

I found out about God's Love because of my cousin, Karen. After not getting into the New York Marathon for the second time through the lottery (I'm definitely NOT fast enough to qualify!), Karen, who works at God's Love, said "Why don't you join our team?" I thought it would be fun to run a marathon with my cousin, so I said, "Sure! What do I have to do?" It turned out I had to raise \$2500.

Raising \$2500 didn't seem like too crazy of a goal when I started fundraising, but as the deadline got closer and closer, I discovered that even though people have the best intentions of helping out, they tend to procrastinate. It was also a little tricky fundraising in California, where most people haven't heard of God's Love. I have a lot of ideas to get the ball rolling a little faster next time if I do it again! In the end, though, people were great and really came through. I ended up raising \$3575!

Unfortunately, the marathon was cancelled because of hurricane Sandy. I found out that there was an unofficial "Run Anyway" marathon in Central Park the next day, and even though I had stayed up too late, ate poorly, and probably drank too much the night before, I decided to show up and put in a few miles for my sponsors. I was really not expecting to see almost 2,000 people there! After about a lap and a half around the park, I started chatting with a woman named Ellen. I asked her if she was going to run "the whole thing", and she said that she had stayed up too late, ate poorly, and probably drank too much the night before, but now that she was already there and running, she might as well go for it and run all 26 miles. I decided that if she was going to go for it, I would too.

I lost track of Ellen after a while, and started chatting with a guy named Ramon. This year's New York Marathon was supposed to have been his first marathon, and he had traveled from North Carolina to run. He said that he had pretty much stayed up too late, ate poorly, and probably drank too much the night before (see a theme here?), but decided to come out anyway when he heard about the impromptu marathon. He was going to run the whole thing, too. We all came in at different times, but all three of us finished 26.2.

I got several shout-outs for God's Love while I was running, which was a nice morale booster. A lot of locals came out and gave the runners course support, as well. People showed up with bottles of water, Gu, bananas, pretzels, horns, funny signs...you name it. I even ran into Linnea from God's Love. I didn't know her and she didn't know me, but she spotted my shirt! I'm glad I was able to help God's Love and raise some funds that were much needed after the Sandy power outage. Hopefully I'll be able to give the New York Marathon another shot...right now I'm getting ready for LA in March!

