

Walking's World in 2006

From June '96 Walking Magazine

©1996 Dave McGovern--Dave's World Class

Fitness, recreational and race walking have all made tremendous strides in popularity during Walking Magazine's 10-year history. We've seen more and more people take up walking for exercise and sport, and more people living healthier lifestyles in general. Since putting out our first issue in 1986, women have earned the right to racewalk in the Olympics, Fyona Campbell has walked around the world, and shoe and clothing manufacturers have finally come around to designing products for our needs instead of selling us re-tooled running gear.

With all the progress we've made in the past ten years, we're confident walking will take on an even greater role in our culture over the next decade. Maybe we're biased, but here's how we at Walking Magazine envision the world in the year 2006:

1996

The president runs for fitness; journalists chuckle at how bad he looks in his shorts.

2006

The president walks for fitness; journalists note how great she looks in her shorts.

1996

Top road races attract 20,000 runners and 200 walkers. Walkers have to wait 30 minutes for their separate start, and are often conveniently forgotten when the prizes are handed out.

2006

Top road races draw 20,000 walkers, 200 runners. First walker takes home a new 2006 Mercedes; first runner takes a cab.

1996

Kids forge their parent's signatures to get out of gym class.

2006

Kids forge their parent's signatures to take extra gym classes.

1996

Polluting power plants supply home electricity.

2006

Home owners supply their own treadmill and ergometer-generated electricity.

1996

Top vacation ideas:

- 1. Pulling a slot handle in a smoky casino
- 2. laying idle on a beach or cruise ship
- 3. eat your way through Europe

2006

Top vacation ideas:

- 1. Hiking to the source of the Amazon
 - 2. Touring the Australian outback on foot
 - 3. Snowshoeing along trans-Siberian railroad
-

1996

Kids aren't eating their vegetables--farmland converted to highways and parking lots.

2006

So many people walk to shop and work, unused roads and parking lots converted to parks and fitness trails.

1996

Automobiles--reproducing out of control--demand more and more highway traffic lanes.

2006

Unused traffic lanes converted to commuter bike and pedestrian lanes.

1996

Travelling businessmen spend half their day stuffed into airplanes; collect frequent flier miles to earn free travel.

2006

Salesmen conduct business via cellular phone on office treadmills; collect frequent trader miles to earn free fitness equipment.

1996

Health Maintenance Organizations overturn the nation's medical system--but the healthy continue to subsidize smokers and sedentary members.

2006

Wellness Maintenance Organizations overturn the nation's medical system. Lower premiums based on number of miles walked per month.

1996

Kids get fat and happy watching television; playing virtual-reality video games.

2006

Kids get healthy and happy playing real-reality games outside.

1996

Tobacco farmers worry about loss of subsidies, continue to lobby for congressional support.

2006

Former tobacco farmers earn healthy profits growing medicinal herbs.

1996

Congress shuts down the Federal Government; National Parks closed while elected representatives squabble.

2006

National Park Service shuts down Congress; representatives settle differences during Yellowstone fly-fishing trip.

1996

Mall walkers wake up at 4:30 a.m. to work out before shoppers arrive.

2006

Shoppers rush to complete purchases before malls close for prime-time walking hours.

1996

Scientists discover artificial fat, revolutionizing the junk food market.

2006

Scientist re-discover raw fruits and vegetables--Harvard researchers discover they taste great and are non-

carcinogenic!

1996

Bloated political commentator Rush Limbaugh is a role model for millions of angry taxpayers.

2006

Rush takes up walking and loses 100 lbs. He's still opinionated, but svelte and not quite so angry.

1996

Astronomers discover several new planets orbiting neighboring stars.

2006

Astronomers discover intelligent life on new planets. Wise beings ditch spacecraft, choosing to walk--at warp speed--to neighboring planets.

1996

T.V. Guide top-selling magazine in the U.S.

2006

Walking top-selling magazine in the U.S.

- The Rush Limbaugh crack earned me the following letter to the editor, of which I am VERY proud:

POLITICALLY CORRECTED

I have been a subscriber of WALKING for several years. I subscribe to receive information on health and fitness, not to read political commentary. The comments made about Rush Limbaugh ("Walking 2006," June 1996, p. 104) were uncalled for. Not only did they insult Mr. Limbaugh, they insulted his listeners.

**Mrs. Jerry Adams
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[*Return to homepage](#)
