



The Strider

Official Newsletter of the
Sun Country Striders, Ltd.

Volume 22, Number 3

August 2004

President's Corner

By: Walter Baker

I hope all of you enjoyed a summer of travel and good times. My wife, Elsa, and I did. Our 8,500 miles of travel taking us to Salt Lake City; Pittsburg, PA; and Louisville, KY among other places for some eleven official and personal events permitted us to enjoy four meaningful Conventions, meet old friends and make new ones, see a good deal of the Country and to share in a family reunion and my 55th High School Class reunion. (Didn't get to do too much Walking...too busy at meetings and too much driving.)

While summer is not over, as the calendar and the temperatures will assure us, we are moving into our next series of Regular Walks. We start with our Alameda Elementary School Walk on 11 and 12 September. (Check elsewhere in this Newsletter for the other three 2004 walks following the Alameda Walk.) Let's turnout for this Alameda Walk and get to see and visit with each other again. Perhaps we can share some of our summertime experiences. Your Board of Directors has approved the 2005 Regular Events schedule. The paper mill for 2005 Regular and YREs is already grinding.

Apparently you all didn't work too hard to get rid of the "old gang." So, you have most of your last year's officers back again this coming year. Henrietta decided family needs were pressing enough that she should not run for reelection. We're going to miss her. We did, however, come up with another dynamic member, Liz Johnson, who will serve as our Vice President. Liz has done great things thus far with Club administration and Walk/Walk Sites Start/Finish Points



Having dinner at our annual General Membership Meeting on May 29 are, from left, Linden Ranel, Randy Ranel, Elsa Baker, and our President, Walter Baker.

suggestions and improvements. And, she's really into walking. I'm not sure that she has completed the A to Z Walk Program, but I do know she worked the upper end of the alphabet this past summer, walking in Xenia, Ohio and Zionsville, Indiana. We're glad to have Liz on board. Henrietta, we thank you for your many services and your most pleasant personality gracing our Board and Walks for these past several years! May we continue to enjoy your presence at our Walks.

I want to thank you all for honoring me with another year as your President. I assure you that your Board and I will work hard at continuing to make Sun Country Striders one of AVA's more prominent Clubs.

I wish to thank all of you Board members for your tremendous support of the past. May we continue doing good things for our Club and our sport! Fondly, Walt

General Membership Meeting

On May 29, 2004, our club held its annual General Membership Meeting at the Dynasty Restaurant. Unfortunately, not near all club members attended. That is unfortunate for both you who didn't attend and those who did. It would have been nice for most club members to have been there so we could get to know each other and make the club more cohesive.

However, those who were there had an enjoyable meal and interaction with other club members. Next year, let's all try to set the time aside and come to the meeting.

After dinner, there was a short business meeting. Joanne Poulos, chair of the nominating committee presented the slate of officers selected by the committee. There began no nomination from the floor the slate was elected by acclamation. See Page 2.



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



Below is a listing of our **UPCOMING EVENTS** for the remainder of 2004 and for all of 2005. Mark your calendar and be sure to participate in all these events.

2004

Sep 11 & 12, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM ... Alameda Elementary School, Las Cruces, NM walk.

Oct 16 & 17, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM ... Fort Selden, Radium Springs, NM walk.

Nov 20 & 21, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM ... Walk at the La Viña Winery in La Union, New Mexico.

Dec 18, 5:00 PM ... Christmas Lights Guided Night Walk (5:30 - 8:00 PM), Trails West Clubhouse, 1450 Avenida de Mesilla, Mesilla, New Mexico.

2005

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 Viña 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.



One of the nice things at our annual General Membership meeting on May 29 -- dinner!! From left is Linden Ranel, Randy Ranel, Elsa Baker - hiding behind Randy, Walter Baker, Frank Conway, Chirstine Conway, almost totally hidden is Louis Bevacqua, then Robert Macklin, Joy Macklin, and barely visable Iva Stanford, Joanne Poulos, Bill Poulos, and Doyle Piland behind the camera.

RECOGNITION & AWARDS

The June/July and the August/September 2004 issues of The American Wanderer lists the following IVV awards for local Volkssporters:

Events (number)

- 75 - Elisabeth Johnson
- 100 - Elisabeth Johnson
- 125 - Elisabeth Johnson
- 425 - Walter Baker

Distance (kilometers)

- 1000 - Elisabeth Johnson
- 1500 - Elisabeth Johnson
- 16,000 - Walter Baker

Congratulations to all. Whether you are just starting out, or have been doing it for a long time, keep it up.

Also, congratulations to Elisabeth Johnson for completing her "PhD" in the AVA's College Campus special program. You can see Elisabeth's name and the names of all those honored so far at URL http://www.ava.org/clubs/reg_northeast/degrees.html.

Organ YRE Being Moved

Beginning 1 January 2005, the Year Round Event currently at the Space Murals Museum in Organ will be located at the Coas Bookstore and the walk will be through the historic districts of Downtown Las Cruces.

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

Board of Directors

Elected members:

Walter Baker, President
Phone: 505-525-3990
E-mail: baker@newmexico.usa.com

Elisabeth Johnson, Vice-President
Phone: 505-521-7304
E-mail: elisabethjohn@msn.com

Randy Ranel, Vice-President Trails
Phone: 505-525-0495
E-mail: ranlinranel@zianet.com

Louis Bevacqua, Secretary
Phone: 505-522-0411
E-mail: None

Doyle Piland, Treasurer
Phone: 505-523-7034
E-mail: dpiland@zianet.com

At-large members:

Carol Gaines, Member
Phone: 505-524-4203
E-mail: None

Robert Macklin, Member
Phone: 505-524-8032
E-mail: macklin@zianet.com

Joanne Poulos, Member
Phone: 505-522-3513
E-mail: watch4dog@zianet.com

Meet and Get to Know Your New Vice-President! Elisabeth Johnson



Two years ago, Elisabeth Johnson went on her first volksmarch on the NMSU campus. There were choices of 5k, 10k and 20k. Listening to Walter Baker describe the walks and activities of the club, she decided to try the 5k, since it was her “first walk” and she hasn’t stopped. In fact, it is often, when traveling to visit her daughters or by herself, that she will complete two 10k’s in one day.

She especially enjoys the special programs offered by the American Volksmarching Association. The College Campus Program requires five 10k walks on different college campuses for an A.A., five more for a B.A., five more for a M.A. and a total of 20, all on different campuses for a PhD. This program she completed in June by walking the AVA sanctioned walk at Purdue University, during a visit to her daughter’s home in Hinsdale, Ill. After the Hinsdale and Chicago walks, they went to Indiana and Ohio completing eight 10 km walks in one week.

She has almost completed the “A to Z” special program. That one requires a walk for each letter of the alphabet, and she lacks only the “Q.”

Her special program booklets include the Lewis and Clark program, California

Heritage, Route 66, Civil War and Ten More for National Heritage. She’s a goal-oriented person and completing programs gives her the incentive to keep on walking.

What got her “hooked on walking?” It all started with a question from her doctor. “What do you do for exercise?” That started a torrential flood of activities including involvement in Senior Olympics Archery, Estimated Time Walk, 1 mile and 5k cycling. Elisabeth says, “it’s fun and I keep setting goals and practicing for the next time. I always compete against myself and try to better my time or total score.”

Elisabeth lived in Duluth, Minnesota for most of her first 20 years. College took her to Columbia, Missouri, Peoria, Illinois and back to the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. She majored in Art and dreamed of continuing at Cranbrook Institute of Art in Michigan for her master’s, but instead decided to give New York City a whirl. She worked at Norcross Greeting Card Company there and then Carnegie Endowment for International Peace where she was publications secretary.

She always said she would never marry a “Johnson” in Minnesota! “Too many Johnsons and Andersons!” After one year in New York, her college boy friend hitchhiked to the Big Apple and asked her if she would get married in New York. The answer was “yes” and they moved to Buffalo where he had obtained a position as a research chemist. Four daughters later, a move to a Detroit suburb and a tragic accident, left her a young widow. She went back to school, at Wayne State University in Detroit to earn her teaching credential, and then accepted a job in Elsinore, California as the District Art Consultant. Elisabeth says, “the teachers’ salaries were double what I was offered in Michigan and I decided it would be less expensive to clothe the girls (no boots, mittens, winter coats) and heat the house! And, no snow to shovel.” From Elsinore, they moved to Simi Valley, California and she taught ceramics, filmmaking, photography, drawing and painting and a variety of craft classes in a neighboring school district for twelve years.

Eight of those years, she took her daughters to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan,

where she was arts and crafts director at Pioneer Camp, in the Hiawatha National Forest. She participated in leading week long canoe trips and backpacking trips with groups of campers.

One by one, the daughters were married and started their own families. Elisabeth decided to start a business, which she called “Pot Pets.” She has designed more than one hundred critters to sit on the edge of plant pots. She traveled to arts and crafts shows from California to Florida and enjoyed a wholesale market across the country. You could find Pot Pets from Disneyland to Yellowstone National Park. She still creates and sells them on Saturdays at the Farmer’s and Crafts Market in Las Cruces, when she isn’t volksmarching or cycling.

September marks her third year anniversary as the Gift Shop Manager at University Terrace Good Samaritan, where she enjoys making custom greeting cards for the residents and sells “wheel chair pockets,” “walker pockets” and adult bibs she has sewn.

Elisabeth was active in the local genealogy society for many years. Curiosity about her roots, an interest in history and a love of travel, took her to Salt Lake City several times and New England. Her first trip was to Ft. Wayne, Indiana on a genealogy Elderhostel program. She says, “when you start digging, one piece of information leads to another and you can’t wait to put the pieces of the puzzle together. I discovered ancestors in Plymouth, Boston and Salem, Massachusetts and I found enough documentation to join the Mayflower Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, Women Descendants of Founders and Patriots and Women Descendants of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company. On my mother’s side of the family, my great-great grandfather was a privateer during the Revolutionary War. He earned enough money to complete his education at Dartmouth and become a minister. He traveled on horseback as a missionary to the Indians and pioneer families as far west as what is now New York State. He performed christenings, marriages, distributed bibles, and gave sermons. I also discovered living “cousins” from Pennsylvania, Michigan, Connecticut and Massachusetts, Finland, Munich, Germany and Canada.”

She hopes to go back to New England some day and go on the volksmarches.



At left is a better view of some of those at the annual General Membership Meeting on May 29. From left is Louis Bevacqua, Robert Macklin, Joy Macklin, and Iva Stanford. For those that don't know, Iva is Robert Macklin's mother and a longtime club member.



Past Vice-President, **Henrietta C. Vargas**

Henrietta (Henrie) Vargas had been our vice-president for several years. Unfortunately, due to family health issues, Henrie was unable to devote adequate time to the vice-president duties and did not seek re-election. We all want to thank Henrie for her service to the club and community. We wish her and her family the best and look forward to her return to active participation soon. **Thank you Henrie!!**

