

Travel Hikers Hoof it in San Francisco

BY ANN MIZEL

PowerHiking San Francisco may be only six inches square, but it's a powerful tool for travelers intent on navigating the city with ease, energy and a sense of excitement. Second in a series (the first was *PowerHiking Paris*), the new book is the brainchild of Belvedere's

Carolyn Hansen and her friend Cathleen Peck of Novato. "Cathy and I have been friends since college," Hansen told *The Ark*. "Our husbands (both lawyers) are partners, and we've been hiking, walking and traveling together for years.

"Four years ago in Paris, Cathy said, 'We're racing along like we're on a power hike,' and we got the idea for a book," Hansen recalled. The two prospective authors returned to Paris later for two weeks to do the deed.

"We had the book all laid out before we went," Hansen said. "We had walked so many areas there so many times before; we just had to update restaurants, shops, sights, etc." This time the duo came equipped with a GPS and Hansen, who does clever, full-color photography, had her camera in hand.

"After we did a walk, we drew exactly on a map where we'd been, and the end result was a colorful, easy to follow map. When they're doing a book (the next one is London), Hansen and Peck start early in the morning and are often still at it well into the evening.

"The *PowerHiking* books are designed to be tough enough to withstand back packs, purses and pockets," said Hansen. "They are spiral-style, so stay open easily, and each hike — along with its own map — has both times and distances noted. And the books are much more than just guidebooks."

The walks include helpful hints and nuggets of history throughout to provide a more in-depth understanding of the cities travelers are exploring by foot. The series 'trademark' is a gold-colored sneaker on the cover.

Hansen and Peck decided to self-publish their books. "We want to get the

books out fast so information will be current," Hansen explained. "And we like having control. It takes about two to three months for the books to come out after we've finished the writing, which we share. We divide up chapters, sending our work back and forth on our computers, and we edit each other," said Hansen, a big walker around Belvedere Island when she's at home.

Lucky for us, both Hansen and Peck love to walk and travel, because their books offer big rewards, but not at big prices. (Paris is \$19.95; San Francisco, \$24.95). The books, which make perfect gifts, are available locally at Giftique on Ark Row, Nicole Grey in Strawberry, At Home at Sweet Things at the Cove and Book Passage in Corte Madera, as well as all Books, Inc. stores, some independent books stores, Amazon.com and the PowerHiking website: www.powerhiking.com.

With London completed, Hansen and Peck have their sights set on Beverly Hills, Santa Monica, Venice Beach, Washington D.C., New York City, New Zealand and on and on and on.

"When we travel, we *always* think, 'Would it work as a walking city?'"

These two are almost always on the go, so stay tuned.



Carolyn Hansen and Cathleen Peck did plenty of footwork to gather information for their *PowerHiking* books