

The Strider



May/June 2022

The Newsletter of the Alley Pond Striders

Volume XLI
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FRONT PAGE NEWS

I always find the end of June to be a reflective time, especially this year. As life begins the return to “normal,” or should I say the “new normal,” I realize how quickly time goes by and just how important Alley Pond Park and the Striders have been to people during these trying times. Having a place and support of others has been key to many of us making it through each day. Now things are improving and we have the opportunity to really get back. On Saturday, June 18th we had our Annual Picnic and you could not ask for a nicer day or a better turnout. We are planning our next club events – City Stride, the Ocean-to-Sound Relay and the NYC Marathon and then the end of year Holiday Party...but let’s not rush things...it’s Summer Time!!

With the start of summer and the accompanying temperatures, I caution everyone to make sure to hydrate. I remember George Zink (an early President of the Striders and an amazing runner) telling us that if you start drinking when you are thirsty it is already too late. Following this advice, I say drink early and drink often (that is, hydrating fluids)!

As we enter the second half of the year, I would like to encourage all Striders to come out to the Park and join a walk or run – especially for our Refreshment Days. Also, consider joining the Executive Board. As we get to the end of the summer, our VP Sara will be starting the process of looking for folks to run for a position on the Board. The Executive Board is the key leadership group that helps plan each year’s events. I would like to suggest that most members do not see all the efforts that go into planning and executing the club events – from scheduling, park permits and coordinating the actual event there is a lot that happens behind the scenes (or BTS as they say now-a-days). When these events seem to go off seamlessly, I would suggest that just means the Board is doing a good job.

In the hit play “Hamilton,” there is a scene and catchy song about being in “The Room Where it Happens” – where Alexander talks about being involved in the decisions being made. I cannot get anyone a starring role on Broadway, but if you join the Executive Board you will be “in the room where it happens” and you can help make it all come together.

Finally, I would like to wish everyone an enjoyable and relaxing summer. If these past two+ years have taught us anything, it is that our time is precious and life can turn on a dime!

Enjoy the park and find balance, Ken Kaiser

TALK ON THE PATH - WHAT'S HAPPENING IN AND OUT OF THE PARK

Happy July Birthdays

Frances Taylor (7th), Ruth Molano (11th), Jacquie Haberer (13th), Steve Turkeltaub (14th), Charlene Mulhall (16th), Laura Weisbord (16th), Danielle Weisbord (16th), Sara Jablonski (17th), Lee Dunworth (18th), Godfrey England (21st), Diane Grunthal (21st), Joby Jacob (24th), Ruth Mezistrano 24th, John Sassone (26th), and Pam Foster (27th).

Warm Welcome to our Newest Striders

Tom Bruckman of Flushing, Anthony DiNatale of Beechurst and Mario Raciti of Oakland Gardens.

Condolences

To Nella Carravetta on the passing of her sister Gina Lippis in May after a short illness. Gina often walked in the park and participated in Strider events. She will be missed by all.

Feel Better

Thinking of Carlos Noriega and sending our positive thoughts and prayers that he's feeling better and stronger with every day.

Annual Picnic

A good time was had by all on Saturday, June 18th. We couldn't have asked for better weather and we had a really nice turnout. Thanks to everyone who worked so hard to pull this together led by Rosalie and Maria.



To help ring in Summer—this newsletter features ice cold treats from Rosalie Hatch!

Please send any items for Talk on the Path to ap-striders@aol.com



RUNNERS REPORT BY COACH ROB PASQUAL

After successfully completing another edition of our own race, the Striders can now turn to their own races as they prime themselves for the big races in the fall.

Our May/June results:

5/21 NYRR Brooklyn Half Marathon:

Vivien Lim 1:27:30 1st place AG
Ira Gardner 2:27:31
Gerry Ruiz 2:51:03

5/22 Hance Family 5k:

Peter Hoey 34:14
Lynn Henry 38:21 2nd place AG

5/28 Rally for Rebecca:

Fran Kraus-Schmidt 28:01 2nd Place AG
Lynn Henry 37:12 1st Place AG

5/29 Long Beach 10 Miler:

Rob Pasqual 1:27:04 2nd place AG
Gerry Ruiz 2:09:07

6/2 Police Appreciation 5K:

Laughlin Whalen 33:19 3rd place AG
George Waters 33:19
Gerry Ruiz 43:47

6/18 NYRR Queens 10K:

Vivien Lim 39:24 2nd Place AG
Pat Mitrofanis 49:15 1st place AG
Andrea Salis 51:33
Sue Corrie 1:08:17
Gerry Ruiz 1:20:10

6/18-19 NYS Senior Games:

Helen Pineda-Pasqual:
1500 technical walk 2nd place
1500 run 2nd place

Rob Pasqual:

10K road race 2nd place AG
800-meter run 3rd place AG
1500-meter run 3rd place AG
4 X 100 meter relay 1st place AG

Gerry Ruiz completing the Long Beach 10-Miler!



Looking ahead I'd like to see a Strider presence at the NYRR Club Team Championship on Sunday, 7/31. We haven't done this race as a team in a loooong time and it's an excellent opportunity to wear your green. And yes, it a Marathon points race.

It's also time to start thinking about doing Ocean to Sound. Last year our Mixed Master team placed first. It's always a nice party. And if you finish soon enough you can get some good snacks. Contact Helen, Pat or myself if you're interested.

OUT-HIKING COVID BY DIANE AND ALLEN GRUNTHAL

Once Covid struck in early 2020, convinced that Allen and I should do our best to eat healthy and continue to exercise, we started our hiking, biking and skiing adventure, traveling to 15 different states. We initially selected hotels which were contactless and afforded access to rooms without going through corridors or elevators. Often we had a kitchenette, where we cooked our own meals or procured restaurant takeout.

Every National Park or National Forest or State Park in which we hiked was distinctive in a special way. Our first drive in 2020 was to Acadia National Park in Maine, a magical place on Mt. Desert Island; one of the top 10 most-visited national parks in the country. There are numerous trails in this park that will satisfy those who want a serene nature walk to those that cater to adrenaline seekers. We also hiked in Camden Hills State Park.

Our next drive was to Shenandoah National Park in Virginia, a land bursting with cascading waterfalls, spectacular vistas, fields of wildflowers, and quiet wooded hollows, with over 200,000 acres of protected lands that are haven to deer, songbirds, and black bear. Here we went on 17 hikes over 11 days. Everyone told us before we left that we had to hike Old Rag, the park's iconic peak, which Outside Online considered one of the 25 best hikes in the world.

Winter 2020-2021 brought us to Vermont many times, with its strict Covid testing and masking requirements. Skiing was different in that you had to mask up on ski lift lines and one could only stay in the ski lodge for lunch for 1/2 hour. You had to warm up fast. In between ski days we also snowshoed.

After ski season, the year 2021 was to usher in trips to the Berkshire Mountains of western Massachusetts, the Catskill Mountains of NY, the White Mountains of New Hampshire, and trips to the central Adirondacks and the southern Adirondacks. Adirondack Park is the largest park in the continental U.S. At 6 million acres, it is bigger than Yosemite, Yellowstone, Glacier & Grand Canyon National Parks combined (yes we've been to all 4). Is it any wonder we return again and again to the Adirondacks.

Also in 2021, we traveled to eastern Pennsylvania where we climbed up the very popular Mt. Tammany in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation area. It is a 4.8 mile 1300 feet of ascent; a glorious hike which climbs steeply uphill to a fantastic overlook of the Delaware Water Gap and Mt. Minsi across the way. We climbed the equally popular Mt. Minsi. Also on our hiking list was Big Pocono State Park, Hickory Run State Park & Bear Creek Preserve.

The highlight of 2021 was our hiking trip to South Dakota; the scenery was unlike anything we had ever seen. Badlands National Park is a place of unimaginable natural beauty. In its more than 242,000 acres; we saw evolution on display. The otherworldly appearance that makes walking through much of the Badlands like exploring a strange and distant planet; it is the result of millions of years of erosion of the soft sedimentary rocks. In Badlands we walked through a maze of canyons, gullies, ridges and mesas that occasionally give up ancient secrets like fossils of extinct animals that lived 20 to 40 million years ago.

Among the larger animals that call the park home are bison, bighorn sheep, mountain lions, coyotes and whitetail deer. Smaller mammals you may come across range from jackrabbits and prairie dogs to raccoons and porcupines. We also hiked in Buffalo Gap



National Grassland, Wind Cave National Park and Custer State Park, which included a climb up 7242' Black Elk Peak - South Dakota's biggest mountain. We hiked among bison, elk, goats and prairie dogs - imagine our angst when we had to bushwhack around bison lying on our hiking path. You don't want to get too close to these guys. The best part of South Dakota was the cordiality of the people.

A totally different experience was spending two weeks in November, 2021, exploring the southeastern coast of the US, basing ourselves in Virginia Beach VA, Wilmington NC and Myrtle Beach SC. We did lots of flat hiking/walking in wildlife refuges, town parks and ocean and river boardwalks. We biked on the East Coast Greenway and dined on crabs, oysters, gumbo, collard greens and yes, grits. The people in South Carolina are most congenial, with strangers regularly greeting us hello. We concluded we'd love to live in a warmer climate, but flat walking 100% of the time is not for us.

December's two weeks in southern Arizona brought us to truly unique hiking venues in Saguaro National Park (pronounced Suh-WAH-row) with its signature saguaro cactus. The saguaro is the park's



centerpiece along with the brilliant gold of the Mexican poppy, penstemons, lupines, desert marigolds, brittlebushes, and globe mallows. A most delightful hiking experience was in the McDowell Sonoran Land Conservancy, in the upscale Scottsdale area. The McDowell Sonoran Preserve protects more than 30,000 acres of pristine desert in north Scottsdale. This is a hiker's paradise, with more than 115 miles of trails, including more than 60 miles of shared-use trails.

Winter 2021-2022 was a better skiing experience in Vermont, with most Covid restrictions lifted. After the ski season, we were back to Pennsylvania, this time central PA, where we biked with our bike club, the Bicycle Club of Philadelphia, a welcoming and amiable club with bike trips and picnics, each with rides for all levels.

Throughout the years, we have hiked in 26 national parks and numerous state parks and national forests, and I never looked carefully at the trees as I was hiking, until we hiked in Allegheny National Forest and Cook Forest State Park in western Pennsylvania in 2022. It was absolutely mesmerizing to see the trees in the Forest Cathedral which are 300 years old or older. Some began growing back in the late 1400s or early 1500s. We walked through canopies of trees which have been standing for 300, 400 or even 500 years. Towering white pines, ancient eastern hemlocks, white and chestnut oaks, red maples, and cucumber trees. Many of the magnificent pine and hemlock trees exceed three feet in diameter with the tallest pines approaching 180 feet.

I had always considered the breath-taking massifs in the Austrian alps to be my favorite place to hike. Now, we found our beautiful country offers equally spectacular panoramas and a panoply of awe-inspiring vistas. Next Up: Smoky Mountain National Park!



ALLEY POND STRIDERS ANNUAL PICNIC REPORT BY VP SARA JABLONSKI

Success! After a two-year hiatus that's the only word to describe this year's picnic. We could not have asked for a more perfect day. It was sunny, but not hot with a nice breeze. Who needs hot when you are standing around (except maybe Larry who was operating the grill and got a bit more than hot)? What a great way to bring together Alley Pond members. I estimated about 50 people at the picnic, BUT Astrid Georges questioned my estimate...so I counted...and it was 52 Striders! That doesn't include children, late arrivals, and four legged friends – a great turnout.

Behind every successful event is a great woman and I want to thank Rosalie Hatch for all her worrying and hard work. When I thanked Rosalie, she told me behind every person is a supporting team. So with that in mind, I would like to thank everyone who helped make this year's picnic a success. Hopefully next year's will be even better!





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The Alley Pond Striders is a running and walking club with over 225 members and serves the communities of Eastern Queens and western Nassau County, NY.

For over 30 years, The Striders continue to actively promote the enjoyment of walking and running in Alley Pond Park. The Alley Pond 5 Mile Challenge is one of the largest local races in the New York City area.

The only membership requirement is a desire to take in the sights of Queens' largest forested area on your own two feet.

A group of Alley Pond Striders can be found any day of the week at the Park House located on Winchester Blvd. near the intersection of Union Turnpike. Members enjoy walks and runs of various distances and paces through the Park and surrounding area.

WALKS AND RUNS BEGIN at 9:00 am at Alley Pond Park House on weekends and 9:00 am during the week.

**For Membership Information
 Please contact Lynn Henry
 at
 516 437-8715 or
lynnahenry@yahoo.com**

Board of Directors

President: Ken Kaiser
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Membership Chair: Lynn Henry
 Phone: (516) 437-8715

E-mail: lynnahenry@yahoo.com

Dues: \$20 Single Membership
 \$30 Family Membership/Couples

Members joining on or after October 1st of each year are automatically members for the following year.

The Strider is the newsletter of The Alley Pond Striders and is prepared monthly by: Managing Director: Ken Kaiser (Please send information and articles to apstriders@aol.com)
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