

The Strider

ANNUAL DUES INFORMATION

Alley Pond Strider
2026 dues are now
overdue with \$25 for
an individual and
\$35 for a family.
Please give your
dues to Lynn,
Laughlin, any Board
member or mail to
Alley Pond Striders,
P.O. Box 298,
Bellerose, NY
11426. You can also
pay via Zelle at
alleypondstriders@
mail.com.

(Note the dues
increase)



President's Message

The days have been beautiful, some hot and steamy, and some cool and rainy. Maintaining the ideal body temperature, being comfortable and staying healthy is important. Staying dry on the outside is relatively easy..... Use an umbrella, stay indoors and try not to sweat (LOL). However, drinking fluids or hydrating is very important. This is especially crucial for runners/walkers in this type of weather. What is a safe and proper way to hydrate?

I am not an expert in this area. Thus, would like to share some myths and facts that I found on a website. Hopefully, this will help you hydrate properly.

Myth: If you're not thirsty, you're probably not dehydrated.

Fact: Thirst does not always correlate with hydration. Fluid levels drop by 2-3% of your body weight before you even realize you're thirsty. A better way to tell if you are drinking enough fluid is to check the color of your urine. If it is pale in color and clear, you are likely well-hydrated. An even more reliable indicator of hydration is the volume of your urine. If your intake is sufficient, you should be going to the bathroom once every few hours. If you find yourself seldom making a visit to the restroom, you probably aren't drinking enough.

Myth: You can't drink too much water—more is better.

Fact: It is possible to overdo your water intake and drink more than your body can flush out. This is called hyponatremia. It is a condition in which sodium levels in the body are dangerously low. It can cause confusion, nausea, and headaches to convulsions. There are certain people more prone than others, including those with congestive heart failure, kidney failure or Addison's disease. Endurance athletes are also susceptible, especially novice runners. If you don't have any of the risk factors mentioned, then there is usually not a serious concern.

Myth: Drinking liquids is the only to stay hydrated.

Fact: About 20% of your fluid is obtained through foods with high water content. These include cucumbers, celery, strawberries, grapefruit, spinach, and watermelon. Soups, broths, and stews are another way to boost your water intake. Foods high in sodium can have the opposite effect on your fluid levels. Salty, high sodium, and packaged meals can contribute to dehydration.

Myth: Everyone should drink 8 glasses of water a day.

Fact: In general, you should take one-third of your body weight and drink that number of ounces in fluids daily. For example, if you weigh 150 pounds, aim to drink 50 ounces or a little over 6 cups. The National Academy of Medicine suggests an adequate intake of daily fluids of about 13 cups for men and 9 cups for women for ages 51 and older. All sources of fluid—drinking water, food, beverages are counted in these recommendations.

In closing, if anyone has any other information on this topic or any other areas of interest that you want to share, please contact me. I am sure that Fred Astaire wouldn't mind if you are "singing in the rain" while walking/running. Taking a bath will not hydrate you – unless you drink the bath water. Stay hydrated, happy, and healthy.

Respectively, Alan G.

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

Since the early 1980's, the Alley Pond Striders continue to actively promote the enjoyment of walking and running in Alley Pond Park. The Alley Pond 5 Mile Challenge is one of the longest run local races in the New York City area.

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

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

WALKS AND RUNS EVERY DAY— Check with Lynn Henry for times and gathering place.

**For Membership Information Please contact Lynn Henry at
516 512-2729 or
lynnahenry@yahoo.com**

Talk on the Path by Lynn Henry

What's happening in and out of the park.

Happy July Birthdays to: Jose Lijo (2nd), Ilana Galatan (4th), Reena Fettner (5th), Carmen Rivera (11th), Barbara Santino (13th), Steve Turkeltaub (14th), Andrea Insalata (15th), Isabel Kim (16th), Laura Weisbord (16th), Danielle Weisbord (16th), Sara Jablonski (17th), Lee Dunworth (18th), Ellen Mascolo (19th), Cindy Doire (21st), Godfrey England (21st), Diane Grunthal (21st), Ruth Mezistrano (24th), Heather Allison (26th), Darya Grebelkes (26th), John Sassone (26th), Pam Foster (27th), Andy Chen (28th), and Kathy Lutzak (28th).

Feeling Better: Happy to see Venice Naidoo out and walking after his recent surgery.

Condolences: To Joe Gambino on this passing of three of his brothers this year. Former Strider Barney in January and Anthony and Stephen in May.

To Judi Rettmer on the passing of her husband and Strider John on June 4th at 90. (Article on Page 4)

Warm Welcome to our newest Striders: Mark Crescimanni of Bayside and Larry and Mary Verderese of Glen Oaks.

Annual Picnic

It was beautiful weather and a nice turnout for our Annual Picnic on Sunday, June 14th.

Thanks to Dorothy, Alan and Laughlin for doing the shopping.

And to Dorothy and Alan for putting it all together! Including Chef Alan manning the grill!

**Please send any items for "Talk on the Path" to the editor at
apstriders@aol.com**



RETTMER - Adolph "John", was born in Brooklyn, NY, March 16, 1936. He died June 4, 2026, at the age of 90. He passed away with family at his bedside. John was an avid runner, completing 50 marathons in his lifetime, and a bike rider who did century rides (100 miles) to Montauk Point for fun. John was also past President for the Alley Pond Striders, holding other various positions, including his favorite as "Race Director." He is survived by his devoted wife, Judi; his caring and loving daughter, Jean who was also his companion bike rider; son-in-law, Alex, who helped him run his freight forward business ITC, and finally took it over when John had a stroke in 2016; his proud grandchildren: Kristen, Nicole and Jonathan; and his cuddly furry Maine Coon cats, Rusty and Coco. He was predeceased by his late daughter, Denise. We will all miss him greatly, but know he is in a better, peaceful, painless place. Rest in peace John. Love, Judi. Wake will be held at R. Stutzman and Son Funeral Home, 224 - 39 Jamaica Avenue, Queens Village, NY. On August 22, 2026, Saturday, 2 -6 PM. In lieu of flowers, donations in his name to charities would be appreciated.

NEWSDAY

RUNNERS' REPORT by Pat Mitrofanis

Hi all, as I sit to write a summary of all the races that our Alley Pond Striders have participated in these last couple of months, the sweltering heat of late June and early July is upon us. Of course, we all want to continue training, if not for upcoming races, but to at least maintain our fitness. That being said, we must keep in mind that what we can do in 50-degree weather is not what we will be able to do in 80 or 90 degrees. Let's pay attention to how we feel when we run and if we need to scale it back, let's do so. Our bodies need time to acclimate to the heat and humidity so let's be patient with ourselves.

So good luck in your July and August races! Don't forget to send me your results along with any commentary you'd like to share with our Striders.

Here are the results from the May/June races:

NYRR Mindfuk 5K (5/2/2026)

Laughlin Whalen 34:46 (1st in age)

J Lew Memorial 5K (5/2/2026)

Joseph Pasqual 23:45 (1st Male Overall)

Pat Mitrofanis 25:07 (1st Female Overall)

Robert Pasqual 27:24

Long Island Half Marathon (5/3/2026)

Edward Grassel 2:33:15 (2nd in Age)

Eddie ran this race 10 min. faster than last year!

He said 'I was the second oldest in the entire race and I ran almost every mile at the same pace. It was cool and perfect for running.' Sounds like Eddie had a great race!

NYRR RBC Brooklyn Half Marathon

(5/16/2026)

Siu Hung Chau 1:33:52

Pat Mitrofanis 1:53:51

Daniel Bach 3:28:58

MRCC/NYNJ Trail Conference 5K

(5/17/2026)

Allen Grunthal 27:53 (1st in Age)

Allen said 'It's been a dozen years since I last ran a race, but apparently, I still got it. Finished first in age group, beating the 2nd place finisher by 9 minutes. I'm just happy these 70 something legs can still do whatever I ask them to do.' I'd say Allen still got it!

Forest Park Runners Classic 4 Mile

(5/24/2026)

This was so much more than a trail race. It was more of a tough mudder event with all the mudslides we ran through! We're all pretty lucky we came out unscathed.

Mason Salis 25:48 (2nd in Age)

Andrea Salis 33:17 (1st in Age)

John Scalzo 33:30 (3rd in Age)

Pat Mitrofanis 34:42 (1st in Age)

Peter Hoey 45:36

Laughlin Whalen 48:49 (2nd in Age)

Daniel Bach 53:40

Bolder Boulder 10K in. Colorado (5/25/2026)

Fran Kraus-Schmidt, with a time of 1:03, got three awards! One for being 4th in age, one for having a time in minutes faster than her age and one for having the last mile be the fastest!

YIJE 5K Run/Walk (5/25/2026)

Rob Pasqual 26:40 (1st in Age)

QDR Ridgewood Runners 5K (5/30/2026)

Pat Mitrofanis 24:57 (1st in Age)

Fairfield Half Marathon (6/7/2026)

Pat Mitrofanis 2:06:59 3rd in age

NYRR Citizens Queens 10K (6/20/2026)

Pat Mitrofanis 55:22

Nella Carravetta 1:16:57

Daniel Bach 1:39:06

Shelter Island 10K (6/20/2026)

Vivien Lim 42:13 (4th Overall/1st Masters)

Jaime Palacios 47:48 (1st in Age)

NYS Senior Games (SUNY Cortland - 6/20/2026)

Rob Pasqual 800m (3rd Place)

400m (1st Place)

4 x 100m Relay (1st Place)

Helen Pineda-Pasqual 1-mile Power Walk (2nd)

NYRR Achilles Hope & Possibility 4-Mile

(6/28/2026: It was less slippery than the Forest Park but just as wet...just different type of moisture.

Laughlin Whalen 47:36 (1st in Age)

Katie's Run 5K New Hyde Park (6/28/2026)

Mason Salis 19:40 (2nd in Age)

Jacob Salis 24:37

Andrea Salis 24:48 (2nd Masters)

And now let's jump right over July and August for a moment and talk about our September relay race! Last year we had two teams participate in the Six-Hour relay race at Belmont State Park in West Babylon. We also had many members come to support and cheer. Everyone had a great time racing, walking and enjoying the post-race food and drink. Let's try to get a couple of teams together again for this year's event which takes place on September 27th. Go to this link for more information <https://events.elitefeats.com/26sixhour>. Please email me if you'd like to participate in this race.



John Rettmer: A Tribute to a Long-Time Strider by Ken Kaiser

John Rettmer, a long-time Strider, a dedicated club leader, an accomplished athlete, a car enthusiast, a good friend and an inspiration completed his last lap of this earthly team on June 4th. He has been promoted to a higher team.

When I joined the Alley Pond Striders over 26 years ago John was on the Executive Board and the Five-Mile Challenge Race Director. With a quick smile and gentle laugh, there never seemed to be any problems or disagreements that John seemed concerned about; he just went about squaring it away. In those days there were a lot of strong personalities (think Mel Kaplan or Stan Zibulsky), which led to many opinions and raised voices. But that never seemed to bother John, with his quick smile and straight-forward solution, things always moved forward. For me, John was a model of leadership. I will always appreciate that leadership. Recalling John will always give me a smile – thanks John.

At the Annual Dinner Dance in March 2017, a Special Award was given to John Rettmer. It read, JOHN RETTMER: In recognition of outstanding dedication and contributions to the success of our club (January 2017). These words did not say nearly enough about his contributions to the Striders.

This well-deserved award was given as John has gone above and beyond in his days with the Alley Pond Striders. He joined the club in June of 1986 and always has been a major proponent and contributor. This is evident by the positions he has held beginning with Vice President in 1991 and President in 1992 and 1993. After a hiatus he returned to the Board as Runner's Rep in 1998 followed by Treasurer in 1999, 2000 and 2001. His long-term commitment as Race Director for our Five-Mile Challenge is an impressive 19 years from 1998 to 2016. Always remaining calm no matter what! With such consistent contributions, it is no surprise John was approved by the Board and Membership as a LIFETIME MEMBER in 2024.

John has won other awards in addition to this one. He was Most Improved Runner in 1987, Runner of the Year in 1996 and Strider of the Year in 1994 and 2003.

John has worn the "Strider colors" representing us in many races from 5k's to marathons winning many, many age group awards along the way.

His biggest supporter is his wife Judi who is also a Strider and she has been there every step of the way to cheer him on and help him and had the unofficial title of "Assistant to the Race Director."

Members memories of John Rettmer

Rob Pasqual: I remember when I first joined the Striders in 1994. I was one of the few runners under 40. I kind of knew Motor Parkway, but I was training for marathon. If you wanted to run longer than 10 you had to join the marathon quartet: John, Mike Ficcarra, Howie and Stan. So, we would go out, I'd tuck in behind them as they ventured to Kissena, Garden City, Eisenhower and, of course, that Labor Day weekend run to the Flushing Meadow Park Globe. Lots of pit stops, lots of stories

On the way back, I'd take off and try to figure my own way back. Sometimes I got back first, sometimes I didn't. But at the end of the day, I got in my double-digit run and that was the important thing. We'd shoot the breeze in front of the Parkhouse and go our separate ways. Some went to the bagel shop, others went home. For someone still new to the neighborhood, it was a great start to the day.

Lynn Henry: I was sad to hear of John's passing. John was a strong person, which was evident with his history of training for and accomplishing many marathons and riding his bike (100-mile rides!) And his dedication to the Striders as Race Director, President, etc. And it was also evident with how he never gave up with all the ailments he dealt with in his last years. John, you're an inspiration to all! RIP

John Sassone: As Mae West said, 'Better to wear out than rust out'. John certainly lived a full life. Miss him already. RIP

Rosalie Hatch: Seeing John on the trail was a treat. He was always ready with a smile and a tale of his adventures---adventures which included his bicycle or his car.

I clearly recall at least one story involving his bicycle and someone else's car. Then how fun it was to meet Judi and get to know them both. Their handling and sense of humor when they had to deal with hurdles thrown their way is inspiring. Fond memories living in my heart.

Mel Kay: I am sure we all have great memories of John. Here are a few of mine:

A hell of a runner. Tough!! Always hung in there at a great pace.

Broke 4 hours in the Marathon (more than once!!)

Common sense and "can do" attitude. "I can fix it"!!!!

We both enjoyed working on and repairing cars. Fellow VW and Saab lover!!!

An amazing biker. A few hundred-mile trip was kid stuff for him!!

Nella Carravetta: When I joined the club, only thing I wanted to do was beat John once in a race....never happened! He was so inspirational.

Ronit Guriel: The world lost an amazing man, when John passed away. We gained precious, wonderful, memories of days passed. Rest In Peace, sweet gentle John. Thank you for ALL that you've done for our wonderful club. From holding board positions, as well as many years as Race Director of our Five-Mile Challenge. We'll be seeing you!!!



Board of Directors

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Runners Rep:
Pat Mitrofanis

Walkers Rep:
Dorothy Chusid



Picnic Past Presidents: Ken Kaiser, **John Rettmer**, **Herb Ascher**, Rob Pasqual, **Stan Zibulsky** and Lynn Henry. (Picture provided by Ronit Guriel)

Upcoming Events

- **THERE WILL BE NO EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING and NO REFRESHMENT DAY IN JULY.**
- **August 10th (Monday): Summer Executive Board Meeting at 7 PM via ZOOM.**
- **August 22nd (Saturday): Refreshment Day – Club provides the bagels and coffee. YOU bring a treat to share!**

**FOOD INSECURITY IS A YEARROUND CONCERN FOR MANY.
PLEASE CONSIDER A DONATION TO HELP OUR NEIGHBORS.**

**Our Lady of Lourdes
Food Pantry
92-96 220th Street, Queens, NY 11428**

www.alleypondstriders.com