



THE ANCHOR

NEWSLETTER NO. 31

JANUARY 2024

USS POINT DEFIANCE LSD-31

WAS A THOMASTON-CLASS DOCK LANDING SHIP OF THE US NAVY

COMMISSIONED 1955 MARCH 31 • DECOMMISSIONED 1983 SEPTEMBER 30

MOTTOS: "YOU CALL, WE HAUL" and "BEACH OR BAR, NONE TOO FAR"

(SHIPMATES AND FRIENDS ARE FOREVER!)

USS POINT DEFIANCE ASSOCIATION POINTS OF CONTACT:

CURRENT ELECTED OFFICERS (AS OF 2023 REUNION):

PRESIDENT:	Mike Doto 1966-1969 MM3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mdoto@bridgemail.com • cell: (406) 491-9308
VICE PRESIDENT:	Tom Pierri 1970-1972 MM2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tpierri@aol.com
TREASURER:	Ken Januario 1965-1968 EM3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ken.januario@gmail.com <p>Dues check should be made payable to: USS PD Association Mail to: USS PD Association • 37 Sherry Avenue • Bristol RI 02809-2544 Association Membership of \$15 is due annually in January unless you have been designated as 'an exception or grandfathered in' as a member.</p>
SECRETARY:	** Debs Day 1968-1969 SFP3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dday6268@gmail.com
CHAPLAIN:	Glenn Schmidt 1970-1971 RM3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • glenadel@paulbunyan.net

PAST OFFICERS:

John Nicolosi 1965-69 MM3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President Sept 1994-2015, Founder
Debs Day 1968-1969 SFP3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President Sept 2015-2018
Howard King 1976-1977 MSCM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chaplain Sept 2015-2022
Raney Wright 1965-67 EM3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretary Sept 2015-2023

VOLUNTEERS:

SHIP'S STORE:	Val Furrick 1966-1969 EM2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • valkathol@aol.com
INFO COORDINATOR:	Cyndi Januario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cyndimccjan@gmail.com
NEWSLETTER EDITOR:	** Sharon Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sharonwday47@gmail.com
WEBSITE ADMINISTRATOR:	Barbara McGonagill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bkmcg2@gmail.com

ASSOCIATION EMAIL:	usspdassociation@gmail.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitored by Info Coordinator
ASSOCIATION WEBSITE:	usspdassociation.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently being updated

**** Note: Both Debs and Sharon Day have updated eMail addresses**

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

**Mike Doto • 1966-1969 MM3
USS Point Defiance LSD 31
953 N. Main Street, Butte, MT 59701
(406) 491-9308 / eMail: mdoto@bridgemail.com**



Dear Shipmates and friends,

I hope you had a Merry Christmas and a good New Years. I have been working on the 2024 reunion that is to be held in the tri-cities in Washington State (11-14 September). I have secured the hotel and am fine-tuning our tours. We will be staying at the Red Lion Hotel and Conference Center in Pasco, WA. I have only a few things to finish up and will be giving you all an update. For one tour I am planning a lunch cruise up the Columbia River. Still working on the other tour. I have also started gathering information for the 2025 reunion.

I don't know if you all know that this year will be the 30th anniversary of our 1st reunion. Shipmate John Nicolosi started the first one in 1994 at Williamsburg, VA. At that reunion the attendees decided to meet every other year. The Plank Owners however, decided they would meet the next year in 1995 in New York. At the 1996 reunion in Las Vegas, NV., it was decided to have a reunion every year. We have done that every year since, except the two Covid years we missed. There are a few people that have attended every one and some that only missed a few.

At the 2023 reunion in Harrisburg, we discussed the USSPD web site and Barbara McGonagill, wife of Lt. Bob Farrell, volunteered to be the website administrator and update the current site. She also discussed establishing a directory of the shipmates that served on the USSPD and it is almost ready to go. We will be sending out some information soon asking if you want to be in the directory. Only those who give us permission will be in the directory.

As a reminder - another change approved at the 2023 reunion was regarding dues payment timeframe. Association membership dues payment (\$15) has been separated from the reunion attendance payment and is now due annually in January.

As communicated in Newsletter #30 distributed in October: **Dues remain \$15 but the payment timeframe has changed - they are due in January and valid for one calendar year.** This change makes it more efficient and clearer for the treasurer to separate membership finances from reunion finances. **Also, members that paid dues for 2023, do not need to submit payment to maintain their membership through 2024. This includes those that are considered exempt from having to pay (plank owners, family of deceased shipmates, others determined to be exempt for various reason).** So for anyone that would like to join the association that **did not pay dues last year** or has **not been notified they are exempt**, payment is due during the month of January 2024, although membership signup is accepted throughout the year. See treasurer info on page 1 for where to send dues.

*Also please note: Some of you that paid dues in 2023 have paid again for 2024.
We will mark as a donation unless you request a return refund.*

Thanks for your service

Be safe out there

Mike Doto MM3
President, USSPD Reunion Association

SHIPMATE'S LOG:

TAPS: SHIPMATES OR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS THAT HAVE RECENTLY PASSED.

Please Note • Names of USS Point Defiance Shipmates or associate members of whom the association was recently notified of their passing are shown. Occasionally you may notice a shipmate that passed in a prior year, reason being we were recently notified or found an obituary via an on-line search. In most cases, condolences will be sent to the family on behalf of the USS PD Association. For those that are members of the Association, a donation in their memory may be sent to an organization or charity requested by the family.



Captain Robert Thomas, Association Member, 2023-12-08

Captain ~ Served as Captain on the PD 1968-1969

Sadly we were notified of the passing of Captain Robert Earl Thomas, USN (Retired), a veteran of WWII, Korean and Vietnam wars. 'Captain Bob', as he was fondly referred to by many, attended the 1996 reunion in Las Vegas and was a long time member of the association. He passed away on December 8th at his home in Monterey, CA, at the age of 98 following a long, courageous battle with multiple myeloma.

Bob was a native of Altus, OK and grew up in a farming community. He joined the navy in 1943 and graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 1945 in the wartime NROTC program. Bob's sea commands included commanding officer of the submarine USS Remora, Commander of Submarine Division 33, and commanding officer of the USS Point Defiance in 1968-1969. His other navy assignments included serving as a weapons and torpedo officer of the submarine base in New London, CT, executive officer of the submarine tender USS Howard Gilmore, and as Chief of Staff of Submarine Flotilla One in San Diego. He retired from active duty in the Navy in 1970.



Shipmates that served with Captain Bob were honored to see him again at the 1996 reunion, and others enjoyed meeting him for the first time (and maybe danced with him!). Bob also really enjoyed receiving the newsletters and often commented on them. In August of 2020, the association published its very first 'Special Edition Newsletter' honoring Captain Thomas. He had sent in all of the information that was contained in the newsletter prior to the group even considering publishing special editions. As we thought about it and had all of this information, why not create and publish a special edition. We contacted him and he immediately said YES, excited and honored to share information about his military career. For those that received the newsletter, we're sure you were honored to read it, especially his Change of Command speech.



In 2010, Bob relocated to Monterey, CA to be closer to his daughters. He became very active and gained memorable friendships at his retirement home, The Park Lane. "Capt. Bob" spent nearly fourteen years there and loved being one of the more popular residents.

Bob was inurned at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery in San Diego, CA, alongside his wife Nancy. He is survived by his children, grandchildren and one great-grandchild born just before his passing.

Should anyone want a copy of the notice sent by his family, please contact us back and we will forward.

SHIPMATE'S LOG (cont'd)

Plank Owner and Association Member Raymond D Flannigan 2023-02-09

We were recently notified of the passing of Plank Owner and Association Member Raymond Flannigan. He passed on February 9, 2023. Ray served in the Navy 1952-1956 and was on the PD 1955-1956 as a QM3. He loved playing country music on his guitar and was an avid Nascar fan. Ray was from Decatur, IL, and is survived by his wife, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, one great-great grandson and his sister.



Ray attended the 2016 reunion in Branson, MO, with his daughter Tracy Kline. He brought a framed picture of the Point Defiance to be auctioned off during the Saturday banquet auction.

Pictured holding the framed picture are Ray (on right) with Sandra and Charles 'Jim' Lackey who made the winning bid.

We were happy to meet Ray and Tracy and that Ray got to enjoy the reunion and reconnect with 4 former Plank Owners.

Shipmate Gary (Nabber) Nabbefeld 2024-01-03

Shipmate Gary 'Nabber' Nabbefeld, of Kaukauma, WI, passed on January 3rd. He served on the PD 1973-1975 BT, and is survived by his wife, children, grandchildren and siblings. Gary was not an association member but we saw notice of his passing on Facebook.

Carol Larkin, Associate Member, 2023-11-20

Many of you know Plank Owner Tom Roy and met his significant other/companion Carol Larkin, who over many years attended just about every reunion with Tom. Sadly, Carol passed away on November 20th after a fairly short illness. For those of you that met and remember Carol, she was small in stature but was a large presence at the reunions, always with a smile on her face and enjoying being with everyone. Although she was not able to attend the past couple of reunions, Carol still thought of those she had become friends with, sending her regards through Tom. She will be missed, but always remembered.

Carol resided in Great Bear Lake, MN, and is survived by her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and her loving friend Tom.



Carol and Tom at one of the many reunions they attended.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the families of those that have passed. All will be included in the memorial held annually at the reunion. Should anyone wish to send a card or message, please contact Sharon or Cyndi who will provide contact information, if available.



Mercy dogs were specially trained to sniff out wounded and bring them first aid in the battlefields of WW1. If a soldier was beyond saving, mercy dogs would lay down next to him so he didn't have to die alone.

SHIPMATE AUTOBIOGRAPHY:

USS POINT DEFIANCE LSD-31

1. NAME AND RANK: Jay Patterson, LT.
2. DATES OF SERVICE: Sept. 28, 1968-Sept. 30, 1970.
3. HOMETOWN: Dallas, TX. Now Fate, TX.
4. SPOUSE/FAMILY:
Late wife Jan during Navy service;
daughter, Betsy, a baby during Navy service;
son, Jamie, born at St. Mary's Hospital, Long Beach, CA,
during Navy service at cost of \$25, a bargain; four grandchildren;
wife, Ellen, her daughter, Sherri, and son, Gary; four grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren!
5. WHY I JOINED THE NAVY: To help stop the Communists from taking over South Viet Nam.
6. Navy or Ship Memories: Great people on PD I served with Boatswain Ron Powell and Chief Engineering Officer Bob Farrell. My shipmates were heroes in emergencies like during fire and during collision with an oiler during underway replenishment. They were dependable in their daily work. I am proud to have served with them. I got an early cut in Nixon's draw down from Viet Nam. Enjoyed touring the Western Pacific, Hong Kong and Japan especially. Learned about good and bad leadership that served me well after Navy service. Loved being OOD underway especially conning the ship going under the Golden Gate Bridge.
7. WORDS OF WISDOM: Be ready. Accept gift of faith and help from God and others. You cannot do it alone. Besides, serving God is a joy and working with and serving others is more fun!
8. PROFESSION BEFORE AND AFTER SERVICE: Enlisted right after law school at SMU. Served as legal officer on the ship. My best cases were defending sailors at Captain's Mast caught drinking beer in the chain locker and defending a sailor charged with assault for dousing a shipmate with dirty water after swabbing the deck, who refused to take a shower. Practiced law from 1970 to 1984. In real estate development from 1984 to 1989. Practiced law from 1989 to 1994. Elected district judge in Dallas in 1994. Served as judge from 1995 through 2006. Helped found the UNT Dallas College of Law. Worked as volunteer to increase funding for legal aid and for access to justice. Now serve as Group Leader in Bible Study Fellowship and lead Men's Bible Study at church.



FOLLOW-UP: 2023 ASSOCIATION DONATIONS:

As voted at the 2023 reunion and communicated in Newsletter #30, donations were made to the following on behalf of the association; Toys for Tots; Pennsylvania Veterans; Larry & Faye Black (association members).

We want to let you all know that letters/notes were received from all three thanking the association for their thoughtfulness and generosity.

This is a copy of the note received from Larry and Faye Black, who were sent Home Depot and Walmart gift cards to be used either personally or within their community as a result of damage from Hurricane Idalia.

Larry and Faye are long time association members and had planned to attend the 2023 reunion, but the hurricane made a direct hit resulting in significant damage to their property.

We're happy to report that they are doing well and looking forward to attending the 2024 reunion!

Dear friends,
Thank You, Thank You, Thank You. You all cannot imagine how wonderful it made us feel to receive your gift!
We are left speechless, because words just are not enough to express our appreciation. It will be put to good use — Thank You,
Larry & Faye Black

SHIPMATE CORNER:

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

The **DAV** offers veterans service and support:

www.dav.org/veterans/find-your-local-office

To find a local National Service Officer to assist you with claims.

www.dav.org/veterans/i-need-a-ride

To assist you with a free ride to appointments.

<https://www.dav.org/get-help-now/veteran-topics-resources/disaster-relief/>

To assist those who have experienced flood, hurricane or other emergencies.

VA Veterans Health:

[Inside Veterans Health](#)

This link provides information and support regarding a multitude of health topics/issues/questions. From arthritis, to lung care, to medication assistance along with a variety of other topics.

FINANCIAL:

Social security beneficiaries will see a 3.2 percent increase in monthly payments starting January 2024.

TRAVEL NEWS:

NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE - (NCL) [Military Appreciation Program](#) (click to learn more)

Active members, veterans, spouses and surviving spouses of the following branches of the United States military with a verified ID.me account are eligible for the NCL military discount:

- Army
- Navy
- Air Force
- Marine Corps
- Coast Guard
- Space Force
- National Guard

How does NCL verify proof of military service?

NCL partners with ID.me, our trusted third-party verification service, which uses private and secure data sources to confirm the accuracy of the information you provide. The verification process typically takes five minutes or less. Once your credentials are verified, you will begin seeing your discounted rates on NCL.com at checkout when logged in. The discounted rate displayed at checkout is reflective of 10% off the cruise fare portion of any cruise.

Where can I learn more about ID.me?

To learn more about the offers and benefits of ID.me, or for company information, please visit www.ID.me. You will need a My NCL account so we can link your military discount to your account. This will allow you to see your discounted prices when logged in to NCL.com and/or allow your travel agent to see your discounted prices.

PUBLIC LANDS:

The National Park Service unveiled a lifetime pass providing free entrance to [national parks](#) for Veterans and their families. The National Defense Authorization Act of 2022 authorized a free lifetime pass to national parks and other federal recreational lands for eligible Veterans and Gold Star Families. In recent years, they were able to receive annual passes but now the Military Pass does not expire for Veterans and Gold Star Family members.

MEDICAL NEWS:

TRAVEL PAY:

[My Healthy Vet](#): You can now use your My HealthVet Premium account to sign in to the Beneficiary Travel Self Service System (BTSSS) travel pay portal. This will replace the need to submit a paper travel reimbursement form and expedite payment to you. Allows you to submit and track status of travel claims online 24/7, M-F 8AM-8PM help desk for travel pay portal or Call (855) 574-7292.

ANNIE:

ANNIE is a text messaging service that helps you manage your care. Track your health readings and learn more about your health wherever you are. www.mobile.va.gov/annie or phone (877) 470-5947.

CPAP SUPPLIES:

Veterans who rely on CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) machines to manage sleep-related breathing disorders, including sleep apnea, now have a new streamlined online ordering system for CPAP supplies. VA has added the CPAP supply ordering feature as part of the online tool that's already in place, same as how Veterans order hearing aid supplies on VA.gov. The addition improves how Veterans order, manage and efficiently receive health care supplies.

Last year, VA's Logistics Center shipped nearly 5.5 million apnea care products, with the majority being supplies such as masks, tubing, filters and more. These are some of the items Veterans can now conveniently request directly online.

To get started with a supply order, Veterans should have the following details ready:

- Shipping address
- Information about your hearing aids
- eMail address
- Information about your CPAP machines

How to place an order:

Click here for CPAP: [Ordering CPAP Supplies](#)

Click here for Hearing Aid: [Ordering Hearing Aid Supplies](#)

Once a Veteran successfully submits an order, they'll receive a confirmation message, which can be retained for records. Within 1 to 2 days of order submission, Veterans will receive an email containing an order tracking number. This number allows for easy monitoring of the order's status. Orders typically arrive within 7 to 10 business days.

In the future, VA's Office of Information and Technology will add more ordering supply types to the VA.gov tool.

CAREGIVERS SUPPORT PROGRAM (CSP) [CAREGIVERS](#)

ABOUT CSP

CSP promotes the health and well-being of Veterans' caregivers through education, resources, support and services. Every VA facility has a CSP team that provides valuable information about resources to help caregivers stay informed and supported as they support Veterans. More information can be found on [CSP's website](#) and by contacting local [CSP teams](#). To learn more, watch [CSP's SITREP podcast](#).

CPR FOR CAREGIVERS:

The VA Caregiver Support Program (CSP) is on a mission to empower caregivers, equipping them with essential lifesaving skills in the form of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). In collaboration with the American Red Cross, CSP launched a [Hands-Only CPR training video](#) for caregivers, available on CSP's national website. "The Caregiver Support Program remains steadfast in preparing Veterans' caregivers with CPR skills to act swiftly and effectively in the critical moments following a cardiac arrest," said Colleen M. Richardson, executive director of CSP. "According to the American Heart Association, being trained to perform CPR can mean the difference between life and death, increasing the survival rate from around 10% to 40% or higher." To develop a network of caregivers who can respond effectively when every

second counts, CSP is also collaborating with the Simulation Learning, Evaluation, Assessment and Research Network to train CSP staff in the American Heart Association's Friends and Family CPR model. The pilot phase for this initiative is currently underway at four sites, with the overarching goal of nationwide implementation.

Why CPR training is important

The significance of CPR training cannot be overstated. The 2023 heart disease and stroke statistics show that among the over 356,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests that occurred, about 75% to 80% happened at home. When someone goes into cardiac arrest, every second counts. Caregivers trained in CPR can respond quickly and competently, increasing the chance of survival. Visit the site for details: [Caregivers](#)

VA CARE OPTIONS:

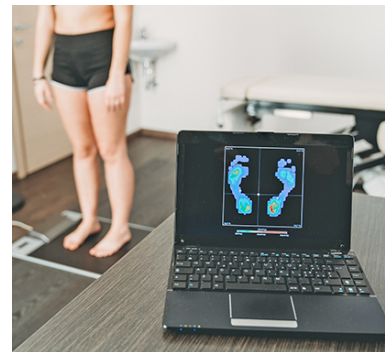
When your provider refers you to a specialist, discuss your plan of care with the Referral Coordination Team (RCT). You can choose to schedule direct care in VA or, if eligible, in VA's network of community care providers. Options: In person, Video, Telephone, Clinical Resource Hub, partnering VAMC specialist or your provider may electronically consult with a specialist for you. Contact your local VA RCT. If you have a specific issue (like neuropathy) ask the VA for a podiatrist. The VA may have a podiatrist in house. Be proactive and persistent when it comes to your health.

DIABETIC NEUROPATHY INNOVATIONS:

VA's Remote Temperature Monitoring Prevents Diabetic Limb Loss

Many VA hospitals now have podiatry doctors on staff. Late-detected diabetic foot ulcers could lead to limb amputation.

VA's remote temperature monitoring program encourages Veterans to use the Podimetrics SmartMat in their podiatry care. The mat can detect diabetic foot ulcers or other foot disorders as early as five weeks before they appear. Diabetes affects about one in four Veterans who receive VA care. For these Veterans, late-detected diabetic foot ulcers could lead to limb amputation. But they can avoid this by taking one simple step... onto an electronic mat each morning. "It's much easier to treat foot ulcers in the early stages," said Dr. Michael Pulla, chief of podiatry at Robley Rex VA in Louisville, Kentucky. "A late-stage foot ulcer or infection can lead to a prolonged healing timeframe, possible hospitalization, increase in resources and result in surgery or amputation. If we can identify a possible ulcer early, we can sometimes prevent these complications."



How remote temperature monitoring works:

Veterans with diabetes who are enrolled in the remote temperature monitoring program receive a Podimetrics SmartMat. These Veterans stand on the SmartMat once daily for 20 seconds and it measures the temperature at the bottom of their feet.

Pioneering preventative care - Use of the remote temperature monitoring program increased during the COVID-19 pandemic and is now being adopted nationwide. More and more Veterans are enrolling in the program to access this lifesaving preventative care.

To learn more about the SmartMat, [visit the VA Diffusion Marketplace website](#)

SmartMat connects with cellular satellites - If the mat detects an increase in temperature greater than 2.2 degrees Celsius at the same location of the foot for two consecutive days, Podimetrics notifies the Veteran and instructs them to check their feet for inflammation or swelling. If the temperature increase continues, Podimetrics alerts the Veteran's VA podiatrist so they can begin care. The SmartMat connects with cellular satellites. This means that even if a Veteran doesn't have Wi-Fi, they can use the SmartMat.

Remote temperature monitoring saves limbs - Remote temperature monitoring reduces clinic visits, hospital admissions, development of wounds and most importantly, amputations. Late-stage treatments such as hospitalization or amputation can be expensive. Veterans save money with early detection of possible foot conditions such as ulcers.

SOME INTERESTING AND FUN STUFF!

THE YEAR 2024

2024 IN NUMBERS

- If you've ever wondered how to write the year 2024 in Roman numerals, it's MMXXIV.
- And, if you ever find yourself needing to know what 2024 looks like in binary, it's 11111101000.
(Binary is a number system based only on the numerals 0 and 1.)

LEAP YEAR

Why Do We Have Leap Years? (Copied from timeanddate.com)

- Leap days keep our calendar in alignment with Earth's revolutions around the Sun. It takes Earth approximately 365.242189 days, or 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, and 45 seconds, to circle once around the Sun. This is called a tropical year, and it starts on the March equinox.
- However, the Gregorian calendar has only 365 days in a year. If we didn't add a leap day on February 29 almost every four years, each calendar year would begin about 6 hours earlier in relation to Earth's revolution around the Sun.
- As a consequence, our time reckoning would slowly drift apart from the tropical year and get increasingly out of sync with the seasons. With a deviation of approximately 6 hours per year, the seasons would shift by about 24 calendar days within 100 years. Allow this to happen for a while, and Northern Hemisphere dwellers will be celebrating Christmas in the middle of summer in a matter of a few centuries.
- Leap days fix this by giving Earth the additional time it needs to complete a full circle around the Sun.

CHINESE ZODIAC

- According to the Chinese calendar, 2024 is the Year of the Dragon, which occurs every twelve years.
- But did you know that the Chinese zodiac cycle also incorporates the five elements – Wood, Fire, Earth, Gold (Metal), and Water? So 2024 is actually the Year of the Wood Dragon, which only occurs every sixty years!
- Because the Chinese calendar works from the lunar cycle, the Chinese New Year for 2024 didn't start on January 1st. Instead, it runs from February 10th to February 28th, 2025.
- Individuals born in the Year of the Dragon are known for their strong leadership qualities, ambition, and confidence. They possess a charismatic and magnetic personality.

The following is from thefactsite.com with a disclaimer from us that we have not verified the information.

WALKING IN 2024:

Ever wondered about the mysteries behind something as ordinary as walking? From the curious sway of our arms to the peculiar phenomenon of sleepwalking, there's a world of intrigue beneath our daily strides.

NATIONAL WALKING DAY IS CELEBRATED ON THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF APRIL.

- The American Heart Association (AHA) created National Walking Day in 2007 to promote the many health benefits of walking.
- Walking makes your joints more flexible and strengthens your muscles.
- So, how about you use this day to wander around a park, go for a hike, or take your pet for a walk?

HOW MANY STEPS A DAY?

- Around 4,000 steps are enough to reap the health benefits of walking.
- Despite doctors recommending people take 6,000 to 10,000 steps daily, research shows that you can still be healthy even if you just take 2,500 to 4,000 steps per day.
- This doesn't mean you should settle for less, though, as increasing your daily steps leads to more health benefits. Besides improving heart health and increasing life expectancy, walking more can reduce your chances of high blood pressure, diabetes, and even cancer!

YOUR WALKING PATTERN IS AS UNIQUE AS YOUR FINGERPRINT!

- A person's manner of walking, known as their gait, varies due to things like weight, posture, and speed.
- However, injuries can also affect your gait, giving you what's referred to as an abnormal gait. Some examples are antalgic gait and waddling gait. An antalgic gait causes people to limp while walking; a waddling gait makes someone walk like a duck due to weakness or dislocation of the hips.

YOU USE LESS ENERGY IF YOU SWING YOUR ARMS WHILE WALKING.

- It's a natural thing for us to sway our arms when walking, as it simply seems more comfortable. But besides this, it turns out that this mannerism helps us conserve energy.
- Researchers at universities in the U.S. and Netherlands discovered that people use 12% more energy when they don't swing their arms while walking.
- What's more interesting, though, is that they found out that when we sway our arms in sync with our legs, we also use more energy – 26% more, to be specific!

WALKING SLOWLY IS ASSOCIATED WITH CONFIDENCE.

- You walk slowly when your strides are wider. And according to psychologists, you take up more space when you walk with larger steps, implying not only confidence but also authority.
- On the other hand, walking faster doesn't exude confidence because it makes you appear more anxious.
- But confidently walking isn't just about your strides and pace. There are other factors to consider, such as looking forward, keeping your hands out of your pockets, and not slouching.

WALKING IS GREAT FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH.

- There's a reason why some people often go out for a walk after a long, tiring day. It's because not only does it reduce stress levels, but it also improves our mood and cognition!
- Another way that walking is beneficial for our mental health is due to its ability to promote self-reflection, helping you gain more gratitude and control of yourself.
- That's why if you're thinking about walking more, then this is your sign!

WALKING CAN ALSO BE A FORM OF MEDITATION.

- This type of meditation is practiced in Kinhin, Theravada, and Vipassana, which are all forms of Buddhism.
- It's done at a slow pace while focusing on your surroundings and body movements, like when your foot touches the ground or when your arms sway.
- You can use walking meditation as an alternative way of being mindful if you find it challenging to meditate in traditional ways.

WALK MEETINGS

- The first thing that might come to your mind when you hear the word "meeting" is a group of people sitting around a conference table.
- But times are changing, and some successful businessmen and well-known entrepreneurs have done their meetings on foot.
- An obvious benefit is that it allows you to work and exercise simultaneously.
- But another advantage is that walking boosts creativity, which is a pretty big deal since brainstorming is an important factor in meetings.

WALKING CAN IMPROVE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE.

- Research from Canada's University of British Columbia has shown that regularly doing aerobic exercises increases the size of the hippocampus, a part of the brain that's crucial for learning.

SLEEPWALKING IS MORE COMMON IN CHILDREN THAN ADULTS!

- Also known as somnambulism, sleepwalking is a sleep disorder that can be passed on genetically or triggered by certain medications.
- Experts say it often happens during our childhood years but eventually stops as we grow into adults.
- This explains why 5-15% of children experience sleepwalking annually, while only 1-1.5% of adults do.

SOME INSECTS CAN WALK ON WATER.

- These mesmerizing insects belong to the Gerridae family and are commonly referred to as water striders or pond skaters.
- Most gerrids are found in freshwater, but a genus called Halobates is an exception since they can be found in saltwater.
- How they're able to walk on water boils down to their long and thin legs, which are hydrophobic, thereby repelling water and creating a buoyant effect.

WALKING IS AN OLYMPIC SPORT.

- That sport is called race walking, and it has been an Olympic sport since 1904.
- At the outset, race walking was part of combined events like decathlons. It was only considered a standalone sport four years later at the 1908 games in London.
- Rules are pretty simple: One foot should always be on the ground, and the supporting leg should extend and stay straight from the moment it makes contact with the ground until the body moves directly over it.
- Those who fail to follow the rules are given a penalty. Race walkers are disqualified from the competition once they receive three penalties.

THE WORLD RECORD FOR THE FASTEST TIME TO WALK THE PAN-AMERICAN HIGHWAY IS 2,426 DAYS.

- British adventurer George Meegan started his journey in Ushuaia, the southernmost point of Argentina, and finished it in Prudhoe Bay, the northernmost place in Alaska.
- Meegan's grueling 19,019-mile (30,608 km) trek began on January 26, 1977, and finished over six years later on September 18, 1983.

SINGAPORE HAS THE FASTEST WALKERS IN THE WORLD.

- Countries with fast-paced societies simply don't have the time of day to stroll along at a leisurely pace.
- Some examples of these busy countries are Denmark, China, and Spain. However, research from the Pace of Life Project in 2007 found that Singapore stands out the most.
- The study measured the time it took to walk a distance of 62 feet in 35 cities and found that Singaporeans were fastest at 10.55 seconds!

HINDUS HAVE A FESTIVAL WHEREIN THEY WALK ON FIRE.

- Thimithi festival is a firewalking ceremony that originated in Tamil Nadu in southern India and is now celebrated in different countries with Tamil people, like Malaysia, Singapore, and South Africa.
- It's celebrated during October and November and is dedicated to the Hindu goddess Draupati Amman.
- Celebrants of Thimithi perform a ritual of walking across hot coals, which they believe to be a way of proving their faith.

IN SUMMARY:

- Walking is great for your body and mind. That's why there's a special holiday that promotes this easy exercise, which provides plenty of health benefits.
- But walking isn't just about being healthy. Some do it for their studies, religion, and even for the Olympics.
- It's a simple activity that impacts different aspects of our lives. So, let this be a reminder for us to walk more and sit less! So grab a family member, friend, pet or go solo! But always let someone know your plans..... just in case!!

MORE FUN STUFF!

EASY RECIPES:

MUFFIN PANCAKES:

1 Egg
2/3 C Milk
1 Pkg Muffin Mix (6-8 oz)
Mix together well.
Cook like pancake.



VALENTINE COCKTAIL:

Combine cranberry juice, vodka, raspberries and prosecco to make this ruby-red cocktail. If romance is in the air, it is the perfect tipple for Valentine's Day!



How often are you lucky enough to come across an abandoned fly rod on the stream.



**IT'S A HUMBLING MOMENT
WHEN YOU REALIZE YOUR PET
HAS SUCCESSFULLY TRAINED
YOU TO DO SOMETHING**

NEWSLETTER EDITOR COMMENTS:

HAPPY NEW YEAR! HERE'S HOPING 2024 IS A WONDERFUL YEAR FOR ALL THE WORLD AND PEACEFUL DAYS ARE AHEAD. IF THERE ARE ANY TOPICS YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE ENTERED INTO THE NEWSLETTER, PLEASE LET ME KNOW. YOU WILL SEE BOTH MINE AND DEBS'S NEW EMAIL ADDRESSES ON THE FIRST PAGE OF THIS NEWSLETTER. AT THE 2023 REUNION, DEBS DAY WAS VOTED IN AS SECRETARY, SO I GUESS YOU ALL KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS!

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