

A Quarterly Publication of the New York Walkers Club

“Walking is the best possible exercise. Habituate yourself to walk very far.”

Thomas Jefferson

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NEW YORK WALKERS CLUB LEADS WOMEN’S WALKING CHALLENGE

This May, thousands of women across the country embarked on an eight-week walking challenge for better health. The Department of Health and Human Services organized the WOMAN Challenge to encourage women to get in 30 minutes of moderate activity most days of the week and to kick off the eighth annual National Women’s Health Week (May 13-19, 2007).

The New York Walkers Club was selected to lead government employees

on their kick off event on May 14th across the Brooklyn Bridge. Approximately 90 federal and city employees participated and completed the walk during their lunch hour. “It was inspiring to see the energy and enthusiasm of the many women and six men” said the event planners.

Lon Wilson, Executive Director of the New York Walkers Club and his five trained Walking Instructors did an excellent job in teaching proper walking technique. We had the opportunity to engage them in warm-up stretching as well as the

cool-down. They also kept the women motivated at a healthy pace throughout the Walk.

Rose Savage, one of the trainers, remained behind until all the walkers completed the walk.

Many participants said “we feel great and this was so much fun that we are going to organize a walking group of our own”.

Story by: Marian Spatz and Rose Savage

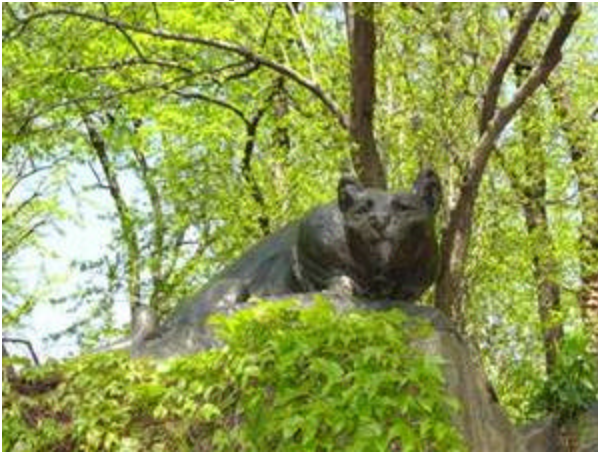


City and Federal Employees Walking across the Brooklyn Bridge, May 2007



Trainers from the New York Walkers Club at City Hall Park

The Cat Sculpture on “Cat Hill”



STILL HUNT

Sculptor: Edward Kemeys (1843-1907) Date: 1881-1883; Placed in Park: 1883 Material: Bronze

Still Hunt, a crouching panther waiting to pounce, was created by Edward Kemeys, the famous American sculptor who also created the famous Hudson Bay wolves at the Philadelphia Zoo, and lions at the entrance to the Art Institute of Chicago.

Kemeys was born in Savannah, Georgia in 1843. His interest in animals is said to date from a summer when, at age 13, he lived on a farm in Illinois that was surrounded by frontier wilderness. After serving as an artillery officer in the Civil War, and an unsuccessful attempt at farming, he was employed in the late 1860's for two dollars a day as an axe-man on the engineering corps that prepared the grounds for the construction of Central Park. While working in Central Park, he took pleasure in observing wild animals, and was inspired in 1869 when he saw an old German sculptor fashioning the head of a wolf at the Central Park Menagerie. "Quick as lightning came the thought...I can do that!" Three years later, Kemeys received a commission for his own sculpture, Two Hudson Bay Wolves Quarreling Over the Carcass of a Deer, which stands in the Philadelphia Zoological Gardens in Fairmont Park, Philadelphia. Buoyed by his early success, Kemeys traveled west in 1872-73, where he hunted, lived with Native Americans, and studied wild animals in their native habitat.

The "cat," situated on a rock in a thicket beside Central Park's East Drive at 76th Street, crouches on a natural rock outcropping in a masterful example of site-specific art. In 1974, the sinuous tail was stolen, but a restoration in 1988, under the auspices of the Municipal Art Society's Adopt-A-Monument Program, replicated this missing feature and reconditioned the surface of the bronze statue. Today, the Central Park Conservancy maintains the sculpture, which continues to inspire awe in weary and unsuspecting joggers as they arrive at the crest of Cedar Hill.

*Adapted from the Virtual Tour at www.centralparknyc.org/virtualpark
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Submitted by Barbara Shimasaki

Storming in Florida

The Walt Disney World Goofy Challenge



For those that may not be familiar with me, I'm **DJ Johnson**, a long time runner that learned how to race walk back in the late 70's, by attending Howard Jacobsen's class. I moved to Florida in 1993. After a debilitating injury in 1998 I tried to return to running. By 2003 I was able to finish a Florida Gulf Coast Marathon by utilizing the Galloway method of walking and running. In 2004 I met Nereida and was reintroduced to Lon (I knew him in the 70's) and decided to focus on race walking. Since then I've done a 15k, a Coney Island 10 miler, 5 half marathons and 4 marathons.

My first race walking marathon was NY in 2005. It wasn't a great experience due to severe cramping for the last 17 miles of the race. I was greatly encouraged by Lon who massaged my back at mile 20, and the cheering of so many of you along the route. My final time was 6:17.

In February 2006 I walked the Gasparilla Marathon in Tampa, FL. The rain, thunder and lightening was so severe that the race was delayed for 40 minutes. The first hour of the race was in a driving rainstorm. The rain actually kept me awake and alert, since I was feeling the effects of the flu and hadn't slept the night before the race. I improved to a 5:48.

Of course, I needed another challenge. I decided to do the Walt Disney World Goofy Challenge in Orlando in January of this year. The weather wasn't too bad and I cruised to a 2:58 in the Saturday Half Marathon. The next day was the full marathon. Of course it was hot and humid most of the race and Disney ran out of water from mile 17 to 21. I also underestimated the effects of the Half that I had finished just 21 hours before. So I was tired for the entire 26.2 miles, but achieved my goal of under 6 hours (5:59) for the marathon and under 3 hours for the Half.

Just one more challenge to go. I stepped up to the line in Miami just 3 weeks later. There was no lightening this time, but we again started in a blinding rainstorm. I was determined to walk a PR. I finished in 5:41.

Now I'm doing a combination of race walking and running as I prepare to keep up with my 36 year old son in the 2007 NYC marathon. I will attempt to run with him as long as possible. However, in the future I will compete in both disciplines. Race walking has been a gift and a joy that has allowed me to slowly work my way back in shape and allowed me to compete in both running and walking.

DJ

New York Walkers Club leads Roosevelt Island residents in Health Walking



A

Walker's

Perspective

Karen Bdera

On Saturday, April 28, Roosevelt Island celebrated its annual Health Day. Among all the activities (yoga, tai chi, aerobics, wall climbing, bicycle safety lessons, blood pressure monitoring...) was the New York Walkers Club health walking. In two separate sessions, led by Lon Wilson and Nick Bodera, the Roosevelt Island

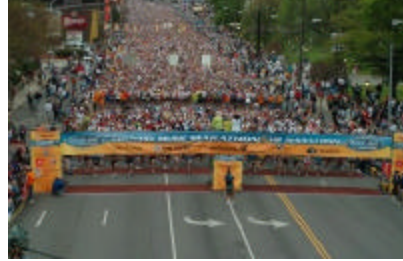
residents learned about the basics of warm-up stretches, walking technique, and cool-down stretches. Each session took walkers up to the northern end of Roosevelt Island, to the lighthouse across from Gracie Mansion. The walks were not only instructional, but also included a sight seeing aspect, with the group

learning about some of the local lore of the island and nearby places to visit, in both Queens and Manhattan.

New York Walkers Club members Jodell Shields, Karen Bdera, Marian Spatz, our newest member Marie, Stephanie Hronec and Nereida Munoz were there to support Lon and Nick. A great time was had by all.



Country Music Marathon & Half Marathon Nashville, TN – Saturday, April 28, 2007



A

Walker's

Perspective

Barbara Shimasaki

A little bit country and a little bit rock 'n' roll. A fun race in a fun city, the eighth annual Country Music Marathon & ½ Marathon hosted its largest participant field in race history. Nearly 30,000 runners and walkers started in waves for some southern hospitality, Nashville style. Elite Racing, the organizers of all the "Rock 'N Roll" marathons, put on a very well organized event. The spectators were awesome,

even though they thinned out considerably after about three-quarters of the field made the turn toward the half marathon finish line. Elvis was spotted at the half-marathon turn-off! All the bands were terrific (and they actually kept playing long enough for the slower marathoners to enjoy). Even if country music isn't your thing, they sure kept the energy pumping! The medical stations handed out plenty of ice on a warm and sunny day—

and those who forgot the sunscreen regretted it! There were rolling hills, hot sun, and some lonely stretches of highway for the pack-of-the-pack full marathoners--but all was forgotten by the time the first-rate post-race concert got underway! The 7 hour time limit makes it "walker friendly" for most. The half marathon is the choice for the slower walker who wants to have a great crowd experience.



New Jersey Marathon -- Sunday, April 29

Around and around we go...A FLAT, two-loop course around the seaside city of Long Branch New Jersey, makes this "close-to-home" marathon and half marathon a spring favorite. The field of between five and six thousand makes this a more low-key event. This year, the cool overcast day made for perfect running and walking weather--especially if you were trying for a good finish time! The course starts at the beach along the boardwalk and wends its way through the

many neighborhoods of Long Branch--from humble blue-collar neighborhoods to fabulous mansion-lined avenues, and back to the boardwalk. If you like cheering crowds, this race may be too quiet for your taste--although supporters line the intersections here and there. If you dream of leaving the hills of Central Park behind for a weekend, then this event is a dream come true! You'll need to walk at about a 15 minute per mile pace to hit the time cut-off for continuing on after the halfway point.

Slow full marathoners were surprised by how quickly the course was broken down by the local police crew! One featured participant is Larry the Lighthouse--also sighted at NYRRC races. He's a local NJ product who has made a name for himself running marathons wearing a full-body replica of the famous lighthouse of Long Branch. His gal pal sports her own full-body Wendy the Windmill costume! We don't know quite what to make of the pair--but were glad to see them again this year near the back of the pack!

Vermont City Marathon at Burlington, Vermont



A

Walker's

Perspective

Alex Davidson

The topography of Burlington forces the marathon into the shape of a four leaf clover. It starts out at Battery Park near Battery Street and Pearl. The Southwest leaf is a 3.2 mile run through this nice neighborhood that lies just west of the University of Vermont. We saw many old picturesque houses and trees. We saw a lot of pre-teens running with us who were doing the first of 5 legs for their relay team. The leaf ended with a run north through the famous Church Street outdoor pedestrian mall and back to the start line, where the 5 person relay teams switched.

Battery Street has a hill that goes from around the 14.5 to the 15 mile point of the marathon. The hill is similar to Harlem Hill except that it is straight and has little tree cover. Locals call running it "storming the battery". This half mile is the place with the most spectators and there is also a bank of Taiko drummers who put out a heavy beat to encourage us to go up the hill. As we went up

the hill, there was definitely a feeling that we were accomplishing something.

At 17.2 miles, the course went westward into a neighborhood, where it did and out and back that ended around 18.2 miles, returned to North Ave and continued northward for a few more blocks and turned westward again at Leddy Park. It went through the park and around another neighborhood and returned to North Ave at the 20 mile point.

At 24.75, the bikeway took us within 20 yards of the finish line. The bikeway continued south, turned into a sidewalk, then a boardwalk and then we did a turnaround on grass, went back north on sidewalk, then asphalt again. We hit the mat in front of the mobile broadcast booth where our names were announced, then hit the finish line mat.

The party at the finish line was awesome. There was lots of free food and beer for the runners and food for

sale for the entouragees. The runners received liquid yogurt and Ben & Jerry samples. (This is appropriate since the first Ben & Jerry shop was located a few blocks away from Waterfront Park) There was even a free shower at the YMCA for those runners who did not have a hotel to return to.

The marathon had 2507 finishers, and 428 2-person and 664 5-person relay finishers. Add in a few no shows and DNFs and it adds up to the advertised 7500 runners. At any time, there are about 3700 runners on the road. The marathon has a 6 hour official limit, and the finish line mat was turned off at 6:30:03 this year. Therefore, this marathon is walker-friendly for anyone who can do a 3:07 half marathon. The course receives an A+ on scenic content.

Since Burlington has about 39,000 residents, the hardest thing about this marathon is getting a hotel room. Be sure to book early!

Philadelphia Broad Street 10 Mile Race



A

Walker's

Perspective

Alex Davidson

Bob Newhouser and I traveled to Philadelphia on Saturday to pick up our numbers. We were picked up by the expo school bus near downtown and taken to the Philadelphia Sports Complex area, where we picked up our numbers. It was a very nice low key expo.

The following day, we got up at the crack of dawn, and walked to the Broad Street line subway station where we met up with 16,900 of our closest friends. The subway took us north to the Olney Ave stop near the end of the line, where everyone looked at each other until Bob told everyone where to get off. Yep, he's lived in New York! LOL

We hung around the starting line at Central High School where there were plenty of porta-pots set up near the track. Many runners were warming up by running around the track. We located the school buses which would take our baggage down to the finish line, took off our sweats, and shivered until the start. At 8:30, the gun went off. This 10 mile race is completely straight and is very easy from a

psychological viewpoint. It has gentle rolling hills and a 100 foot net drop during the first 8 miles, and pretty flat after that. You can see the William Tell statue on the top of City Hall at the start, and you stare at this for the first 5.8 miles. You pass Temple University and Hospital around mile 2 and continue on through some interesting neighborhoods as you approach City Hall. The street was lined with spectators and some bands throughout.

At 5.8 miles, we went around City Hall Square on the left and got back on Broad Street. We passed through the arts area of downtown near Walnut Street and went through the nicest part of the course. Now, we could see a freeway overpass at around 9 miles and this served as a reference point.

At 9 miles, we went under the freeway and into the Sports Complex. We passed the major sports stadiums and continued on our way to the Naval Yard. Now, our reference point was this underpass near the finish line that was the entrance to the yard. Spectators were a

little sparse for a half mile, but built back up by the time we got to that pass. We went under and entered the Naval Yard and could see the finish line.

There was plenty to eat in the Naval Yard, and we picked up our food packets, located the school buses, retrieved our baggage, changed back into our tourist clothes and got on the bus back to the Pattison subway station at the sports complex. This was followed by a day of tourist activity.

Cost is \$25-30 with an additional \$10 if you want to pick your number up at the start line. This allows you to do this race without spending money on a hotel if you leave the Port Authority early in the morning. The subway is free once you have a number, and the race provides transportation to and from the expo area on Saturday. The streets are closed at a 15 minute pace, but you are allowed to continue on the sidewalks, and almost everyone finished by 3:30, and the last person finished at 4:10. So, it's very walker friendly.

New York Walkers Club Happenings

Borough President Marty Markowitz has invited the New York Walkers Club to lead a walk around Prospect Park for the "Lighten Up Brooklyn" Program on July 22nd. Lighten up Brooklyn is a program to help Brooklyn residents eat healthy and exercise.
Borough President

Markowitz will have plenty of give-aways at the event and he will be there to help motivate the walkers.

The walk will begin at 8 am at Grand Army Plaza. NYWC will have trainers who will be pace setters with paces from 12-16 minutes. You can

also walk at your own pace for a 3.35 miles or 2 mile walk.

Starting July 21st Alex Davidson and Rose Savage will offer **Free Walk Clinics in Prospect Park** every Saturday at 9 am.

Come and be apart of these inaugural events.

Healthwalking: A Public Service Announcement

I am a member of the New York Walkers Club. Every Saturday morning at 9:30 from Sept thru June (8:30am in July and August) there are free clinics in Central Park which meet at the Engineer's Gate (at the East 90th Street entrance just below the reservoir). You can't miss us as you will see a group stretching.

There is always an instructor there to teach technique, lead stretches and lend support. The clinic is free and run through the auspices of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation.

There are walkers there of all levels, shapes and sizes. I suggest that anyone who wants to get in shape, stay in shape, lose weight, reduce stress, enjoy the outdoors and Central Park, or connect with other walkers of all levels, give this a try.

It is much easier to get into a program tailored to your level with others to lend support. This might be just the thing for you.

As you progress in your walking, the coaches and instructors continue to give pointers, inspiration and support.

You can do this casually, or take it as far as you want. Coach Lon Wilson is a national race walk champion and a veteran of more than 100 marathons.

Do not be afraid.

Get off on the right foot!

I look forward to seeing you on Saturday.

Gary Brynes

To join the New York Walkers Club call 718 588-0441 or 718 909 5670

FOUNDERS MESSAGE



"Summertime, and the livin' is easy" - as the song goes. Days are longer. The grass and trees are green. The sun is glorious. Life is goo-ood.

I hope you're out there walking. You really have no excuses due to weather. Incidentally, we get WEATHER every day. The dedicated adapt to it. The lazy make excuses about it.

As instructors, we teach the essence of the activity, so that we may spark your interest and get you to participate.

Whatever we teach - the technique, the drills, the execution - is done with a "safety first" concept. Injuries are not fun. Improper execution or overuse can bring them on. Correct technique should come before how fast or how far you go.

Many beginners are euphoric with their new program and with their immediate gains. But sometimes if they try to press too hard, they develop some technique faults which can bring on injury or a failure to progressively walk at faster speeds. That's where you must return to basics.

Master the technique. Have it become reflexive. The speed and endurance will come with time on your feet and dedication in your heart.

Have a great summer!

Coach Jake Jacobson

President and Founder
Jake Jacobson

Executive Director
Lon Wilson

Co-Director
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To Join NYWC call
718 588 0441 or

Visit our webpage
www.nywalkersclub.org

**"A 5K a day will keep
the doctor away"**

Coach Lon Wilson

