



# The Strider

Official Newsletter of the  
Sun Country Striders, Ltd.

Volume 22, Number 5

December 2004

## President's Corner

By: Walter Baker

We are well into the Holiday Season, Thanksgiving and beyond... Christmas and the New Year to come. And, we are about to wrap up our Calendar Year of Sun Country Strider Events. We had a fine Walk...our replacement Nutcracker Suite Walk...out at the La Vina Winery in La Union on the weekend of 20-21 November. You all, and our friends from around close, turned out in nice numbers. The setting was pleasant, the management of La Vina was most supportive and cooperative and the weather didn't treat us too badly. Thanks for sharing the occasion! We now have but our Christmas Lights Walk, 18 December, and we bring 2004 Regular Events to an end. The Christmas Lights Guided Walks will again start and finish at the Trails West Club House. Registration will commence at 5:00 PM, with the first walkers out on the trail as close to 5:30 PM as possible. Refreshments at the Club House will follow the Walks. I hope you all will again turn out in goodly numbers to enjoy the Walks and to share in the early festivities of Christmas. I also hope that a group of you carolers might come along. I've always enjoyed the Walk through Old Mesilla with caroling all the way. I remember you Wilsons. You were great!

A copy of the YRE brochure should accompany this Newsletter. You will see that January-March will be our Hosted Walks...an opportunity to get acquainted with our YRE Walks. You will also note that we are moving our Space Murals Museum Walk into town and the new Walk, a Downtown (I like to call it our Old Town Walk.) Walk will start/finish at the COAS Bookstore on the Downtown Mall. We hope you will

enjoy this new Walk and the history of our city associated with it. We'll certainly welcome any comments and/or proposed improvements to this new Walk. We believe it will well serve our Club and visitors to our City.

While I thought our October Newsletter would be our last Newsletter of the year, and in closing expressed myself accordingly, let me again wish each and every one of you the very Merriest of Christmases and the Most Happy and Prosperous of New Years. We've had a great year! May next year be equally as great and wonderful!!

Fondly, Walt

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Below is a listing of our **UPCOMING EVENTS** for 2005. Mark your calendar and be sure to participate in all these events.

**Jan 8 & 9**, 8:00 - 11:00 AM ... Best Western Mesilla Valley Inn - Hosted Year-Round Walk.

**Feb 5 & 6**, 8:00 - 11:00 AM ... Las Cruces Hilton - Hosted Year-Round Walk.

**Mar 11 & 12**, 8:00 - 11:00 AM ... Coas Bookstore - Hosted Year-Round Walk.

**Apr 16 & 17**, 8:00 - 4:00 PM ... Sonoma Ranch Golf Course, Las Cruces, New Mexico walk.

**May 21 & 22**, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM ... New Mexico State University walk.

**June - August**, HAVE A NICE SUMMER!

**Sep 10 & 11**, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM ... Zia Middle School, Las Cruces, NM walk.

**Oct 15 & 16**, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM ... Fort Selden, Radium Springs, NM walk.

**Nov 19 & 20**, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM ... Walk at the La Vina Winery in La Union, New Mexico.

**Dec 17**, 5:00 PM ... Christmas Lights Guided Night Walk (5:30 - 8:00 PM), Trails West Clubhouse, 1450 Avenida de Mesilla, Mesilla, New Mexico.



The Start-Finish tables for our walk at the La Vina Winery near La Union. From left, an unidentified participant, Louis Bevacqua, Randy Ranel, Walter Baker, and Robert Macklin.

## Things are a Changin'

As most of you know, the Sun Country Striders has sponsored a Year Round Walk at the Space Murals Museum near Organ for several years. For the last few years, participation has continued to decline. Since the primary course was through areas where written directions were not adequate, trail markings were required. For unknown reasons, some in the area apparently didn't like the ribbons used to mark the course, and would remove them. This made the course work intensive, and along with the low participation, it was decided to close the Space Murals Museum walk and move the event to historic downtown Las Cruces. So, beginning 1 January 2005, there will be an interesting walk with the start-finish point at the Coas Bookstore located at 317 North Main Street in the Downtown Mall. The walk takes you past many old, interesting buildings and the walk directions gives you their interesting history.



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A member of the American Volkssport Association (AVA) in the  
International Federation of Popular Sports (IVV)



## Meet and Get to Know Your Club Treasurer! Doyle Piland



Doyle Piland is the current Treasurer for the Sun Country Striders. He was born on January 7, 1937 in Foil, Ozark County, Missouri. He graduated from Ava High School, in Ava, Missouri in 1955. Doyle's high school days were sort of average, with some football and track as extracurricular activity, in addition to his studies in preparation for engineering curriculum at the college level. However, after graduation and before fall semester, he went to work in Tulsa, Oklahoma as a welder. For an 18 year old, the pay seemed so good, there just didn't seem to be a reason to go to college, so he just decided to skip college. However, after working as a welder for about 18 months, it became clear that he didn't want to do that for the rest of his working career. While looking for other employment, the question always came up, asking if he had completed his military service (draft) and they would say "come back after you complete your service." So, to take care of that problem, he started his career in the US Army in 1957. His 22½ year Army career included assignments at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas; Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland; Fort Hood, Texas; Germany; Redstone Arsenal, Alabama; Okinawa, Japan; Camp Kilmer, New Jersey; Fort Bliss, Texas; White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico; Korea; and Kwajalein Missile Range. In 1975, almost 20 years after he decided he didn't really need a college degree, he completed his studies and was awarded a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering by New Mexico State University.

While serving in Okinawa in 1960-1964, he met and married his wife Sumiko

Yonamine and they moved around the globe together to the various assignments, except the one year assignment to Kwajalein. While assigned to Germany in 1978, they went on their first Volksmarch. They were immediately hooked. Before their departure in 1979, they had completed over 75 events. Doyle retired from active military duty effective September 1, 1979 with the rank of Chief Warrant Officer 3.

In March 1980, Doyle accepted a civil service position with the Army Material Test and Evaluation Directorate (ARMTE) at White Sands Missile Range as an Electronics Engineer. Life was good! But, Doyle & Sumiko missed the volksmarches they had grown to love in Germany. In September 1981, they found an article about a "Global Volksmarch" to be held at Holloman Air Force Base near Alamogordo. Of course they went and found information about the fledgling American Volkssport Association and contacted them for information on how to form a club in the Las Cruces area. With that information, a lot of convincing friends that they really wanted to help form a club, and several meetings of the newly interested, the Sun Country Striders Volkssport Club was formed and officially chartered in the American Volkssport Association in February 1982. Doyle served as the President for the first three years of the club's existence. He has served in several capacities over the past 22+ years. In 1985, he was elected as the Director of the American Volkssport Association Southwest Region. The Southwest Region at that time included New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, and the mountain time zone of Texas. He served two years in that capacity.

He worked for almost six years with the Test Operations group for the Patriot Air Defense System, with prime duty as the Environmental Test Conductor. Following the Patriot assignment, he moved to the Microwave and Automated Systems Branch, Applied Sciences Division of ARMTE where he did instrumentation design and system analysis in support of various test programs at White Sands.

The final six years of Doyle's career was with the Nuclear Effects Directorate, later re-designated the Directorate for Applied

Technology, Test and Simulation (DATTS). In that assignment he worked with instrumentation design and analysis for various system test programs, both military and private industry, mainly in the area of Electromagnetic Radiation Effects testing. He retired with 40 years of total active federal service at the end of August 1997.

After retirement, Doyle volunteered to assist with the American Volkssport Association (AVA) Website. He redesigned the events and club listing pages and updated them each week using information e-mailed to him from AVA headquarters. He continued this for almost six years. He served on the AVA's Internet Committee and was instrumental in developing the capability to link the events and clubs listing pages directly to the AVA's database, which automatically updated the website listings and did not require Doyle's manual updates. When this was completed in 2003, he then finished his association with the AVA website.

Doyle developed the Sun Country Striders' website around 1995, and has maintained it since that time.

In the spring of 1999, Doyle became involved with the White Sands Missile Range Historical Foundation and became the Volunteer Archivist for the White Sands Missile Range Museum. He currently works with several volunteers - other retired White Sands employees - documenting and cataloging various Archival Material for the Museum's Archival Holdings. In addition, he is the Webmaster for the Museum Website at <http://www.wsmr-history.org/> and is a member of the White Sands Missile Range Historical Foundation.

In June of 2001, Sumiko was diagnosed with Lung Cancer. After debilitating chemotherapy, which didn't seem to affect the cancer, Sumiko lost her battle in March 2002.

Doyle has participated in over 550 IVV Sanctioned events and walked over 27,500 Kilometers since he started volksmarching in Germany in 1978. He is currently serving his second term as the Club's Treasurer. In addition, Doyle maintains the mailing list database and membership records, as well as edits the Club Newsletter.

**new balance** 

**Official Shoe Sponsor** of the AVA and its member Clubs. Quality, comfortable walking shoes at reasonable prices.

**Board of Directors**

**Elected members:**

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**Hosted Year-Round Walks  
Start the New Year**

Each year in January, February, and March, we start our volksmarch year with hosted Year-Round Walks at our three Year-Round Event (YRE) locations. Hosted YREs are the regular YRE, except there will be someone at the start-finish point to help you register and answer questions.

This year, we start with the events at the Best Western, Mesilla Valley Inn. One of those events was featured in our April 2004 Newsletter. Some of the sights you see on the other Mesilla Event are at right. This event is a Civil War Battlefield event. Did you know that? Make sure you come, do the walk and learn all the details.

In February, we walk the original Las Cruces YRE (started in 1987) with the start-finish at the Hilton.

Then in March, we introduce the Historic Downtown walk featured in the "Things are a Changin'" article on page one.



The Vestal Bowman House on Bowman Street in Mesilla Park, along the alternate course for the Mesilla walk



El Patio Bar on the Southwest corner of the Plaza in Mesilla.



The Historic Fountain Theater about a block South of the Southeast corner of the Plaza in Mesilla.



The San Albino Church forms the North side of the Plaza in Mesilla.



Historic San Albino Cemetery in Mesilla.



The Gazebo in the center of the Plaza in Mesilla.



**A Cotton Pickin' Volksmarch?**

Not exactly. This is a cotton field along the trail at the walk in La Union.



Along the trail of the La Union walk. Pecan grove on the left and cotton field on the right. A walk in the country.

