

THE HISTORY OF WALKING
IN THE
TIDEWATER STRIDERS, INC.
1972 – 2009
REVISED EDITION

BY
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The sport of walking in the Tidewater Striders organization is but a small area of concentration in the club's activities. As a relative newcomer to the Tidewater Striders when research for the original history began, I relied on a handful of members whose knowledge of the club and the sport of race walking made the project possible.

The archives are maintained by Rich Hildreth, first elected to serve on the board of directors in 2005. He served in that capacity while the research was in progress and gave me full access to club records. Our numerous conversations about the role of particular members involved in the club's development were extremely helpful.

Ada Lester, Editor of the *Rundown*, furnished most of the monthly issues from 2006 through 2009. Cindy Williams supplied missing copies. As the research was winding down, they provided a vital link.

There is no way I can adequately thank Steve Durant and Hartley Dewey, who were instrumental in setting the project in motion and never wavered in their support and enthusiasm for bringing it to a successful conclusion. Offering the wisdom of their experience, they contributed energetically and creatively to the text. Each proofread the history and made poignant recommendations.

Dr. Denise Schnitzer, an avid fitness walker, proofread the revised edition and made pertinent suggestions adding to the clarity of the presentation.

When further explanation was required beyond recorded minutes and *Rundown* articles, I consulted Dr. Mel Williams. His personal knowledge of the club's constitution and bylaws shed light on questionable procedures at times when there appeared to be conflicting evidence. Moreover, I am indebted to Professor Williams for providing the spark that ignited the current revision.

Also allowing me to probe the pages of their memory were Dick Kole, Pat Molnar, Curt Aasen, Steve Speirs, Rick Brown, Diane Zinn and Kathy Nash.

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Jordan S. Levitin
April 2012

INTRODUCTION

Tidewater Striders was established in 1972 as a track club in South Hampton Roads. Seventeen years later, walking officially became a secondary purpose of the organization.

Researching the history began with a request from Dave McGovern, world class race walker and instructor. McGovern had heard about the Tidewater Striders program from walkers attending his clinics. In March 2009, at a clinic in Williamsburg, Virginia, McGovern asked Strider walkers to provide details of the success of their program for distribution at similar clinics throughout the United States.

Under the direction of Steve Durrant and Hartley Dewey, Strider Walking Committee Co-chairmen, a blueprint, "Developing Organized Walking within a Running Club," was forwarded to McGovern in September 2009. The history of how walkers came to be accepted in an environment featuring competitors in a related sport was an offshoot of the presentation for McGovern.

Research for the history came principally from Tidewater Strider archives, which include (1) original recorded minutes of board and general membership meetings in Strider minutes books and (2) minutes of the same meetings reprinted in Strider newsletters. Sources are differentiated in notes.

Since March 1981, the *Rundown* has been the official Strider newsletter. Reprinted minutes of board meetings during part of the study were subject to editing by newsletter staff and appeared in the *Rundown* sixty to ninety days following the meeting. Footnotes reflecting the Strider newsletter as the secondary source of minutes identify the *Rundown* as the source.

The first edition of the history of walking in the club was completed in February 2010. The purpose of the revised edition is to enable the reader to follow the text more easily by improving the organization of the study as it unfolded aided by the use of footnotes. Extant historical documents delivered to the archives after completion of the study became part of the revised history.

Two histories of the Tidewater Striders have been written. "The Tidewater Striders Track Club, 1972-1990" by Charles Hester honored the Eighteenth Anniversary of the club's founding, corresponding to the Fifteenth Anniversary of its incorporation. The second, "History of the Tidewater Striders Track Club, 1972-1997" by Raymond Ochs was written to commemorate the Strider's Twenty-fifth Anniversary. Ochs followed with "Tidewater Striders History (1998)" and "Tidewater Striders History (1999)."

Hester made no mention of walking. The only reference to walking of any description by Ochs in the Twenty-fifth Anniversary edition was four lines about Anthony "Cokey" Daman: "The December 1996 newsletter would have an article on 'Cokey' Daman, a Tidewater Strider

celebrating his 78th birthday. Cokey started running at age 58, and has set many records in the 70-74 and 75-79 age divisions in races. He is also a nationally recognized race walker.”¹

Neither Hester nor Ochs attributed a place to walking in the Tidewater Striders past, although as this study will show, sufficient evidence was available to suggest walking would become an integral part of Strider history.

Ochs recalled how the club started out with a few athletes intent on establishing a track club, later expanded into road racing, and added triathlons, biathlons, and wheelchair races. Concluding the history, Ochs pondered, “What will happen in the next 25 years is anyone's guess. Who would have imagined something like triathlon and biathlon or wheelchair racing in the same event as runners?”²

Indeed, who would have imagined? One is left to ponder had Ochs paid closer attention to signs already obvious about walking, he might have answered his own question. This is a study of how it happened with all its peaks and valleys.

¹Ochs, Charles. *History of The Tidewater Striders Track Club 1972-1997*. 1997. TS. 18. Archives. Virginia Beach, Virginia.

² *Ibid.*, 22.

THE FORMATIVE YEARS: 1972 - 1979

1972

Established in 1972 as Tidewater Striders Track Club, the organization met quarterly in the Old Dominion University Physical Education building. Announcements of meetings and news of upcoming races were in the form of mimeographed newsletters.³

Races included the “First Annual Tidewater Cross Country Run” at Chesapeake College (6 miles) sponsored by the Norfolk Central YMCA; “Nature Trail Ten” (10 miles); Virginia Beach Rotary “Nature Trail Run” (10 miles) and the “NAS Road Race.” Earliest recorded race results of the YMCA Cross Country Run at Chesapeake College on October 14, 1972, included information seldom seen today: “Temperature: 65 degrees, Wind: Negligible.”⁴

1973

The first Shamrock Marathon in Virginia was sponsored jointly by the Tidewater Striders Track Club and the Virginia Beach Rotary Club. It was held on St. Patrick's Day, 1973.⁵

A report in the Archives dated March 17, 1973, stated the Striders had an active membership of seventy-seven.

In a letter to members dated June 11, 1973, Strider President Jerry Bocrrie announced a quarterly meeting of the Tidewater Striders Track Club would be held on June 23, 1973. “I hope many of the Striders will decide to attend this meeting as our attendance has only been 33% of our total membership.”

1975

The Striders Constitution filed with the State Corporation Commission in October 1975 stipulated in Article II, Purposes, Section I, “The primary purpose of the Striders is to promote and encourage running, particularly long distance running through educational and charitable means.” Section II specified, “A secondary purpose of the Striders is to promote other athletic endeavors normally encompassed in Track and Field.” It would take fourteen years before walking was specifically added to Section II.

Original bylaws listed nine standing committees: Race, Course Certification, Membership, Women, Shamrock Marathon, Program, Publications, Public Relations and Publicity, and Training. In addition, three president's committees were listed: Election, Awards and Banquet. Provisions were made for ad hoc committees as needed.

³ The earliest correspondence in the Tidewater Striders Archives, a mimeographed letter from Ronald Brinster, Secretary/Treasurer, dated December 26, 1972, begins “Dear Striders,” and reads in part, “The next meeting of the Tidewater Striders will be held at 10:00 A.M., Saturday, January 13, at the Old Dominion University Physical Education Building. Bring your friends and neighbors. For those of you who are interested in an early morning wake up, we will have an 8 mile and a 12 mile run BEFORE the meeting begins at 8:15 A.M.”

⁴ Miscellaneous Race Reports. Archives. 1972.

⁵ Bridges, Pat. “Pat’s Last Progress Report.” Archives. Mar. 1973.

1977

The earliest mention of walking in Strider records appeared in a flyer announcing the 1977 Tidewater AAU Jr. Olympic Track and Field Meet at Bayside High School in Virginia Beach on June 14, 1977. The entry fee was fifty cents per person. Bocie and Karl Griffler served as meet directors. The announcement to members included separate one mile race walks for boys and girls in the Intermediate Division, ages 14-15, and in the Senior Division, ages 16-17.

A message from Strider President Bob Jennings appeared in the September issue of "The Strider News."

The Tidewater Striders Track Club is going through a period of transition which will ultimately serve to benefit each individual member. The club is in the process of its changing leadership organization from the current one to one of governing by council, much the way local governments are run.

The first meeting of the Striders Executive Council was held on December 22, 1977, at the president's home. The council consisted of the president, vice president, treasurer, recording secretary, membership chairman, publicity chairman, women's representative, meet coordinator and assistant meet coordinator.⁶

1978

The strong presence of women in the organization was evidenced at the outset by regular meetings of the Tidewater Striders Women. At a general meeting of the club July 22, 1978, Bocie announced, "The Women's Cross Country Championships will be held at Mount Trashmore at 10:00 a.m. on August 5, 1978." Men were invited to meetings.⁷

1979

A proposed revision to the Striders Constitution appeared in the February 1979 "Strider News." President Dr. Melvin H. Williams, Director, Human Performance Laboratory in the Old Dominion School of Education Division of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Athletics, wrote,

The constitution is designed to meet the needs of an ever expanding membership. It is not perfect to cover all points of issue, but it does give us a better structure than the current constitution and is flexible enough to provide for action on matters not implicitly covered.

A hand written report of the minutes of the club meeting on March 3, 1979, consisted of five lines:

⁶ Strider News, Vol. VI, No. 6. Dec. 1977.

⁷ Seven months later the Tidewater Striders Constitution was amended to include "Women" as one of nine new Standing Committees (Article IX, Section II). Bylaws Section VIII, specified, "The duties of the Women's Committee shall be (a) to encourage and promote the involvement of women in all aspects of running."

New constitution brought before
the members for discussion & voting,
passed with no dissenting votes.
Committee reports made.
Shamrock update.

Article II, formerly known as “Purposes” was changed to “Objects,” which were listed as follows:

A. The object of the association shall be the promotion and encouragement of running (particularly long distance running), and whenever feasible track and field participation.

B. In furtherance of objective “A” this club may hold championships, races and social events; print and publish newsletters, make awards; and do other such things as may be incidental to or conducive to the encouragement of running.

C. Other objective is to make known by appropriate means the benefits of long distance running and jogging and to coordinate with other agencies advocating running as a means of physical fitness.

Although walking was not specifically mentioned, “jogging” appeared for the first time in the language of the Striders Constitution. The door had been left ajar.

LIGHTING THE TORCH: 1980-1989

The first edition of this study for the period 1980-1989 began with the qualification, “No reports of meetings of the Striders Board of Directors in the early 1980s were found in Strider Archives.” In March 2011, however, Treasurer Dan Edwards delivered to Archivist Rich Hildreth several binders of extant records he had received from former executive director, R.P. Kale, which included minutes of board meetings in the 80s.⁸

Members were kept informed of the club’s activities through “Strider News” from October 1975 - March 1979, “Tidewater Strider Newsletter” from April 1979 - February 1981. In March 1981, *Rundown*, an expanded monthly newsletter, became the official Strider publication,

Early *Rundown* issues consisted of letters to the editor, race flyers and race results, news of the annual banquet and reports from Striders competing in major marathons. Articles on sports nutrition by Mel Williams greatly enhanced the literary quality of the newsletter.

1986

The first mention of an activity other than running or jogging in Tidewater Strider minutes appeared in June 1986. President Dave McDonald welcomed two members from the Tidewater Triathlon Club, and a general discussion ensued about the possibility of merging the two clubs. A seed had been planted. Fourteen years after the Tidewater Track Club was founded, the Striders Board of Directors considered supporting another activity.

The following entry appeared in minutes of the Striders board meeting on October 21, 1986, McDonald presiding: “Dave informed the board that Pembroke Mall is establishing a walking course. A walking group will be formed as part of the Striders. He spoke of the walking course at Military Circle. Pat Molnar reported there was also one at Tower Mall.”

Molnar became a competitive walker in 1986. He was the first Strider walker elected to the Board of Directors.⁹

1987

McDonald was re-elected president of the board at the January meeting. Each board member spoke briefly about the New Year. Minutes indicate McDonald spoke on “the need for walking programs, possibly dog walks.”

⁸ Historical writers rarely, if ever, consider their work “definitive” history. Additional information comes to light at a time when least expected.

⁹ Minutes of Board Meeting. Feb. 1986.

An eight month hiatus followed when no discussion of fitness walking or race walking occurred at Strider board meetings.¹⁰ The silence was finally broken at the board of directors meeting in October 1987. Minutes of the meeting noted, “Executive Director Charlie George talked about a walking brochure and the promotion of race walking.” Unfortunately, his remarks were not recorded.¹¹ It had been ten months since McDonald was quoted as telling the board, “A walking group will be formed as part of the Striders.” Could the momentum be sustained? It would not take long to find out.

1988

At the March 1988 board meeting, McDonald announced, “The Trails Association of Virginia Beach wants to help promote trails for running, biking and walking.”¹² Two months later, program Chairman Ed Brinkley reported a running and walking clinic would take place at 6:00 p.m. on June 23 at Foreman Field, Old Dominion University, in Norfolk.

Acrimony prevailed at the board meeting on June 20, 1988. A mean-spirited exchange took place over the letter a Strider had written to all directors stating a former director was attempting to decimate the club. The accusation was denied by the former director, who was present at the meeting. Charges were leveled of fiscal mismanagement of Strider funds. A complaint was made that new secretaries were not receiving copies of minutes from former secretaries.¹³

The following month, Vice President K.E. Morgan announced that minutes of board meetings will be edited in the *Rundown*. Molnar suggested that minutes be abbreviated for publication, but made available to the general public if requested.”¹⁴ It would appear the intent was to prevent disharmony among board members from spreading to the Strider running community and beyond, but not to the extent of preventing disclosure of arguments on actions taken by directors.

At the board meeting in July, McDonald reported 81 people turned out for the clinic at ODU. Molnar, who assisted with the program, recalled, “It was a very successful evening. Everyone was enthusiastic about what they saw and heard.”¹⁵

¹⁰ Throughout the text, the reader will find references to fitness walking and race walking, often referred to as “power walking” or “speed walking.” Unlike the latter, however, race walking has a prescribed technique based on controlled, precise movements. Defined in the 2008 *USA Track & Field Race Walk Officiating Handbook*, race walking “is a progression of steps so taken that the walker makes contact with the ground so that no visible (to the human eye) loss of contact occurs. The advancing leg must be straightened (i.e., not bent at the knee) from the moment of first contact with the ground until the leg is in the vertical position.”

¹¹ Over the years, recording minutes by Strider secretaries at board meetings and general membership meetings has been inconsistent. Some secretaries were diligent in their attention to detail; others were not. Abbreviated minutes fail to provide the exchange of differing opinions among directors, opinions that had they prevailed might have affected the sport of walking in the Strider organization. The secretaries most attentive to detail recording board proceedings was Kathleen McAllister-Morgan, particularly during the tumultuous eighties when discord surfaced among members regarding revision of the club’s constitution and bylaws. Later, Bee Andrews was cognizant that detailed minutes led to a clearer understanding of how the Strider board functioned.

¹² *Minutes of Board Meeting*. Mar. 1988.

¹³ *Minutes of Board Meeting*. June 1988.

¹⁴ Editing minutes of board meetings presents a problem searching for primary source evidence. In July 1988, the Strider board approved providing the *Rundown* with edited minutes. Additionally, beneath the heading in the September 1989 *Rundown*, “Minutes of the July 1989 Tidewater Striders Board of Directors” was the caveat, “(Edited by Newsletter Staff).” The last issue of the newsletter in which the editing notice appeared was July 1992.

In spite of the distractions, McDonald, an elite Strider runner, was clearly energized by the potential of a small but dedicated walking group within the Tidewater Striders Running Club. On August 15, 1988, he wrote to board members urging them to turn their attention to the future and to consider programs or suggestions which have been “waiting in the wings.”¹⁶ Understanding diverse attitudes among Striders to untried programs, McDonald was moved to write,

All of our members need to realize that we are all volunteers, and we do make mistakes. Criticism can be for the betterment of the club if those who complain are willing to pitch in. As board members we are the “doers” of the club. We are the leaders, but we can't do it alone. By cultivating sponsorship of our events, and by encouraging members to assist us with Strider programs we can continue to have a successful, innovative, and dynamic organization.¹⁷

He went on to address issues and programs, among them, membership. “Membership should be a major priority. Everyone should pitch in. Growth can only happen through attracting first, walkers; second, youth; third, military; fourth, triathletes.” While membership growth is important, attracting walkers topped the list.¹⁸

Regarding a separate matter of importance to the president, McDonald referred specifically to the Pembroke Striders.

Pembroke Striders should be a reality by the end of this year. This walking club, based at Pembroke Mall, should be the prototype of other Strider-related walking programs. The cost of joining will be \$15, with members receiving a club shirt and plenty of extras, including becoming a member of the Tidewater Striders. I see the potential for gaining a good number of new members. I could use some help here.¹⁹

A general meeting was held on October 15, 1988, at the Holiday Inn Portsmouth to vote on proposed major changes to the Constitution. Present and voting were 43 out of a membership of 1,750. Among the changes, the purpose of the Tidewater Striders as set forth in Article II, Section II, would include promoting walking and triathlons.²⁰

Pat Molnar, Chairman of the Constitution Committee, presented fourteen changes to the constitution. Minutes of the meeting recorded by Strider Board Secretary Kathleen McAllister-Morgan noted the five member Constitution Committee “...spent endless hours revising, rewriting and updating the old constitution to come up with these changes. Questions concerning

¹⁵ *Minutes of Board Meeting*. July 1988.

¹⁶ McDonald, Dave. Letter to Strider Board of Directors. 15 Aug. 1988. TS. 1985-1989 Minutes & Correspondence. Archives. Virginia Beach.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Minutes of General Meeting*. Oct. 1988.

the constitution and other questions and remarks bearing no association to the constitution were taken from the floor.”²¹

At one point, Greg Eck asked the board to provide him with a membership list. Minutes note, “A lengthy discussion ensued.” The vote to adopt the changes was 30 in favor, 13 opposed. A three-fourths vote in favor was necessary to adopt. Proposed changes failed by three votes.²² Walkers and triathletes would wait for another day and a kinder mindset.

If Bocrie is considered the “Father of the Tidewater Strider Track Club,” as the *Strider News* proudly suggested in November 1977, McDonald is the esteemed “Father of Race Walking.”

With unmistakable vision and steadfast resolve, McDonald championed the cause for walking. His place in the history of Striders race walking is firmly etched. Few Strider presidents before McDonald had to contend with stronger personality conflicts which, by the narrowest of margins, prevented walking from being recognized by the established running community. But that would soon change.

Daman did not stand by idly while Striders debated the efficacy of excluding walkers from the constitution and bylaws. At the Board of Directors meeting on December 19, 1988, Daman announced that a meeting for race walk judging would be held on January 8, 1989, at the Chesapeake General Hospital. He recommended adding 2 Mile, 5K and 10K race walks to the usual 1 mile race in Striders events. Regarding Striders media coverage, Daman suggested the word “race walk” be substituted for “walk” and for Striders to begin considering race walking as a sport instead of a casual “fun run.”²³

Daman’s proposals represented a giant step forward for an organization which two months earlier had rejected the addition of race walking to its sponsored activities. Unfortunately, however, whatever impact he may have made the night of December 19, 1988, was overshadowed by a major scandal about to boil over.

Following Daman’s recommendation, the audit committee presented its report to the board of directors. A shortage of \$20,852.80 had been discovered in the treasurer’s books, and there was more to come. Details of the scandal rocked the Tidewater Striders organization, which bent but did not break.²⁴

Minutes of board meetings for the next six months describe the subsequent turmoil in detail. Restitution of embezzled funds was priority number one on the agenda of board meetings. Life did go on, however. Board meetings were held. Committees worked. Races took place, and awards were presented.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ *Minutes of Board Meeting*. Dec. 1988.

²⁴ Ibid.

1989

Coming on the heels of the rejection of McDonald's visionary plan for the future of walking in the Striders organization, 1989 was a pivotal year for the walking community.

The January *Rundown* featured an article by McDonald, who called walker attention to the kickoff of the Pembroke Striders Walking Club. "It has been on the drawing board for two years, but the Tidewater Striders are finally ready to unveil their walking club, the Pembroke Striders, on February 18th." ²⁵

McDonald continued,

The primary objective of the Pembroke Striders is to further support walking for fitness and competition. The club is an offshoot of the Tidewater Striders, opening the door for new members to join the Striders who are interested in walking, (a slow form of running). The members joining the Pembroke Striders will receive the same benefits as Tidewater Striders members. There will also be a new column appearing frequently in the *Rundown* devoted specifically to walking, including walking events, walking tips, seminars and health screenings, and new happenings with the Pembroke Striders. ²⁶

The first 200 walkers to join the Pembroke club on February 18 would receive discounts from participating Pembroke Mall merchants. The article concluded by naming the co-sponsors of the Pembroke Striders Walking Club: Etonic, Sentara Leigh Hospital, Hofheimer's Pembroke Mall, and the Tidewater Striders. Daman was listed as "Walk Club Coordinator." ²⁷

As luck would have it, on the morning of February 18, potential new walking members found themselves stranded at home by an overnight twelve inch accumulation of snow, which shut down Virginia Beach and closed the mall. "Even still," reported Daman, "a few die-hards, about 20 people, braved the inclement weather, became members, and were treated to a modified opening with a walking demonstration and a walk-thru of the one-half mile course." ²⁸

Announcement of a free program, "Techniques for Race Walking" appeared in the January *Rundown*. Distances included a 1 mile fitness walk and a one-half mile walk for youngsters 8 and under; one-half mile walk for 9-12 year-old boys and girls; and a 2 mile Tidewater Striders race walk event. Clinics were given before and after the walks and included slide presentations and videos. ²⁹

Race results for the 1988 "Turkey Trot" were reported in the February 1989 *Rundown*. The race was 10K for runners and 1 mile for walkers. This was the first 10K Strider race reported in the newsletter in which walkers were invited to participate, albeit at a shorter distance. New

²⁵ McDonald. "Kickoff of the Pembroke Striders Walking Club." *Rundown* Jan. 1989: 5. Print.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Daman, Cokey, "The Tidewater Striders at Pembroke Mall Walking Club." *Rundown* Apr. 1989, 16.

²⁹ Announcement. *Rundown*. Jan. 1989: 6. Print.

ground had been broken. Charles Young and Karen Rountree finished first in their respective divisions.³⁰

At the board meeting on February 20, 1989, Williams presented the first major breakthrough for walkers. A draft proposal called for a change in the wording of the Constitution, Article II, "Purposes," Section II, to read: "Secondary purposes of the Striders are to promote participation in other athletic endeavors such as Track and Field, WALKING and TRIATHLONS."³¹

Changes in bylaws were also proposed. Article II, "Purposes," Section I, provided for the Striders to "undertake such functions in order to promote running, TRACK AND FIELD EVENTS, WALKING AND TRIATHLONS." Bylaws Article XI, "Committees," provided for six new standing committees, including a Walking Committee and a Constitution Committee. Williams conjectured the process of adopting the new proposals would take six months.³²

At the March meeting of the board, Williams indicated additional proposals to change the constitution and bylaws had been received from several board members. A discussion ensued about input from the general membership. Williams indicated all Tidewater Striders may offer changes and suggestions.³³

Veteran walkers were quick to react to the heightened level of interest resulting from Williams' proposals. Daman and Race Director Becky Hanna wasted no time organizing monthly race walking clinics and walks at the Lifestyle Plus Fitness Center at Chesapeake General Hospital. In the March 1989 *Rundown*, Walk Coordinator Daman reported results of the first clinic in February.

A group of about 50 people of all ages was present and shown the techniques and told of the many health benefits of race walking. Regis Dandar, the area premier race walker, conducted the clinic handsomely with the help of Bob Gailbraith and Wayne Talasky, both very gifted race walkers.

A low key race walk was conducted in the parking lot later and all had a chance to put their newly found sport into action. Much enthusiasm and interest was shown and I'm sure we will see them in future races.³⁴

³⁰ Race Results. *Rundown*. Feb. 1989: 13. Print.

Turkey Trot, Nov. 24, 1988, open 1 mile walk.

<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
1. Charles F. Young 8:52	1. Karen Rountree 9:27
2. Patrick Molnar 9:10	2. Teresa Pair 10:33
3. Cokey Daman 9:13	3. Nelene Grover 12:16

³¹ *Minutes of Board Meeting*. Feb. 1989.

³² The Constitution Committee brought a second draft to the board for approval to amend the constitution in May 1989, a third draft in November 1989, and a fourth and final draft in April 1990, which was approved by a general membership meeting on June 30, 1990.

³³ *Minutes of Board Meeting*. Mar. 1989.

³⁴ *Rundown* Mar. 1989: 21. Print.

Four upcoming walks were listed: March 18, “Shamrock 5K Walk,” Virginia Beach; April 8, “KDH for Children” 1M Walk, Norfolk; May 13, “Point of View” 1M Walk, Virginia Beach; May 27, “Cancer Society” 1M Walk, Portsmouth. Each subsequent *Rundown* updated the list. With few exceptions, walks were 1 milers. Walkers were encouraged to bring their friends. It was only a matter of time before sponsors and race directors would realize there was a future for longer walking distances in Tidewater Striders events.³⁵

April 1989 board minutes included the copy of a two-page press release on Striders letterhead announcing the official ribbon cutting of the opening of a half-mile walking circuit in Pembroke Mall. The release stated in part,

The objectives of the Pembroke Striders, a division of the Tidewater Striders, are to further support walking for fitness and competition for people of all ages. Members joining the Pembroke Striders will receive the same benefits as Tidewater Strider members. The Tidewater Striders will institute a special column in their monthly newsletter, the *Rundown*, specifically geared toward walking. The column will include a schedule of walk events, walking tips, seminars and health screenings.³⁶

Hannah and Daman were listed as contacts for additional information.

Daman continued to extol the benefits of a good walking program in each issue of the *Rundown*. In May he was pleased to report,

It was merely a dream a couple of years ago that Dave McDonald, former President of the Tidewater Striders wanted to form a much requested and needed walking club for this area. On Saturday, April 15th, that dream came true with the gala ribbon cutting ceremony at Pembroke Mall. Thanks Dave, we owe it all to you.³⁷

Daman continued, “Many new members were signed that morning, and we now have well over one hundred members and growing every day.”³⁸

“A Walk in the Park” by Daman in the June *Rundown* introduced readers to a small group of walkers who met at Mount Trashmore for their first walk in the park. “There was a good balance of fitness walkers and dedicated race walkers in the group; therefore each group could walk at its own comfortable pace. Hopefully this is only the beginning of a permanent weekly outing that will attract many more of you in the club and also interest others to join us as well.” wrote Daman.³⁹

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ *Minutes of Board Meeting*. Apr. 1989.

³⁷ Daman. “A Walking Club is Born.” *Rundown* May 1989: 6. Print.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Daman. “A Walk in the Park.” *Rundown* June 1989: 9. Print.

Chesapeake General Hospital became actively involved in health fitness in 1988, the year it established the Lifestyle Fitness Center's "Too Hot to Trot" summer walking series. The series, which was the first walk series in Strider history, took place each Thursday in July. The cost was \$2.00 for each walk or \$5.00 for the series, which was advertised in the newsletter flyer for "fun and fitness." Hanna served as walk director, and Daman as Strider walk coordinator.

Daman was constantly looking for opportunities to interest people in a healthy lifestyle. His announcement in the July newsletter presented an opening.

To encourage walking for fitness, Lifestyle Fitness Center and the Tidewater Striders are offering a summer walking program every Thursday evening in July. The two mile walk will begin at 7:00 p.m. and will allow walkers to go their own pace on a specially designated path adjacent to Chesapeake General Hospital. These are strictly fitness walks, not race walks. We expect many veteran walkers to be in attendance who will be happy to assist anyone on the proper form for fitness walking so that one may get more health benefits and pleasure from your daily walks.⁴⁰

In May and August 1989, The *Rundown* published results of a general membership survey launched in December 1988. Objectives of the survey were (1) to give members an opportunity to express their opinions, (2) to give Strider decision makers guidance for the future, (3) to give members an opportunity to provide directors with sensitive information, (4) create a better line of communication and (5) give volunteers an opportunity to be heard.⁴¹

The survey, authored by David W. Harrison, editor of the newsletter, consisted of four sections. Each section included a series of questions. Of particular interest for this study is Part 4, "Constitution Section." Regarding the question of broadening the purposes of the Striders to include walking, 58.4% voted in favor and 26.9% opposed. The balance of the voters were "possibly" in favor (7.1 %) and 7.6% gave no response. On expanding Strider purposes to include race walking, 64 % were in favor, 18.3% against, 10.2% possibly in favor and 7.6% remained silent. No indication was given of the number of surveys distributed, which were mailed with election ballots; however, the editor noted he had received 196 responses, which he considered a success.⁴²

Several factors contributed to the support for walking. Foremost was the continued emphasis by Williams to improve the fitness and health of a growing population, which led to proposed changes in the Strider Constitution and Bylaws. In addition, Daman, a prolific writer, articulated the case for proper fitness by timely articles in the newsletter each month.

Together, Daman, McDonald and Hanna devoted incalculable hours in the field with demonstrations, fitness walks, race walks, videos and clinics. Steady growth in membership of the Pembroke Strider Walking Club, reported by Daman in the December *Rundown* to have reached 130, was a contributing factor.

⁴⁰ Daman. "Special Attention: Pembroke Striders and All Other Walkers." *Rundown* July 1989: 6. Print.

⁴¹ Harrison, David. "Results of the 1988 Tidewater Striders General Membership Survey." *Rundown* May 1989: 19-22. Print.

⁴² Harrison. "Survey Results." *Rundown* Sept. 1989: 19-20. Print.

An interesting article appeared in the September *Rundown*. A record holder in running and racewalking, Daman knew his subject well as he expounded on the benefits of each in “Running vs. Walking – A Good Combination.”

Both sports can produce a tough aerobic workout with each sport burning the same amount of calories. Running in a race, however, makes a greater demand on your cardiovascular system than race walking. On the other side of the coin race walking demands and requires more physical exertion and the necessary rapid movement of your arms (in sprinting) and the unique twisting of the hips that’s necessary to maintain the certain forward stride (one foot directly in front of the other). ...Why not try a combination of both? ⁴³

The front cover of the October newsletter gave walkers a sense of immense pride with the announcement of the first 10K walk in a Tidewater Strider Grand Prix event. The occasion was the “12th Annual Burger King Turkey Trot” at Mt. Trashmore with recognition for men and women in all age categories. ⁴⁴

The race took place under adverse conditions. Reporting in the December *Rundown*, Daman wrote, “Cold, blistery winds greeted the brave, but enthusiastic race walkers Thanksgiving morning participating in the first 10K race walk held in Virginia. I’m sure for many walkers it was their very first race walk, especially at the demanding 10K distance.”

He thanked the volunteers who made it possible, including the folks who served hot coffee, donuts and fruit before and after the race; the lap counters; course judge Bill Bernard; and race director McDonald, without whose efforts “this race would not have existed.” Daman concluded,

Walkers - we now know it can be done. The race was a positive move in the right direction and I now truly believe in a matter of time, race walking will become bigger and better for all our members. Let your voice be heard-what we want from our club. My random talks with club members (walkers) is that they want more race walking events, not just one (1) milers, but longer and more challenging distances as in our running events. Once a month race walks, independent of the running events, have been strongly voiced. Express your views and desires, and with your help and participation walking programs can be a success, one we can all be proud of. ⁴⁵

The “Jingle Bell” two mile race for walkers in Chesapeake on Sunday, December 17, 1989, attracted fifty-four walkers ranging in age from 4 to 79, including nineteen men, thirty-two women and three youngsters under twelve. Martin O’Brien, 33, finished first overall in 18:42. The cost to enter the race was \$3.00, or \$2.00 per person for a family of three or more. Interestingly, a 1989 5K “Jingle Bell” run was held in Norfolk with 437 finishers. Race results for all runners and walkers were published in the January 1990 *Rundown*. ⁴⁶

⁴³ Daman. “Running vs. Walking – A Good Combination.” *Rundown* Sept. 1989: 17. Print.

⁴⁴ *Rundown*. Oct.1989, front cover.

⁴⁵ Daman. “First 10K Race Walk.” *Rundown* Dec. 1989: 34. Print.

The 80s ended on a positive note. In an accompanying article captioned “Walking Through the 90's,” Daman observed, “ ... As responsible adults, we must all be concerned about the physical fitness of our children (grandchildren), since the latest statistics show it is on the decline. This is my dream - that the decline in the health and fitness of our youth be turned around in a positive direction.”⁴⁷

He called on walkers to work with elementary schools as early as first grade to start a walking program, because as kids develop they will become healthier, gain confidence and improve self esteem. “The torch is there,” he wrote, “lit and ready for someone to carry it so that our next generation and future ones will be healthier and better ones.”⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Daman. “Walking Through the 90’s.” *Rundown* Dec. 1989: 34. Print.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

GUARDED OPTIMISM: 1990 - 1999

1990

Appearing for the first time with an attractive glossy cover, the January 1990 issue of the *Rundown* was a skillfully re-designed newsletter.

Heartened by proposed changes the previous year in the constitution and bylaws and completion of the first 5K and 10K walks in Strider history, the walking community approached the new year with guarded optimism. After waiting fifteen years, it appeared walkers were about to have a place at the table pending acceptance at a general membership meeting of changes to the club's constitution first approved by the board of directors two years earlier.⁴⁹ In anticipation of a favorable outcome, Becky Hanna was named Walking Committee Chair.⁵⁰

From the beginning, however, one might have sensed something was amiss in the world of Cokey Daman. Calling attention in the January *Rundown* to the "5K Winter Walk" at Mount Trashmore in February, Daman wrote, "...please support the race and show the race director and future race directors this is what we want and need to have a good walk club."⁵¹

His article in the January 1990 newsletter was to be his last as Pembroke Striders Coordinator. With the exception of reports to the *Rundown* regarding personal race walk results, he would soon stop submitting articles on health, fitness, and walking to the Strider newsletter.

Incidents occurred in the first ninety days of the year which rocked the foundation of the Strider walking community.

On January 21, McDonald resigned from the Strider board for personal reasons. Apparently, several Strider runners took umbrage at the media attention McDonald received for his success as a runner, and they became vocal in their criticism.⁵²

No one on the Strider board had done as much to promote walking as a legitimate pursuit as McDonald. Shortly after his resignation became known, Daman, in support of his friend, advised Hanna of his intentions to resign. Daman had been the heart and soul of the Pembroke Striders, and his withdrawal would be felt immediately. Efforts by Hanna to get Daman to change his mind were fruitless.⁵³

⁴⁹ Proposals to amend the Strider Constitution in this study are of particular interest to walkers because of inconsistencies in the Articles of Incorporation, constitution and bylaws for approving amendments.

⁵⁰ Becky Hanna's name appeared in the February newsletter as Walking Committee chairperson. All committee chairpersons were listed in the "Tidewater Strider Service Directory" with the caveat, "pending board approval," which continued until it was removed in October 1990.

⁵¹ Daman. "Bits of News for Walkers." *Rundown* Jan. 1990: 6. Print.

⁵² McDonald. Letter to Tidewater Striders President and Board. 21 Jan. 1990. Archives. Virginia Beach.

⁵³ *Minutes of Board Meeting*. Feb. 1990.

McDonald's resignation was announced by President Dave Harrison on February 24 at the general membership meeting. Hanna reported she was "looking into the Pembroke Striders and hoping to find some assistance."⁵⁴

At the March board meeting, Hanna reported she was talking with McDonald and Daman about the status of the Pembroke group, and although both had opted out of further service to the Tidewater Striders, they agreed to serve on Hanna's committee to save the Pembroke Striders Walking Club.⁵⁵

The March *Rundown* reported the board's reaction to Harrison's announcement of McDonald's resignation. Williams suggested the board ask McDonald to reconsider. Morgan reminded the directors that twice before McDonald had attempted to resign. After due consideration the board approved sending a letter to McDonald expressing its appreciation for his work on behalf of the Strider organization and asking him to reconsider his resignation.⁵⁶

Not everyone in the Pembroke Striders Club had been pleased with club rules. A letter to the *Rundown* editor from Terrell Johnson addressed his dissatisfaction. Mr. Johnson said he was a "walker," not a "race walker," and had been walking "religiously" for two years. A Pembroke Strider for one year, he was considering not rejoining because he objected to paying \$6 - \$10 to participate in one mile walks which accompany the runs. "As far as rewards," he wrote, "I can not see paying \$6 to \$10 for a ribbon, maybe a T-shirt, but you don't get those unless you pay \$6 more or are participating in the runs."⁵⁷

Three months after Daman withdrew from the Pembroke Striders Walking Club, notices were sent to the club's 125 members inviting them to a meeting at Pembroke Mall with mall management. According to minutes of the May board meeting, ten walkers attended the meeting.⁵⁸

In her report to the board, Hanna noted, "The general response from those in attendance was that they did not need the Tidewater Striders to help organize their walking." Further, Hanna informed the board she will be focusing her efforts on fitness and race walking and that she was assembling a committee to assist her.⁵⁹ The euphoria of the past two years was in rapid decline.

At the board meeting in April 1990, Williams had reminded the directors that according to the Articles of Incorporation, proposed amendments must first be approved by a majority of the board. Changes in the constitution must then be approved by three-fourths of the votes cast at a general meeting of the membership. Changes in bylaws require two-thirds of votes cast at a

⁵⁴ *Minutes of General Membership Meeting*. Feb. 1990.

⁵⁵ *Minutes of Board Meeting*. Mar. 1990.

⁵⁶ "Minutes of January Board Meeting." *Rundown*. Mar. 1990, 4-5.

⁵⁷ Johnson, Terrell. Letter. *Rundown* Mar. 1990: 7. Print.

⁵⁸ "Minutes of May Board Meeting." *Rundown*. July 1990, 9.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

general membership meeting. The board approved changing the constitution and bylaws to read “majority” for consistency with the Articles of Incorporation.⁶⁰

In accord with provisions to amend, the constitution with changes noted was printed in the May newsletter. The board set June 30 for the general meeting.

In June, Harrison, reporting for the Constitution Committee in Williams’ absence, informed the board that the order of business for the June 30 general meeting included a discussion of the Articles of Incorporation. Would this finally be the date that promoting walking became an official secondary purpose of the Tidewater Striders?

One would think that after sixteen months of seemingly endless discussions, untold hours of committee meetings and three drafts, Strider walkers and favorably inclined Strider runners would turn out to ratify the legitimacy of walking in the Strider organization. When the count of those present was taken however, it was less than the required number for a quorum, and the president announced another attempt to vote would be made at the August 24 general membership meeting.⁶¹

No report of a general membership meeting was found in minutes for August or September 1990. The Constitutional Committee’s report for September appearing in the December *Rundown* stated that Williams was working on draft #4, the final hard copy. After a discussion of inconsistencies, the board voted to approve the Articles of Incorporation.⁶²

Daman continued to race walk and report results to the *Rundown*. On July 9, 1990, he wrote to *Rundown* Editor Paul Steele that he had competed in the “TAC/USA 10K National Racewalk Championship” in Niagara Falls, New York, and won the National Championship in the 70-74 age group in a time of 1 hour and 42 seconds, setting a national record which had not been broken since 1980. The race attracted 128 race walkers from 28 states.⁶³

The following note appeared in the August-September *Rundown* from Harrison: “Strider race walkers Frankie Spurling, Pat Molnar and Cokey Daman assisted in the informal judging at the Too Hot to Trot Summer Walking Series. Though not connected under formal guidelines of TAC, the series was a great success for race walkers and walkers.”⁶⁴

Evidence that race walking included younger members of the Strider organization appeared in the August-September issue of the *Rundown*. On August 4, William Jesse-Leggett participated in the “National TAC/USA Youth 5,000 meter Race Walk Championship” in Durham, North Carolina, finishing second in his age group (13-14) with a time of 30:29. Later the same day, he

⁶⁰ *Minutes of Board Meeting*. Apr. 1990.

⁶¹ *Minutes of Board Meeting*. June 1990.

⁶² “Minutes of September Board Meeting.” *Rundown*. Dec. 1990, 1.

⁶³ Daman. *Rundown* July 1990: 5. Print.

⁶⁴ Harrison, David. “Keepin’ You Posted.” *Rundown* Aug.-Sept. 1990: 9. Print.

race walked in the 5K open division and finished first in the 19 and under age group, 11th overall. The open division featured several members of the U.S. Olympic team.⁶⁵

Few Strider races in 1990 included walking events, and in those that did, the walk was a one mile walk for adults and a one mile “fun walk” for children. A notable exception was the “10K Turkey Trot” held at Mount Trashmore on November 22. New course records were set in the men’s division by Regis Dandar (54:20) and in the women’s division by Bernice Baebachann (58:34). The race drew ten men and thirteen women.⁶⁶

1991

Harrison reviewed events of the past year in the January newsletter. “A modified constitution was adopted,” he wrote. “This project took a couple of years to do, but was wrapped up and approved by the general membership in the middle of the year.”⁶⁷

In a letter to Harrison dated January 16, 1991, Hanna resigned from the board. She wrote that she was being married in April and would be moving to San Diego, California. She was writing at this time to give the board an opportunity to fill the vacant seat as quickly as possible. “It was a pleasure working with you and co-directing ‘Too Hot to Trot.’ July will never be the same,” wrote Hanna in her final letter to the Strider board.⁶⁸ Her vibrant personality and leadership skills would be sorely missed in the dark days that lay ahead for Strider walkers.

On January 25, 1991, Attorney Don Grey filed “Articles of Amendment of the Tidewater Striders Track Club” with the State Corporation Commission. Documents included with the filing specify that the amendments to the club’s constitution were adopted on October 15, 1990, which coincides with the date Williams presented the Policy and Procedures of the Constitution Committee to the board of directors.⁶⁹

Mitchell Broudy was listed in the February newsletter as Chairman of the Walking Committee and a member of the board of directors.

Revised policies and procedures submitted to the board by the *Rundown* stipulated “Minutes from the Tidewater Strider Board of Directors would be printed only after board approval and will not be reworded by the newsletter or the staff.”⁷⁰

⁶⁵*Rundown*, Aug.- Sept. 1990, 26.

⁶⁶Hanner, Craig. “Race Notes, Turkey Trot.”*Rundown* Jan. 1991: 10. Print.

⁶⁷Harrison. “Keepin’ You Posted.” *Rundown* Jan.1991: 6. Print.

⁶⁸Hanna, Becky. Letter to Harrison. 16 Jan.1991. Archives. Virginia Beach.

⁶⁹Grey, Donald. Letter to State Corporation Commission with Statement of Change of Registered Office/Registered Agent, Articles of Amendment of The Tidewater Striders Track Club, Articles of Incorporation of The Tidewater Striders Track Club. 25 Jan. 1991. Archives. Virginia Beach.

⁷⁰“*Rundown* Policies and Procedures, General Guidelines for Article and Material Submission,” revised 17 Mar.1991. Not only had the board taken the position of editing information from minutes of meetings provided to the *Rundown*, (1988, Note 3), the newsletter was returning copy it was printing to the board for approval.

For the first time in Strider history, the same race flyer included separate boxes for walkers and runners to indicate their category of participation in two separate races. The events were the “Winter 5K RRCA Challenge Go for the Gold” for runners and the “Winter 5K Walk” for walkers. The start time for walkers was 9:00 a.m. and for runners, 10:00 a.m. Medals were given to the first two men and women in each age category. For pre-registering, the cost was \$7.00, which increased to \$10.00 on race day. In March, the newsletter published race results for the “Winter 5K RRCA Challenge Go for Gold” only. Walker race results were not included.

To most sponsors, however, 5K walks in 1991 appeared little more than a curiosity.

- The “Blair Clipper Classic” sponsored by Sentara Norfolk General Hospital featured a 1 mile fun run/walk and 5K run.
- Holy Trinity School sponsored the “Annual Ocean View 5K Run and 1 Mile Family Walk.”
- The 1991 “Neptune Festival” sponsored by Virginia Beach General Hospital included a wellness walk at 8:00 a.m., 1 mile fun run at 8:30 a.m., and 5K run at 9:00 a.m.

An exception was the “2nd Annual Race Over Water” on the East Coast's Longest Fishing Pier sponsored by the Newport News Branch of the YMCA, which included a 10K run at 9:00 a.m., 5K run at 10:15 a.m. and 5K walk at 11:00 a.m.⁷¹

Walkers could always count on Daman reporting to the *Rundown* whenever he competed in a race walking event out of town. Who better to represent Tidewater Striders? Nationwide, his record as a race walker served to enhance the Striders’ reputation whose primary purpose was to promote running.

In October, an ebullient Daman sent a note the newsletter which was published in a column aptly titled “Striders on the Road.” Daman informed newsletter editor Paul Steele he competed in the Carter's Grove “very hilly” 10K walk, setting a personal record in 59:49, breaking his national record by 53 seconds in 70-74 age group. “The time would not go into the record books,” he said, “because it was not a judged race.”⁷²

Articles of interest to fitness walkers and race walkers disappeared from the newsletter. Announcements of clinics for walkers, once heavily promoted, if conducted, were not publicized. Little was recorded in Strider minutes from the Walking Committee chairman. For the most part, sponsors catered only to runners in newsletter flyers. Perhaps the most disappointing news of all for walkers appeared in the July newsletter: the summer series, “Too Hot to Trot,” had been cancelled.⁷³

⁷¹ The James River Bridge was often referred to as the “World’s Longest Fishing Pier.”

⁷² Race walking records become official only in events certified by USA Track & Field (USATF) judges or by judges of the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF).

⁷³ Steele, Paul. “From the Editor,” *Rundown*. July 1991: 12. Print.

Strider walkers received mixed signals throughout the year. In April, Broudy reported to the board that “the committee had a meeting and is getting with Morgan on putting together race walks at various area races.” There is no evidence anything substantive came from the meeting; however, in September Broudy reported Daman had organized a “Walk of the Month Club,” which met at Mount Trashmore and had approximately 100 members. It is unfortunate that additional information on a walking group of this size is lacking, especially after the demise of the Pembroke Striders Walking Club.⁷⁴

1992

Reflecting on the club’s accomplishments in the previous year, Strider President Craig Hanner could not recall a single noteworthy event involving walkers.⁷⁵

Signs in 1992 indicating the sport of walking was running out of steam, gradually became more acute and continued throughout the balance of the decade.

The Walking Committee report at the February board meeting presented by Bill Leggett indicated Daman wanted to conduct walks following Strider events. Strider President K.E. Morgan responded that the race sponsor would have to address the request.⁷⁶ Two months later, Morgan informed the board, “Cokey Daman is still interested in holding a walk series following Strider races.”

Broudy was listed in the newsletter as Walking Committee Chair for the entire year. Seldom did he make a report at board meetings. At several meetings, however, the secretary reported, “Mitch will work with Cokey Daman regarding walks.”⁷⁷

It was a frustrating time for the walking establishment. In a conversation with Durrant reported in “Developing Organized Walking within a Running Club,” Broudy related, “I’m not going to say walking was not tolerated. It just took time to integrate the Strider culture.”⁷⁸

In May, Al Morris was named Walk Committee chair.⁷⁹ His term was short lived. At the July board meeting, the president announced he had received a letter of resignation from Morris. Dan Hurley, a successful race director for the “Lions Journey for Sight,” served the balance of Morris’ term.⁸⁰

The *Rundown* congratulated Daman and Suzanne Sansfield for their gold medal finishes in their age divisions at the “Southeastern Masters Race Walking Championships” in Raleigh, N.C.

⁷⁴ After Daman stopped submitting articles for the newsletter, little information was forthcoming about his involvement with the walking community.

⁷⁵ Hanner, Craig, “President’s Corner,” *Rundown*. Jan. 1992: 6. Print.

⁷⁶ “Minutes of February Board Meeting.” *Rundown*. Apr. 1992, 9.

⁷⁷ Mitch Broudy was involved throughout the year organizing Triathlons, and his interest in walking may have suffered as a result.

⁷⁸ Durrant, Steve, “Developing Organized Walking Within a Running Club,” <http://www.racewalking.org>.

⁷⁹ “Minutes of May Board Meeting.” *Rundown*. July 1992, 11.

⁸⁰ “Minutes of July Board Meeting.” *Rundown*. Oct. 1992, 9.

Daman finished first with a time of 30:03 in the 5K and 2:10.53 in the 20K, and Sansfield turned in performances of 28:47 in the 5K and 2:10:53 in the 20K. The event was held May 1-3.⁸¹

At Ft. Mammoth, N.J., on September 13, at age 74, Daman broke his own record by two minutes in the “40K National Race Walk Championship.” He won the gold medal in the 70-74 age group with a time of 4:41.36.⁸²

At the September board meeting the secretary recorded, “Dan hasn't spoken to Cokey Daman yet. He has spoken to his son. Dan wants to know how intent the Striders are in promoting walking. Striders must promote educational aspects of walking and physical fitness.”⁸³ Hurley's report to the board the following month indicated a walk across the James River Bridge was under consideration.⁸⁴

At the board meeting in November, Dan introduced Lillian Benson, who spoke on behalf of the James River Bridge Walk. Mike Kessler, an official with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation was also introduced. Mrs. Benson asked the board for assistance in organizing a walk across the bridge.⁸⁵

Morgan suggested they might have a hard time closing both lanes of the James River Bridge, but said he will see what is involved “through his connections.” Nothing more was heard about a walk across the James River Bridge.⁸⁶

In his report to the board in November, Hurley said he had spoken with Daman about the idea he first mentioned to the Walking Committee Chairman in February. Daman's suggestion was to hold walks once a month between five and ten minutes after the start of a race.⁸⁷

1993

Minutes of the January 1993 board meeting listed the Walking Committee as “ad hoc,” although it had been a standing committee as noted in the constitution and bylaws revision adopted in October 1990.⁸⁸

Ochs reported for the Walking Committee at board meetings from February through December, although the newsletter continued to list Broudy as committee chairman. Ochs' reports on walking were confined to a line or two in the minutes. Very little was accomplished.

⁸¹ "Race Walking on the Road." *Rundown* June 1992: 21. Print.

⁸² "Striders on the Road." Announcement. *Rundown* Oct. 1992: 25. Print.

⁸³ "Minutes of September Board Meeting." *Rundown*. Nov. 1992, 14.

⁸⁴ "Minutes of October Board Meeting." *Rundown*. Jan. 1993, 11.

⁸⁵ "Minutes of November Board Meeting." *Rundown*. Jan. 1993, 11.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ *Minutes of Board Meeting*. Jan. 1993.

Periodically news about races open to walkers would appear in the *Rundown*. Minutes of the March board meeting indicate a “general discussion on walking” took place. No details were included.

Typewritten minutes in 1993 are part of Strider archives. Editing minutes by *Rundown* staff was discontinued, and minutes in newsletters are copies of actual minutes recorded by the secretary.

Reporting for the Walking Committee at the July board meeting, Ochs stated, “The Junior Olympics needs volunteers. If anyone is interested in the AAU walking meet (7/17/93), contact Bill Barco. Also, on 7/17 the youth walk championship and Senior Championships will be held.”

The following notice appeared in the July, August, and September *Rundown*:

The Striders are seeking someone to be a Teams Committee Walk Coordinator to keep area personnel informed of walking events of all types. If interested please call Ray Ochs at 496-9556. Anyone interested in becoming a walk official, Paul Chyria has IAAF and US Track and Field walk manuals.

In August, Ochs informed the board that an “article” appeared in the *Rundown* looking for a person to chair the Walking Committee.⁸⁹ The Service Directory in the November *Rundown* listed Dennis Hughes as Walking Committee Chair.⁹⁰

1994

Hughes was listed in the January 1994 *Rundown* as Walking Committee Chair. Although only one committee report was submitted to the board during the year, it is not clear the report was submitted by the chairman.

After reading the original history, Hughes sent a text message to Durrant, Chairman of the Walking Committee, on December 11, 2010, which Durrant forwarded to the author. Hughes explained his position vis-à-vis the board of directors.

I was indeed the Walking Coordinator in 1994. I do not recall providing reports, but I not asked to provide them. I wasn’t ever asked to a meeting either. They simply wanted a contact person for walkers, and since I was a competitive race walker and Tidewater Strider member (always present at most races – either as a competitor or volunteer), I was asked to be the Walking Coordinator....The Striders then were not necessarily pro-race walking. The races we did have were primarily due to Rick Brown. Dedicated to the Striders and very hard working, he always looked out for everyone.⁹¹

⁸⁹ The “article” to which Ochs referred is five lines which read more like a request for volunteer help. The position, “Walk Coordinator,” was first used in the late 80s by Daman, most likely made up to describe his association with the Pembroke Strider Walk Club. It was not an official title bestowed by the Strider board. Cindy Williams, also a walker, much later was listed in the Service Directory as Chairman of the Walking Committee; however, she described herself to the author as a “walk coordinator,” not the committee chair.

⁹⁰ “Service Directory.” *Rundown* Feb. 1993: 21. Print.

The February meeting of the board began with Strider President Mike Fuller, summarizing major events of the previous year and receiving recommendations for improving the club in 1994. Increasing attention to the club's walking program was among them, notwithstanding 1993 had been a down year for walkers.⁹²

At the May board meeting, Strider Secretary Doug Dugro reported, "Dennis Hughes is active in promoting walking in recent months. The following races have walks as events in the coming months: 'Virginia State Games,' the 'Spring Classic' in Hopewell, and the 'Walk Over Water' in Newport News."⁹³

An article by Hughes, "Try Walking," appearing in the May *Rundown* extolled the benefits of walking. Hughes concluded by writing:

I hope I have aroused some curiosity and invite all walkers and wanna-be's [*sic*] to an informal clinic/workout at Salem Middle School on Lynnhaven Parkway on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. I will be more than happy to discuss all aspects of walking ranging from fitness walking to race walking and answer any questions you may have.⁹⁴

The invitation to attend Hughes' Tuesday and Thursday workouts was repeated in the June newsletter. The turnout for clinics and workouts at Salem Middle School was not reported.

1995

Throughout 1995, race flyers in the *Rundown* continued to link walking with fitness. The Shamrock Sportsfest publicized a 5K Fitness Walk at a cost of \$22. "5K Race & Fitness Walk' offers you a chance to stretch your legs for 3.1 miles to the oceanfront and then back to the grand finish inside the Pavilion" exclaimed the flyer. "Race Walkers will be timed and judged."

"The President's Corner," a new monthly feature, was introduced in the March 1995 *Rundown*. Betty Belknap became the first Strider president to submit a message. From the time presidents' messages began appearing, with two notable exceptions, seldom did they mention fitness walkers or race walkers.⁹⁵

Unfortunately, the Strider board of directors was out of touch with its walkers, and walkers were no longer in touch with the organization. No report was made by the committee at a board meeting during the year. Nor is there any evidence of a board member talking with Hughes

⁹¹ Hughes, Dennis. Message to Steve Durrant, 11 Dec. 2010, forwarded to author 12 Dec. 2012. E-mail.

⁹² *Minutes of Board Meeting*. Feb. 1994.

⁹³ *Minutes of Board Meeting*. May 1994.

⁹⁴ Hughes. "Try Walking." *Rundown* May 1994: 3. Print.

⁹⁵ In their presidents' messages, Bee Andrews and Rich Hildreth often recognized walkers as part of the Tidewater Strider family and called attention to the contribution they were making.

about what could be done to resurrect an active Strider walking program, which at one time was as much concerned about health and fitness issues as it was about participation in races.

1996

For the third consecutive year, Hughes was listed in the Strider newsletter as Walking Committee Chairman.⁹⁶

Generally, race flyers did not include walking as part of the event. In the July 1996 *Rundown*, a notice addressed to race directors was repeated in the next four consecutive issues.

The Tidewater Striders would like to get a list of all the area races which have walk events so that a schedule can be produced for those club members interested in walking. If your racing event is planning on having a walk or race walk, please contact Dennis Hughes.⁹⁷

The lack of response, though not unexpected, was still rather puzzling. Since 1989, walkers in sponsored races had for the most part been limited to distances of one or two miles. Four races with 1 mile walks had already been scheduled for the balance of the year.⁹⁸

Perhaps it was the mindset of sponsors and race directors alike that all walkers were pedestrian walkers. Yet, the popularity of the “Turkey Trot,” and other races of 5K and 10K distance was no longer in doubt. It was simply a matter of time before race sponsors did the arithmetic: walkers paid the same registration fee as runners to enter the same race.

Numerous references have been made in these pages to the records set and the off course contributions made by Cokey Daman, a runner turned walker and one of the most remarkable local athletes of his time. His writing has been an inspiration to many. On the eve of Daman’s 78th birthday, Evie Thompson-Lakey filed a story with the *Rundown*, which included in part a not-so-well-known account of how Daman became a race walker.

One typically hot and humid Tidewater summer, Cokey entered a local race aptly named “Too Hot to Trot.” Halfway through the race, Cokey realized that it was indeed too hot to trot and found himself walking through most of the race. Up until this point, it had never occurred to him that one could *walk* in a race. Instead of being discouraged, it was here that Cokey discovered race walking. He was 69 years old. Since then, Cokey has never been defeated in his age division in National or World competition race walking. His victories at the USATF National Masters Championships 50K, 40K, 30K, 20K; the VIII World Masters USATF Championships 20K and 5K; and the Eastman 5K National Race

⁹⁶ “Service Directory.” *Rundown* Jan. 1996: 2. Print.

⁹⁷ “Race Directors with Walking Events.” *Rundown* July 1996: 4. Print.

⁹⁸ At the time the notice appeared, four races with walking divisions had been scheduled:

August 3	Norfolk - Run for Sight, 1 mile
September 21	Portsmouth - Maryview Medical Center, Knights of Columbus, 1 mile
October 11	R.A.T. Race, 1 mile
October 19	Virginia Beach, 1 mile

Walk Championship (in which he competed immediately following completion of the 10K Run) have all been National records in both the 70-74 and 75-79 age divisions.⁹⁹

1997

The malaise for walkers continued in 1997. For the first five months of the year, the Walking Committee had nothing to offer at board meetings. Results of a survey announced in the May *Rundown* added insult to injury. Members were asked how they felt about membership fees, the newsletter, Grand Prix awards program, races (number and variety), programs/general meetings, banquets, socials, teams, trash pickup/community service, marketplace, scholarship programs and youth programs.¹⁰⁰

Regarding the number and variety of races, 51% responded they were “good,” 28% were “satisfied,” 14% thought races “needed work,” and 7% were “undecided.” Reference to the survey in the monthly newsletter did not mention fitness walking or race walking.

At the July board of directors meeting, Secretary Pearl Ibarra stated no one had stepped forward to chair the Walk Committee. Three potential candidates would be contacted and a notice put in the *Rundown*. Members of the board questioned the merits of the Walk Committee. The secretary recorded:

It was noted that there was little or no participation and walking as a competitive sport has declined for various reasons. Pearl pointed out that the Walk Committee was a standing committee prescribed in the constitution and to eliminate the committee would require a vote from the general membership.¹⁰¹

Organized walking in the Tidewater Striders had reached the lowest point in its history.¹⁰²

In the December issue of the *Rundown*, a list of coordinators and volunteers needed included the following:

Walking Committee Chair

Qualifications: Enthusiastic walker desiring to promote the benefits and fun of walking. It can be a very fulfilling task that is appreciated by the club. I will provide assistance in any way that I can. If interested contact Paul Steele or any board member.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ Thomson-Lahey, Evie. “Happy Birthday to Tidewater Strider – Cokey Daman.” *Rundown* Dec. 1996, 9. Print.

¹⁰⁰ “Tidewater Strider Survey Results.” *Rundown* May 1997, 16-20. Print.

¹⁰¹ *Amended Minutes of July Board Meeting*. July 1997.

¹⁰² Minutes of the Oct. board meeting noted the Walking Committee was again without a chairperson.

¹⁰³ List of coordinators and volunteers needed. *Rundown*. Dec. 1997: 5. Print.

1998

Strider Vice President Ibarra reported she had talked to Jim Resolute, who expressed an interest in “being the club contact for any interest in the area of walking.” Pearl said she had mailed Jim a copy of the committee's policies and procedures, and called attention to the Gator Volksmarch, a local walking club that sponsors walk events.¹⁰⁴ Resolute was listed as chairman of the Walk Committee in the service directory of the February *Rundown*.¹⁰⁵

Minutes of the April board meeting reported the following brief exchange: “Pearl asked about the possibility of having more competitive walking events, Kale responded that we would need more judges to make the results official.”¹⁰⁶

1999

Beginning in January 1999, a disclaimer appeared in the *Rundown* stating it is “published monthly by the Tidewater Striders, a non profit educational and recreational organization for running and triathlon enthusiasts. Opinions expressed in the *Rundown* are not necessarily those of the editor or the Tidewater Striders Board of Directors.”¹⁰⁷

The *Rundown* disclaimer had ignored the constitution and bylaws of the very organization to which it was beholden. Seven years earlier, by establishing a standing committee for walkers and defining the duties of the committee, Striders had officially recognized walking in its governing documents as an activity worthy of promotion and participation.

Minutes of board meetings in Strider Archives indicate there were only minimal opportunities for walkers in 1999.

At the March board meeting, Kale reported for Walking Committee Chair Jim Resolute that on October 31, there would be a walk in the Norfolk Zoo. In May, Kale reported to the board that a signed contract and deposit from the Norfolk Zoo had been received for the walk¹⁰⁸

The first mention at a Strider board meeting of Deanie Eldridge in connection with the Walking Committee occurred in May. Eldridge was serving as Membership Chairman at the time, and reported she was serving on the Walking Committee for the “Walk in the Zoo” on October 31.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁴“Minutes of January Board Meeting.” *Rundown*. Apr.1998, 31.

¹⁰⁵ “Service Directory,” *Rundown* Feb.1998, 2.

Reports for the Walking Committee at board meetings in 1998 were given by Secretary Pearl Ibarra or Kale. At the February board meeting, Ibarra said Resolute expressed an interest in being the club’s contact for anyone showing an interest in walking. It is not clear that Resolute personally attended a board meeting. Like others before him, he may never have fully understood, or was not told, that by agreeing to be the Strider contact person for walkers, he was also Chairman of the Walking Committee.

¹⁰⁶ Minutes of April. Board Meeting.” *Rundown*. June 1998, 30. Print.

That was the last issue of the newsletter in 1998 in which a report from the Walking Committee would appear in board minutes. No articles on walking appeared in any newsletter during the year.

¹⁰⁷ *Rundown*, January 1999, 3.

¹⁰⁸ *Minutes of Board Meeting*. March 1999.

THE RISE TO PROMINENCE: 2000-2009

2000

At her first meeting as president of the Tidewater Striders, Bee Andrews announced the appointment of Deanie Eldridge to chair the Walking Committee.¹¹⁰ Anxious to breathe new life into a moribund program, Eldridge informed board members how she intended to get it done.

Goals: Primary goal is to get the word out that the Striders DO HAVE an active and vibrant group of walkers who meet, train, participate in various races and events, and provide great support to one another. We want to let other walkers know, who may or may not be Strider members yet, that there's a great place for them within the club. Hopefully, this will activate some of our existing members and bring in many new ones.

I'm planning a monthly column, which will highlight race successes, publicize our training schedule for various events, and offer various walking tips and guidance from members of this committee....I'll also put a plug in for the "official walk" category at Shamrock and encourage those walkers ready to take on a marathon to come out and support that effort!¹¹¹

Addressing the Strider membership in the February *Rundown*, Andrews wrote, "Deanie Eldridge will be heading up our Walking Committee this year and you can be sure the energy and enthusiasm she put into Membership will now really benefit this fitness area. Stay tuned for training tips, group walks and more races that will include walking events."¹¹²

Deanie lived up to the advance notice. She became an articulate writer on fitness, race walking and marathons. In the March newsletter, Deanie introduced a new column, "Pedestrian Crossing," and set the standard for what would follow.

Hi, I'm Deanie Eldridge, Chair of our new Walking Committee. I've probably met many of you through my past involvement as Strider Membership Chair, or through Strider volunteering. For those I haven't met yet, I look forward to seeing you on the trails and keeping you posted on what's going on with Strider walkers!¹¹³

The new committee chair described how a core group of walkers had been walking for over a year in the cold, rain, wind and snow. "What we do may be deemed power walking, race

¹⁰⁹ That was the last reference to the "Walk in the Zoo" in any subsequent issue of the newsletter. As this study will show, however, Eldridge would become a major force in the resurgence of the walking establishment.

¹¹⁰ *Minutes of Board Meeting*. Feb. 2000.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Andrews, Bee. "President's Corner." *Rundown* Feb. 2002: 4. Print.

¹¹³ Eldridge, Deanie. "Pedestrian Crossing." *Rundown* Mar. 2000: 27. Print.

walking, or just plain 'ole [*sic*] walking for hours on end to keep in shape, meet our training goals, and believe it or not, having fun.”¹¹⁴

The Walking Committee included Jim Murphy, Rose Holloman, Bill Spruill, Doreen Rodman Rhonda Poole, Jim Resolute, Dianette Stokes and Becky Jones. Eldridge invited anyone interested in becoming involved to join them in training each Sunday morning at 6:30 a.m. Training locations, times, and schedules varied depending upon events for which they were training.¹¹⁵

New walkers took advantage of the opportunity; however, local race sponsors were not yet of a mindset to include walkers competing in races longer than one mile. Race flyers inserted in newsletters specifying a race as “5K/1 Mile,” indicated runners participated in the 3.1 mile race and walkers in the 1 mile race.

When the Walking Committee did not make a report at Strider board meetings, Eldridge publicized the latest walker news in “Pedestrian Crossing.” Durrant recalls that he became a walker the year after Eldridge was appointed committee chair. “I started walking in 2001 thanks to the encouragement of Deanie Eldridge who was the Strider Walking Chair at the time. She kept me pointed towards the 2001 Shamrock Marathon, which I completed as a walker in 5:42.27.”¹¹⁶

In the April newsletter, Eldridge described how five Tidewater Strider walkers had trained together for the 2000 “Myrtle Beach Marathon.” No Strider walker had ever before competed in a marathon. Recalling the event she wrote,

Beginning the marathon in the wee hours of the morning was a neat experience. The darkness gave an air of mystery to the proceedings and when the starting gun went off, the scene opening up before us was like the final moments of the movie “Field of Dreams.” Thousands of runners and walkers could be seen weaving their way from the start area to the access road by the glow of street light. Another great feature of an early start was seeing the sun rise over the ocean as we moved down Ocean Boulevard.¹¹⁷

In “All I Ever Needed to Know About Life, I Learned at the Shamrock Marathon,” Eldridge credited her training partners with much of her success. “They were,” she wrote, “her best supporters, coaches, cheerleaders and motivators,” and emphasized the importance of setting goals; knowing when to say “no” because it’s just not your day; and playing by the rules of competitive race walking.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Durrant, Steve. “Walker Profile: Steve Durrant, Race Walker and Former Runner.” *Rundown*. Mar. 2004:28. Print.

¹¹⁷ Eldridge. “Pedestrian Crossing.” *Rundown* Apr. 2000: 29. Print.

¹¹⁸ Eldridge. “Pedestrian Crossing.” *Rundown* May 2000: 25. Print.

Fellow walkers also contributed to Eldridge's columns. In the June newsletter, Roadman, Holloman and Daman made poignant observations. "Walking can be tranquil and soothing and at the same time beneficial to your mind and body, all with very little risk of injury," explained Roadman referring to participating in a marathon. "I could not have done it (walked a marathon) without the tremendous support of my husband, the camaraderie of my training buddies, and the support of the running community," wrote Holloman. To champion race walker Daman, "being consistent is the key to anything in life. Stick with your program and don't get discouraged."¹¹⁹

In the July *Rundown*, Andrews reported, "The Tidewater Striders Relay for Life 2000 effort, a 24-hour walking event to benefit the American Cancer Society, was a tremendous success Over 50 Striders participating on four different teams, raised \$11,489 for this important cause."¹²⁰

As the months progressed, Eldridge was writing more about training walkers for marathons. In August, she described her first coaching experience for Team Diabetes in the "Kona Marathon" on the Big Island of Hawaii.

Race results appearing in monthly *Rundowns* seldom mentioned walker finishes. Although walkers participated in the "Norfolk Half Marathon" on October 7 and the "Marine Corps Marathon" on October 25, only finish times for runners appeared in the December newsletter.

A memorandum dated September 18, 2000, from Bill Hollaran to Andrews and Tidewater Strider Board Members was found among miscellaneous documents in the archives. The subject of the memorandum was "Critical Issues for Strategic Planning Retreat." Six acute key areas were designated. Regarding area # 4, new programs/initiatives, Hollaran noted, "The Tidewater Striders need to expand their fitness and training programs. Training and walking are not a race or program emphasis of the Tidewater Striders."

2001

Reporting on the planning retreat in the January 2001 *Rundown*, Andrews wrote, "For the first time ever, the Board of Directors and a few other members in key areas of the club (membership, Web site) participated in a professionally run two-day strategic workshop." Regarding the six key areas, Andrews stated, "We are committed to work on each of these areas in the year(s) to come in an effort to ensure we do all we can to make a positive impact on our organization."¹²¹

Always on the upbeat in her newsletter messages, Eldridge began the New Year extolling the virtues of winter training. "Winter is a wonderful time of year to train – for both runners and walkers. I love winter training – it's certainly not too warm, the air is crisp and clean, and it's easy to stay well hydrated." She reported the walking contingent is doing the Distance Series in

¹¹⁹ Eldridge. "Pedestrian Crossing." *Rundown* June 2000: 33. Print.

¹²⁰ Andrews. "Relay for Life: Strive to Survive, A Sweltering Success." *Rundown* July 2000: 9. Print.

¹²¹ Andrews, Bee. "President's Corner." *Rundown* Jan. 2001: 4. Print.

preparation for the “Myrtle Beach Marathon” in February 2001 and “Shamrock Marathon” in March. Both races she said were “walker-friendly.”¹²²

Much of Eldridge’s January column focused on cross training: kick boxing, weight training, elliptical machines, swimming, indoor track workouts and step classes. “The possibilities are endless,” she noted. “The important point is not to let winter slow you down when it comes to exercise and training for spring activities.”¹²³

The Walking Committee report in January, which Eldridge provided to the board, mentioned that she was working with Charlie Johnson to establish walking groups during the week.

In the February newsletter, Eldridge reached out to injured runners.

Recently we’ve picked up a couple of wonderful walking partners, both runners with injuries hampering their routine. While they’re not able to run at their normal pace, they are able to continue training through walking. We know we’ll lose them back to the running world eventually, but in the interim, we’re enjoying our new companions on our 12, 14 and 6 mile training walks.

It’s really a good message for all of us; sometimes an injury may prevent us performing at levels we’re accustomed to, but we still may be able to get out, pump up our heart rates, and limber up those leg muscles.¹²⁴

The two injured Strider runners, Bill Spruill and Steve Durrant, took up walking as an outlet for pent-up energy. Their return to running was only temporary. Others were motivated by the challenge to conquer a new sport, Daman, among them.

Spruill became the first runner turned walker due to injury to tie for first in a Strider walk. The occasion was the “1st Annual Tom Bashara Memorial Scholarship 5K Walk” in September 2000. Twenty-nine men and women crossed the finish line. At age 65, Spruill tied for first place overall with Thomas Bashara a time of 40:11. Sondra Bashara, age 30, finished first among women in 40:43. The race netted \$2,635 for the scholarship fund.¹²⁵ Spruill would later undergo full knee replacement surgery, but return to race walking at age 75.

Durrant gradually worked runs in with walking. At age 62, however, symptoms of a pending hamstring disaster flared simultaneously in both legs, which caused him to give up running altogether.¹²⁶

¹²² Eldridge. “Pedestrian Crossing,” *Rundown* Jan. 2001: 23. Print.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Eldridge. “Pedestrian Crossing,” *Rundown* Feb. 2001: 25. Print.

¹²⁵ *Rundown*, October 2000, 27.

¹²⁶ Steve Durrant became a national race walking competitor, national level USATF Certified Race Walk official and judge, Tidewater Strider Walking Committee Co-chair, race director for two USATF Strider race walks and monthly contributor to the *Rundown*.

Beginning in April 2001, Eldridge's personal contact with the Strider board diminished considerably. In May, she provided a report to the board indicating the formation of walking groups during the summer was in the works. Her monthly column, "Pedestrian Crossing," did not appear in the newsletter for several months. In September it reappeared.

Unknown to anyone, except possibly Eldridge, this would be her last contribution to the *Rundown*, and it was classic Deanie. Her absence, she said, was due to "a combination of a hectic work schedule, business travel and forgotten deadlines." She warned about dehydration and overheating in September and October, the necessity to exercise with caution, the importance of proper diet, and the exciting schedule of fall walks and marathons, especially charity walks. "Charlie Johnson, a Strider board member "is hoping to get together a walking group this fall," wrote Eldridge. She suggested that folks interested in longer walks should contact Charlie or her because the walking group's training schedule had become more varied.

A column by Mel Williams and David Branch, "Training With the Tidewater Striders: In Their Own Words," in the September *Rundown*, connected the dots. The column was a lengthy interview with Eldridge. The writers broke the news that Deanie was expecting her first child in February 2002 and was looking forward to the "Chicago Marathon" in the fall 2002 as her comeback event. The interview concluded with the following thoughtful comments from Eldridge.

Thanks so much for the opportunity to participate in this column. It's wonderful to know that the Tidewater Striders recognize and I appreciate the training that's involved in race walking and marathon training. It means so much to us as walkers, when in an event, we're greeted, encouraged, and celebrated by the runners we see along the way – thanks to each of you for your support.

I'm delighted to see that many of the local Strider races are now either "walker friendly" or offer a separate walking competition. As our population ages and hopefully turns more to fitness, there will be many more walkers out on the roads and trails. I'm glad the Striders offer a wonderful home and support system for us.¹²⁷

That was Eldridge's way of saying "good-bye." Faced with family and work commitments, and other obligations, she moved away from involvement with walking, although she remained in the Tidewater area.

2002

Three different Striders served as chairman of the Walking Committee in 2002.¹²⁸ Little news about fitness walking or race walking surfaced from board meetings. Following two years with an active committee chairman, 2002 was a let down.

¹²⁷ Mel Williams and David Branch, "Training With the Tidewater Striders: In Their Own Words," *Rundown* Sept. 2001: 19. Print.

¹²⁸ Charlie Johnson served as chairman in January and February; Jim Resolute, March - September; Tom Gerhardt, October - December.

An announcement appeared in the March *Rundown* for the “Fit for the River Training Program – 2002.”

If you or any of your friends or neighbors (who need not be Striders) wish to train for a road race, here is your chance. Nearly 30 coaches/trainers have committed their expertise to the 2002 Fit for the River Run 10K Road Race on May 4, 2002. The program is particularly designed for walkers, non-runners, or novice runners.

In a conversation with the author on October 21, 2009, Dr. Mel Williams explained,

The program started off trying to get boys and girls in public schools interested in running and walking. When organizers realized the program was not working, they went to the community for support. Striders recruited their friends, neighbors and business associates. They, in turn, recruited others interested in improving their fitness through running or walking, folks who may at one time thought about fitness, but never got around to do anything about it. The program was not designed to teach race walking technique. It lasted for three years and was highly successful.

Results of a membership survey commissioned in the Fall 2001 to assess member satisfaction with the Strider organization, involvement, needs and concerns was released in the Spring 2002. An ad hoc Strider survey committee worked with a consultant at Christopher Newport University to design and conduct the survey.¹²⁹

A telephone survey of a random 10% sample of the club membership was conducted to provide “more valid data than that of a much larger sample that was not random or a mail-in survey.” Of 220 randomly selected Striders, 174 completed the survey, representing 9.7% of the total membership of 1,800.¹³⁰

The majority of respondents said they primarily run for fitness. There was only limited evidence of involvement in other activities such as biking, aerobics and swimming.

The survey found the most popular race distances were 5K, 10K and half-marathon. The growing popularity of fitness walking and races of shorter distances notwithstanding, to the Survey Committee, walking of any kind remained an ancillary consideration.¹³¹

Race results for the “Tom Bashara Memorial 5K Walk” in May were reported in the April newsletter. Daman’s performance continued to raise the eyebrows of his race walking companions. At age 83, he finished third in a time of 36:05. Twenty-one walkers - 9 men and 22 women - participated in the race.

¹²⁹ “Membership Survey 02” is included in a binder labeled “Miscellaneous Reports” in the Strider Archives. The survey process began in November 2001, but the majority of the data was collected in March and April 2002. Results of 41 questions were reported in an 18 page report.

¹³⁰ Aasen, Curt. “Membership Survey.” *Rundown* July 2002: 13. Print.

¹³¹ Ibid.

2003

A notice in the January *Rundown* requested the help of 50 volunteers to coach novice walkers and runners for the “3rd Annual Fit for the River Run.” Williams, who was responsible for jump starting the first “Fit for the River Run program in 2002, was again the contact. Referring to the previous year’s River Run challenge, Williams wrote, “For the participants, most of whom had never run or walked that distance before, the 10-kilometer (6.2 mile) race was one of the most significant athletic accomplishments of their lifetime.”¹³²

Tom Gerhardt was listed in the February and March *Rundown* as Walking Committee Chair.

Victoria Nichols took over as Walking Committee chair in March. She described herself as a “back-a-da-pack” person, so slow that she walked a mile in half the time it takes others to complete a 5K.¹³³

At the outset, Nichols set reasonable goals: Promote walker-friendly events and establish Tidewater Striders as the major contact for the events, promote competition between Strider walkers and walkers in similar clubs, establish a separate Web site and forum for walker news and information, establish a Grand Prix for walkers and contribute articles to the newsletter promoting fitness and race walking.¹³⁴ Never before had a new Walking Committee Chair set forth such ambitious plans.

Nichols thanked Jerry and Amy Frostick for enabling walkers to compete in the 2003 “Shamrock Marathon” by keeping the course open. She was particularly grateful to volunteers on the course for supporting the walkers by vocalizing encouragement while the race was in progress. She announced the walker Web page and forum were now up, and she congratulated the five Striders who completed the “Shamrock Marathon Walk”¹³⁵

Tom Gerhardt, 3rd overall
 Steve Durrant, 6th overall
 Dwight Kane
 Catherine Reade
 Victoria Nichols (first marathon)

August 4, 2003, would become a “red letter day” in the history of walking in the Tidewater Strider organization. At the August meeting of the board of directors, Nichols presented a modified proposal for establishing a Walkers Grand Prix (WGP). The Walking Committee Chair had done her homework. The proposal was unanimously accepted.¹³⁶

¹³² “3rd Annual Fit for the River Run.” *Rundown* Jan. 2003: 38. Print.

¹³³ Nichols, Victoria. “Tidewater Striders Walking Committee.” *Rundown* Apr. 2003: 26. Print. (In minutes of meetings and newsletter bylines, the new Walking Committee Chair was alternatively listed as “Nichols” and “Nicholls” for the purpose of this study, “Nichols” is used.)

¹³⁴ Nichols. “Tidewater Striders Walking Committee.” *Rundown* May 2003: 26. Print.

¹³⁵ Nichols. “Walking Committee Update: 2004 Walkers Grand Prix.” *Rundown* Aug. 2003: 34. Print.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

Eleven sponsors had agreed to host walking events and support time limits if needed. Nichols thanked Kale, Andrews and Curt Aasen for helping with changes in policies and procedures to include WGP races. Kendall Tata volunteered to serve as race director for the first Walker Grand Prix event, the Jennifer Braun 5K.¹³⁷

Referring to the Strider Constitution and Bylaws adopted by the board in 1989 to promote walking as a secondary purpose, WGP races welcomed fitness walkers and race walkers in events of shorter distances: 5K, 8K and 10K. Nichols referred to shorter races as “new opportunities,” and reminded walkers to keep their membership current and invite friends to become Strider members.¹³⁸

Concerned that race participants could register as walkers and run in sanctioned Strider events to improve their performance, Nichols addressed the issue in the September *Rundown*.¹³⁹

- Races are open to anyone who is a walker. Some races have time limits.
- Walkers are not required to use official race walk techniques (no lifting, no bent knee) to enter a race.
- Walkers should not enter the walk division of a race if they are planning to run any portion of the race.
- The walkers division is not for joggers, slow runners, or people who do not want to finish last in their age division when walkers start before runners.
- Walkers are not required to do every race in the Walker Grand Prix schedule unless going for a WGP award.

Curt Aasen, past president of the Strider Board of Directors, remarked, “Victoria was energetic and pro active in working for the club, and she came along at a time when we didn’t have much going for the walkers. She was a complete walker. There was no running in her background. She got a lot of change put in place that would not have happened if she had not been there, and a lot of things are happening today that would not have happened without her leadership.”¹⁴⁰

“Victoria was a walker pioneer,” recalled Strider Web Master Steve Spiers. “She pushed to have a dedicated “Walkers page” on the Strider Web site. Although the content has grown in recent years, it still retains much of its original format.”¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Nichols. “Walking Committee Update.” *Rundown* Sept. 2003: 27. Print.

¹³⁹ Pedestrian walkers accustomed to combining walking and running in the same race took time to adjust to “no running.” Truth told, as long as race flyers advertised an event as “run/walk,” an open invitation had been extended to combine the two. Only after race registration forms included separate spaces for participants to select “walk” or “run” was the distinction made clear. A few walkers, however, continued to game the system.

¹⁴⁰ Telephone conversation with the author, July 2009.

¹⁴¹ Telephone conversation with the author, August 2009.

Tidewater Strider walkers began entering more competitive races. The 2003 “National Senior Games” were held in Norfolk. Results of Striders were published in the October newsletter.¹⁴²

Men’s 1500 Meter Racewalk, Norfolk State University

Tom Gerhardt, 8:07.72	5 th place	Age Group 50-54
Harry Watson, 8:26.55	7 th place	Age Group 60-64
Paul Madden, 10:09.66	5 th place	Age Group 75-79

Men’s 5K Racewalk, U.S. Naval Amphibious Base, Little Creek, VA

Tom Gerhardt, 29:59	4 th place
Harry Watson, 31.24	7 th place
Paul Madden, 36:22	3 rd place

The “Tom Bashara Memorial Scholarship 5K Walk” continued to be a popular local walking event in 2003. Under a separate heading, complete race results for 22 participants (13 women and 9 men) were published in the October newsletter.¹⁴³

In October, Harry Watson, Daman’s walking companion, sponsored a race walk demonstration for newcomers to the sport in the Old Dominion University Field House. For most, it was their first opportunity to receive instruction from a race walking expert. Harry called on his friend, Chris English, a leading USATF walk judge from Richmond, to lead the demonstration.¹⁴⁴

The “Jennifer Braun 5K Memorial Run and Walk” became the first Walker Grand Prix sponsored event. Sponsored by Checkered Flag in Virginia Beach on December 28, 2003, the race drew 36 walkers, 17 men and 19 women. For the first time, race results for all walkers were published in the *Rundown*. Tom Gerhardt and Regina Gunther finished first in their divisions with times of 29:38 and 35:54, respectively.¹⁴⁵

With each passing month, Nichols seemed more comfortable in the job as Walking Committee Chair. In newsletter articles she reached out to novice walkers who had never dreamed of competing in a Strider event. She continued to develop the Walker Grand Prix program for 2004. Modeled after the runner’s program, the most notable differences were that walkers received overall awards and races were shorter distances.

¹⁴² Scudder, Steve. “2003 National Senior Games and Olympics.” *Rundown* Sept. 2003: 32. Print.

¹⁴³ “4th Annual Tom Bashara 5K Walk September 14, 2003.” *Rundown* Oct. 2003: 14-15. Print.

¹⁴⁴ Nichols. “Walkers Grand Prix and More.” *Rundown* Dec. 2003: 31. Print.

¹⁴⁵ “Race Results.” *Rundown* Feb. 2004: 15-16. Print.

2004

In her last message as president, Andrews acknowledged with gratitude contributions to the *Rundown* by regular monthly columnists, including Nichols.¹⁴⁶

Nichols attended her first meeting as a member of the Board of Directors in January 2004. She was pleased to inform the board that the first race of the Walker Grand Prix, the “Jennifer Braun Memorial Race” in December 2003, was highly successful. One-third were Strider members.

During the next twelve months articles by walkers received more space in the newsletters than in any previous year. Walkers were gaining experience and developing new ways to make races more efficient. Help was needed to assist Nichols with the ambitious plans she had envisioned. To that end, Janie Mirmelstein was appointed Walk Coordinator and Gabrielle Miller became Walk Committee Co-chair.¹⁴⁷

Nichols saw to it that walkers did not lack for information about registering for races. “We are new and things are evolving pretty quickly,” she wrote. “Each walker is responsible for keeping up with those changes.” Walkers could keep up with changes through the Web site on the walker section of the Strider forum or in the newsletter.¹⁴⁸

An article by Durrant in the February newsletter described the inaugural 7.5 mile walk in the “22nd Annual Seaside Half-Marathon” on December 5, 2003, in Wachapreague, Virginia. Durrant had been running the Seaside race since 1989. Describing the experience, he wrote, “It’s the type of race that reminds me of what road running was like many years ago when I first got into competitive running: not a lot of participants compared with what we see here in Tidewater.”¹⁴⁹

After numerous hamstring injuries requiring extensive neuromuscular rehabilitation, Durrant began walking full-time in 2002. He convinced Race Director Vernon Bell to include a walkers division in the Seaside event. Thirteen walkers entered the first race. Durrant finished third behind Watson and Steve Shapiro.¹⁵⁰

Common to all “Seaside Half-Marathons,” the race is conducted without computers. Clip boards, stop watches, and pencils are the tools of the day. A small cannon starts the race. The course takes walkers in a Northeast direction from Wachapreague before turning off from half-marathon runners on two lane country roads.

Generously supported by local residents and folks from small neighboring towns, hot clam chowder, chili, and apple cider await the finishers. Durrant recalls the race director changed the

¹⁴⁶ Andrews. “The President’s Corner.” *Rundown* Jan 2004: 4. Print

¹⁴⁷ Nichols. “Walker Committee Update.” *Rundown* Feb 2004: 18. Print.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Durrant. “1st Annual 7.5 Mile Walk Held at Wachapreague, VA.” *Rundown* Feb. 2004: 19. Print

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

walk course to 7.7 miles when Strider race walkers suggested the course was longer than 7.5 miles.

“The Penguin Classic 5K in Virginia Beach” on February 14, 2004, drew more walkers than any previous race. In a race of 350 participants, 57 were walkers. Gerhardt finished first overall among male walkers in 29:37:00. First overall among female walkers was Dawn Richt (35:43:00). “Many of our walkers took home prizes,” Nichols reported.¹⁵¹ The lineup of Walker Grand Prix races, however, remained in a state of flux throughout 2004.

Walking Committee Co-chair Gabrielle Miller introduced herself in the March *Rundown*. She completed the "Distance Series 5K" with Durrant and Stokes, and the 30K with Shapiro, Durrant, Stokes and Bob Curtin Jr. The newsletter, however, reported only runners' results in the Distance Series.

Still concerned about race participants who registered as “walkers,” but opted to run part of the race, Nichols was moved to write in the May *Rundown*,

We have some people who have been witnessed blatantly cheating. If you are a Strider member entered in a walk division, you must follow the rules. This means absolutely NO running, jogging or anything else other than walking. Starting with the next race in June, races will be monitored for cheaters and you will not receive Walker Grand Prix points. Some of the race directors I've talked to will also disqualify you for awards if you are caught. So please don't do it. It's not worth it.¹⁵²

After nearly one year since the issue first surfaced, on July 5, 2004, the Strider board unanimously passed a motion, with the support of Williams, to change the words of the Walker's Policies and procedures from:

“Participants who have been discovered to be not walking the complete entire race (unless as noted on disclaimers provided at races) will be moved out of the results of the walker division and moved into the appropriate runners division, with the forfeiture of Grand Prix points and race awards (if any),” to

“Participants who have been discovered to be not walking the complete entire race (unless as noted on disclaimers provided at races) will be disqualified, with the forfeiture of Grand Prix points and race awards, if any.”¹⁵³

Eight Strider race walkers attended a one-day clinic in Williamsburg in May given by Ray Funkhouser, National Master Race Walk Champion. Impressed by what they saw and heard, the Walking Committee teamed with Sentara Community Health and Prevention to procure the

¹⁵¹ “Race Results.” *Rundown* Mar. 2004: 13. Print.

¹⁵² Nichols. “Walking Committee Update.” *Rundown* May 2004: 26. Print.
Apparently frustrated by a situation Nichols believed had gotten out of control, it is not clear why the Walking Committee Chair, a Strider board member who should have been aware of how policy changes became effective, would think that walkers who ran would lose Grand Prix points. Policy changes could not become effective until the board of directors gave its formal approval.

¹⁵³ “Minutes of July Board Meeting.” *Rundown*. Sept. 2004: 5.

services of Funkhouser to conduct three classes at the Russell Memorial Library in Chesapeake, Virginia, for participants in various stages of walking.¹⁵⁴

As Walking Committee Chair, Nichols recognized the necessity for a Web site that reached out to different categories of walkers. In her September 2004 *Rundown* column, “Walking Committee Update,” she wrote, “Please note that we are adding a lot of new links for fitness walkers, not just racers. I would appreciate anyone who is willing to be a walker group leader or creating a group of walkers to contact me with your information. I have had people contact me wanting to walk in a group, but I need leaders.”¹⁵⁵

The majority of races endorsed by the Tidewater Striders were to raise funds for various charities. Many were Grand Prix Walker events. A sample listing of fall races was included in the September newsletter: “Toys for Tots” (underprivileged children); “Hike for Heifer” (local food banks); “South Hampton Roads Heart Walk;” “Susan B. Komen Race for the Cure” (breast cancer research); “Cerebral Palsy of Virginia Annual Walk-A-Thon;” “Walk for Diabetes;” “Arthritis Foundation 5K.”¹⁵⁶

Quite suddenly, an aura of discontent engulfed Nichols in her performance as Walking Committee Chair. Trouble was brewing, and it began to surface in her column in the November *Rundown*. Referring to a forthcoming judging certification clinic, Nichols wrote, “I would like to have a head count of those interesting in judging. We can see about doing our own walks at a track, to raise funds for our own purposes, and to start inviting people out to our races. I will look into free entry to our judged walks for those people who judge.”¹⁵⁷

She then moved to “add or modify” a list of proposals to change Walker Grand Prix rules, which she described as “something more to the liking of everyone involved.” A rationale accompanied each addition and modification.¹⁵⁸

Nichols proposed a major overhaul of the Walker Grand Prix system that put her at odds with the Strider Board of Directors. She concluded by writing, “I will let people know more on whether or not these get approved and in what form as soon as I can. It is possible that there may not be a walkers [*sic*] Grand Prix next year due to not approving most of the same races we had last year. I don’t know at this point. I’ll keep everyone informed.”¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁴ Plans for the classes were first announced in “Walk Like a Champion! Walkers Fundraising Clinic,” an article by Nichols in the August *Rundown*. A full page announcement followed in the September *Rundown*. In the beginner’s class, Funkhouser would introduce the fundamentals of race walking, safety, proper shoes and the benefit of participating with like minded walkers in a group. The advanced class was for experienced walkers who wanted to improve their race walking technique, race walk faster and more efficiently and would include video taping. He would conclude with a class on becoming a USA Track & Field race walk judge, the rules of race walking, and what to look for when judging a USATF race walk event.

¹⁵⁵ Nichols. “Walking Committee Update.” *Rundown* Nov. 2004: 22. Print.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁷ Nichols. “Walking Committee Update.” *Rundown* Nov. 2004: 22. Print.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

Victoria Nichols, a vocal and energetic Walking Committee Chair for two years, had clearly drawn a line in the sand. The board was in no mood to respond at that time. Her motion to add or modify Walkers Grand Prix rules was deferred until the meeting on January 10, 2005.¹⁶⁰

Rebuffed by the board of directors the previous month, in the December *Rundown* Nichols presented her plan to change Walker Grand Prix procedures to the Strider membership “Since our goals are not included in the strategic planning phase of the Striders,” she wrote, “(I have asked that this be amended, since walker support is a secondary goal of the Striders), I am listing them here and I would like some feedback from people on what they think.”¹⁶¹

Nichols began by listing group walking and sponsorship as target areas. She was interested in forming fitness groups to walk together on weekends or after work on weekdays, individuals to walk as a group for 10K distances or more, and groups interested in short distances, 5K or less. Having previously lined up Checkered Flag as a sponsor, she proposed to find additional sponsors and sources of revenue.¹⁶²

Next, she referred to motions she had already sent to the board, starting with a requirement for 20 points to receive a Walker’s Grand Prix award. Points would be given for volunteering as a judge at Strider judged race walks, volunteering as a group leader for fitness walks or as a member of the Walking Committee, and for submitting three articles to the *Rundown* of at least 150 words on walking, race walking, or fitness walking.¹⁶³

To receive Grand Prix points a walker had to be a Strider in good standing prior to the race. Grand Prix races would vary in distance from 1 mile to 6.2 miles (10K), and races equal to or longer than 10K not designated as Grand Prix races would be added at the discretion of the Walking Committee. Twenty extra points would be added for completing the “Shamrock Marathon” in addition to receiving credit for the Shamrock 8K Grand Prix. Points would be awarded to the first five male and female finishers in each race.¹⁶⁴

She then listed events that were not Grand Prix races and would not qualify for the six races required of walkers to receive a Grand Prix award. However, if completed within the time limits specified, walkers would receive up to 50 Grand Prix points.¹⁶⁵

And with that, Nichols had pushed the envelope about as far as it could go.

¹⁶⁰ “Minutes of November Board Meeting.” *Rundown*. Jan. 2005, 5.

¹⁶¹ Nichols. “Walking Committee Update.” *Rundown* Dec. 2004: 15. Print.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

2005

The February *Rundown* published minutes of the January board meeting repeating additions and modifications to Walker Grand Prix awards first proposed by Nichols in November 2004. The meeting was adjourned before a vote could be taken.¹⁶⁶

A touching article in the February *Rundown* by Tata related the history of the “Jennifer Braun Memorial 5K Run and Walk” on New Year’s Day and the courageous battle Jennifer waged against a rare form of cancer. After thirteen years, this was to be the last race, which had raised over \$100,000 to help families with terminally ill children.¹⁶⁷

Twenty-four female and seven male walkers completed the 2005 race. Pamela Svete (40:30) and Tom Gerhardt (30:16) led their divisions.¹⁶⁸

Dick Kole replaced Nichols as Walking Committee Chair at the board meeting in February. Although Nichols was still listed as a director, she had fallen out of favor with members of the board. Nichols remained on the board to complete her term, but her byline did not appear again in the *Rundown*.

Kole’s high level of interest was evident from the outset. He recognized shortcomings with the walking program, and building on Nichols’ system, recommended further changes in existing policies and procedures by adding to or modifying the Walker Grand Prix. Motions by the Walking Committee, however, to amend policies and procedures and to approve the 2005 Walking Participation schedule were tabled.

On March 7, 2005, the board of directors was ready to act on the committee’s recommendations. And act they did!

In a chilling repudiation of questionable decisions and perceived interference with its authority to govern as a board, the directors left no doubt about what was now required. Its first statement established the mood of the board: “Remove all changes to the walking committee procedures as well as Grand Prix racing schedules for walkers that were approved at the February Board meeting, including sections 7.L. (1), 7.L. (3) and 7.L. (11) and revert back to what it was on [*sic*] January 2004.” PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ “Minutes of January Board Meeting.” *Rundown*. Feb. 2005, 5.

¹⁶⁷ Tata, Kendall. “Jennifer Braun Memorial Run.” *Rundown* Jan. 2005: 11. Print.

¹⁶⁸ “Jennifer Braun Memorial Run and Walk Race Results.” *Rundown* Feb. 2005:15. Print.

¹⁶⁹ “Minutes of March Board Meeting.” *Rundown*. May 2005, 5.

[Walking Committee Procedures Section 7.L. (1) was removed and replaced with: Tidewater Strider Walking Grand Prix races will vary in distances and must be at least one mile long. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY; Section 7.L. (3) would have allowed points to be awarded in Grand Prix races based on distance of race and effort put forth training for the race. Removed and done away with completely. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY; Section 7.L. (11). Removed. Added Section 8 to distinguish between earning points in Walker Grand Prix events and earning points in Walker Participation events. The Walking Committee was expected to exercise more control of races with walk divisions, improve contact with race directors, set race schedules, submit reports to the *Rundown* and work with Awards and Banquet chairpersons to present walker awards at the annual banquet. PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.]

The following changes in the Walking Committee policies and procedures were passed unanimously:

- Tidewater Strider Grand Prix races will vary in distance and must be at least one mile long.
- To be eligible for walker Grand Prix awards, a walker must volunteer for at least one Tidewater Strider function.

The following additions to the policies and procedures were enacted:

- The Walking Committee shall attempt to select as many Strider sponsored or contracted events for the Walking Grand Prix as possible.
- In addition to earning points in Grand Prix walking events, walkers may also earn points in participation events. Each is a separate series of events with its own point system.
- Specified the number of points a walker may earn based on distances in races identified by the Walking Committee as participation events only. Qualifying races must be longer than 5K distance.
- Participation events will generally not be held closer than two weeks apart.
- The number of participation events will be determined by the Walking Committee.
- Walkers must walk in a minimum of three participation events yearly to qualify for an award.
- The Walking Committee must provide race directors of selected events with sufficient information to enable the race committee to determine who completed the race in the time allotted.
- The Walking Committee must provide the board of directors with a schedule of races for the ensuing year by the November board meeting.
- The first five walkers, male or female, who have the most participation points will receive standard awards. All walkers completing at least three participation events will receive a certificate.
- The committee shall provide an article to the *Rundown* before the first race of each walker participation series explaining the rules, listing the races in the series, and the points associated with each race.
- Walker participation standings will be listed quarterly in the *Rundown* and published on the Striders Web site.

On motion of the Strategic Objectives Committee, Objective 2, was amended as follows:

MISSION

In general, the purpose of the Tidewater Striders, as documented in its constitution and articles of confederation [*sic*], is to promote and encourage long distance running, walking, multi-sport events, track and field, and other similar endeavors through appropriate educational and charitable means.

VISION

This should be the main principle underlying the club's mission and the development of our visionary statement, or guiding principle, as to what we hope as a club to accomplish over the next five years. In essence, the club should attempt to retain its reputation as the premier running-related organization in South Hampton Roads and to maintain its reputation as one of the best and most active running clubs in the nation. The Striders' vision includes (1) the promotion and conduct of races and (2) conduct of educational programs to promote running and related exercise endeavors for health, fitness and sport.

The motion passed unanimously.¹⁷⁰

Two months later, the board of directors moved to implement "related exercise endeavors" in its vision statement. The secretary recorded the following action in the minutes of the May board meeting:

Motion by the Strategic Objective Committee, goal 1, objective 10: Evaluate the need for walking only race competition. Walking may be an excellent approach to encourage people to exercise, and walkers only competition could provide motivation for individuals and intensify such a fitness program.
PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.¹⁷¹

Kole understood, however, that walker only race competition would not become a reality until the number of active walkers increased dramatically. In May 2005, the walking community consisted of thirty-five people and Kole was still asking for volunteers to serve on the Walking Committee.

In the April newsletter, Kole announced the addition of Tom Gerhardt and Pat Molnar to the Walking Committee. The committee now consisted of Linda Walker, Tom, Pat, and himself. He was looking for a fifth.¹⁷²

Addressing the Strider walkers in the May *Rundown*, Kole referred to an issue that had long been a sticking-point with Walking Committee chairpersons, and indicated change was in the works.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ "Minutes of May Board Meeting." *Rundown*. July 2005, 5.
(Thirteen years had elapsed between the Tidewater Striders approving "Walking" as a secondary purpose of the organization and declaring it part of the club's vision. It took only sixty days to advance from a vision to "walking only race competition.")

¹⁷² Kole. "Walking Committee Update." *Rundown* Apr. 2005: 20. Print.

Some races do not present awards to walkers nor do they have an entry on the registration form to differentiate between walkers and runners. I know most of you but I don't always know if you are running or walking in a particular race, so please let me know if you think there might be a problem. As we get further into the year the separation of walkers from runners will become less of a problem as many registration forms will include a space to designate how you will participate in a race.¹⁷³

The 2005 "National Senior Games/Senior Olympics" were held in June in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, at Carnegie Mellon University. Competing in the 1500 meter race walk, 50-54 age group, Shapiro, 51, won the gold medal, finishing in first place in 7:33.10. He also took the gold medal in the 5000 meter race walk with a time of 28:33. At the Annual Strider Banquet in January 2006, Steve received the Tidewater Strider's "Outstanding Male Performance Award" for 2005.¹⁷⁴

On December 5, 2005, the Board of Directors unanimously approved the revised Walking Committee Policy and Procedures. In addition, the Walking Committee asked the board to consider permanent representation on the board for walkers and an increase in the committee budget for walker awards.¹⁷⁵

2006

Printed in the January *Rundown*, Walkers Grand Prix rules for 2006 were different from those in 2005.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³ Kole. "Walking Committee Update." *Rundown* May 2005: 24. Print.

¹⁷⁴ Kole. "Walking Committee Update." *Rundown* May 2005: 25. Print.

¹⁷⁵ "Minutes of December Board Meeting." *Rundown*. Jan. 2006, 5.

¹⁷⁶ Kole. "Walker's Update." *Rundown* Jan. 2006: 21. Print.

Revised Walking Committee Policies and procedures, unanimously approved by the board of directors on December 5, 2005, are summarized as follows:

Policies

It is the responsibility of the Walking Committee (WC) to (1) promote race walking and fitness walking, (2) serve as liaison to local walking events, (3) provide walking information to members and the community and (4) create and publicize the Strider WGP series.

Procedures

The WC will provide walking information for the *Rundown* and Strider web site and to the membership through programs and clinics, and act as liaison with race directors and select races in the WGP series using the following criteria:

- The WC will determine the number of walking events each year; however, races selected should at least two weeks apart.
- The WGP schedule will be presented to the Strider board for approval by the December board meeting of the year preceding proposed races.
- The WGP schedule will follow the runner GP schedule except for races not suitable for walking. The WC may substitute for cancelled races.
- To qualify for a WGP award, a participant must walk in a minimum of 6 events in the WPG series.
- To be eligible for a WGP award, a walker must volunteer for at least one volunteer Strider function.
- 1st through 5th place finishers will accumulate Competition points – awarded in separate overall male and female divisions corresponding to their finish (20, 15, 12, 10, 8) - and all walkers completing WGP races will accumulate Participation points, which are awarded at one point per complete kilometer.
- Walkers must walk the entire race distance. Running or jogging at any time during the race are not permitted and will result in removal from the walk division of the race.

Regarding the budget request at the December 2005 meeting for (1) additional funding and (2) consideration of permanent representation for walkers on the Strider board, the directors danced around the first request and did not address the second.¹⁷⁷

Preparation by Kole was so thorough it provided the foundation for future adjustments. It was a masterful piece of work, not least because it stood the test of time with only minimal tweaking required in the intervening years between January 2006 and the conclusion of this study, December 2009.

Walkers' race results in the newsletter for the "Tune-Up Series" at Fort Story in February did not differentiate between walkers and runners, who were included together by age groups. Strider race walkers who entered the events turned in credible performances in their age groups. The men included Durrant, Dewey, Lyons, Curtin, Shapiro and Gerhardt.

Race directors were becoming more walker-friendly.

- The race flyer for the "Chesapeake Bay 10K" included a 10K walk and a 10K run, another first.
- The flyer for the "POMOCO 15th Annual Running Crab" race in Hampton, Virginia, included a 5K walk.
- The flyer for the "'Run for Holiday House of Portsmouth" sponsored by the Knights of Columbus included a 5K for runners and a 5K for walkers.
- The Flyer for "Riverside Harvest Festival" in Williamsburg included an 8 mile race walk.
- The "8th Annual ODU Accounting" race included walkers and runners in its 5K event.

Tata resigned as a director in March, and Kole took her place on the board of directors. Kole was now a member of the board and chairman of a standing committee, not unusual in the history of the Strider organization. His major contribution to the newsletter during the year consisted of frequent statistical reports on 2006 Walker Grand Prix results and Walker Participation results.

"Race Walking for Runners?" an article by Durrant appeared in the August *Rundown*. It would be the first of many articles submitted by him to the monthly newsletter.

Most race walkers start out as runners and turn to race walking as a result of a running injury. Durrant's is a human interest story of how he became a competitive race walker in his age

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- Walkers who do not complete the race within the race's published time will not be counted as have completed the race
 - Walkers who do not place in the 5 top of the Competition series will be eligible for one of five Participation awards. Walkers not receiving either award but who completed at least 6 WGP events will receive a certificate indicating the number of events in which the walker participated and the number of points accumulated.
 - Awards must be approved by the board prior to publication in the *Rundown* and on the Strider Web site.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

division following recovery from hamstring injuries first in one leg, then in the other, referred to earlier in this study. He was 62. The year was 2001.

In 1999, Durrant tore a hamstring and underwent physical therapy for several months before he could run again. The following year the same injury occurred in the other leg, and again he underwent rehabilitation. But the retired Marine Colonel was not about to stop running. In fact, during one of the rehabs, he managed to walk another marathon.¹⁷⁸ Here is how he described what happened next.

During a training run the symptoms of a pending disaster flared simultaneously in both legs. That was my last day of running. I was not going to let myself go through another several months of physical therapy on my hamstrings again just to be a runner. I told myself I would be a “speed” walker or “power” walker, but not like those “race walkers” that looked like drunken ducks swinging their hips and bent arms all over the place. I soon realized that those drunken ducks moved a lot faster than other types of walkers, and I got over it. I have been a race walker for the past five years and have maintained myself relatively injury free compared to my running days when an ice pack and 800 mg of ibuprofen were my constant companions. I’ve race walked seven marathons to date and the recovery periods have been much shorter than those during my running days when a couple days of rest were needed before I could gradually get my body back to running.¹⁷⁹

At the December meeting, Hildreth thanked Kole for developing walker policies and procedures and said that although Kole was retiring from the board, he would continue to maintain Walker Grand Prix records for the club.

2007

In the president’s January message, Hildreth welcomed Dwight Kane and Anita Keegan to the board of directors. For the first time, two walkers had been elected to serve on the Strider board.¹⁸⁰

A list of Walker Grand Prix races for 2007 was published in the January *Rundown* together with changes in policies and procedures.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ Durrant. “Race Walking for Runners?” *Rundown* Aug. 2006: 16. Print.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Hildreth, Rich, “President’ Corner.” *Rundown* Jan. 2007: 3. Print.

¹⁸¹ “Walking Grand Prix: Walking Participation for 2007.” *Rundown* Jan. 2007: 27. Print.

Races were listed on one line in two columns as Race A and Race B. The top three men and women completing at least 6 races and meeting the volunteer requirement received awards.

If two races were listed on the same line, only one would qualify for points for any single walker. The fastest male and female in Race A earned 20 points for the race, and no points in Race B shown on the same line.

If the same walkers (i.e. the ones who won Race A) completed Race B shown on the same line, they were not considered for Grand Prix points for Race B. The remaining fastest male and female walkers in Race A, excluding those who earned 20 points for either Race A or B would earn 15 points for Race A. This would continue until all available points were awarded.

“Hair of the Dog,” a walker-friendly 5K race, is held each year on January 1. The event is a favorite of Judy Paschall, senior Strider female walker, who for the past six years has walked the distance on New Years day in her pajamas. Top finishers in 2007 were:¹⁸²

	<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>
1 st place	Steve Shapiro (27:49)	1 st place	Anita Keegan (37:32)
2 nd place	Tom Gerhardt (30:53)	2 nd place	Karen Williams (38:51)
3 rd place	Scott Stakes (31:06)	3 rd place	Mary Ann Calvert (47:14)

Prior to 2007, two outstanding female walkers and knowledgeable writers, Deanie Eldridge and Victoria Nicholls, published almost every month in the newsletter while they served on the board of directors or as Walking Committee Chair. Anita Keegan became the third, taking over the committee after Kole retired at the end of 2006.

Keegan’s first article “You Can Walk a 5K, 10K, Half or Full Marathon!” appeared in the March 2007 newsletter. She described the transition from running to race walking, and recalled what it was like being a convert to walking and overcoming the apprehension of embracing a similar sport. “I asked questions. Lots of them. I read. I talked with experienced walkers. I got out and trained for and completed events.”¹⁸³

Clearly, Keegan was highly motivated to succeed in every aspect of walking. She set out to remove lingering doubt among folks who had never dreamed of walking distances of 5K, 10K, and longer. “Yes. YOU CAN!” she wrote. “You walk every day, don’t you? Truly, unless there is a physical or health reason why you can’t walk for extended periods, then you can complete an endurance event.”¹⁸⁴

Kathy Nash served as co-chair of the Walking Committee. She had been walking for several years before she finally got up the courage to join the Striders in 2005. Reticent about picking up her race packet as a new Strider the day before the “Shamrock Marathon,” Nash was befriended by Keegan and Kole, who were working at the Tidewater Strider booth. Recalling her experience at the Shamrock that year, Nash wrote,

I remember Anita volunteering to help walkers during the “Shamrock Marathon.” She was such a fast walker that she was able to help walkers who were injured and make sure they received medical care, then catch up with the slower walkers and coach the rest of us to the finish line. It was a within the walker time limit.

To qualify for an award, the Walker Participation Award, the walker had to be a Tidewater Strider member and meet the volunteer requirement. One point was awarded to each kilometer of the race, and the five walkers, either men or women who earned the most points but had not earned a Walker Grand Prix Award would receive a Walker Participation Award.

¹⁸² “Hair of the Dog Race Results.” *Rundown* Feb. 2007: 25. Print.

¹⁸³ Keegan, Anita. “Yes You Can Walk a 5K, 10K, Half or Full Marathon,” *Rundown* Mar. 2007: 17. Print.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

When walkers started focusing on learning how to race walk, Anita insisted in setting up the first training program. She was featured in a magazine article and was a big supporter of “Team in Training.” ...She gained the respect of local runners, and encouraged more walkers to join the Tidewater Striders.¹⁸⁵

Recognition of walkers’ race results in 2007 was a mixed bag. Some race directors did not recognize walker finishes. Others included walker finishes with the appropriate age group for runners. Separate listings of walker finishes were rare. “The Angel Flight 5K” in March and “Elizabeth River 10K” in May were two notable exceptions.

“The Angel Flight 5K” included a separate listing for male and female walkers in the April newsletter. Tom Gerhardt, age 55, finished first among seven male walkers in 31:12 and Karen Williams, age 41, finished first in a group of twenty-five females in 39:15. Of 140 finishers, over 20% were walkers, their best turnout of the year.¹⁸⁶

Six male and seventeen female walkers were among 674 finishers in the 2007 “10K Elizabeth River Run” in Portsmouth. Shapiro finished first in the men’s division (58:00) and Kelly Garcia-Smith finished first in the women’s division (1:10:31).¹⁸⁷

In the April newsletter, Hildreth called attention to an event on May 5 at Virginia Wesleyan College. Reaching out to walkers interested in improving their race walking technique or folks just interested in becoming a walker, he wrote, “It will be an opportunity to meet and greet other walkers. Chances are you already know this, but one of the main draws of running or walking in competition is socializing with other participants. Getting to know one another better is part of the enjoyment of the activity.”¹⁸⁸

Keegan’s interests extended beyond fitness walking and training for distance races. She had become a student of the sport.

In the May *Rundown*, she began the first of a two part series, “Etiquette: Common Courtesy, Order and Safety on the Course,” issues her predecessors seldom discussed in newsletter articles. Her comments were directed to runners and walkers alike. Introducing the series, Keegan explained,

Course etiquette doesn’t apply only to walkers. Runners follow the same guidelines. It’s been my experience that etiquette is especially important for walkers because we are usually on the course longer and tend to socialize as we go. There’s nothing wrong with that as long as we maintain focus that we are not the only ones on the course.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁵ Nash, Kathy. “Re: Anita Keegan.” Message to the author. 2 Feb. 2012. E-mail.

¹⁸⁶ “Angel Flight 5K.” *Rundown* Apr. 2007: 21. Print.

¹⁸⁷ “Elizabeth River 10K.” *Rundown* June 2007: 19. Print.

¹⁸⁸ Hildreth. “President’s Corner,” *Rundown* Apr. 2007: 3. Print.

¹⁸⁹ Keegan. “Etiquette: Common Courtesy, Order and Safety on the Course.” *Rundown* May 2007: 18-19. Print.

In Part I, Keegan covered etiquette before the event: race entry, lining up, and disposing of excess clothing, food and beverage.¹⁹⁰

The following month in Part II, she talked about courtesy during the race - keeping to the right, knowing who is near you, water stops and courtesy after the race. She concluded the series with friendly advice, “It sounds like a lot to remember when you’re on the course or training path. Just as with the physical aspects of training, it becomes second nature as you put in the miles. We all make mistakes now and then. Just remember the basics...common courtesy, order, and safety.”¹⁹¹ Keegan had established her versatility as a writer on all facets of walking.

Hartley Dewey, who had been working with Kole for two years refining the Grand Prix system, became responsible for scoring the Walker Grand Prix in March 2007. He had been a race walker for 3 years, and knew the system well. Two years later Lori Sherwood would take over. Nothing was lost in the transition. Lori is a conscientious walker on and off the course.

In the June newsletter, the Strider president called attention to the May 5 clinic at Virginia Wesleyan and to the approach of hot weather, the possibility of dehydration, and that “all our races are the same length,” Hildreth offered, “This could be why walking is obviously becoming more popular and why more folks are taking it up.”

He thanked Keegan, Kane, and Durrant for organizing a great walking clinic. Hildreth continued,

On an otherwise perfectly nice Saturday afternoon, 53 Striders came out to learn more about walking technique. That, by the way, included two former very accomplished runners and one former president of the Striders. Walking is obviously a way to continue being active, while being less stressful to joints and muscles. As we age it sure looks like it may be the future of our sport.¹⁹²

Minutes of the July board meeting included an encouraging announcement from the Walking Committee: “Shamrock is going to have a major walk division including judges.” Durrant explained how it happened.

In 2007, Hartley Dewey, Steve Durrant and Dwight Kane approached the race directors of the Shamrock Sportsfest, an event which attracts 16,000 participants to its Marathon, Half-Marathon, 8K and two children’s races. They asked the directors to bring back the walk division in the 2008 Shamrock Marathon, which had been discontinued in 2005. They further stipulated they would be personally responsible to the race directors for all walk division race management functions, including providing walk judges on the course and handling walker complaints.¹⁹³

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Keegan. “Course Etiquette: Part II.” *Rundown* June 2007: 14-15. Print.

¹⁹² Hildreth. “President’s Corner,” *Rundown* June 2007: 3. Print.

¹⁹³ Durrant. “Developing Organized Walking Within a Running Club.” <http://www.tidewaterstriders.com>

The 2007 “Summer National Senior Games/Senior Olympics” were held in Louisville, Kentucky, in July at the University of Louisville. The 1500 meter race walk was held on the university track and the 5K meter race walk at the City of Louisville’s Iroquois Park on a modified two loop out and back course on a rolling paved road.¹⁹⁴

Shapiro bettered his 2005 gold medal performances in each race competing in the 50-54 age group. He improved his time in the 1500 meter race walk in 2007 by eighteen seconds to finish in 7:14:18, although he finished second in the race and won the silver medal. He bettered his time in the 5000 meter race walk by a full minute and ten seconds, and finished in second place in 27:22:56 to win a second silver medal.¹⁹⁵

Participating in his first “National Senior Games” in the 65-69 age group Durrant had a personal best of 9:38:61 in the 1500 meter race walk, finishing 11th in a field of 23 race walkers. In the last 1000 meters of the 5000 meter race, his legs “rubberized,” and he crossed the finish line in 12th place with a time of 34:26:65.¹⁹⁶

At the September board meeting, Keegan reported volunteers at the Strider booth in the Virginia Beach Coliseum for the “Rock ’n Roll” Expo talked with many visitors interested in walking.

Her article in the September 2007 *Rundown*, “Over-training, Over-hydrating, Over-dressing” was another example of her versatility as a walker oriented writer.

“Listen to your body,” she began. “All days are not equal. Your schedule may call for six miles, but you know your body has reached its limit. What do you do? Swap your training day for a rest/recovery day, or rest an extra day. The investment in rest will pay off in the long run (literally). Don’t be a slave to your training schedule.” She continued with a discussion of avoiding dehydration during a race by “drinking to your thirst,” and the value of wearing light layers of non-cotton clothing for training in cold weather.¹⁹⁷

Of twelve race flyers included in the September *Rundown*, seven included events for walkers. Without ever inserting his byline, Dewey continued to submit for publication updated Walking Grand Prix and Walking Participation results for publication.

In her walking committee report at the November board meeting, Keegan stated there are currently in excess of 100 walkers, which is “about 10% of the club.”¹⁹⁸

Results of Strider race walkers in out-of-town marathons made the news. The December newsletter reported Dewey completed the “Portland Oregon Marathon” on October 7 in

¹⁹⁴ Durrant. “Strider Race Walkers at National Senior Games.” *Rundown* Aug. 2007: 15. Print.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Keegan. “Over training, Over-hydrating, Over-dressing,” *Rundown* Sept. 2007: 14. Print.

¹⁹⁸ “Minutes of November Board Meeting.” *Rundown*. Jan. 2006, 5.

5:44:01.¹⁹⁹

Paula Graham's name appeared for the first time in a Strider publication, completing the November "Turkey Trot 10K" on November 22, 2007, in 1:25:25.²⁰⁰ Wasting no time, she embarked on a program to improve her race walking technique and develop a proper training regimen to include diet and exercise. Within a year, Graham had become an elite race walking competitor and student of the sport.

Tidewater Strider race walkers were introduced to a new challenge in 2007 by Durrant: the "One Hour Postal Race Walk," a national race walk competition held by clubs throughout the United States sponsored by the Shore Atlantic Club in New Jersey.²⁰¹

The inaugural "One Hour Postal Race Walk" for Strider race walkers was held on December 22, 2007, at Tallwood High School in Virginia Beach on a newly resurfaced rubberized track. A stiff wind from the northeast and temperature in the mid 40s did not hamper performances. Five men and seven women entered the competition.²⁰²

Shapiro, 54, placed first overall for male competitors and fourth nationally in the men's 50-54 age group, walking 10,141 meters at a pace of 9:30 per minute. Rebecca Garson 43, a Strider living in Afton, Virginia, led female competitors, race walking 9,588 meters, at a pace of 10:02 per minute, and finished first nationally in the women's 40-44 age group. The Strider "One Hour Postal Race Walk" connection with the Shore Atlantic Club lasted two years.²⁰³

The final event in the Walkers' Grand Prix racing year was the Wachapreague 7.7 mile race. Shapiro finished first, setting a new course record for men in 1:12:38. Finishing first among women was Joanna Leung, also setting a new course record in 1:24:30.²⁰⁴

As the year came to a close, the walking community was saddened to learn their long time friend and mentor, Anita Keegan, had resigned for personal reasons as Walking Committee Chair and member of the Strider board. Attempts to contact Anita for this study were unsuccessful. The president announced Diane Zinn would take Keegan's seat on the board.

¹⁹⁹ "Striders on the Road." *Rundown* Dec. 2007: 36. Print.

²⁰⁰ "Tidewater Striders Turkey Trot." *Rundown* Dec. 2007: 23. Print.

²⁰¹ Competition is held on a measured track. The race is judged by USATF certified judges in accord with USATF rules governing race walking. Individual lap sheets for each walker are maintained to record the cumulative lap time for each lap. At the end of sixty minutes, a horn sounds, walkers stop, and with a measuring wheel, the distance is recorded for each walker's last lap. Added to the distance covered in the number of completed laps, the total distance for each competitor is sent to the Shore Club where national rankings are compiled by age groups.

²⁰² Durrant. "Strider 1-Hour Postal Race Walk at Tallwood High School," *Rundown*, Feb. 2008: 29. Print.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Durrant. "Strider Walkers at Wachapreague 2007." *Rundown* Jan. 2008: 29. Print.

Keegan had been an efficacious advocate for walkers. Her articles in the *Rundown* each month were articulately composed gems of wisdom not given to hyperbole or excess. In short, Keegan “walked the walk and talked the talk.”

She was never too busy to converse with interested folks about the benefits of walking. In the newsletter each month listing Strider training sites primarily for runners, Keegan invited walkers of all ages and levels of experience to meet her for friendly training walks every Wednesday in the K-Mart parking lot in Virginia Beach at 6:00 p.m. where “the distance is up to you.”

Recalling how she became a walker, Diane Zinn said, “I remember Anita was the reason I started. She and Dwight Kane were so positive and happy to be walkers. Anita led the first walker training session I went to at Mt. Trashmore. She met me at the finish line cheering at my first Neptune 5K. I felt a big loss when she left.”²⁰⁵

2008

On January 1, 2008, eight race walkers participated in the “Hair of the Dog 5K” in Virginia Beach. Shapiro led the men with a time of 26:02, and Karen Williams finished first among women in 39:20.²⁰⁶

Hildreth welcomed new board member Lori Sherwood to the January meeting.

At the annual banquet in February, the Striders presented awards to competition and participation winners in 2007, recognized outstanding high school athletes, and presented special awards for exemplary service to the organization. Durrant was presented with the “Striders Race Director of the Year Award for 2007.” He had been race director for the “Strider Mile” and “1500M VA-USATF Race Walking Championship” and Strider “One Hour Race Walk.” The events are judged races and require an incredible amount of preparation.

The front cover of the March *Rundown* included pictures of Lori Sherwood, “Overall Female Walker 20k/25k/30k” and Carl Mallet, “Overall Male Walker 10k/15k/20k” in the Distance Series at Fort Story.

A notice appeared in the February and March *Rundowns* informing “Shamrock Marathon” participants that both the Marathon and Half-Marathon had competitive walk divisions in 2008. Running and jogging were not permitted by anyone who registered as a walker. Participants were expected to walk the entire distance. If individuals were observed running or jogging any part of the race, they would be moved from the walking division to the running division.²⁰⁷

Kane established an electronic newsletter for one hundred walkers to whom he sent e-mail whenever anything of interest to walkers came to his attention. According to Cindy Williams, “Dwight was successful in getting everyone in contact with one another and communicating. If

²⁰⁵ Zinn, Diane. Conversation with author. 15 Jan. 2012.

²⁰⁶ “Hair of the Dog.” *Rundown* Feb. 2008: 31. Print.

²⁰⁷ “Shamrock Sportsfest – March 14-16, 2008.” *Rundown* Mar. 2008: 20. Print.

he hadn't started collecting e-mail addresses, we would not be where we are today. Dwight's personality is perfect for bringing in new members."²⁰⁸

Beginning in March 2008, the information source for Tidewater Strider walkers was Cindy Williams' "Bullet Mail." It began as an electronically distributed weekly newsletter. A year later "Bullet Mail" switched to bi-weekly distribution. The newsletter was not limited to Strider members. Interest generated in fitness walking and race walking through the newsletter attracted new members to the Striders organization.

Content of the "Bullet Mail" increased as its readership grew. By the end of 2009, over two hundred people were receiving the newsletter, which had a staff of one, compiler and editor Cindy Williams.

A typical newsletter included messages of upcoming local walker-friendly races and races in neighboring cities with special instructions that might apply; news of race walking clinics; list of Grand Prix events; Walker Grand Prix and Walker Participation rules; schedule of weekly training sites, including fitness walks with Strider group leaders; race walking Web sites; and the latest walking publications.

Race flyers in the *Rundown* continued to be an enigma for walkers throughout 2008, and it had become clear walkers could not always rely on flyers for information about walking events. Most races supported worthy causes. Race flyers were all about attracting folks to support those causes. The ambiguity of race flyers, however, made it difficult for walkers to know which races were walker-friendly. Had it not been for "Bullet Mail," many walkers would have been left in the dark.

In April, following five days under the watchful eye of Dave McGovern at the National Training Center in Clement, Florida, Paula Graham and Lori Sherwood traveled to Orlando for the "USATF National Masters 20K Race Walk Championship" for what Graham referred to as their "final exam." Sherwood had misgivings about being judged in a 20K race using a newly learned racing technique.²⁰⁹

Participating as part of Dave's World Class Race Walking Team, Graham's team won the gold medal. In her first ever USATF team race walk championship, Graham was a National Champion. Unfortunately, Sherwood was retired from the course, having received a red paddle, the official sign of disqualification. As National Race Walk Champion Ian Whatley has observed, "Every race walker at some time in their career will get DQd in a major race."²¹⁰

Although the International Association of Lions Clubs no longer includes the "Lions Journey for Sight" among its numerous programs to assist the blind and vision impaired, the race has been supported by clubs in Lions District 24-D for twenty-three years and has become a Tidewater

²⁰⁸Williams, Cindy. Conversation with author. 9 Aug. 2009.

²⁰⁹Graham, Paula. "Strider Walkers Compete Against Olympic Hopefuls in USA Masters 20K Race Walking Championships. *Rundown* June 2008: 6. Print.

²¹⁰Ibid.

Striders Grand Prix event largely due to efforts of Dan Hurley, a Strider and member of the Churchland Lions Club.

The race is walker-friendly, and Lions clubs were encouraged to host vision impaired and legally blind folks in their communities for a morning of fun, exercise and good food. Guests had an opportunity to participate in a one mile or 5K race assisted by a Lions club member. Once in a while, a totally blind person was brought to the event. Every guest received a medal for entering a race.

Two articles appeared in the July *Rundown* by Strider race walkers. The first was about a totally blind woman, Dr. Karen Gearreald, and her Strider friend in the 2008 “Lions Journey for Sight.”²¹¹ Both were past presidents of the Norfolk Host Lions Club.

Gearreald was born totally blind, long before special education classes for handicapped children became available in Virginia public schools. The youngster and her parents had to prove to the State Department of Education that she could perform successfully in the classroom. It then took an act of the Virginia General Assembly for Gearreald to become the first totally blind student in the state admitted to the first grade in public school.²¹²

Gearreald advanced through the public school system and graduated from high school in Norfolk, second in her class. She went on to receive a B.A. Degree from Agnes Scott College, Ph.D. from Harvard University and LL.B. from Duke University School of Law.

Arm in arm and without a white cane, Gearreald and her Strider friend practiced walking together for three weeks prior to the race. Their goal was to walk the 5K distance in under 60 minutes. On race day, they lined up at the back of the pack, and were the last to cross the start line.

Still outbound on the course, the blind lady and her Strider walking companion encountered runners and walkers headed back to finish line shouting words of encouragement. As a matter of courtesy, Strider judges remained on the course until the two walkers had passed, although there was little danger either would take any steps that might be regarded as “running.” It was a touching moment when the last walk judge on the course, Heidi McGill Sleasman, applauded the two as they approached and followed them to the finish line on her bicycle.

The only totally blind person in the 2008 “Lions Journey for Sight,” the last to cross the start line, was first to cross the finish line with her walking friend, the author of this history. The clock read 57:25. They had achieved their goal.²¹³

²¹¹ Various scales have been developed to describe the extent of vision loss and define blindness. The International Council of Ophthalmology and the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities define total blindness as the complete lack of form and visual light perception. Total blindness is clinically recorded as NLP, “no light perception.” In the United States, the terms “partially blind,” “low vision,” “legally blind,” and “totally blind” are used to describe students with visual impairments.

²¹² Prior to 1950, all hearing and vision impaired children in Virginia attended the State School for Deaf and Blind in Staunton, Virginia.

²¹³ Levitin, Jordan. “From Last to First in One Race.” *Rundown* July 2008: 13. Print.

In the second article, Durrant described an intense two day race walking clinic in Ashburn, Virginia, by international race walking competitor and coach, Dave McGovern. Williams, Zinn, Graham, Dewey, Durrant and Debbie Samuels attended the clinic.²¹⁴ A group picture of Strider attendees appeared on the cover of the August *Rundown*.

The course for the “Chesapeake Bay 10K” in April was out and back on Ocean View Avenue. Eleven Strider race walkers competed. Scott Stakes was the first male to cross the finish line in 1:05:21. Gerhardt was two seconds behind. Janssen was the fastest female (1:13:03) followed by Robin Land (1:16:34).²¹⁵

Eight days later, Stakes and Gerhardt would again go head to head on the boardwalk in Virginia Beach in the 5K walk division of the “Jewish Family Service Run, Roll or Stroll.” The 5K walk attracted 103 competitors, of whom 31 were walkers. One second separated first place Gerhardt (31:04) from second place Stakes (31:05).²¹⁶

The 10K “Elizabeth River Run” in May 2008 through downtown Portsmouth included nine male race walkers led by Stakes (1:04:40) and twenty-five female race walkers led by Janssen (1:11:26).²¹⁷

An announcement appeared in the summer editions of the *Rundown* welcoming readers to contact Williams or Kane for informal meetings and walks at various distances, including an introduction to race walking. “They love the sport,” read the announcement, “and just want to share their knowledge. During the session, the two veteran Strider walkers will demonstrate proper walking technique and also discuss what is and isn’t a legal walking step.”

The “VA-USATF 3000m Race Walk Championship” held in August at the Strider Mile, is one of two Strider events judged by certified USATF judges. Conducted in heats, the event gives all race walkers an opportunity to compete. Overall male winner was Shapiro (17:13:29) and overall female winner was Garson (17:55:66).²¹⁸

The “St. Mary’s 5K,” was held at Fort Story in October in ideal weather conditions. Nine male and twenty-nine females completed the 2008 race. Stakes led male walkers (31:18) and Patricia Howell finished first among female walkers (37:25).²¹⁹

The “One Hour Postal Race Walk” was again held at Tallwood High School in November at near freezing temperature made to seem much colder by the wind chill factor. Graham won the 1st Place medal in Most Improved Women’s Category, improving her distance from 7,254

²¹⁴ Durrant. “Striders Attend Race Walking Clinic in Ashburn, VA.” *Rundown* July 2008: 15. Print.

²¹⁵ “Chesapeake Bay 10K.” *Rundown* June 2008: 31. Print.

²¹⁶ “JFS Run, Roll or Stroll.” *Rundown* June 2008: 24. Print.

²¹⁷ “Elizabeth River Run.” *Rundown* July 2008: 23. Print.

²¹⁸ “Tidewaters Mile & 3000M Race Walk.” *Rundown* Sept. 2008: 29-30. Print.

²¹⁹ “St. Mary’s Home 5K.” *Rundown* Nov. 2008: 30. Print.

meters (4.51 miles) in 2007 to 8,558 meters (5.31 miles) in 2008. Nancy Hallingse finished second, completing 7,481 meters (4.64 miles) and Sherwood finished third, completing 6,800 meters (4.22 miles).²²⁰

Gerhardt finished first in the men's division completing 9,672 meters (6.00 miles); Dewey, second, completing 8,657 meters (5.37 miles); and Bill Lipford, third, completing 8,567 meters (5.31 miles).²²¹

Referred to earlier, one of the best kept secrets on the race schedule is the "Seaside Half Marathon and 7.7 Mile Walk" in Wachapreague on the Eastern Shore of Virginia held annually in December. The 2008 race drew 97 participants, including 66 runners and 31 walkers from Virginia, Delaware, and Maryland. Thirty-five Tidewater Striders crossed the Chesapeake Bay to make the hour-long trip to the race site.

Top four male and female finishers in the 7.7 Mile Walk were:²²²

<u>Male</u>		<u>Female</u>	
1. Tom Gerhardt	1:18:02	1. Lori Sherwood	1:35:07
2. Scott Stakes	1:19:07	2. Gladys Sopko	1:44:32
3. Steve Shapiro	1:21:22	3. Jennifer Jeffers	1:52:26
4. Hartley Dewey	1:28:43	4. Elaine Jeffers	1:52:28

Final WGP standings for men in 2008 were Stakes, Dewey, Kane, Durrant and Gerhardt, and for women, Sherwood, Janssen, Nash, Graham and Sleasman. 2008 Walker Participation awards were given to Williams, Curtin, Kole, Zinn and Paschall.²²³

2009

The Walking Grand Prix schedule and Walking Participation rules for 2009 were published in the January *Rundown*. The schedule was full. Twenty-two races were planned, eleven each in Group A and Group B.²²⁴

Several changes were made for 2009. Only the top nine races were scored for the final Grand Prix standing, and all races counted for participation points. Participation rules changed.

²²⁰Durrant. "One Hour Postal Race Walk." *Rundown* Dec, 2008-Jan. 2009:6. Print.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Scudder. "Striders on the Road." Feb. 2009: 24. Print.

²²³ Final Walker Grand Prix Standings & Walker Participation Standings, *Rundown* Dec. 2008-Jan. 2009: 20-21. Print.

²²⁴ "Walker Grand Prix (WGP) & Walking Participation for 2009." *Rundown* Dec.2008-Jan 2009: 15. Print.

Volunteers were required to judge at least three Walking Grand Prix races and record bib numbers of walkers who violated their status by running or jogging. Beginning in 2009, walkers counting laps at USATF judged races would earn participation points.²²⁵

At the Annual Strider Banquet in February 2009, Kole received a Presidential Award for his work in making Tidewater Striders a walker-friendly organization.

Ten Striders attended a one day USA Track and Field Officials Training Clinic in February sponsored by the Virginia Association of USATF at Christopher Newport University in Newport News, Virginia. The clinic is held each year between January and March to certify new officials and update currently certified officials on USATF rules and new rules changes. In addition to USATF rules, clinics review changes in existing rules relating to the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) and NFHS (National Federation of High Schools).²²⁶

Williams, Paschall, Zinn and Lipford were certified for the first time. Recertified were Dewey, Shapiro, Nash, Durrant, Kole and Sherwood.²²⁷

Having little to do with the usual fare seen in monthly *Rundowns* – articles on running, walking, triathlons, nutrition, training sites, minutes of meetings, race results and race flyers– an article appeared in the March *Rundown* about a jewel in the crown of the City of Norfolk, the Norfolk Botanical Garden, venue for the month-long Tidewater “Strider Summer Series.” The writer reviewed the early history of the Garden, which sprang from a 1938 Works Progress Administration Grant (WPA) and reported on the work that goes on there year-round.²²⁸

Also in March, thirty-one race walkers ranging in age from 12 to 75, including thirteen Tidewater Striders, attended McGovern’s weekend race walking clinic in Williamsburg, Virginia. McGovern was assisted by Ian Whatley, a former national and international race walker living in South Carolina and Rebecca Garson, a popular competitor in local race walks. Garson was the reigning “Shamrock Half-Marathon Walk” women’s record holder.

McGovern’s weekend clinic was intense. Before dinner on Friday, he filmed the technique of each race walker. He would later show videos commenting on each one’s strengths and weaknesses with recommendations how the individual could improve their form and proficiency.

At any time during track sessions, it was not unusual for Whatley to walk alongside a race walker and offer advice based on what he was observing in the individual’s form. Stretching exercises, drills and classroom discussion of the physiology in types of workouts in a race walker’s routine were introduced. Lactate thresholds and VO2 systems were discussed at length.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Durrant. "Strider Walkers Attend VA-USATF Officials Clinic." *Rundown* Mar. 2009: 17. Print.

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ Levitin, Jordan. “A Big Bang for the Buck.” *Rundown* Mar. 2009: 10. Print.

As Cindy Williams observed following the clinic, “So much goes on and there is so much information to absorb, it’s impossible to get it all the first time you attend one of McGovern’s clinics.”

The 2009 “Lions Journey for Sight” had 194 finishers, including 30 female and 8 male walkers. Overall female walker results were (1) Janssen, 34:31; (2) Graham, 35:37; (3) Hallingse, 36:36. Overall male walker results were (1) Stakes, 31:19; (2) Lipford, 32:16, (3) Dewey, 33:50.²²⁹

Separate male and female walker results in the “Lions journey for Sight” were reported in the May *Rundown*, the work of race director Hurley in conjunction with Brown, legendary Strider who provides instantaneous electronic race results from a van parked in the vicinity of the finish line. The top five male and female walkers plus Master walkers 40 and over received a total of sixteen awards.

Brown’s contribution to the Strider organization is immeasurable. In 2008, as economic conditions worsened, newspaper advertising dropped off considerably. Responding accordingly, “The Virginian-Pilot” reduced the number of pages in each section of the paper. With the exception of the “Shamrock Marathon” and the “Rock ‘n Roll Marathon,” detailed results of local races disappeared. However, thanks to Brown and Steve Speirs, Strider Web master, complete results of local races are posted on the Strider Web site usually within 48 hours of the finish. Race results subsequently appear in the *Rundown*.

The “Virginia Senior Games” in Richmond, Virginia, were held on May 9, 2009, at Sports Backer Stadium. Three Striders won five gold medals, including two each by Debra Hovatter and Jordan “Buddy” Levitin and one by Bill Lipford.²³⁰

<u>Event</u>	<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>
1500m	55-59 (F)	Deborah Hovatter	11:21	1
1500m	75-79 (M)	Buddy Levitin	12:28	1
5000m	55-59 (F)	Deborah Hovatter	38:22	1
5000m	50-54 (M)	Bill Lipford	31:51	1
5000m	75-79 (M)	Buddy Levitin	39:13	1

Ask Tidewater Strider race walkers why they became race walkers, and most likely they will say they started out as runners until sidelined by injury. Following recovery, and fearing recurrence of the same injury, they turned to race walking. In “Looking for Another Reason to be a Race Walker?” Durrant explores the issue in greater depth.

Many Strider walkers and race walkers are former runners who were “forced” into walking and race walking because of injuries caused or aggravated by running. Walking was the only option they could find that would allow them to continue racing and to maintain their desired level of physical (and mental) activity and fitness. Dave

²²⁹ “Lions Journey for Sight Race Results.” *Rundown* May 2009: 27. Print.

²³⁰ “2009 Virginia Senior Games Results Book, Richmond, VA, May 7-10,” 8.

McGovern...has told those of us who attend his clinics that race walking burns more calories than running.²³¹

To further support his case, Durrant referred to an article by University of Massachusetts professor, Dr James Rippe, who wrote in part,

Race walking burns 120 to 130 per mile. One important reason for this is the upper body is employed in race walking as well as the lower body. Arms pump vigorously to propel the body forward working arm, neck and chest muscles. In addition, the race walker's advancing foot strikes with much less force the runner's foot because the race walker never has both feet off the ground, resulting in less impact to the foot, ankle, knees, hips, and fewer injuries.²³²

Buddy Levitin was invited by the board of directors in July 2009 to fill the seat through December vacated by Tommy Neeson. Levitin's term was short-lived as he ran for a two year term in December, but was not elected. While engaged in research for this study, Levitin recognized the need for a Strider historian, and addressed the matter at the November board meeting. Comments from the board were less than favorable. The larger picture had escaped most of the directors.

Recorded by Strider Secretary Sharon Rodier, minutes of the August board meeting indicate Shapiro had assumed the duties of walk team coordinator for the Teams Committee and taken on the responsibility of setting up walking teams for local, state and inter-state events. A request for funds had been received. The walking team would receive up to \$500 from a budgeted line item for teams.

Although legendary runner turned race walker Cokey Daman had been out of the limelight for seventeen years, Durrant and Chris Catoe visited the champ in July 2009. Durrant filed this report with the *Rundown*.²³³

He's showing his 91 years, but still carries on a great conversation. He's an avid reader of the monthly *Rundown* and complimented me on the past race walking articles I've submitted. I'm concerned when the newsletter goes 100% electronic next year, and if nothing else, I intend to make and deliver him a copy each month.

We talked about his running days, when I was in my 40s and he was in his 60s, and how I always used him as my target, but more often than not did not finish ahead of him. Interestingly, he became interested in race walking by reading about it and then doing it. This occurred during his 70-74 years of age period when he set race walking age group records in the 1500m & 5K races at the "National Senior Games" in 1989.

²³¹ Durrant. "Looking for Another Reason to be a Race Walker?" *Rundown* July 2009: 13. Print.

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Chris Catoe and Steve Durrant, "For Fellow Geezers and Geezer Wannabes." *Rundown* Aug. 2009: 11. Print.

In 1991, he broke his own record in the 1500m. His times are no longer the current records, but they're still in the top 10 for both events. At age 85 he returned to running full time and still holds 8 current age group Virginia Road Running records he set from age 75 through 85.

Results of the "VA-USATF and SE Region 3000m Racewalk Championship" were posted in the September *Rundown*.²³⁴

<u>Male overall results</u>				<u>Female overall results</u>			
1	Bill Lipford	45	16:16	1	Rebecca Garson	45	18:40
2	Tom Gerhardt	58	17:42	2	Paula Graham	46	20:33
3	Scott Stakes	46	18:05	3	Linda Janssen	47	20:33
4	Hartley Dewey	61	19:45	4	Heidi Sleasman	37	24:49
5	Carl Mallett	67	25:45	5	Judith Paschall	69	24:51
6	Robert Curtin	56	26:27	6	Diana Hinshaw	28	31:45

At the September meeting of the board, Levitin informed the directors that in March 2009, McGovern asked Tidewater Striders to produce a handout on developing walking in a running environment for him to distribute at race walking clinics throughout the country. The work had been completed and was posted on McGovern's Web site and the Tidewater Striders Web site.

A report received from the Walking Committee revealed,

There is an issue of runners not respecting the right of walkers to be on the same course. During a recent race, walkers were being pushed off the path even though they were staying to the right with enough room on the left for all to pass. A suggestion was made that we write something up for the *Rundown* "Ms Manners" and spread out the start time more on tight courses.²³⁵

Tidewater Striders continued to distinguish themselves in major race walking events throughout the year.

The Strider Walking Team of Shapiro, Dewey, and Lipford, assisted by Durrant and Janssen, traveled to Ocean Township, New Jersey, to compete in the USATF National 40K Championship on September 13, 2009. The team finished in 3rd place. Shapiro finished 2nd in the men's 55-59 age group. Dewey finished 4th in the men's 60-64 age group. At the 22K mark, severe cramps caused Lipford to leave the race.²³⁶

In October, competing in the "USATF National 5K Race Walking Championship" in Kingsport, Tennessee, Graham and Janssen placed 2nd and 3rd respectively in the women's 45-49

²³⁴ "Strider Mile." *Rundown* Sept. 2009: 20. Print.

²³⁵ "Minutes of August Board Meeting." *Rundown*. Oct. 2009, 6.

²³⁶ Durrant. "USATF National 40K Race Walk Championship," *Rundown* Oct. 2009: 25. Print

age group behind Olympian Teresa Vail, and Lipford took 3rd in the men's 55-59 age group. Durrant won the 1st Place medal in men's 70-74 age group.²³⁷

Replacing the Shore Athletic Club of New Jersey after fifteen years, the 2009 "One Hour Postal Race Walk" was organized by Walk On! Minnesota. Local competition was held on November 14 at Tallwood High School in a cold drizzle.

Steve Durrant served as race director and sent the results to Walk On! Minnesota. Distances traveled by individual race walkers on measured tracks in all 2009 One Hour Postal Race Walks were merged by Walk On! Minnesota and published by the organizer according to distance traveled, overall place, gender and age group.

Results of Tidewater Strider race walkers in the 2009 One Hour Postal were outstanding:²³⁸

Distance (in meters)	Name	Overall Place	Gender Place	Age Group Place
10145	Tom Gerhardt	11	M:10	M55:1
8440	Linda Janssen	59	F:23	W45:3
8310	Steve Durrant	65	M:39	M70:5
8302	Hartley Dewey	66	M:40	M60:5
8301	Paula Graham	67	F:27	W45:4
7211	Lori Sherwood	134	F:69	W45:9
7105	Buddy Levitin	136	M:67	M75:2
6768	Desiree Haubner	170	F:91	W40:13

Results of the "28th Annual Seaside Half-Marathon and 7.7 Mile Walk" in Wachapreague on December 5, 2009, were released in a letter from Race Director Vernon Bell. The race attracted 71 runners and 23 walkers on a cold, rainy day, with a stiff wind blowing from the north in participant's faces.²³⁹

Of the first five finishers in the Seaside 7.7 mile walking division, four were Striders: Gerhardt (1:16:32), Graham (1:32:17), Kane(1:41:20), Smith, non Strider, (1:43:50), and Levitin (1:47:22). Altogether, 94 participants completed the race, including 71 runners and 23 walkers. Strider race walkers were sad to learn from long time race director Vernon Bell that after thirty years, the Wachapreague event would end in December 2011.²⁴⁰

Throughout the year, Durrant furnished individual walkers competing in the Walking Grand Prix Series with World Association of Veteran Athletes (WAVA) age graded results of the individual races. The North American Race Walking Foundation describes age grading as "a subjective process based on careful analysis of 'world best' times at each age for both males and

²³⁷ Durrant. "Strider Walkers Compete in USATF National 5K Race Walk Championship." *Rundown* Dec. 2009:34. Print.

²³⁸ Durrant. "Re: 2009 VA Assn USATF One Hour Postal Race Walk Championships." Message to the author. 15 Nov. 2009. E-mail.

²³⁹ Durrant. "Re: 28th Annual Seaside 7.7 Mile Walk." Message to the author. 15 Nov. 2009. E-mail.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

females. It is not an exact science. At the same time, it provides one of the best-available tools for evaluating, forecasting and comparing walker and/or running performances.”

Information gathered is based on tables compiled by the WAVA. Adjusted finish times are based on what finish times would have been if walkers were in their prime years, 20-29. In one 5K race this year, the 46 year-old walker with the best actual race time (31:06) finished second in age graded time (28:31) to the 75 year old walker who crossed the finish line in 39:57 and finished first in age graded time (27:10). The realization is that as walkers grow older, age graded results become “bragging rights.”

The year ended with the announcement of Walking Grand Prix (WGP) and Walker Participation (WP) winners. Age graded results for 2009 WGP events were furnished by Durrant, with the following caveat: “They are strictly for historical use since the Walking Committee decided that Age-Graded Awards would not be included in the WGP Series at this time.”

<u>WGP</u>			
<u>MEN</u>		<u>WOMEN</u>	
<u>Place</u>	<u>A/G Place</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>A/G Place</u>
1 - Tom Gerhardt	1 - Tom Gerhardt (Tie)	1 - Linda Janssen	1 - Linda Janssen
2 - Scott Stakes	2 - Steve Durrant (Tie)	2 - Lori Sherwood	2 - Lori Sherwood
3 - Steve Durrant	3 - Dwight Kane	3 - Paula Graham	3 - Paula Graham
4 - Dwight Kane	4 - Hartley Dewey	4 - Kathy Nash	4 - Kathy Nash
5 - Hartley Dewey	5 - Scott Stakes	5 - Heidi Sleasman	5 - Heidi Sleasman

The top ten finishers in Walker Participation competition were,

1 - Richard Kole	6 - Nancy Hallingse
2 - Bill Lipford	7 - Charlyne Gibson
3 - Buddy Levitin	8 - Bob Curtin
4 - Cindy Williams	9 - Desiree Haubner
5 - Judy Paschall	10 - James Wolfe

Looking back on the first decade of the New Century, one can safely say, “The Rise to Prominence” was in full swing. Tidewater Strider walkers had the feeling the best is yet to come.

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