

[Week 26: Outdoor Enthusiast](#)

To hear and see Nashua Telegraph columnist Corey Perrine's interview and video of Steve Priest go to:

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By Corey Perrine

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Tearing your Achilles tendon is never a good thing. However, for Steve Priest of Bedford, it was a blessing in disguise. Thirty years ago, Steve did just that during a game of pickup basketball.

"I dropped to the floor and turned around expecting to see who had taken my legs out from under me. Nobody was there, the damage was done," Priest said.

During his healing process – noticing the 25 pounds he had packed on – doctors told him he had a 50/50 chance of rupturing the same tendon again. Stubborn and determined, he wanted to prove them wrong.

"I went down to my cellar and rummaged through old boxes of shoes," Priest said. "I found my 10-year-old ankle-high Army combat boots and reminisced to myself about boot camp and its daily mandate to hit the road running."

From that day forward, the goal progressed from 1 mile, to a local race, to the Boston Marathon. It spread to hiking, paddling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, orienteering, biking, the National Senior Games, swimming, boomeranging, golfing, biathlons, triathlons and other outdoor activities.

It's safe to say Priest is competitive, but more importantly, he knows how to drink life in.

"I've taken from Henry David Thoreau's 'Walden' . . . I never wanted to discover that I had not lived."

This philosophy, coupled with his adventures, lead Priest to write his first book, "Outdoor Enthusiast - Never say, 'I wish I had,'" borrowing from that Thoreau quote. And his publishers even dubbed him a "master outdoorsman," even though no such official title exists.

"It's important for me because I would like to motivate others to get outside and enjoy the outdoors," Priest said. "It's just given so much to me in terms of health and bonding with my friends and family."

These days, you can find Stephen blogging about his latest adventures at www.outdooradventurers.blogspot.com. His book can be purchased at www.outdoorsteve.com.

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