

# January 2015 Member Profile

Windy City Striders

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[Edition 1, Volume 1]

## *An Evening with Della*

I had the opportunity to meet with Della Works at her home and see her "HUNDREDS" of running metals, plaques, pins that adorn her wall along with the many news articles that have been written about her. I had my list of questions I wanted to ask, like; how long

have you been running, what was your favorite race and so on. Although I still want to know some of those things, I found the deeper attraction to Della Works is her faith, her devotion to her family and her love for Casper.

Della's first half marathon was in Phoenix, AZ at the age of 59. Her friend Phyllis had done so many marathons and said, "You've got to start doing marathons, you get such a neat T-Shirt". That T-shirt happened to have a picture of a turtle and a hare. Her husband encouraged her to do it and she hasn't stopped since. She said it just took someone to encourage her.

## *Della's 1<sup>st</sup> Run*

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In 1984 Della's son, Robert, signed her up for her first race, which was the Casper Chase before the annual parade. Back then it was an 8 mile run. At 49 years old, she was the oldest woman running. She remembers wearing a white lace cowboy hat and took time out to pick a Black Eyed Susan flower.



She was ADDICTED - all the "young" runners looked so healthy.

Running became a family event after that.



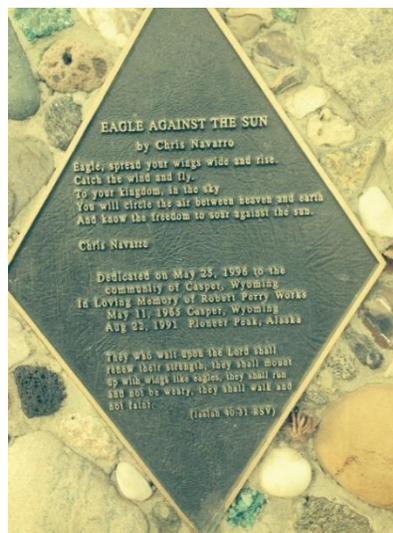
As you can see by the picture of all Della's medals – she has quite a story to tell. Each medal has a memory and a story of its own. She ran a marathon in Greece on the 100 year anniversary of the marathon beginning. She ran a marathon in Antarctica which was the most pristine and beautiful and it is the “only continent that has never been at war”. Della was selected to be one of 11,500 bearers chosen out of 210,000 people nominated to carry the torch for the Salt Lake Winter Games.

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Della has traveled the world to run and also taken each of her 14 grandchildren on trips. Japan, Galapagos Islands, Iceland, Greenland, and other places across the globe.

Della wants to be a role model and motivate others to keep going. She says runners are very special people – they look after older folks. She wants them to know if she can do it, they can do it too. “It's a blessing I can do this”

Della only wears New Balance Running shoes, which are American made.



## WE RUN TO REMEMBER

In 1991, Della's son Robert, who was a law student at the time, died in a plane crash in Alaska. Della honors her son, each time she runs. “We run to remember”.

Her most emotional run was a marathon in Oklahoma City. The path was lined with banners with the names of all who perished in the Oklahoma City bombing. Again, she said, “We run to remember”.

If you have an opportunity to walk downtown, at the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> and Center Street, you can see the memorial that honors her son.

The stones were provided from around the world by friends of Della's Husband who was a geologist.

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When I first met Della 4 years ago, I was running the Casper Crosstown Half, and ran with her a while on the path by Fort Caspar. I had no idea about the history of this woman. I can only hope that I am still running, night skiing, climbing mountains and collecting medals when I am 79. If you happen to see this Norwegian driving her convertible in winter with the top down – give her a honk and say Hi.

As the evening came to a close, Della told me, “I have had such a wonderful life – a good life”.

Yes, my friend Della – you have. Thank you for sharing your story with us.