

Chargin' Charlie

December 2017

President's Message

The Holiday Season is a busy time. While some of us took the easy way out and ordered turkey dinners from local stores, many cooked multiple dishes for the traditional Thanksgiving feast. And now we are heading into the season when many of the major religions celebrate milestones. Christmas and Channukah are loosely tied around the Winter Solstice.

The Halloween candy wasn't even stale before stores began putting up Christmas decorations. There's generally some shopping and gift wrapping to do. Not to mention writing cards or Christmas letters to out-of-town friends.

It's easy to feel like there's not much spare time for things like volksmarching. But while the holidays are busy, they're meant to be fun. Try to keep a balance in your activities and enjoy the upcoming month. Take time to get outside and enjoy a walk on a pretty day. Better yet, invite a friend.

On a personal note, I would just like to thank everyone in the club for so many fun times this past year. We've volunteered together, planned together and walked together. You are the best!

Best wishes and Merry Christmas.

Helen Garamone

Club Minutes

President Helen Garamone called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm, at Daniels Run Elementary School in Fairfax, Va. Attending were: Barry Plott, Karen Plott, Vicki Mitchell, Dave Peck, Bob McLean, Ralph Koontz, Sandy Koontz, Dianne Purdy, Pat Hyland, Dana Beales, Bonnie Recore, Jack Jeter, Susan Jeter and Jim Garamone

The club accepted the minutes of the October meeting.

Treasurer's report: Barry Plott reported the club is up \$459.79 for the year. This is after paying for the post office box and necessary sanctions.

Membership: Vicki Mitchell and Dave Peck joined the club. They arrive from Stuttgart, Germany, where they were active in Volksmarching. Helen reported we received a new member from the website.

Notable walks: Dianne and Dana reported they had been in five continents in the past few months including 21 walks in two weeks with the Tater Tours.

Sandy and Ralph Koontz talked about the walks in South Dakota including the walk at the Crazy Horse monument, saying it was absolutely gorgeous in the autumn.

Helen and Dianne and Dana reported on the Walk Across Florida Volksmarch festival held this year at Saint Augustine. They noted it was the 27th year the event has been held and that it was well-organized and a lot of fun.

Jack and Susan spoke about the walks in Gettysburg, Pa., saying they were fascinating, fun and filled with history.

Jim Garamone talked about a short walk in Hawaii where he thought he was going to have a major heart attack by climbing 900 feet in under a half mile.

Old business: Helen briefed on the OptOut program for Black Friday. Sponsored by REI, the idea is to get people out of the stores and into nature. The club is sponsoring a group walk at South Run Recreation Center in Springfield on November 24 at 10 a.m.

Helen also briefed on the Atlantic Regional Conference that will be held March 16-18, at the Embassy Suites - Dulles North, 44610 Waxpool Rd., in Dulles/Ashburn, Va. The walks will be in Ashburn, Leesburg and Vienna's Meadowlark Gardens. Pat Hyland announced she is coordinating the Silent Auction that will be held at the conference.

The Northern Virginia Volksmarchers will hold its annual holiday party at Cedar Knoll Restaurant on the George

Washington Parkway at 6 pm, December 17. There is a year-round walk at Dyke March in Alexandria a few miles away.

The Spring Walk - there are issues surrounding the walk at Vint Hill and the club voted instead to have the walk at Huntley Meadows on April 28, 2018.

New business: The Burke Lake Oktoberfest Walk will return to its normal weekend in September.

Carine, who has been doing a superb job with NVV brochures, is moving out of the business. Helen did the brochure for the 2018 walks as a cut-and-paste effort as few changes were needed. Walk directions in the future must contain an emergency number, a non-emergency number and a disclaimer.

The December meeting will be held at Cedar Knoll (and take about 30 seconds). The next meeting of the club will be January 8, 2018 at Daniels Run Elementary School in Fairfax, Va.

Submitted by Jim Garamone, acting secretary

Silent Auction at Regional Conference

There will be a Silent Auction, in lieu of a registration fee, at the Atlantic Regional Conference March 16-18, at the Embassy Suites in Ashburn, Va. We encourage everyone to contribute and to bid on the items contributed. Donations are needed of new or nearly new items that you would want to place a bid on. The American Volkssport Association is a 501(c) (3) charity. Please let us know what items you will be donating. It will help us in our planning and setting up at the conference. Contact: Pat Hyland, pathyland@verizon.net or Karen Plott, secondhorse@verizon.net.

Overachievers!

The club had a number of overachievers this past month. They are: David Adler with 10 events, Denis Clements with 325 and Robert Grunewald with 1,200.

Karen Plott now has walked 18,000 kilometers. To put this in perspective, this means Karen has walked the equivalent of from here to Ulan Bator, Mongolia and back.

New members

A hearty welcome to Dave Peck and Vicki Mitchell who joined our club in November. Both recently relocated to this area from Stuttgart, Germany.

Holiday Party

The club is having its annual holiday party at Cedar Knoll Restaurant at 9030 Lucia Lane, Alexandria on Sunday Dec. 17. Cedar Knoll is conveniently located right off the George Washington Parkway and has a reputation for great food. Our dinner reservations are for 6 p.m.

The Alexandria Dyke Marsh year-round walk is just a few miles north up the parkway at the Roy Rogers at 1506 Belle View Blvd in the shopping center. Those who wish to walk before the dinner are encouraged to take advantage of this nearby walk.

If you're a little early, consider dropping by the Garamone household at 9009 Stratford Lane, Alexandria. We're just one mile from Cedar Knoll. Jim and I plan to have some hot cider and cookies available and we'd love to have you over.

We currently have 21 members signed up to come to the dinner. It's not too late to join us. Just give Helen at call at (703) 360-5692 or email her at hkgaramone@hotmail.com. The more the merrier!

Upcoming events

Dec. 8-9 - Williamsburg Christmas Walks. A day and night walk in historic Williamsburg - once the capital of Virginia. Start point -- The Best Western Hotel 351 York Street, Williamsburg, Va. The night walk starts between 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm. Finish by 9:00 pm. peninsulapathfinder.org

Dec. 9 -- Annapolis Lighted Boat Parade Annapolis Athletic Club, 1031 Bay Ridge Avenue Eastport Shopping Center Annapolis, MD 21403. 12 pm till 2 pm, finish by 5pm. www.annapolisamblers.org

Dec. 11 -- Holiday Lights of Owen Brown, Dye House 6887 Garland Lane, Columbia, MD 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM. Finish by 9:30 PM www.mdvolks.org/CVC

Dec. 16 - Fredericksburg, Va. Holiday Lights walk. Start/
Finish: Spencer Devon Brew Pub, 106 George St
Fredericksburg, VA 22401 Start between 3-5 pm.

Dec. 31-Jan. 1 -- New Year's Eve - Come Walk with Us!
Savage, Md. Faith Ministry Center, 9050 Baltimore St. on
corner of Foundry and Baltimore St. sign in between 8:30 AM
to 1 PM and finish by 4 PM www.mdvolks.org/freestate/

Quote of the month—

Find peace inside...by going outside.

Anonymous

The Last Word

Helen spoke to the people at Huntley Meadows Park about having the Spring volksmarch there, and they agreed. But one aspect about it bothered me - no dogs on the boardwalk trail. Not "no dogs off leashes" -- just "no dogs."

I get it. There's wildlife in the park. There's limited passage on the boardwalks, and many people are afraid of dogs.

They have good reasons, but I have to tell you I have always enjoyed having Nugget or Scrappy along with us.

Nugget is going on 16 and I am pretty sure she would not be interested in accompanying us for a 10-kilometer walk anymore, but she used to.

She used to be 90-pounds of muscle pulling Helen or I along the path. We would joke that while we walked 10 kilometers, she walked about double that because she was always going from side-to-side to examine smells and sights along the trail.

She's a black dog with a white chest (and now a pretty white face, too), and she looked beautiful walking through the leaves or vegetation or snow along the path.

She always enjoyed pitter-pattering along in creeks, and if I got too far ahead of Helen, she would stop and not move an inch until Helen caught up.

In short, she's a great pup and fun to have along.

Happy walking, folks. See you on the trail. Bring a treat for Nugget!

Jim Garamone