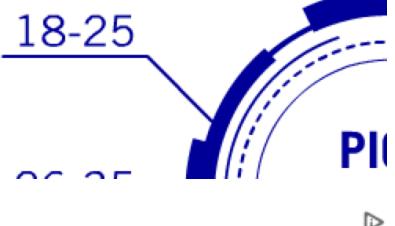
But, performance isn't important to him because he recognizes the bigger picture of it all. So, when he crossed the finish line of the Katy Triathlon and was thinking that it did not go as well as he had planned, it was still a triumph.

Through exercise and training, Thurman has been able to turn his life around. And, through Team RWB, he is able to share in a community with veterans who have similar stories.

He is now able to do what the man in the Army hat did for him: Put a hand on a young veteran's shoulder and tell him that it only gets better.

Comments 0 | E-mail | Print | Share { 67 | Tweet { 8 | g+1 { 0 | 0

WHAT TEXANS SHOULD DO WITH YOUR CAR IS OVER 3 YEARS
COMPANIES HOPE YOU WILL DO IT RIDICULOUSLY EASY



By Natalie Harms

You Might Also Like



2014 MAZDA6 Review: Styling That Sets it Apart
MSN Autos



Out of the Box: 10 Amazing Underground Homes
Details.com



Cats Raise A Beautiful Husky Puppy...Now She Acts Like One...
LolBoom



15 Superfoods for People Over 50—Eat These Now
AARP

From Around the Web

- [Still Crazy – for Each Other – After All These Years](#) (AARP)
- [Seeing Double? 12 Celebrities You Didn't Know Had a Twin!](#) (Perez Hilton)
- [Celebs You Didn't Know Are Black](#) (PressroomVIP)
- [Celebs Who Are Super Religious \[PHOTOS\]](#) (Perez Hilton)
- [The Next Big Tattoo Trend Is Here](#) (StyleBistro)
- [Pamela Anderson's Breast Pops Out Because She Wears Lingerie to Event \(PHOTO\)](#) (Stirring Daily)

We Recommend

- [Man claims 6-year-old initiated sexual assault](#)
- [Photos show Johnny Manziel kissing Playboy model, rolling \\$20 bill in Las Vegas](#)
- [Houston billionaire to wed his son's mother-in-law, reports say](#)
- [16-year-old who claimed to make deal with devil to stand trial as adult in girl's death](#)
- [Embattled Kurds key in fight against Islamic State](#)
- [2 Houston men charged in 10-hour kidnap, sex assault of trick-or-treater](#)

Recommended by

Featured Galleries



Spring stunner on a private lake



Houston women toast birthdays in style



Best and worst role models for kids



Readers' cute photos of kids and pets

All Digital Access - only \$1/week

Stay connected with Houston's best local news source - get unlimited digital access today!

HoustonChronicle.com
Get the inside scoop with exclusive local stories every Houstonian should read.

iPad®
Read Houston's top stories anytime, anywhere.

Email
Get the most important stories sent straight to your inbox!

Daily eNewspaper
The pleasure of reading a newspaper online.

STAR ACCESS INSIDER
This exclusive membership program grants access to contests, VIP events and an inside look into the Houston Chronicle.

[CLICK HERE TO SUBSCRIBE](#)

(0) Comments

powered by:



Write your comment here

[Record video](#) [Upload video](#) [Upload image](#)
[Submit](#)
[Show: 10](#) | [20](#) | [50](#) | [Newest](#)

Follow

There are no comments yet.

[Local](#) [US & World](#) [Sports](#) [Business](#) [Entertainment](#) [Lifestyle](#) [Jobs](#) [Cars](#) [Real Estate](#)

Safarilower.com
Obama Waives Refi Requirement
 Click here to find out how much you can save.

Click Your Age:

18-25

26-35

36-45

46-55

56-65

66-75

OVER 75

LowerMyBills.com



Advertise With Us

Purchase ads for web, social media, and print via Hearst Media Services

Place a classified ad in the paper or online

Place a targeted ad in a specialty section such as a weekly or neighborhood publication

About Us

About the Houston Chronicle
 Executive Team
 Local Sales Teams
 Careers
 Community
 Legal Notices
 Contests
 Find&Save Local Shopping
 Ad Choices
 Corporate Home

Editions & Apps

iPad
 iPhone
 Android
 Blackberry
 Mobile Site
 HoustonChronicle.com
 eEdition Demo | Today's eEdition
 Chronicle in Education
 Chron.com Site Index

Subscriber Services

Get home delivery, manage your subscription, pay your bill with EZ Pay, and set a vacation hold for the paper

Local Business Directory

Contact Us

Customer Service
Newsroom Contacts

Follow Chron

 Facebook
 Twitter
 LinkedIn
 Newsletters
 RSS
 Social Media

[Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Your California Privacy Rights](#) | [Ad Choices](#)

Houston Chronicle | P.O. Box 4260 Houston, Texas 77210-4260

© Copyright 2014 Hearst Newspapers, LLC