

# spotlight on members

*Spotlight on Members gives us the opportunity to hear about what our members are up to today, as well as how they found their way to Natural Hygiene. If you're interested in sharing your own story, we'd love to hear from you (please email essays of no more than 500 words, and one or two photos, to [info@healthscience.org](mailto:info@healthscience.org)).*



## Pat Thompson

*Middlebury, Connecticut*

I found my way to Natural Hygiene through Jo Willard, an NHS member who had cured herself of arthritis through fasting. I joined NHS and started volunteering for at their offices in Bridgeport, Connecticut. In 1982 I went on my first fast to find relief from my arthritis and shortness of

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breath. I visited Dr. Scott's Natural Health Institute in Ohio, run by Dr. D.J. Scott, and did three fasts.

My first fast was so miserable that it only lasted four days (out of my 11 planned). After two weeks I returned home. However, the benefits of my short fast were amazing. My arthritis and shortness of breath disappeared completely, not to pop their heads up for another 15 years.

In 1995 I fasted for the second time with Dr. Scott. By then I realized that everyone feels pretty miserable when they're fasting, so I was mentally prepared. I had a large writing pad with me to break the days into 15-minute segments; I knew I could get through 15 minutes at a time. So I checked off each 15-minute time

period on my pad, and eventually I reached my goal of fasting for 11 days. When I arrived home I felt wonderful. I realized that we cannot take care of our loved ones unless we first take care of ourselves.

But what happened after my third fast, in the year 2000, was utterly amazing. I fasted for 19 days. It took me three weeks to get my strength back after arriving home, but I felt wonderful. And then something happened to me after that I was not expecting: I started liking people who I didn't like before. I did not get up thinking that I would like everyone that day; it happened more naturally. As I met each person one by one that I use to dislike, I began to like him or her. I couldn't even find a reason for disliking them.

Why would a fast cause me to like people I didn't like before? Was my brain cleansed? Was my mind cleansed? What and where is my mind? Is my mind in every cell in my body? Is my mind outside of my body? Is my mind everywhere?

This reminded me of the macrobiotics medical philosophy that you could get sick more easily if you were critical of yourself and other people. We are all human and sometimes we



*Pat with her husband and great-grandchildren.*

just won't like someone. However, now when I notice it happening, I realize I am projecting my own likes and dislikes onto others, and I don't make a big deal out of it.

***“Something happened to me I was not expecting: I started liking people I didn't like before.”***

Today my husband and I are very active seniors. We have many grandchildren and great grandchildren. I just turned 70 years old and my husband will be 89 next January. We love spending time with our families. My husband plays golf and I love dancing, kayaking and walking. I am so grateful for meeting Jo Willard and Dr. Scott and learning about Natural Hygiene.



**Larry Baker**  
Madison,  
Virginia

My life journey began on a Kansas farm. As a farm boy, after graduating from Kansas State University, I completed flight training in Pensacola Florida and met Elizabeth, who would become my wife in 1962. Our first daughter, Courtney, was born a year later. After my tour in Vietnam, our second daughter, Cameron, was born in 1968 and I began my 30-year career as a pilot for American Airlines. Our son, Coleman, was born in Korea and adopted in 1971.

My journey with the Natural Hygiene/National Health Association



Larry and Elizabeth Baker



The Baker family left to right: Cameron, Courtney, Coleman, Elizabeth and Larry.

tion began in 1986. I attended a pork barbecue dinner to benefit the local county rescue squad. After that meal I felt very uncomfortable; not sick but unsettled enough that I decided not to eat pork anymore. A few weeks later, I decided to eschew all meat. Shortly after that decision, I heard an interview with Dr. John McDougall on National Public Radio where he talked about cheese as an unhealthy food. I then read the book *Fit For Life* by Harvey and Marilyn Diamond, and there I was introduced to Natural Hygiene, and went on to read books by Dr. Herbert Shelton.

Now I was convinced that the vegan lifestyle was best for optimum health. Although my wife was not a vegetarian, she decided to go to the

Center for Chiropractic and Conservative Therapy in Penngrove, California (which is now TrueNorth Health Center in Santa Rosa, California). She lost 30 pounds and became a vegetarian. We both went to TrueNorth twice for “tune-ups” after that initial visit.

I retired from American Airlines in 1998, and although we enjoyed life on our farm in Virginia, Elizabeth had some health issues, including two bouts with pneumonia. We were able to go to Scotland in 2012 to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary. In April of 2013 Elizabeth lost her two-week battle with another round of pneumonia. She was my best friend and I miss her so much. But I am determined to live life to its fullest.

My children have been very supportive throughout the past two years, and I am very grateful for them. I continue to be a dedicated vegan, and I also continue to enjoy good health. I feel fortunate that I have weighed the same since I was 18 years old, but I know how important lifestyle is in maintaining health. As a Christian, I believe we must maintain a balance between the physical, spiritual and emotional. To me the National Health Association provides a unique opportunity to encourage each other as members, and to educate those in our community about healthy living.





**Patti Breitman**  
Fairfax, California



I first discovered a plant-based lifestyle when I worked as a book editor in New York City in the 1980s. I worked on the book *Fit for Life* by Harvey and Marilyn Diamond, and I then read John Robbins' book *Diet for a New America*. After reading these two books, there was no turning back for me.

Learning about dairy cows being repeatedly impregnated, and having their babies taken from them so that we could take their milk was a powerful image. And learning that male chicks at hatcheries are killed the day they hatch broke my heart (only females lay eggs, so the males are not valuable). I have not consumed eggs or dairy since then, as I wanted no part of those cruel industries.


When I first gave up dairy I lost 18 pounds, my skin cleared up, and my fingernails got stronger. I had so much energy when I changed my diet that I didn't know what to do with myself. So I trained for and ran the New York City Marathon, even though I hadn't run more than six miles before then.

Now I write vegan books. I am the co-author with Carol J. Adams of *How to Eat Like a Vegetarian, Even If You Never Want To Be One*, and with Carol J. Adams and Virginia Messina, MPH, RD, of *Never Too Late to Go Vegan: The Over-50 Guide to Adopting and Thriving on Plant Based Diet*. I also run a local vegan support group in Marin County, California (Marin-VEG.org).

My interest in animal advocacy led me to co-found Dharma Voices for Animals (DharmaVoicesForAnimals.org) Dharma means the teachings of the Buddha, and as a student of these teachings I learned that not harming and compassion for all beings is a primary precept. However, there seemed to be a blind spot among many who practice Buddhism regarding food choices, in that they did not follow the precept of not harming animals. Some friends and I created this organization to bring attention to the ways we cause harm to animals when we shop and eat.

I am also on the advisory council of Animals and Society (Animalsand-

Society.org), "where knowledge and science meet ethics and compassion." ASI works to stop the cycle of domestic violence and animal abuse, and it supports research into relationships between human animals and non-human animals.

My passion for healthy eating is matched only by my passion for justice for animals and healing our planet. If you watch my two favorite films, *Earthlings* and *Forks Over Knives*, you will come to know the motivations that keep me making the food and lifestyle choices I do. I like to think that through the talks I've given (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mt9NGskh5Qw>) and in my writing, I help people see animals through a more compassionate lens and see good health as a series of wise choices we can make every day. 



*Patti Breitman co-founded Dharma Voices for Animals to bring attention to the ways we cause harm to animals when we shop and eat.*