

## MILL CITIES RELAY By Dave Delay

Lots of Striders turned out for the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Mill Cities Relay on December 8. More than 80 Striders participated in the relay from Nashua to Andover, Mass. Gate City fielded 19 separate teams – enough to take home the Club Participation Award for the fifth year in a row.

It was a beautiful day for a race – clear, seasonably cool, and not too windy. What wind there was generally favored the runners. Those who ran leg four from the Bellegarde Boathouse in Lowell enjoyed a pleasant tail wind all the way to Methuen. It wasn't until the fifth leg crossed the bridge in Lawrence that runners turned into the wind for the home stretch.

Mother Nature's only significant obstacle this year was snow. Drifts of up to a foot of snow forced runners off the bike path in Lowell and on to Rte. 113. According to Dave Camire, this was only the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in 19 years race organizers have used this detour. The organizers avoid this section of Rte. 113 because of the heavy traffic at several bridges, but there was no choice. Race organizers compensated by adding excellent traffic control at each of the bridges.

The Winners Circle Running Club (WCRC) is a perennial contender at Mill Cities and this year was no exception. WCRC took first place with 59 points. The Merrimack Valley Striders (MVS), absent from the top three since 1999, returned in style. MVS placed second with convincing 53 points. The big surprise this year was the Somerville Road Runners. They placed third with 39 points.

Despite our strong turnout, Gate City placed only sixth overall with 29 team points. Let's not



sugar coat it. Sixth place is a disappointment – particularly since we past four years in a row. On the other hand, many Striders were out there mostly to have fun this year. That's not a bad thing. Just as an individual should avoid training and racing hard year in and year out, it's probably good for a running club to take it easy occasionally.

If you are worried about our prospects for next year, consider this. The fourth place team scored 32 points – just three more than we did. With a few minor adjustments, we could easily have placed fourth this year. This tells me we have a strong core group of runners. With a little with some help in the Open divisions, we could definitely return to the top three next year.



This year our top teams included:

- 🏆 1<sup>st</sup> Female Veterans – Jane Levesque, Kathy Engle, Pat Smith
- 🏆 2<sup>nd</sup> Female Seniors -- Heidy McGaffigan, Genia Sanborn, Judy Moland
- 🏆 4<sup>th</sup> Male Masters – “Run Free or Die” – John Saunders, Jim Belanger, Walter Swanbon, Wayne MacLeod, Don McCarty
- 🏆 4<sup>th</sup> Male Seniors – Dave Salvas, Dick Doyle, Richard Stockdale, Trevor Ward, Paul MacDonald
- 🏆 4<sup>th</sup> Male Veterans – Warren Church, Eldon Burkinshaw, Shaun Scanlon, Jack Kick, Bill Spencer
- 🏆 5<sup>th</sup> Female Masters – “Mash Unit” – Pat Belanger, Priscilla Flynn, Susan Finerty, Sue Picard, Robin Rocha
- 🏆 6<sup>th</sup> Coed Open – Mike Hagerty, Sally Sites, Amy Quinette, Bill Juris, Dave Ferris

Striders that deserve special recognition include:

- 🏆 Jane Levesque and Warren Church, both of whom ran their 19<sup>th</sup> consecutive Mill Cities Relay. That’s every edition of Mill Cities since the beginning. See you both at number 20 next year!
- 🏆 “Iron Pam” Hall who ran the first leg for the “Wednesday Evening Church Group” and then ran the 9.4 mile fourth leg for daughter Josie’s Coed Open team.
- 🏆 Mike and Linda Thatcher for retrieving my cell phone for me. Just before I started my leg, I discovered my phone was missing. It had been picked up by a passerby and she was already a half a mile away in a car. Mike and Linda generously retrieved my phone while I was running. At the end of my leg I handed Mike the baton and Linda handed me my phone. Now that’s teamwork.

I’m sure there are lots of other Striders that went above and beyond for the club. There were many captains who organized teams. Along the route, there were lots of Striders passing out water and cheering on their team mates. Whether I listed your name above or not, everyone who was there deserves a big round of applause.

Team Name	Division	Members
No Name	Male Open	Bill Farina, Carl Murphy, Steve Stanley, Adrien Cooper, Doug Casey
GCS Run Free or Die	Male Masters	John Saunders, Jim Belanger, Walter Swanbon, Wayne MacLeod, Don McCarty
GCS Run Free or Die 2	Male Masters	Charlie Lawrence, John Hennessy, Mike Merra, Chip Geisler, Mike Sarro
GCS Run Free or Die 3	Male Masters	Bob Pelletier, Tom Conley, Paul Tobin, Fran Dwyer, George Itz
Gate City Northwest	Male Masters	Jim Ecke, Damian Rowe, Peter de Bruyn Kops, Dave Delay, Mike Thatcher
Gate City Striders	Male Seniors	Dave Salvas, Dick Doyle, Richard Stockdale, Trevor Ward, Paul MacDonald
Gate City Striders 2	Male Seniors	Mike Levesque, Dick Bersani, Steve Moland, Sammy El-Guebaly, George Miller
Gate City Senior 3	Male Seniors	John Lewicki, Jerry Rocha, Dave Wendt, Stan Klem, Peter Donahue
GCS Veteran A	Male Veterans	Warren Church, Eldon Burkinshaw, Shaun Scanlon, Jack Kick, Bill Spencer
GCS Veteran B	Male Veterans	Bob Lemay, Nick Nicholson, Ken Beach, Bill Engle, Shu Minami
Mash Unit Female	Masters	Pat Belanger, Priscilla Flynn, Susan Finerty, Sue Picard, Robin Rocha
No Name	Female Seniors	Heidy McGaffigan, Genia Sanborn, Judy Moland,
Gate City Striding Seniors #1	Female Seniors	Pat Kiesselbach, Linda Madden, Emily Strong
Gate City Striding Seniors #2	Female Seniors	Sue Rube, Virginia Mills, Sue Marrer-Strasen
Gate City Striding Veterans	Female Veterans	Jane Levesque, Kathy Engle, Pat Smith
No Name	Mixed Open	Mike Hagerty, Bill Juris, Dave Ferris, Sally Sites, Amy Quinette
The Fearless Five	Mixed Open	Josie Hall, Pam Hall ??? ??? ???
Team Throck Morton	Mixed Open	David Cormier, Annette Marchand, Tom Raiche, Brian Withers, Sherry Boyer
WECC	Mixed Masters	Rich MacDonald, Pam Hall, Roger Hall, Skip Cleaver, Jeanie Ferreira

# Randumb Thoughts

By Bob Thompson



It's been a snowy and frigidly cold winter thus far. Temperatures soared into the 20's on Saturday January 25th. The mid 20's felt like the mid 40's after weeks of single and negative digit temperatures. The abundant snow and cold temps has made for excellent downhill and cross-country conditions throughout the region. Last year there was no XC skiing locally. The trails of Beaver Brook and other local venues have a deep base as of this writing. Several Striders were greeted with cloudless blue sunny skies and deep snow at the Beaver on Sunday January 5th. As one Strider says "there were picture-ass views" as the sun glistened off the fresh powder. (You can take the boy out of Maine, but you can't take Maine out of the boy.) Many Striders have been taking advantage of the deep snow pack and mid-week prices and enjoying the superb downhill conditions. Killington had nearly every trail open in powder and packed

powder conditions in mid December for only \$29. (Regular \$62). Upcoming (\$29) New Hampshire days at Killington are February 6th and 24th; March 6th and 18th; and April 2nd and 14th (a chance to ski some Volkswagen Bug size bumps a few days before Boston). Take a day off from work and ski for cheap. Sunapee offers skiing for only \$24 if you can find a buddy on two-for-one Wednesdays. If you are paying full price to ski you are paying too much! Every area has some kind of deal on lift tickets. Look on-line or buy discount tickets at area ski shops. There's nothing like the excitement of a high speed downhill run surrounded by nature's beauty.....Every serious runner should have 4 pairs of running shoes. Two pairs in order to alternate pairs each day. (Running everyday on the same pair of shoes does not allow the shoes to dry out thoroughly and regain their spring.) A third pair should be used for running errands, driving, golfing, watching TV, shooting hoops, etc.... The fourth pair should be strictly used for mowing the lawn and yard work. Don't mow the lawn in your new \$100 Asics unless you prefer green shoes. All other pairs of running shoes should be brought the Wednesday evening workouts this spring for donation to the Milford Share Program to help the needy.....Warren Church and Jane Levesque continued their streak of being the only runners to have run all 19 Mill Cities Relays. I ran the first Mill Cities Relay (do you remember the hot soup?) and have run roughly 1/2 of them and have many memories. Have they found Allen Pottle yet? Believe it or not, I ran the short leg on the GCS Men's Open team one year. I believe it was 1988. I was never very fast but I have become very slow over the years. I will run the 20th Mill Cities this December. That will be a fun party! The Gate City Striders have won the Mill Cities participation award 5 consecutive years. We should go for a record number in 2003. Put it on your calendar now for the first Sunday in December.... Congratulations to long-time Strider Skip Cleaver on being awarded the Gate City Striders lifetime achievement award at the recent Annual Dinner. Skip has contributed greatly to the Gate City Striders and the community as a volunteer, a president, a director, a runner and a friend to all who come in contact with him. Skip is also a previous winner of the Phil Quinn Award for outstanding service to the running community in the Merrimack Valley. Skip also keeps many a runner regular with his Sunday morning running column in the Nashua Telegraph. Skip, you're the best!..... (More non-running-randumb-thoughts dept: (that's what you get when I'm not running much)) On the local music scene Aces & Eights, featuring former Strider Buddy Bernard on lead vocals, attracted nearly 1,000 to Alpine Grove for a recent concert. The band played two 1-1/2 hour sets and had the entire crowd dancing. Dean Shalhoup of the Nashua Telegraph wrote a couple of fine articles about local legendary band. Look for their next reunion concert, download Aces tunes, or

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view many old photos of the band at [www.acesnh.com](http://www.acesnh.com)....Other upcoming musical acts coming to Alpine Grove in Hollis include Little Feat, Commander Cody, and James Montgomery.....Dan Hicks and his Hot Licks are back on the road. Dan wowed the crowd with his witty unique style at the historic Ioka Theater in downtown Exeter. Dan was twice featured on the cover of Rolling Stone Magazine back in the 70's. Dan is a one of a kind entertainer and has written 100s of songs of poetry put to music in an acoustic, folk-jazz, swing style. He will be back in the area soon. You can get his tour schedule, CD's and more at [www.surfdog.com](http://www.surfdog.com).... (Back to running) I enjoyed filling out the Gate City Strider survey. It got me thinking not only about the GCS but my running as well. It made me realize how far I have come as a runner by the way that I answered some of the questions. While I would love to see the Striders have a complete team, it is not that important to me since I no longer run to compete. I have fully made the transition from runner to jogger and the social aspect of the Striders is most important to me at this time in my life or "running career"..... Years ago, I didn't like it when friends or co-workers would ask if I was going "jogging". Running and jogging are two different sports or activities. Running is putting out an extra effort, lifting the knees a little higher, striding a bit further and breathing a lot heavier. I used to run and don't do much of that anymore. Jogging is running once a week or so, going as slow as you can go, running as short as possible to get a workout, and not setting your stop watch.

I have found that there are several advantages to being a jogger instead of a runner.

- 👉 You don't need high tech/ high cost garments (cotton does fine if you are only out for 20 minutes for so and hardly work up a sweat.)
- 👉 You have less laundry. I recall training for marathons in the winter and having loads of wet garments each and every day to launder and deal with.
- 👉 Less pairs of shoes are required. One pair for running, shopping, watching TV, etc.. is fine since alternating is not needed. You can even run in your green lawn mowing running shoes.
- 👉 Power bars, GU, Gatorade are not needed and reduce expenses.
- 👉 You don't need a watch. You just go run around the block a few times until you start to sweat and then you stop.
- 👉 You don't need to plan your daily runs. You find 20 minutes on the weekend and you're "good to go"!
- 👉 You save money on race entry fees since there is no sense racing when you can accomplish the same outside your front door.
- 👉 You don't mind when someone asks if you went "jogging".

Maybe someday I'll be a runner again..... In my opinion, the most important thing that the Gate City Striders have done is build lifetime friendships and relationships among hundreds of individuals. The winning or losing of any races mean nothing compared to lifelong friendships that would have never occurred if not for the Gate City Striders....Speaking of Striders and friendships, Happy 40th birthdays to longtime Striders and friends Traci Swanbon and Lisa Klasman. You are now in the protected class under ADEA. Congratulations! You should start forming your women's master's team for the 20th Mill Cities now. If you are thinking mixed masters instead women's masters, I'm still available.....I'll see you on the Mines Falls trails on Wednesday evening April 9th, 2003 and don't forget the annual First Communion at Church afterwards.