

South Riding Running Club



Left to right, Alison Gittelman, Phil Holt, Kathy Hoenig, Maria Little, John Winkert



A shot from a recent Saturday; a very rainy day and great turnout.

You've seen us before. Maybe it was early one winter morning. That sleepy commute had just begun, and you noticed the reflective gear on a runner braving the weather bouncing along the road toward you. Or maybe it was the time you saw those people running in the pouring rain. Or the day the weather was perfect, and you saw all the runners out around the neighborhood and you felt a little twinge, like maybe you were missing out. You have seen us on the road, in large or small groups, at Starbucks or Caribou enjoying post run coffee and conversation. Who are all those people?

The South Riding Running Club is celebrating its second anniversary this month. We've come a long way; and not just in miles. From the very first email inviting runners to meet at Starbucks, we have encouraged, motivated, sustained, and enjoyed each others' successes on the road

By Maria Little, President

and off. We all share the desire to be fit and to have fun. We are a group of people of all ages, shapes and sizes who enjoy the benefit of company and conversation that comes with joining other runners. We enjoy being able to chase up and down the stairs after our toddlers and after our grandchildren.

What does it take to have this much fun and reap the rewards? Simply a desire to invest in your future health and the motivation to get out of bed that first time to come out and meet us. We've all gone through the awkwardness of being new and inexperienced or just a little uncomfortable starting an activity with new people. Like all of South Riding, we welcome newcomers, and you'll find that no matter what your ambition or current state of fitness, you'll meet neighbors who really are just like you.

Some of us are accomplished runners. Many of us are not, but everyone is able to fit in, and every goal is supported and encouraged. Siva Natarajan, a novice runner during our first year, ran the 2005 Marine Corps Marathon and lived to tell. Alison Gittelman and Kathy Hoenig, race and regularly win their age group. Phil Holt is a member of the 50 States Marathon Club and our Treasurer John Winkert is a member of the 50 Plus Club (50 races a year that is). We haven't quite figured those guys out. But enthusiasm is

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contagious, and this year we have more people than ever participating in local races. We even have a group of 25 South Riding runners registered for the 2006 Army 10 Miler. We'll be hosting a spaghetti dinner the night before and activities the day of the race.

The South Riding Running Club isn't about running fast or far. We really do enjoy the camaraderie, motivation, and fun, even when we're out for a few miles on a weekday morning. The post-run coffee and conversation are a tremendous reward, frequently lasting longer than the run. Come out and meet us. We'll go your pace and keep you going when you're tired. Someone will probably have a jogging stroller, too. Visit us at our website www.srrunners.org and read some of the race reports — they are truly inspiring.

Who are all those people? The South Riding Running Club is a community of runners and walkers of all levels and ability. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate regardless of age, gender, athletic inclination, and goals. We hope to see you out there soon.