

The Strider



Jan/Feb 2023

The Newsletter of the Alley Pond Striders

Volume XLII
Issue 1/2

FRONT PAGE NEWS

The new year - 2023, has gotten off to a good start. Despite the lack of snow and any real winter, these last two months have been excellent for walking and running. On the very first day of January, a large group of Striders met at nearby Oakland Lake for a wonderful walk around the picturesque setting. By early February Coach Rob once again put together a spectacular 13th edition of the Alley Bowl; and, we once again enjoyed our Annual Dinner Dance.

This year's Dinner Dance was held on a Sunday and shifted one hour earlier as we continue to try to increase attendance at this wonderful club event. If you have any ideas on how we can increase attendance next year, please let us know...or even better join the Dinner Dance Committee!

For my part, I not only enjoyed the Dinner Dance, but I was also a bit surprised. I was surprised with a 25-Year Membership Certificate. Amazing...25 years. In looking back over those 25 years, I recall the first Membership Meeting with then President Lynn Henry talking about a 'kinder and gentler' administration. John & Judi Rettmer who opened their house for Five Mile Challenge Race applications where a group of Striders would get together to fold, label and organize by zip codes these applications for US Mail distribution. And, of course, I remember some of the great Strider leaders we have lost: Stan Zibulsky, Trudy & Andy Hodas, Debbie Pesa and Linda Schultheiss. I will never forget the Board Meetings hosted by Linda and Howard. I remember Mel Kaplan - frequent Walkers Rep. who always said to the runners...'one day, you will all be walkers'! Mel taught me that despite having different ideas on **how to make** the Striders a better club, we all **want the best** Alley Pond Striders possible.

Now as I move into my next 25 years with the Striders, I see leaders like this year's Strider of the Year - Ronit Guriel. Ronit has been with the Striders for 35 years! She has been on the Board many times over those years. And, the one thing Ronit does that is priceless...she shows up. She helps at the Refreshment Days, she volunteers and helps out at all the club events, including the recent Alley Bowl where she worked with Sara Jablonski at registration. I encourage all Striders to start by just showing up. You don't have to coordinate a club walk like Dorothy or a relay race like Coach Rob - but being there and helping out makes a tremendous difference. Even just doing one thing - even if you think it's a small thing - will contribute to the success of these events.

On a different note, I needed to report that our annual Challenge Race is being postponed this year. After much discussions lead by Laughlin Whelan and the Race Committee, a few issues were raised. (1) our race did not do well last year with the impacted Green Line Path as a 5k; (2) there is significant number of races on our race day; and (3) we are having difficulties getting sponsors since we don't advertise enough or in the right places. During this next year, we need your assistance in redesigning the approach to our 5-Mile Challenge. Please talk to Laughlin about your ideas - they are vital to getting our race back!

Stay well and find balance, Ken Kaiser

Talk on the Path - What's Happening In and Out Of the Park

Happy March Birthday to:

JoAnn Kelly (3rd), Tony Florido (4th), Andrea Salis (11th), Patricia Ward (13th), Mel Kay (15th), John Wilhelm (15th), Astrid Georges (16th), John Rettmer (16th), Judi Rettmer (16th), Nella Carravetta (21st), Kathy Ziegler (21st), Hank Klein (22nd), Phil Marcus (24th), Manuel Sanudo (24th), Conrad Schellenberg (28th) and Ellen Katcher (31st).

Milestone Birthday

Long-time Strider Phil Marcus, our former Membership Chair, will be **102** on **Wednesday, March 24th**.

Welcome to

Janet & Kenny Bravmann of Briarwood, Barbara DaCosta of Cambria Heights, Maxine and Murray Gottlieb of Forest Hills, Alexandra Grzesik of Bayside, Ellen Heimberger of Great Neck and Renee Wasserman of Great Neck.

Dinner Dance

A good time was had by all at K.Pacho's on Sunday, Feb. 5th. The night was filled with lots of dancing and yakking and of course food and adult beverages. The annual awards and 10 and 25 year celebrants were announced and congratulated. A big thank you goes Co-Social Secretary Rosalie Hatch for all the hard work she put into making this night a success. Thanks Rosalie!!

Congratulations to the Annual Award Winners and Anniversaries

The Striders who are celebrating 25 and 10 years with the club were announced at our dinner at K.Pacho's on February 5th.

- **25 years** – Nella Carravetta, Dorothy Chusid and Ken Kaiser
- **10 years** – Lou & Tina Cothalis, Ilana Galatan, John Novak and Eleanor Petardi.

Congrats to all and here's to many more years as an Alley Pond Strider!!

Also recognized at the Annual Dinner Dance, congratulations to the 2022 Annual Award Winners for their well-deserved awards::

Strider of the Year – Ronit Gurriel

Walker of the Year – Tony Florido

Male Runner of the Year – Venice Naidoo

Female Runner of the Year – Andrea Salis

Most Improved Runner of the Year – George Waters

Alley Bowl XIII

Congrats to Rob who organized another successful race - Alley Bowl XIII. A good time was had by all - participants and volunteers.

Testimonial "I joined the Alley Pond Striders in October of 2022. The Alley Pond Striders make walking, a healthy and fun experience. It's a wonderful way to explore your community and an opportunity to meet a group of warm, engaging, caring, individuals. As a mature adult, it's a great way to connect with others around a shared interest. You guys are great." Gladys Garcia

Please send any items for "Talk on the Path" to the editor at:

apstriders@aol.com



Runners Report by Randi Opsahl

Hi, I'm Randi Opsahl and I'm the new Alley Pond Striders Runner's Rep. I've been a proud member of the Alley Pond Striders since 2009. I have met the most wonderful people through the Striders and I know many will be life-long friends. I have big shoes (no pun intended) to fill following Rob, but I will do my best.

Please note the following change: going forward your race results should be sent to me at randi_opsahl@yahoo.com or TEXT to 917-414-6125, so I can brag about you in the newsletter.

I'd like to plan a few destination runs and if you have a favorite run to share, your suggestions are welcome! A few possibilities are Normal J. Levy Park & Preserve; Rockefeller State Park Preserve; Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve and Hempstead Lake State Park..

January & February Race Results

Sri Chimney New Year's Day Half Marathon (1/1/23)

Venice Naidoo	1:57:57
Andrea Salis	1:46:01

2023 NYRR Joe Kleinerman 10K (1/7/23)

Rafael Medalla	0:50:07
Angela Medalla	1:01:09
Gerard Ruiz	1:25:59

2023 NYRR Fred Lebow Half Marathon (1/22/23)

Albert Galatan	2:37:50
Gerard Ruiz	3:00:31

SRC 10 Mile Run to Blue Point Brewery (1/14/23)

Venice Naidoo	1:25:11
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Alley Bowl XIII (2/12/23)

Venice Naidoo (1st Team)	22:34
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2023 NYRR Gridiron 4M

Gerard Ruiz	0:52:33
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PPTC Cherry Tree 10 Miler (2/19/23)

Venice Naidoo	1:35 :25
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Arizona Rock 'n Roll Marathon

Andrea Salis	3:52:49
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Don't be left out. Remember, I can't post your results if you haven't shared them with me!

Future Race Plan

Pat Mitrofanis and Venice Naidoo have big plans! They will be running the Celebrate Life Half Marathon (3/19) and the United Airlines NYC Half (3/19/23). Pat will then run the Credit Union Cherry Blossom 10 Mile Run (4/2/23) and the Boston Marathon (4/17/23). Venice will run the London Marathon (4/23/23). Wish them happy and healthy training if you see them on the path.

Let me know your race plans so I can include them here too. Contact info is above.

Until next time, happy trails!

Walker's New Year's Day Walk by Dorothy Chusid

New Year's Day 2023 started on the right foot when 24 Striders joined together at Oakland Lake Park to wish each other a happy, healthy and peaceful day. The cold weather was not a deterrent as we walked around the lake several times. It's always a pretty sight to see the swans and other wildlife on the lake. Afterwards, many of our Striders met at a diner where we continued to celebrate the New Year over breakfast and "toasts." Ideas were also shared about future walking trips.



Annual Dinner Dance Awards and Recognition

Congratulations to the Annual Award Winners and Anniversaries

The Striders who are celebrating 25 and 10 years with the club were announced at our dinner at K.Pacho's on February 5th.

Special Anniversaries Recognition:

25 years: Nella Carravetta, Dorothy Chusid and Ken Kaiser (pictures on left)

10 years: Lou & Tina Cothalis, Ilana Galatan, John Novak and Eleanor Petardi.



Strider Award Recipient's:

Strider of the Year – Ronit Guriel



Walker of the Year – Tony Florido



Male Runner of the Year – Venice Naidoo



Female Runner of the Year – Andrea Salis



Most Improved Runner of the Year – George Waters



Alley Bowl XIII - Post Game Recap By Coach Rob Pasqual

On a perfect Winter morning, nine teams toed the line for the 13th edition of “Alley Bowl.” I created Alley Bowl because one Super Bowl Sunday, when I really wanted to race, I couldn’t find any local races other than the Gridiron race at Central Park, which was completely sold out. Hence Alley Bowl was formed, a fun mix of relay, football toss and tailgate party all rolled into one.

The early lead was held by my own team, the “Ground Hogs.” Arasu Mani, still working his way back from an injury, grabbed a big lead. As in football, however, no lead is safe as during the second leg Joe Mirabella of the “Terminators” took his team to the top position. Their third runner, Ian, sealed the deal as they won in a time of 22:34.

The race for second was spirited as four teams were within a minute of each other. In the end, my Hogs were able to hold off the Cunninghammers sponsored “Giants Superbowl 2024” team. Alleybowl veteran Karen Shalley’s Shamrocks & Shenanigans team took home the spirit of the games costume award.

Special thanks to all the Strider runners and walkers who helped out. Dorothy, cancelled the walkers Sunday jaunt so they could help out. Larry had plenty of hot dogs ready for our famished finishers. And head ref Ken, was again on top of his game.

Though we certainly missed perennial champions from the Front Runners, we certainly appreciated the enthusiasm and effort from our friend from the Cunninghammers. We hope to see everyone back next year.

Results:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------|
| 1) Terminators | 22:34 |
| 2) Ground Hogs | 23:07 |
| 3) Giants Superbowl 2024 | 23:13 |
| 4) Fresh Meadows | 23:27 |
| 5) JNJ | 23:41 |
| 6) 3 Fast & Furious | 24:47 |
| 7) Shamrocks & Shenanigans | 28:44 |
| 8) 3’s Company | 29:30 |
| 9) Morris Park | 33:40 |



1st Place Team: Terminators



2nd Place Team: Groundhogs

Food Drive Sets New Record by *John Sassone*

Eggs up 49% and box of cereal \$7.99. Who can afford that??? The sad truth is that many can't. However, thanks to the generosity of the Alley Pond Striders and my colleagues at Janney Montgomery Scott, the 200 families that Our Lady of Lourdes Food Pantry serves were a little more secure this holiday season.

We set a new record of just over \$1,300 plus MANY bags of food, paper goods, and toiletries. Sr. Mary Vianney Nwakaor, SJS, who runs the food pantry, could not believe how many trips Lynn, Larry, and I made toting bags of donations down the stairs to the pantry. Volunteers including Strider Debbie Pantano will sort the goods and prepare bags for the families based on their needs and preferences. The needy include single mothers, retired seniors, and the working poor. They also get calls on the Emergency Food Hotline from the truly desperate. Most come from Queens Village, Bellerose, Floral Park and parts of Bayside.



Sr. Mary is a member of the **The Sisters of Jesus the Saviour**, an order of nuns founded in Nigeria. They work with the poor in Detroit, Miami, and here in Queens. She wants you to know we are in her prayers and is thankful for all we have done.

Although we do not know the names of the generous people who filled the bin in the park house, I would like to acknowledge some of those who gave cash contributions: **Ken Kaiser, Lynn Henry, Joe Gambino, Pat Sassone, Larry and Kathy Lutzak, Diane Haber and Laughlin Whalen.**



I would also like to thank **Matt Symons** and the NYC Department of Parks for allowing us to place a collection bin in the park house and keeping an eye on the donation bucket.

Mother Teresa said, "If you can't feed a hundred, then feed just one." I think our efforts this year fed a hundred, most of whom are women and children. Holidays were a little happier for some because of the Striders. If you missed the drive, you can still give a check to me or any Board member. If you did not donate and would like to, make the checks out to: Our Lady of Lourdes, put Food Pantry in the memo section and mail to:

Alley Pond Striders, PO Box 298, Bellerose, NY 11426 or use our website: <http://www.alleypondstriders.com> to donate using the new "PAYPAL" selection located on the right side of the top bar on the main page.

Please mark your donation "Food Drive"

PLEASE CONSIDER DONATING YEAR-ROUND!

Please Join us on an Exciting MOROCCAN SAHARA ODYSSEY

This will be an intimate group
of 11-15 friends & friends of
our friends

September 30th 2023 to October 15th 2023

(pre-trip extension US departure date September 25th 2023)

Base Tour Cost (no air): \$4195 per person

Airfare from JFK: \$1000 per person

Optional Pre-Trip Extension: \$1395 per person

(Includes Northern Morocco, Chefchaouen,
Tangier & Berbers of the Rif.)

ITINERARY SUMMARY

The tour runs 16 days, however, some of us
may want to take the **PRE-TRIP EXTENSION**
which is: 5 nights in Northern Morocco,
Chefchaouen, Tangier & Berbers of the Rif.

DAYS DESTINATION

1	Fly to Casablanca, Morocco
2-3	Rabat
4-6	Fez
7	Erfoud
8-9	Sahara Desert
10-11	Ouarzazate
12-14	Marrakesh
15	Casablanca
16	Return to U.S.



WHAT TO EXPECT

People-to-People Experiences: Spend A Day in the Life of Asfalou village where a local family will share their daily routine and show us how to prepare a traditional meal. And, meet members of the Imik Simik Women's Association for Rural Development—supported by Grand Circle Foundation—near Ait Benhaddou, where we'll learn how these local women aim to improve their quality of life and foster independence in young women. You'll also share a meal with a local family in Fez during a Home-Hosted Dinner.

O.A.T. Exclusives: Venture off the beaten path to spend 2 nights at a private tented camp in the legendary Sahara Desert. Our camp is located close to a sand dune sea near Merzouga where few foreigners venture, along routes known only to the camel and goat-herding Tuareg nomads. We'll also have candid conversations about Controversial Topics such as discrimination against women, poverty, and the influx of sub-Saharan refugees. By speaking to local people directly affected by these complex issues, we'll gain a deeper understanding of day-to-day life in Morocco.

Transfers are free from/to the Casablanca Airport and the hotel. Please note that there is no additional cost for a single supplement. You can use your frequent flyer miles. Discounts may be available if we get a minimum of 11 people on our tour. Proof of Covid vaccinations are required at this time. Moderately easy, rated 2 out of 5. Participants who take OAT tours are mostly seniors.

For more information and booking instructions please contact : Alan Gold at 646 269-2135 (call or text) or Dorothy Chusid at 347- 204-2324 (call or text).

Backstory for “Cats and Kids” by Steve Appel

Nicole inherited her passion for running from her mother Rona. They ran two New York City Marathons together and many other races over the years. It was at her local running club, “The Alley Pond Striders,” that Nicole met Gillian Turbin. They ran together, ate bagels at Junior’s, and became fast friends. On two occasions, while Nicole’s Dad was away in Africa and Peru, Gillian lived with her, cared for her, and, memorably, took her to a Mets game. Gillian touched, not only Nicole’s life, but the lives of countless other kids in the NYC Public School System as a reading teacher. Nicole will always hold Gillian and her two beloved cats, Montana and Phoebe, close to her heart. Her drawing, “Cats and Kids,” is dedicated to them and to all the kids Gillian taught to read.

The drawing has an ironic edge. Ah, “the sweet innocence of youth”...and of cute little kitty cats! Little girls prance in fields of spring-time flowers. Lady bugs cavort with butterflies! Nancy and Sluggo walk down the street hand in hand...it’s puppy love in a drawing about cats! And there’s Mickey and Minnie...and what could be cuter or more innocent than a “Lucky Japanese Cat.”

But what’s this...a Fat Cat downing a glass of cheap Cabernet? A Black Cat on a saloon sign? Be careful naughty boys and girls, and kitties who’ve gone astray! There are cautionary tales afoot, and “creatures that go bump in the night!” Don’t suck your thumbs or play with matches or you could end up as a pile of ashes! And always remember that behind every Santa, lurks the goat-footed Krampus, who ain’t no sweet grampa!

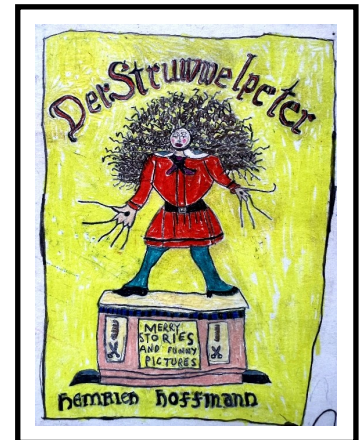
Der Struwwelpeter (“shock-headed Peter” or “Shaggy Peter”) (right) is an 1845 book of disturbingly bizarre cautionary children’s tales written by Heinrich Hoffman, a German psychiatrist, no less, as a Christmas present for his three-year old son. Try as one might, who could forget such light-hearted tales as the one of the thumb sucking boy and the “Scissorman?”

Or the little match-playing girl who immolates herself in front of her distraught kitties? Or the little boy who refuses to eat his soup and wastes away and dies? In 1998, Nicole joined her dear adopted grandma Lottie at an off-Broadway musical, based on the book, featuring “The Tiger Lillies.” Lotti, who grew up reading these popular German bedtime stories, fled from the Nazi’s to Britain, at age 17.

Krampus (above) is a horned, demonic figure, popular in the folklore of Central and Eastern Europe who, during the Advent season, scares children who have misbehaved. Assisting Saint Nicholas, the pair visit children on the night of December 6th, with Saint Nicholas rewarding the well-behaved children with modest gifts such as oranges, dried fruit, walnuts and chocolate, while the badly behaved ones only receive punishment from Krampus with birch rods. The incorrigible is carried away in a basket into the dark woods, never to be heard from again. Wikipedia.



Nicole Appel, “Cats and Kids,” colored pencil on paper, 19x24 inches, 2022. Dedicated to Gillian Turbin.



Dues Are Due!

**Thanks to the many of you who have already paid but if you haven't - 2023 dues are \$20/individual and \$30/family payable to Lynn, Laughlin or any Board member. Or send to Alley Pond Striders,
P.O. Box 298, Bellerose, NY 11426
or on the website with PayPal and Venmo: @Michael-Weisbord**



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
ALLEY POND STRIDERS
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**Food insecurity is not just at
Thanksgiving time. Consider
donating to a local food pantry
year round.**

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The Alley Pond Striders is a running and walking club with over 160 members and serves the communities of Eastern Queens and western Nassau County, NY.

Since the early 1980's, the Alley Pond 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 longest run 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 EVERY DAY— Check with Lynn Henry for times and gathering place.

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

Board of Directors

President: Ken Kaiser
Vice President: Sara Jablonski
Treasurer: Laughlin Whalen
Recording Secretary:
Pat Mitrofanis
Corresponding Secretary:
Ronit Guriel
Social Secretary:
Maria Ferraro & Rosalie Hatch
Runners Rep: Randi Opsahl
Walkers Rep: Dorothy Chusid

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

E-mail: lynnahenry@yahoo.com

Annual Dues: \$20 Single Membership

\$30 Family Membership/Couples

NEW MEMBERS ONLY who join after
June 30th first year membership fees are
\$10 for an individual and \$15 for a family.

The Strider is the newsletter of The Alley
Pond Striders and is prepared monthly by:
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