

THE AMERICAN WANDERER TAW

The Walking Magazine



**AMERICA'S
WALKING CLUB**
ESTABLISHED 1976

The American Wanderer is
a national publication of the
AVA: Americas Walking Club.



**2025 AVA Biennial Convention
Las Cruces, New Mexico**



Fun, Fitness, Friendship INSIDE THIS ISSUE



APR
ISSUE

1

2025 Convention

Proposals for 2027 Convention

Volkswalking is a Family

Club anniversary milestone list

Multi-event list for rest of year

Texas Trail Roundup

Groupers

King William Parade



2024 TEXAS TRAIL ROUNDUP

More images
on pg. 6.

Come and join us for the 23rd
US FreedomWalk
18-20 October 2024



US FREEDOM WALK



Walk 
Arlington



AMERICA'S
WALKING CLUB
ESTABLISHED 1974
Volksmarching at its Best

An International Walking Experience

BOARD CHAIR'S MESSAGE



NANCY WITTENBERG, BOARD CHAIR

Hello, everyone! And, welcome to our new The American Wanderer (TAW). This is a big step in providing the news and information we need for planning to attend events across the AVA nation. Provided, of course, our clubs send information to the TAW as soon as possible. By eliminating the costs of mailing and returning of undeliverable newsprint TAWs we reduce national office expenses and we can get the TAW sooner – right in our email, to save for later reading or to print off with your PDF application. Many thanks to our Publicity Committee for their hard work designing this magazine format.

One decision of the last board meeting on February 13, was to have the 2025 AVA convention in Las Cruces, New Mexico in late April or early May. I am not aware of a definite date as I write this article, but stay tuned for more information. We received a video presentation from Albert Herrera of Visit Las Cruces and were happy to hear of the support that we could get from the area.

My next trip is to the International Volkssport Federation's (IVV) Congress in Canberra, Australia, March 19-24 along with their Peace Walks. We have four attending as delegates: Carl Cordes, Vice Chair, Leslie Stone, Secretary, and Delores Grenier, chair of the USA Freedom Walks, as well as myself. We paid our own way to not impact the budget in any way. We will be electing officers, approving the budget, and hearing reports. Some of us will see more of Australia and New Zealand during the trip.

I hope you all have a wonderful walking spring, and can travel to other areas. I will be attending the Atlantic Regional Conference in Dover, Delaware in early April.



AVA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Find a Director in your area.

Photo courtesy of Martin Callahan

PRESIDENT'S UPDATES

I hope everyone is enjoying the new American Wanderer (TAW). The new TAW will be employed primarily as a marketing tool to share with the universe of walkers what it is that we do. The hope is that by casting a wider marketing net we will draw more new participants to our events. Clubs should take advantage of this and use the TAW to market local and regional events. Stories are also a great way to market our events so please keep sending the TAW stories of your experiences on the trails.

Because one of the primary audiences of the TAW will be external, we will no longer post details about AVA operations, policies, guidelines, etc. These notices will continue to be posted in the monthly Checkpoint so please read it. If you would like to receive the Checkpoint, please email Hector at hector@ava.org.

GROUPER PARTNERSHIP UPDATES

ELEMENT3 HEALTH IS NOW GROUPER!

Exciting news! Element3 Health has embarked on a transformative journey and is now proudly rebranded as Grouper. Grouper is not your typical healthcare provider; they are a radically beneficial concept that is all about enhancing health through the joy of social connection. And guess what? They believe so much in the power of our community that they have stepped up to cover both AVA members' association and local club dues!


This partnership opens a realm of opportunities not just for our association, but for each local club within the AVA network. It is not just about getting your individual and club membership dues reimbursed; it's about growth and visibility for your clubs. As a club leader, joining the Grouper network places you in an expansive community of members actively seeking walking clubs. Imagine the growth and the buzz around your club as new members join, all thanks to the visibility through Grouper's network.



HENRY ROSALES, PRESIDENT AND CEO

It's important to note that Grouper stands out in the healthcare landscape. They're not an insurance company and they are not selling insurance. They are in the business of promoting better health through social connections and activities – a mission that aligns with the AVA. So, how can your club be a part of this? It's simple. All you need to do is fill out this form to get the ball rolling. A team member from Grouper will then reach out to dive into the details, perks, and how your club can thrive through this partnership.

Let's make health about community, connection, and the simple joys of being part of a walking club. Fill out the form, become a part of the Grouper network, and let us stride forward together!

[AVA Club Leader Interest Form \(google.com\)](https://www.google.com) 

If you need help or have questions about any Grouper programs, please contact them directly at (833)-906-1700 or email them at info@hellougrouper.com

Get Paid for Having Fun

YOU PLAY, WE PAY

Grouper works with health plans to cover your club membership.

WALKING



Grouper

MEMBERSHIP REIMBURSEMENT NEW GROUPER INITIATIVE!

Grouper has agreed to reimburse qualifying members for their AVA Associate and/or club individual dues for their primary club only. Members must first register on their platform to see if they qualify. If a member qualifies, Grouper will send a check directly to the member for the total annual amount paid for AVA Associate and/or club membership dues (primary club only). All reimbursements will come directly from Grouper and not the AVA and there is a request to report monthly activities to Grouper. See below.

JOIN THE SOCIAL FITNESS REVOLUTION – NO MEMBERSHIP FEE REQUIRED FOR QUALIFYING MEMBERS

Great news for our walking enthusiasts! In an exciting partnership with Grouper, America's Walking Club now offers reimbursable AVA Associate and individual club memberships to eligible Medicare Advantage and Supplement plan holders. Check your eligibility today and get your America's Walking Club Associate membership and individual club membership (primary club only) covered without any cost! Check your eligibility today by clicking on this link below.

GrouperGroups.com/AVA



Grouper Fact Sheet [Airtable - AVA](#)

Grouper Frequently Asked Questions [Airtable - AVA](#)

Grouper Privacy Policy [Privacy Policy - Grouper \(hellogrouper.com\)](#)

MAKE PLANS TO JOIN US IN SAN ANTONIO, TX SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2024, FOR THE KING WILLIAM FIESTA PARADE!

Thanks to the support of the King William Association, the AVA will participate in the annual King William Fiesta Parade. This event draws over 30,000 national and international participants. Parade participants will walk approximately three miles carrying an IVV or IML banner. This year we invite you to also carry a banner from your state and bring miniature State flags to hand out!

If you would like to participate in the parade, please RSVP by emailing henry@ava.org with your name and the number of participants in your group. Children and grandchildren are welcome to participate with you. Please put King William Parade in the subject line. Parade participants are limited to the first thirty individuals who RSVP. What a terrific way to market who we are and what we do!



2025 AVA BIENNIAL CONVENTION LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO

Jerry Wilson, Chair, AVA Convention Committee

The 2025 AVA Biennial Convention will be held in Las Cruces, New Mexico. The dates, pending availability, will be Tuesday, April 29 - Friday, May 2. Added to these convention dates will be pre-convention events Saturday through Monday, April 26 - 28, and post-convention events Saturday and Sunday May 3 and 4. National Office staff, Convention Committee members, nation-wide volunteers, local volunteers and local visitors bureau representatives are working to provide a great event! We want to see you in New Mexico in 2025! Hold these dates and travel dates.

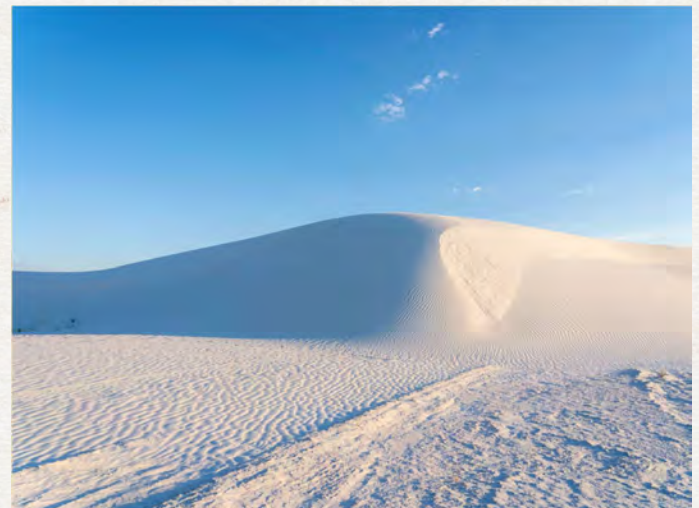


WELCOME TO LAS CRUCES
The Real New Mexico

POPULATION 112,914	NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY	
COUNTY Doña Ana County	HOME OF THE AGGIES	FOUNDED 1888
ELEVATION -3,900 ft	TOTAL FLOORS 21,210	SPRING ACRES 900 Acres
FOUNDED 1849	COUNTRIES 89	STORIES 49
ESTABLISHED 1907	PROXIMITY TO...	
WEATHER 320 hours of sunshine	46 Miles EL PASO, TX	53 Miles INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
		41 Miles US/MEXICO BORDER
		233 Miles ALBUQUERQUE, NM
	Crossroads of INTERSTATE 10 & INTERSTATE 25	271 Miles TUCSON, AZ
		390 Miles PHOENIX, AZ
		Midpoint between SAN DIEGO, CA & DALLAS, TX via Interstate 10



EXPERIENCE UNIQUE WALKS IN LAS CRUCES, NM & EL PASO, TX



2024 IML/TEXAS TRAIL ROUNDUP-ANOTHER BIG SUCCESS!

Special thanks to Susan Medlin, Southwest Regional Director, and all our club members, volunteers, and the national office team for another successful IML Texas Trail Roundup walk festival! I am very appreciative of all the work everyone puts into these events to ensure their success and promote Fun, Fitness, and Friendships! Thank you for your time, commitment, and dedication.



The IML Texas Trail Roundup in San Antonio had 184 people, 57 from foreign countries: Germany, Austria, Ireland, Turkey, Great Britain, The Czech Republic, Russia, Norway, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Denmark, Puerto Rico, and Israel. Thank you to all participants, volunteers, and AVA staff for another great weekend. - Susan Alton



Fun, Fitness, Friendship



ATLANTIC REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS

SUGARLOAFERS FIVE TRADITIONAL EVENTS IN 2024

BY ANTHONY (TONY) LAING

The Sugarloafers Walking Club of Montgomery County, Maryland is planning five diverse and varied Traditional Events in 2024:

1. April 13 - Lake Frank and Meadows Nature Center, Rockville, Maryland - Walk on community sidewalks and then onto paved trails in Rock Creek Park with views of Lake Frank and its dam
2. May 18 - Historic Rockville, Maryland - Wander around one of the oldest and the largest city in Montgomery County. Visit the Old Courthouse which is now the headquarters for Peerless Rockville (the Rockville Historical Society).
3. June 1 - Traville Gateway & Falls Grove, Rockville, Maryland - Meander on a delightful walk in a high tech area of Montgomery County.
4. September 28 - Oktoberfest in Frederick - Walk in historic Frederick Maryland and prime yourself for an Oktoberfest. Entrance to the Oktoberfest is free if you walk our event.
5. November 16 - Moonlight in Seneca Creek State Park, Gaithersburg, Maryland - Moon Rises at 5:16 pm. Enjoy a chance to experience our beautiful park in the moonlight for a different view of the world around us. This is a rare opportunity.

Check out all of our Sugarloafer Volkssporting activities at our Web Site: Sugarloafers.org



MID-AMERICA REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS

TREKKING THROUGH KENTUCKY HISTORY

CRAIG GAUGER - MID-AMERICA RD

The Mid-America Region invites all walkers and wanderers to our gathering in and near Frankfort, Kentucky from June 14-16, 2024. We are hosting 4 walks: Frankfort's Cove Spring Park, Harrodsburg Sestercentennial fest (250 years celebration), Bardstown, and Shelbyville all in central Kentucky. All 4 events are sanctioned from June 12-18 as seasonal walks on the OSB, with a different state group sponsoring each event.

Ohio clubs are hosting the Friday morning walk at Cove Spring Park from 8am-11am. There are 2 types of walks planned. A regular 2-B walk up and down hills through the beautiful forest or a 1km relatively flat, paved walkway that one can walk around as many laps as they wish.

Friday evening there is a pay-as-you-go Meet & Greet at Good Wood Brewing, 109 W Main St in Frankfort, from 6-9pm.

Saturday morning walk will be in Bardstown, hosted by Illinois walking clubs through parks and city sidewalks, from 8:30am-11am. Lots of opportunities for bourbon here. There will sandwiches available for a nominal donation, so you don't have to search or wait for food.

Saturday afternoon walk will be in Harrodsburg during their 250th anniversary fest from noon-3pm. It will be through parks, Old Fort Harrodsburg State Park, and city sidewalks hosted by Michigan walkers. Saturday evening, there is another pay-as-you-go Meet & Greet. It will be at The Barrel Room at 622 Main St in Shelbyville, KY, also from 6-9pm.

Sunday morning walk will be in Shelbyville, 8am-11am. It will go through public parks and city sidewalks. This walk is hosted by Indiana walking clubs.

There are 5 seasonal walks in Frankfort, Louisville, and Henderson, KY for you to enjoy before, during, or after our conference. Also, a walk in Covington, KY which crosses the Ohio River into Ohio and back to Kentucky.

Sunday at noon till 12:45pm there will be a short Mid-America Region meeting after the walk in Shelbyville at the start/finish area. There will be a few raffle prizes available at the end of the meeting.

You can find all of the details at my.ava.org



NORTH CENTRAL REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS

AROUND THE REGION

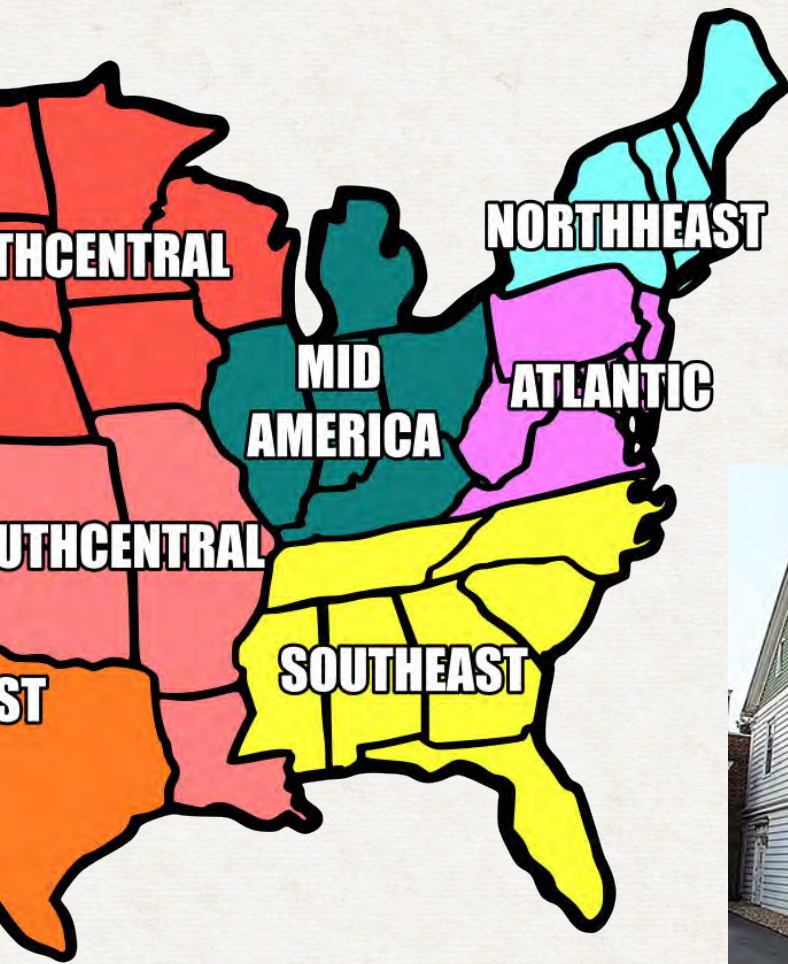
SUSAN PINNEKE, NORTH CENTRAL REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Spring is a magical time in the North Central Region. The world is waking up from its winter hibernation. Everywhere you look, the landscape is greening up, flowers are in bloom and the sun is shining. It's the perfect season to walk!!

The clubs of the region offer a variety of events to get you out enjoying the lovely spring weather. In Iowa, you can't get more spring time than a tulip festival. Enjoy a walk in Holland in Pella, Iowa at the end of April. Thousands of tulips will be in bloom. Nebraska has a couple of spring walks planned, including on around beautiful Bennington Lake. What a great chance to enjoy nature!! This is a memorial walk for long time club member and past president Lee Frantz.

The three clubs in Minnesota all have something special planned for this spring. There's Art-A-Whirl in May in Minneapolis. This is the largest open studio art tour in the country. Also, in May the North Star Trail Travelers are planning a Spring Fun weekend at Blue Mound State Park. Twin Cities Volkssport will be joining Woodbury Thrives again this year in June. This is an awesome community event that promotes health. The Madison Club is venturing outside to greet spring in May along the Ice Age Trail and for two days in June in Fitchburg, WI.

South Dakota isn't to be left out. We all know about Crazy Horse the first Saturday in June, but there's so much more going on there than just Crazy Horse. If you can't make it the first of June, there's plenty in April & May in Rapid City and Custer. You won't lack for interesting events in the North Central Region this spring. Please come visit and stay a while; our year around and seasonal events are exceptional and varied, so you'll find something to tickle your fancy. Hope to see you on the trail.



Dolgeville's old factory complex is now the Graystone, home to antique, second hand, and crafts shops.



The Bulls Head Inn, established in 1802, is at the center of the Cobleskill Historic District.

NORTHEAST REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS

ECLIPSES, HISTORY, AND VIOLETS OH MY!

BY LEA DARLING, SUSAN GREY, VERA WEISS, AND CHRIS YOST. EDITED BY LINDA MORZILLO

The Solar Eclipse on April 8th will be viewed in Plattsburgh, NY. Located in the northeastern corner of New York, Plattsburgh is in the direct path of the total eclipse. The walk begins at the Oval, an open space at the site of the Historic Air Force barracks built in 1838. The route is along the Empire State Trail with Lake Champlain and views of Vermont to the east. Walkers will pass a marina on Lake Champlain, explore city streets with several historic homes, and see monuments related to the War of 1812 and the early discovery of Plattsburgh. The walk continues through the downtown area with several eating spots.

A walk has been planned to take place on June 1st in the historic village of Cobleskill, NY, once known as the "Pancake Flour Capital of the World." Settled in 1721 on land bought from the Iroquois by German Palatine settlers, its name came from the first Dutch mill owner, Kobell and the Dutch name for stream, kill. Built in 1802, the Bulls Head Inn is the center of the Cobleskill Historic District. Walkers will pass through the small village park with a veterans'

Arden Lawand designed the logo for shirts to commemorate the Solar Eclipse Walk in Plattsburgh, NY.

memorial, cross over the millpond on a bridge at the Cobleskill Creek, see the commercial area, several residential streets, churches, an old school, a railroad depot and the first county fairground buildings. The Battle of Cobleskill/Cobleskill Massacre in 1778 took place during the American Revolution in nearby Warnersville. The British and their allies, the Iroquois, burned the settlement. The fertile Schoharie Valley, the Breadbasket of the Revolution, provided much of the sustenance for General Washington's army. Starting in the 1830's, mills produced materials such as fulling (cleaning woolen cloth), lumber, grist, and cider. Several stone quarries began operation in the late nineteenth century. With the opening of the railroad, the community became prosperous, the population quadrupled and the number of enterprises increased. Today with 6,500 residents, Cobleskill is home to SUNY Cobleskill, New York State's premier public agricultural state-funded college and the largest village employer.

On June 8th, a new walk in Dolgeville will be in conjunction with the village's annual Violet Festival! The village was founded in 1794 by Samuel Low. First, around 1795, a grist mill and later a saw mill were built by Captain John Favill on Ransom Creek. A blacksmith shop, tannery and schoolhouse were added with the arrival of more settlers. Dolgeville was known as Green's Bridge and later Brockett's Bridge before 1881. Thomas Edison's first water-powered dynamo was installed in Alfred Dolge's factory which produced parts and materials for pianos. The Daniel Green shoe company partnered with Dolge after finding that the factory's piano felt was also well-suited for slippers. Dolge failed financially in 1899, and the Dolge Company Factory Complex became property of the Daniel Green Company, the largest employer in the village until 1999, when it shuttered its operations. The factory complex, now called the Graystone, is used as an antique, second hand, and crafts shops hosting the annual flower show and art shows for the Violet Festival. Lyndon Lyon, who lived in Dolgeville until his death in 1999, developed about 800 hybrid varieties of African violets. The Violet Festival commemorates Lyon; his greenhouse in Dolgeville is still known for violets and orchids. The entire village gets into the spirit with 75 craft and food vendors participate and is also a wonderful way to support the small businesses in town.





NORTHEAST REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS

HUDSON TO HOUSATONIC WALKING WEEKEND, SEPT. 6-8

BY CAROL ENDRISS WEST

For the third year, the AVA Northeast Region is holding its annual walking weekend for our seven-state area. For 2024, the Volkssport Club at West Point and the Connecticut Valley Volkssport Club are hosting a series of appealing events in the Mid-Hudson area of New York near Poughkeepsie (halfway between New York City and Albany) and across the state line in Kent, Connecticut along the Housatonic River. Both river valleys offer scenic walking opportunities, along with interesting history that includes early Native American habitation, Dutch and English colonization, and the impacts of the 19th century industrial revolution and national leaders such as Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt.



Walkway Over The Hudson between Highland and Poughkeepsie, NY— a highlight of the Hudson to Housatonic Walking Weekend (photo by Andrew Schmidt)



Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt in bronze, at the FDR National Historic Site Visitor Center starting point of the Hyde Park, NY walk (photo by Andrew Schmidt)



An important 19th century railroad depot, now a pharmacy and gift shop, near the Housatonic River in Kent, CT (photo by Lee West)

NEW YORK AND CONNECTICUT WALKS

There will be a group walk each day for the following three event walks. (People can do the walks on their own, as well.)

Beginning on Friday afternoon, Sept. 6, walkers will immerse themselves in Hyde Park, with fascinating sites highlighting the Roosevelt and Vanderbilt families.

On Saturday morning, Sept. 7, there will be a group walk on the “Walkway Over The Hudson” into Poughkeepsie. Participants will experience walking 2.1k across the world’s longest and tallest elevated pedestrian bridge (212’ above the river) and into the city of Poughkeepsie, which served as New York’s second capital after the American Revolution.

The weekend concludes on Sunday morning, Sept. 8, with a walk in Kent, Connecticut, a charming New England village whose beautiful, peaceful setting has drawn internationally known leaders of the political, movie and fashion worlds.

Other nearby New York Volkswalks include Rhinebeck, Beacon, Cold Spring, Cornwall-on-Hudson, West Point, and Fort Montgomery. In Connecticut, walkers can experience the easiest stretch of the entire Appalachian Trail, running along the Housatonic River in Kent.

SOCIAL EVENTS

The Meet and Greet event on Friday night will be at the Germania of Poughkeepsie’s Oktoberfest, where bratwurst, sauerkraut, pretzels, apple strudel, and more, accompanied by Bavarian music and dancing, will bring us back to our Volkssporting roots. Saturday night will be an opportunity to meet up with friends from around our region, and beyond, in a private dining room at a Poughkeepsie-area Italian restaurant.

MORE INFO



Check out our event website at <https://nodegreen.com/hudtohou/> and the AVA website’s multi-event fest listing (<https://my.ava.org/find-a-fest.php>) for registration information, updates to the walk schedule, lodging and contacts for any questions you may have. We have reserved a block of rooms at the Hampton Inn and Suites Poughkeepsie, so reserve early for the discount (\$159/night). These resources are updated frequently, so check in often to see new developments.

EXTEND YOUR STAY

If you haven’t visited this area, why not plan to extend your stay beyond the weekend? There’s lots to see and do, beyond what you’ll experience during the Volkswalks. The Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site features Eleanor’s Val-Kill Cottage, and the Culinary Institute of America restaurants offer unique meals prepared and served by future chefs. In Kent, the Eric Sloane Museum and Kent Iron Furnace, along with the Connecticut Antique Machinery Museum, are well worth a visit, especially if you’re intrigued by early American engines and farm equipment. Biking and hiking trails, waterfalls, wineries and breweries are abundant in both areas.

BRANFORD, CONNECTICUT: A MEDLEY OF TRAILS

BY EILEEN ANDERSON

A beautiful island-dotted harbor, Victorian summer cottages, an old trolley footbridge across a salt marsh, and a greenway with a labyrinth. This new YRE has a lot to show off with its medley of peaceful vistas and reminders of a bygone era.

Start the 5K/6K walk at the community library in the Stony Creek area of Branford, and you will immediately see examples of the ubiquitous "Stony Creek Pink" granite that was extracted from nine local quarries starting in the mid-19th century. The shoreline location of the quarries and the railroad network made transportation to New York City and other coastal cities both feasible and profitable. This granite can be seen in foundations, pillars, and walkways throughout your walk and was also used for the Statue of Liberty pedestal, the Brooklyn Bridge, Columbia University campus, West Point Battle Monument, Grant's Tomb and other public structures.

The first leg of the 5K Stony Creek walk passes the popular Legacy Theater, which in the 1960s housed the "Puppet House," where five-foot tall Sicilian puppets acted out historic dramas. Farther along the route is an old train depot and the cute one-room Stony Creek Museum, which began as a church serving immigrant Catholic quarry workers in the early 1900s.

The second leg leads back to the harbor, with views of the archipelago of Thimble Islands, owned by wealthy "Islanders" (with the exception of Outer Island, which is a National Wildlife Refuge accessible to the public by boat or kayak). "Creekers" say there's an island for every day of the year, but that depends on your definition of an island. There are a variety of narrated cruises throughout the day that attract many tourists (late May-early October, except Tues.) and could be a relaxing après-walk experience for Volkssporters. The shoreline boasts a lovely beach and gazebo in a park, plus two informal restaurants (Stony Creek Market and The Thimbleberry) with inside and outside waterfront dining offering delicious sandwiches, pizza, fresh baked goods, and, of course, ice cream. Stroll by the headquarters of the internationally-acclaimed, 130+-year old Stony Creek Fife and Drum Corps, which still practices on Thursday evenings in their Seaside Hall (next to The Thimbleberry). Along the route are the grand summer "cottages" of 19th century business leaders.

Finish the third leg of the Stony Creek route on the Branford Trolley Trail, featuring a footbridge over a salt marsh with nesting ospreys, egrets and other shore birds and passing under a colorful graffiti-covered bridge. The trail follows the old trolley line from New Haven that ran for 30 years (1907-37); you may see and hear modern-day Amtrak trains to the north. A 1K option continues across the marsh to train tracks currently used to transport traprock south to waiting barges in the harbor.

An additional 5K route is just an 8-minute drive west, in the Pine Orchard and Tabor areas of Branford. This section of the Shoreline Greenway features a meditative labyrinth, the man-made Chet's Pond, and benches for enjoying a quiet moment. (I personally love to pause for a homemade snack at this point.) The trail meanders through a quiet residential neighborhood, followed by the even quieter Tabor Cemetery, the final resting place of Swedish quarry workers (and where over 50 stones bear my married surname)!

Connecticut Valley Volkssport Club (CVVC) invites you to savor this picturesque medley of sights at their group walk of the Branford YRE on Sat., June 8 at 9 am. See the club website at <https://www.avaclubs.org/cvvc> or direct questions to me at eilande@comcast.net.



CVVC President Bob McDougall and Treasurer Lee West enjoy spectacular perennials and view of the Thimble Islands.



CVVC member Janet Battista centered in labyrinth on the Shoreline Greenway trail.



CVVC Branford Trailmaster Eileen Anderson on the Branford Trolley Trail Footbridge in Stony Creek.


NORTHWEST REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS

UPCOMING EVENTS

BY SHARON MOATS

The Volkssport Clubs of the Northwest Region are busy planning many special walk and hike events for you! You will see mountains, coastal communities, historic sites, native lands and great woody walks as you visit our many events.

You can start your Northwest adventure in Lacey, WA on April 25-28, 2024, for Capitol Volkssport Club's "Wild and Woody" event. 11 Walks within 2-hour drive for you to enjoy. All walks are also available in OSB from Apr 22-May 3. Full information here:

https://capitolvolkssportclub.org/cvc_specialevents/wild&woody_wa_2024.html 

Interlaken Trailblazers are hosting "Spring in Winthrop". This has usually been a fall event but the trailmaster's made their routes in the spring when the glorious balsam root was blooming as well as other wildflowers so are now sharing that beautiful season with you. 5 walks/hikes and 1 bike are available for you to enjoy. This old wild west themed community will also have the '49ers in town with their horses and stagecoaches for you to enjoy. No socials this time but we will be onsite May 9-11 for registration and greeting you. All walks are available in OSB from May 5-20, 2024. Full information on the website:

<http://www.interlakentrailblazers.org/scheduled-events.html>

August 3-4, 2024, you can join Four-Plus Foolhardy Folks for a beautiful hiking experience at the Mt Baker area. Hikers can always expect a dondrous experience with this group. Full information here:

<https://fourplushikers.weebly.com/nwhw-mt-baker-2024.html> 


Moving on to Idaho for August 23-25, 2024, you can explore the town of Wallace, Id and surrounding areas. Did you know Lana Turner was born in this small community? This was the very last town that was bypassed by I-90 going across the country. The last active Brothel closed in 1974! Lilac City Volkssport is inviting you to join them for this fun trip. Check their website for updates coming soon.

<https://lilaccityvolks.com/>



Sept 19-22, 2024, is the dates of the NW Regional Conference (walkfest) on the beautiful Kitsap Peninsula across Puget Sound from Seattle. The headquarters will be in Silverdale WA. No host hotel but there is a good selection of your favorite chains and smaller hotels, VRBO, etc. 8 walks are being planned by several clubs of the Evergreen State Volkssport Association. So much to see and experience on this beautiful peninsula. Socials are being planned. Registration will open in May. Info coming soon:

<http://www.esva.online/>

Rounding out our multi-day calendar, we will travel to Shady Cove, OR in the heart of the Rogue Valley. Rogue Valley for Oct 17-20, 2024. Columbia River Volkssport Club and Rogue Valley Walkers are planning 5 walks for you to enjoy. Information will be posted here: <https://www.walking4fun.org/> 

Hope you can join us in the Northwest Region to visit these beautiful areas and met new Volkssport friends along the trail.



 **Fun, Fitness, Friendship**

CVC club members checking the forested trails.



WILD AND WOODY IN WASHINGTON

BY SHARON MOATS

It is hard to believe but Spring is just around the corner. The Capitol Volkssport Club has just the weekend event to get you ready for your summer walking and hiking. Wild and Woody in Washington will be taking place in the Lacey and Olympia area (and beyond) April 25-28, 2024. The eleven walks are extremely scenic and varied. Make your plans now to come for an exciting weekend of walking and hiking.

All the walks will be offered in the Online Start Box from April 22 until May 3. If you would like to start your walking weekend a day or two early or continue a day or two after, you can. Also planned are several group walks during the weekend for various routes and these can be checked out at the event headquarters, the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs, in Lacey. There are several social opportunities to catch up with your walking friends. A Meet & Greet is planned on Friday evening and a dinner is planned on Saturday evening. Along with these is the group Pub Crawl walk on Thursday afternoon.

The club has negotiated a great entrance price for us at the NW Trek walk on Sunday, April 28. NW Trek is part of the Tacoma Zoo but features animals that call our region "home". You can walk this anytime April 22-May 3 through the OSB but the discounted entrance fee is only available through the registration form and only for Sunday. This is a great opportunity to see bears, wolves, cougars, otters, and other Pacific NW animals and birds.

Plus, yes, there is more, the city of Olympia will host their Procession of the Species Parade on Saturday afternoon. This is non-motorized parade celebrating our natural world. Don't wait any longer. Go to capitolvolkssportclub.org, click on the registration form, fill it out, and get it in the mail today. There is nothing like walking with old and new friends to begin your spring and summer walking.



Mima Falls

PACIFIC REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS

HERM HUSBANDS MEMORIAL WALK UPDATE

BY CARL CORDES

This Coronado CA YRE transitioned to Online Start Box only for 2024. The physical start box at the Coronado Historical Association (CHA) Museum on Orange Ave is closed till further notice. The museum and I are hopeful it may return in the future. Herman Husbands (1933-2023) maintained the walk for many years as President of the Coronado Beachcombers so only fitting the walk honors his commitment to this walk, his club, and service to IVV, AVA and the Pacific Region. The museum has been the start point for this walk over 20 years.

Another recent change is the Tent City restaurant adjoining the museum closed and is undergoing renovation for a new dining concept. Therefore, the museum restrooms are only available during museum hours, currently Tuesday-Sunday 10 till 4. Closed Monday. There are other public and business facilities available along the 5K and 12K routes, too.

OSB directions include an option to take the ferry from San Diego to Coronado Island and begin the walk in the middle of the 12K route rather than drive over the Coronado Bridge to the start point. For those chasing special programs this walk qualifies for Par for the Course, Rails to Trails, Rock Around the Clock and Walking with America's Veterans. The majestic Hotel del Coronado, beaches, unique shops and dining, grand neighborhoods, and great views of San Diego across the bay are just some of the features of this walk.

Make time to tour the museum (free) with its many artifacts and displays depicting the history of The Crown City. The exhibits change periodically. For most current hours of operation, exhibition details, and more information about the museum visit Coronadohistory.org.



Vice Chair Carl Cordes, walk POC, collects the 2023 physical start box materials at Coronado Historical Association Museum.



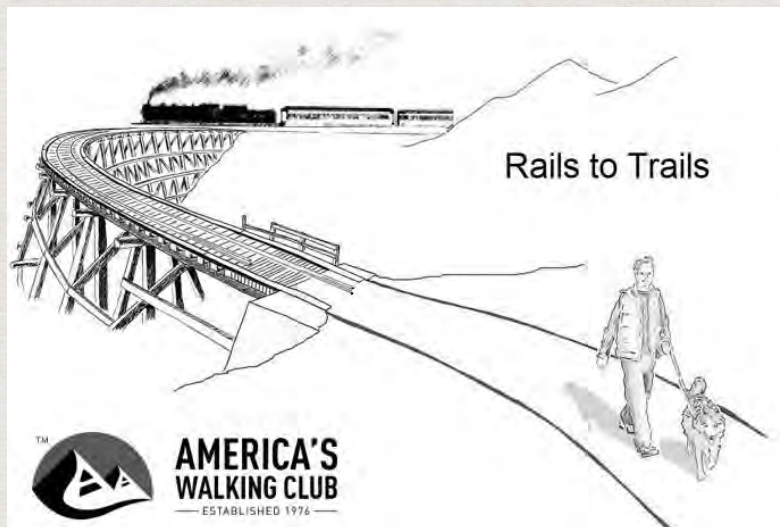
ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS

CONGRATULATIONS TO THESE FINISHERS OF AVA SPECIAL PROGRAM RAILS-TO-TRAILS

BY SHERRY SAYERS

Sue-Lon Weibert
 Erica Fisker
 Jacob Fisker
 Susan Strachan
 Sue Bolander
 Terri Gillette
 Carrie Ann Witzel
 Pam Davis
 Chase Davis
 Lawrence Schwindt
 Dave Hooker - 2nd Book
 Bonnie Johnson - 2nd Book
 Cheryl Linke
 Marie Steinke
 Steven Hess
 Sharon Fritz
 John Glass
 Suzi Glass
 Glen Conyers
 Doris Conyers
 Sarah Gregory-Long
 Terry Lunghofer
 Tom Crabill

John Cairns
 Marie Robb
 Paul Robb
 Diane Johannesen
 Peggy Watts
 Susan Knutson
 Kathy Szczesiak
 Jane Legaard
 Sue Payton
 Patricia King
 Michelle Roberts
 Karen Fernandez
 Linda Nyman
 Eileen Skinner
 Rebecca Shrive
 Dan Webster
 Terri Tyler
 Wade Barger
 Robert Buzolich x 2 books
 Cecilia Miner
 Tim Miner
 Sally Coones



A huge thank you to everyone who has participated thus far! As a reminder, you can still get your Rails-To-Trails book. Send \$12 to Colorado Springs Walking Club, 3524 N. Cascade Avenue, #58, Colorado Springs, CO 80907, attention: Sherry Sayers. The program runs from January 1, 2022, until December 31, 2025, with redemption of the books ending December 31, 2026. For questions, email CSWC@AVAClubs.org, or call or text 719-640-6745.



SOUTH CENTRAL REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS

SAINT LOUIS WALKERS' TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE WALK, APRIL 8

BY DEANNE BROWN

The Total Solar Eclipse Walk

The eclipse begins at 12:40 pm and peaks at 2 pm with a 4 minute, 6 second viewing window in Cape Girardeau!

Monday, April 8, 2024

Cape Girardeau SportsPlex
 2526 Jim Drury Way
 Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701
 (573) 339-6341



Rating: 2B, 5K/11K

Poles recommended on the Nature Center trails
 Event I.D. # 126749-2024/Y3513

Saint Louis Walkers' Club is hosting an Eclipse Walk in Cape Girardeau, Missouri. Cape Girardeau, a small city with a French heritage, is located in almost the exact center of the eclipse path, allowing for an amazing 4-minute, 6-second view of the celestial phenomenon.

Meet the Saint Louis Walkers club members in the huge parking lot of Cape Girardeau's SportsPlex, 2526 Jim Drury Way. This is easy to find, right off I-55. It is Cape Girardeau's official viewing site. Please arrive early because even a large lot like SportsPlex's will fill up quickly when people are eager to see the eclipse. Register between 7:30 and 10 am. This allows enough time to walk an 11K, get back to your car, and grab a bite from a food truck or your own picnic lunch before the eclipse event starts. Look for the AVA/Saint Louis Walkers' banner standing next to our car where you can physically register. You can also get your registration and stamps from the Online Start Box (OSB).

In the event of a rainy day or some other type of weather that prevents the eclipse from being seen, Saint Louis Walkers has sanctioned the walk for five days, two days prior to Eclipse Day and two days after. If you register online, you can walk the 11K or the 5K routes within those five days and still get the Eclipse stamp. In case of bad weather, you will not be able to get your books physically stamped. That can only be done online. If it's a sunny day and seeing the eclipse is possible, we will stamp your books at SportsPlex.

We suggest you find a hotel in the St. Louis area. The hotels in the eclipse path are raising their rates quite high. We think St. Louis's hotels will not be doing so because St. Louis is a little outside the path. The drive from St. Louis to Cape Girardeau is about two hours.

The 5K route loops through woods behind the Nature Center on gravel paths and passes through a beautiful park with fishing lakes. Bringing your hiking poles would be a good idea when you circle through the Nature Center's trails. The 11K goes through Cape Woods Conservation Area on paved paths, the Nature Center's trails (which are not as hilly as the 5K's route), and the park, then back to SportsPlex.

Pets are welcome. Please bring lawn chairs and new eclipse glasses. More information is available on our website, www.saintlouiswalkers.com. You can also download the Eclipse Walk brochure from our website. For any other questions, email DeAnne at deeb333@gmail.com.



Fun, Fitness, Friendship

WALK BOXES APPRECIATED

BY GLEN CONYORS

Dogwood Trailblazers Walking Club in Joplin wants AVA walkers to know that they have fifteen walks that are registered for at physical walk box locations. It has been noted that some walkers do not want to do the OSB route but prefer a walk box to register at. Mindful of this our Dogwood club has an answer.

Four of these walks will be the last of eight walks in the Missouri Clubs County Walk Event and have walk boxes. They are however located further to the eastern part of the state.

So for those who have told us that if it is an OSB and they don't want to fool with it, come to Southwest Missouri. We have great places to walk and if lodging and good restaurants are required, we have that too.



HUFFIN' & PUFFIN' ON THE HIGH PLAINS 2024

BY TERRI TYLER – SUNFLOWER SOD STOMPERS PRESIDENT

The Sunflower Sod Stompers are once again pursuing their goal to provide sanctioned walking events in almost all of the 105 counties in the Sunflower State. This year the Sod Stompers are featuring another 5 new Kansas counties for those volkssporters who are seeking those stamps for their Kansas Counties booklet. This busy, extended, walking weekend will be taking place May 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12. Highlight these dates on your calendar now! Mid-May is usually good walking weather in Kansas but of course, weather conditions can change quickly so come prepared.

The Sod Stompers of Topeka would like to invite all volkssporters to join them in their traditional, springtime weekend of events. This busy weekend of volkssporting is planned for the High-Plains in western Kansas. The events will be held in the 5 counties of: Ellis, Graham, Ness, Rush, and Trego - walking in the 5 county-seat communities.

Some of these towns are located in the western half of the State along Interstate 70, and then some communities will be either north or south of this major transportation corridor. Most of the event sites are in towns based primarily around government, farming and ranching, mining, oil, railroading and associated businesses. Although our walking communities are not heavily populated, all of them have some interesting sites, histories, and charm for participants. Each event can be unique with some hidden finds. All 8 of the walking events are new Sod Stomper trails in these different communities. The city of Hays in Ellis County was walked before but this was several years ago before the "Kansas County" program was implemented. Besides Hays, you will have an opportunity to walk in Victoria – home to the "Cathedral of the Plains" and in the town of Ellis – hometown of Walter Chrysler. Make sure you bring your Parks Passport book. You will have a chance to explore the Nicodemus National Historic Site and the land surrounding this "Exoduster" community of the late 1800s. And then there is Lacrosse – "Barbed Wire Capital of the World".

The walking routes will feature local business areas besides well-maintained residential sections. Courses are fairly flat but there are just a few inclines in these communities. Town routes are on many streets that are tree-lined but be prepared to be walking in some full sun. The low humidity and the ever-blowing winds in Kansas can also dehydrate the body while on the trails. Of course the Sod Stompers will have water stops along the way but bring your water containers if you so choose. Conveniences can be rather limited in these communities so take advantage when available.

Walkers are invited to come and take-part and enjoy the small towns located in America's heartland. These sanctioned events will have qualifiers for current (some retired) AVA Special Programs connected to Veterans, Town/City Halls, and Par for the Course. A few sanctioned swims will be available for those who enjoy that aspect of volkssporting.

The Sunflower Sod Stompers would appreciate your support for their efforts. Motels and group meals have been arranged for participants who are attending. Fort Hays State University and several high schools are graduating that weekend so take advantage of the motel blocks. Sorry to say that area motel prices will be inflated. If you have any questions regarding these Kansas events, contact Terri Tyler by e-mail: ttyler50@gmail.com. Sarah Long at solong@att.net can also provide information for these events.

Come enjoy small-town Kansas on the western High Plains of the United States this spring!

VISIT GREEN COUNTRY THIS SPRING!!

BY TERESA ARNOLD – SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Tulsa be the site of our 2nd traditional event on April 20, sponsored by Tulsa Walking Club. This will be a new location for the club. It will begin at the new YMCA and explore not only the YMCA's grounds but also Turkey Mountain. This will be a Great Adventure!

County Walkers take Notice! May 18 there will be walks hosted by Tulsa Walking Club in Okfuskee and McIntosh Counties! June 15 the club will host two walks in Claremore (Rogers County) and Nowata (Nowata County). Do you need these counties? Mark your calendars and make plans to attend!

This is a great time of year to explore Green Country! Be sure and make plans to attend!

Download flyers @ava.org. We look forward to seeing YOU on the trails in 2024!

DOGWOOD TRAILBLAZERS SOUTHWEST MISSOURI EVENTS

BY GLEN CONYORS

The members of Dogwood Trailblazers Walking Club in Joplin Missouri invite you to two events April 27, 2024 in Carterville and Joplin Missouri. The morning walk in Carterville is an historic old lead and zinc mining town which had its start in the 1870's in an area of the little city called the Center Creek Bottoms. Boasting a population of 12,000 in its heyday but also boasting the richest lead and zinc ore anywhere. " More capital was invested, more expensive machinery used, and deeper and more systematic mining was done with more satisfactory results than at any other mining locality in southwestern Missouri."

Assisting the many miners who lived in the area was a trolley system supplying transportation to Oklahoma and Kansas where additional lead and zinc mining jobs were required. Remnants of that system are still present today.

This walk will capture much of the history and flavor of the lead mining success. The 10k will also take walkers out to a well kept cemetery and Veterans Memorial. This walk will also follow the original Rt 66 route as it passes through the city.

The afternoon walk starts in downtown Joplin a short distance away in Joplin and will show walkers recently renovated historical houses in the Murphysburg neighborhood. Many of these were built by the mine owners. We will also share with walkers our new Courthouse and the recently completed Harry M. Cornell Arts and Entertainment Complex. Those who like to see murals will not be disappointed as well.

SOUTHEAST REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS



SAVE THE DATES! WAF33 IN PALM COAST, FL NOVEMBER 1 - 3, 2024

BY JOHN MCCLELLAN, CATHY METHERELL
& ALICE LAWRENCE

Save the dates for this year's thirty-third edition of Walk Around Florida (WAF33) to be held 1—3 November in beautiful Palm Coast, FL! WAF33 is brought to you by the Happy Wanderers, Mid-Florida Milers and Suncoast Sandpipers walking clubs in the SE Region of AVA: America's Walking Club!

Palm Coast is located in Flagler County, Florida – 70 miles south of Jacksonville and 30 miles north of Daytona Beach. It is one of Florida's newest cities, just incorporated in 1999. The latest population estimates show that nearly 94,000 people call Palm Coast home. Quality of life is paramount in Palm Coast. The vibrant lifestyle and the natural environment go hand-in-hand here. The city offers a dozen beautiful parks and 130+ miles of connecting trails and paths for walking/bicycling. Lined with historic oaks, towering pines and indigenous vegetation, Palm Coast's parks and trails showcase the splendid elegance of the native Florida landscape. Bird-watching is popular at St. Joe Walkway and Linear Park, which are designated as Great Florida Birding & Wildlife Trails, and visitors can spot dolphins and seabirds as they stroll along the Intracoastal at Waterfront Park.

We expect WAF33 to include our traditional offering of four walking events starting Friday afternoon, with two walks on Saturday and the last on Sunday morning. We'll have a sanctioned swim event at the hotel pool and we're planning a bike event as well – which means we can potentially offer a volkssporting triathlon! Anyone who's been to WAF before also knows we'll have plenty of social activities, games & activities – with an opening evening Meet & Greet, raffle baskets featuring locale faire, a photo contest, and a banquet dinner on Saturday night, just to mention a few.

Stay tuned for future articles with more information on the activities, A Award, social activities and pre-registration brochure. We expect to start pre-registration early in summer. You'll find information on WAF33 on the three club websites: www.happywanderersfl.org, <https://midfloridamilers.org>, Suncoast Sandpipers and Facebook at: www.facebook.com/WalkaroundFlorida33 We're looking forward to seeing you at our 33rd multi-event weekend!



SOUTHWEST REGION TALES FROM THE TRAILS

THE SAN ANTONIO PATHFINDERS' 13TH ANNUAL TOUR DE CASTROVILLE WALK

BY MARTIN CALLAHAN

The San Antonio Pathfinders is hosting its annual Volksmarch on April 13 which is an adjunct of the 13th annual Tour de Castroville walk, run, and ride family events in Castroville, Texas. Registration for the Volksmarch is separate from the Tour de Castroville registration, though Volkssporters will follow the same Tour de Castroville marked trails.

Castroville, also known as the "Little Alsace of Texas" is located on the Medina River and US Highway 90 W, 25 miles west of downtown San Antonio in eastern Medina County. The town was named after its founder, Henri Castro, who obtained a land grant from the Republic of Texas to establish a colony. Henri Castro and his mostly Catholic Alsatian farmers first settled on the scenic bend of the Medina River in September of 1844.

There are over 300 preserved historic buildings in and around Castroville, many of which sit in the old part of town, now a National Historic District. A large number of these original buildings, some displaying unique Alsatian architecture, were constructed more than 170 years ago and are still being used as residences or businesses. Note that the sign "PCH", on these historic buildings, stands for Pioneer Castroville Home. You will also have the opportunity to visit numerous antique shops, restaurants and the famous Haby's Bakery after your walk or along the trail. For more information on Castroville online go to: www.castroville.com.

The 5 km and 10 km walk routes are rated 1A and begin at the event tent at the Castroville Regional Park, 816 Alsace Street, Castroville, TX 78009. Registration begins at 7:20 a.m. with the walk start time between 8:20 and 11:30, finish by 2 p.m. For information on the 13th Annual Tour de Castroville online visit: castrovilletx.gov/tourdecastroville but do not register on this website but at the event tent.

For information on this walk contact Mike Schwencke at: 210-382-0367 or email him at: mike.schwencke@outlook.com.



Eide with Rudy and Gayle Weinraub stop for a picture along the walk trail in front of the St. Louis Catholic Church completed in 1870 and visible along the 2023 Tour de Castroville Walk in Castroville, Texas. (Photo credit: Martin Callahan)



JOSHUA SPRINGS PARK AND PRESERVE WALK

BY TINA BOHNERT

Joshua Springs Park and Preserve, Kendall County's fabulous park, is the setting for a 5 km or 10 km volksmarch sponsored by Comfort's walking club, The Guadalupe Gallivanter, on May 25. Located between Boerne and Comfort with 8 miles of multi-use trails encompassing 365 acres of rich terrain in the Texas Hill Country, Joshua Springs Park and Preserve is a wonderful destination for hiking, biking, exercising and viewing diverse wildlife. Scenic wonders abound: Allen and Little Joshua Creeks, waterfalls, two spring fed lakes, and scenic Hill Country views. Enjoy picnicking under vast Texas Live Oaks, pavilions, and various other covered picnic areas. Joshua Springs Park and Preserve is a fun, family friendly place for all to enjoy!

The route is mainly on trails with short stretches on park roads. The 10k will also go through meadows. You must be a registered walker to participate. Registration will be done at the park on the day of the walk and all walkers must pay a registration fee of \$4.00. Walkers may start anytime between 7:30 and 11:00 AM and must be finished no later than 2:00 PM. Walkers must stay on the designated trails. Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Pets are welcome but must be kept on a leash.

Joshua Springs Park and Preserve is located at 716 FM 289, Comfort, TX about midway between Comfort and Boerne along I-10. The Comfort walking club sponsors two other events during the year. The Comfort Easter Walk is hosted on the Saturday before Easter and is generally one 5 km and 10 km event. In late October the club hosts a two-day 10 km walk event in Waring, TX. These events have been a local tradition for over 40 years. The club also hosts YRE's in Bandera, Comfort, and Kerrville, Texas. For additional information contact John Bohnert at 830-995-2421 or email johnbohnert63@gmail.com. On the day of the event call 830-431-2850.

Diane Duesterhoeft with Cory and Molly stop for a picture along the walk trail with the lake visible behind them along the trail on the May 2022 Joshua Springs Park and Preserve Walk in Comfort, Texas. (Photo credit: Martin Callahan)



Gayle Weinraub with Rudy (left) and Dolly pose for a picture on the pier with the lake visible behind them along the trail on the May 2022 Joshua Springs Park and Preserve Walk in Comfort, Texas. Photo credit: Martin Callahan)



From left to right, Robert Theis, Sheri Logan, Andy Thomas, Gerry Kamicka and Linda Goodman pose for a picture before following the trail under the archway behind them out of the park along the 2023 Tour de Castroville Walk in Castroville, Texas. (Photo credit: Martin Callahan)



WALK 7 NEW COUNTIES IN EAST AND CENTRAL NEW MEXICO

BY SUSAN FINE

Each year for several years, the Sun Country Striders have offered new counties, so you can have the chance to walk all of New Mexico. For 2024, there are seven new counties featured in East and Central New Mexico. You can walk anytime through 2024 through the Online Start Box (OSB). Or you can join us in April for a group walk, and walk the new events with others.

April 10 – 15, 2024, we'll meet to walk together, starting in Tucumcari, along Route 66 on Wednesday April 10 at 1pm; then on to Santa Rosa for a 4pm walk. Thursday, April 11 at 10am, we'll roam through Mosquero followed by Mills Canyon at 2pm. A meet and greet will take place Thursday night in Las Vegas, NM. Friday morning's walk starts in Watrous, followed by the Fort Union National Monument; then a walk through historic Las Vegas, NM. A group dinner is optional Friday night in Las Vegas, at the historic Casteneda Hotel, Fred Harvey's first trackside hotel. Saturday April 13 is a free day to walk Santa Fe and/or Los Alamos. Sunday, we'll walk Albuquerque's Old Town, then Belen. Monday April 15, we'll be in Socorro in the morning; and in Mountainair and the Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument.

During the group walks, we'll have stamps and directions available, or you can do the OSB and join us when you can. Because we're traveling to various counties, there is no base hotel.

There are several side trips that can be made to several historic sites like the Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument. Please find more information and detailed schedule for the group walks at suncountrystriders.wordpress.com. Or email the POCs: Henri Vargas queta_69@hotmail.com or Eileen Roberts eileenh49@yahoo.com.



WALK THE KING WILLIAM PARADE

Who doesn't love a parade? Bring your family, and join us in San Antonio, TX as we walk in the King William Parade, Saturday, April 27 at 9am. We'll be carrying an IVV or IML banner for about 3 miles, showcasing our sport to an audience of over 30,000. If you can help us, email henry@ava.org with your name and number of participants in your group.

Also, if you have old medals, Ellen Ott will be selling them during the King William Fair that same weekend. Send them to the AVA office, or call Ellen at 210-723-8574.



Special Sale

\$5.00

Plus Shipping

CONTACT MARIAN
marian@ava.org

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR HOSTING THE 2027 AVA BIENNIAL CONVENTION

BY JERRY WILSON, CHAIR, AVA CONVENTION COMMITTEE

Is your local AVA club, multiple local clubs or your state club interested in hosting the 2027 AVA Biennial Convention? It is time to start working on a proposal for submission to AVA. Later in 2024, AVA National Office staff and the AVA Convention Committee will review submitted proposals. Acceptable proposals will be evaluated and the highest scoring two proposals will be invited to make presentations in Las Cruces, New Mexico on May 2, 2025. Attending delegates will be asked to vote on presentations.

If interested in submitting a proposal to host the 2027 AVA Biennial Convention, contact the AVA National Office, or Jerry Wilson, Chair, AVA Convention Committee to obtain Request for Proposal (RFP) documents. Completed proposals should be received by August 1, 2024 for review and to negotiate adjustments. We will help applicants to submit acceptable applications and clear up any questions.

Contacts:

Henry Rosals, AVA President: Henry@ava.org

Jerry Wilson, Chair AVA Convention Committee: convention@ava.org

VOLKSWALKING AS A FAMILY

BY PAT JEWETT

I started volkswalking in 2003. In the beginning I would show up at a volkswalk event and walk by myself. Of course, I never walked by myself because I'd meet other walkers and start up conversations. Now I am surrounded by friends when I walk.

Many of the walks I was doing were walks with easy ratings, no hills. I heard about this walk in NW Portland called the Heart Throb walk. NW Portland was one of my favorite places to hike. My parents were coming to Portland to visit me. I knew they enjoyed walking so I thought this would be a fun walk for us. It was called the Heart Throb walk for a reason, something I neglected to pay attention to.

The walk lured us in with some flat streets before abruptly heading uphill and then we were at the staircases. At the time, I did not know NW and SW Portland were known for their stairs. The warm-up was three sets of staircases, 361 steps heading up to Cumberland Dr. At the top of the third staircase there was a checkpoint. They were making sure people were okay to continue on. Now that should have been a warning to me. I thought it meant we were done with the stairs.

The entire walk was about walking all the stairs in NW and SW Portland along this route. We had many more stairs ahead of us. At one point along the walk my dad was hunched over but he wouldn't give up. We survived the 203 creaky wooden elevator stairs and again thought we were done with the stairs. By the time we saw the Cardinell stairs we were exhausted. Every set of stairs we climbed we assumed were the last of the stairs to climb. This set didn't look too bad. We could see the landing at the top. We reached the landing and I told my parents not to look up. There were two more landings for a total of 179 steps.

By the time we crawled back to the finish I was sure my parents would never want to go on another volkswalk with me again. We had climbed over 1000 steps on this walk. I kept trying to tell them that many of the walks I had done previously were not like this walk.

It was a big surprise when my parents joined the Rogue Valley Walkers club in Medford OR. Over the years my mom became the treasurer, then the President and then my dad became the Vice President when my mom stepped down from being President. We often laughed about how I introduced them to volkswalking. It was a fun story to tell to our friends.



My mom came up with the Shady Cove walk event held every other year in Shady Cove. They came up with hikes along Lost Creek, the Rogue River and Casey Dam plus other walks. Even now it is a much-loved event in the NW Region. The Columbia River Volkssport Club is co-hosting this event October 16-19, 2024. My parents really enjoyed finding new walks for the club or redoing the walks that were already established.

Volkswalking was something we enjoyed as a family. Over the years it brought us closer together. We went to many events together enjoying the company of mutual friends from their club and my club. When I visited my parents in Medford we often did a walk with their club. My dad walked at least 4 miles each day.

Of course aging changes everything and my parents had to stop walking due to health issues. In mid December of 2023 my dad was diagnosed with metastasized brain cancer. He chose hospice care and died on January 15, 2024. I was recently going through his things and I found a waist pack that had pins and souvenirs stuck all over the little pack. In that moment I realized truly how much joy my parents received from volkswalking.

The joys, the closeness I enjoyed with my parents and the friendships I have made volkswalking has been invaluable. I received so much support from my volkswalking community during this hard time.

Thank you for so many wonderful memories that I have of my parents through volkswalking.

My mom is now living in assisted living in Talent, OR.



UPCOMING



EVENTS

IVV EVENT



AWARDS





HERE IS A LIST OF UPCOMING MULTI-DAY EVENTS FOR YOUR TRAVEL PLANNING. CLICK ON THE LINKS FOR MORE INFORMATION. THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THESE CLUBS.

Month	Date	Multi-day Event Description	Host Club	State
2024				
April	05 - 07	Atlantic Regional Conference	First State Webfooters	DE
April	10 - 15	East & Central NM Group Walks	Sun Country Striders	NM
April	25 - 27	Kick-off of 5 New County Walks	Ozark Hill Hikers	AR
April	25 - 28	Wild & Woodsy	Capitol Volkssport Club	WA
April	26 - 28	California Volkssport Convention	Sonoma County Stompers	CA
May	09 - 12	Huffin' & Puffin' on the High Plains	Sunflower Sod Stompers	KS
May	11 - 13	Spring in Winthrop	Interlaken Trailblazers	WA
June	12 - 18	Mid-America Conference Walks	Clubs in either OH, MI, IN, IL	KY
August	02 - 04	NW Hiking Weekend	Four Plus Foolhardy Folks	WA
August	23 - 25	Wallace Weekend	Lilac City Volkssport Assoc.	ID
September	06 - 08	Hudson to Housatonic NE Region Weekend	Volkssport Club at West Point	NY/CT
September	13 - 15	Itasca State Park - Headwaters and Wilderness Trail	North Star Trail Trekkers	MN
September	19 - 22	NW Regional Conference	Evergreen State Volkssport Assn.	WA
October	11 - 13	Ruidoso / Lincoln National Forest Hiking Weekend	West Texas Trail Walkers	NM
October	17 - 20	Shady Cove	CRVC-Rogue Valley Walkers	OR
October	18 - 20	23rd US FreedomWalk Festival / IML	U.S. Freedom Walk Festival Club	VA
October	23 - 27	Hoofin' It on Halloween	Sunflower Sod Stompers	KS
November	01 - 03	Walk Around Florida (WAF33)	Happy Wanderers Walking Club	FL
2025				
February	TBD	Texas Trail Roundup/IML	Texas Trail Roundup	TX
April/May	29 - 2	AVA Biennial Convention	AVA & Sun Country Striders	NM

AVA FEATURED EVENTS

San Antonio Pathfinders



Tour De Castroville

Just 15 miles west of San Antonio
816 Alsace Ave. Castroville, TX

April 13, 2024

AVA registration for the 5 & 10K walks is 7:30am to 11:00am on the day of the event at the START/FINISH table and is separate from the Tour de Castroville event registration

The Tour de Castroville Walk/ Run/ Ride is a family event held annually at the Castroville Regional Park. Known as "The Little Alsace of Texas", Castroville has maintained its Alsatian heritage while assimilating the flair of the American rural west.

Mike Schwencke
mike.schwencke@outlook.com
(210) 382-0367

[Click here for more information](#)

California Volkssport Asso



CVA National Convention

Rohnert Park, California

April 26-28 2024

5 walks – Meet & Greet – Group Dinner & More

Marilyn Nasi,
707-486-8528

Hosted by Sonoma County Stompers
and Vaca Valley Volks

[Click here for more information](#)

See all the walks/bike/swim events: ava.org – find a walk

Sunflower Sod Stompers



Huffin' & Puffin' on the High Plains of Kansas

May 8 - 12, 2024

Walks in the Kansas Counties of Ellis, Graham,
Ness, Rush, and Trego. Swims, too.

Events are located west of Interstate 135/U.S.
81 corridor and along, or north or south of I-70.

Terri Tyler
Ttyler50@gmail.com

[Click Here for More Information](#)

Mid America Weekend



Walking in Historic Kentucky

June 14-16, 2024

4 Walks: Frankfort, Shelbyville, Bardstown, &
Harrodsburg plus 2 Socials – Raffles - & More

Craig Gauger at (419) 350-4345, or via email to
cggauger@hotmail.com. Or Bob Buzolich at (574) 339-9140, or
via email to sonofbuzz@prodigy.net

[Click Here for More Information](#)

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Northeast Region Weekend



Hudson to Housatonic

September 6-8, 2024

Walks in Hyde Park, NY; Over the Hudson River;
and Kent Village, CT, plus social and dinner

Andrew Schmidt, hudtohou@gmail.com or phone 845-464-2676
Carol West, carol.west@sbcglobal.net or phone 860-999-1957

[Click Here for More Information](#)

Northwest Region Conf.



Kitsap Peninsula across Puget Sound from Seattle

September 19-22, 2024

8 Walks Planned Plus Socials
Registration opens in May

Sharon Moats – rd_nw@ava.org

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HOW TO LIVE WELL WITH CHRONIC PAIN AFTER A NEW DIAGNOSIS

BY PATRICIA SARMIENTO

Getting diagnosed with a chronic pain condition can feel impossible to process emotionally and mentally. For many, it's a life-altering experience that involves adapting to new imitations, shifting daily routines, and changing how they view themselves or their lives going forward.

That said, receiving the diagnosis does not have to mark the end of your independent living. It's the start of a new journey where self-care and positivity are key to a brighter future. The [American Volkssport Association](#) outlines some essential tips and resources for navigating the road ahead and building a healthy, fulfilling life.

COMING TO TERMS WITH YOUR DIAGNOSIS

The first order of business is to accept your diagnosis for what it is.

- Allow yourself time to process the news and the [emotions that come with it](#).
- Connect with local patient advocacy groups, attend support groups, and speak with people [who understand what you're going through](#). You may find comfort in learning from others' experiences and building a support network.
- Educate yourself about your condition to understand your symptoms and possible treatment. Ask your healthcare provider about the solutions available to you; the more you know about your condition, the better equipped you'll be to manage it.
- Remember that you are stronger than you think. Your diagnosis doesn't define you, and you have the power to choose how you lead your life!

RELAXING AND REDUCING STRESS

Everyone lives with an amount of stress, but those with chronic pain can experience even more stress and anxiety in their daily lives.

- Minimize worry and reduce stress by learning how to [be present in the moment](#); meditations, breathing exercises, and visualization can prove helpful.
- From gentle stretching to low-impact exercises, find a physical activity that you enjoy and that [works with your condition](#).
- Walking can be an effective method for relieving chronic pain, as it helps to build muscle strength, flexibility, and reduces inflammation. Look for an area with a high Walk Score of 70 and above, such as a [walkable neighborhood](#) or nearby park.
- Establish a sleep routine, create a comfortable environment in your bedroom, and do activities that help you wind down before bedtime. A good night's rest can make a [significant impact on your overall health](#) and pain levels.
- Engage in activities that [bring you joy and make you happy](#) during the day.
- Replace bad vibes with good by decluttering and tidying up your living environment. Also work in some good feng shui throughout the home to optimize positivity.

HEALTHY HABITS TO IMPLEMENT

Finally, think of how you can improve your long-term health in this challenging season.

- Seeing a chiropractor can be a highly effective method for managing and relieving chronic pain, including conditions like back pain, headaches, and joint discomfort.
- Consider working with a registered dietitian to develop a meal plan that meets your needs. A well-balanced diet can [give you more energy](#) to tackle your daily challenges.
- Find ways to squeeze in [more regular physical activity](#) to not only stay fit but feel better overall. If at work, take the stairs instead of the elevator and go for a walk around the block on your lunch break.
- Keep a water bottle handy and [aim to drink enough fluids](#) throughout the day.
- Practice self-compassion and prioritize fun activities. Taking a warm bath, reading a novel, or spending time with a friend can help you [keep your mental well-being in check](#) and reduce stress.

Chronic pain presents unique challenges, but you don't have to give up on leading a fulfilling life. Through education, relaxation, and self-care, you can take steps to boost your quality of life and live your days fully.

Don't forget to be kind to yourself as you navigate this new terrain. Connect with others who understand what you're going through, and lean into activities that make you happy. You have the power to decide how you live with chronic pain, so seize the day!

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