

Footsteps

Fun, Fitness, Friendship

Volume XX Number 4

July/August 2019



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For the latest on events and news visit our website:
<http://www.netrailblazers.club/>
or like us on Facebook



The Prez Sez...



Gregorian Calendar Mid-Year (July 1), Julian Calendar (Day 182), half a Volkssport year as President—and Writer’s Block—which one of these is not a good fit?

Writer’s block is not helpful when you wake up on July 5th, with a newsletter deadline, while humming, “*Summertime and the Living is Easy*” Thanks to Google™, I found out that the calendar terms above suggest that in the heat of the summertime, when living is easy, it is time to relax and reflect on things that happened the first half of the year. It’s a stretch, but that’s my theme—reflection.

Our club has had some great events in 2019: our annual dinner, soup walk, supporting the Humane Society with a walk starting at the shelter (a walk without rain by the way), a Birthday Cake and giving away Omaha and Nebraska gifts to celebrate our 40-years as a club. *And 17 club members (pictured) attended the American Volkssport Association’s (AVA) Bi-Annual Convention in Albany, NY in June.*



Donna and I attended our first biennial convention and AVA lived up to its motto of Fun, Fitness and Friendship with their theme—*Walk Thru History*. Besides the usual suspects at a conference: social gatherings, awards banquet, fund raising silent auction and education sessions, there were three preconvention walks, three walks during the convention and two postconvention walks that provided New England history. (Note: Donna and I put 3,710 miles on our car by

visiting family in New York, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire before and after the conference walks; and on the way home a side trip to do the Niagara Falls walk).

We stayed in Concord, NH while visiting my sister the day before the first group walk in Portsmouth, NH and found our hotel was the start-point for a walk. Adding this walk into our plans took us through the University of New Hampshire Law School, past the home of Franklin Pierce, the nation’s 14th president, and around the state capital building with a statue of the orator and congressman from NH, Daniel Webster.

Portsmouth, NH is a ship building and Navy town and was the site of our first preconvention walk. Located on the Piscataqua River, a tidal estuary with a swift current, it has been well suited for shipping since its founding in 1653. In 1774, in the lead-up to the Revolution, Paul Revere rode to Portsmouth warning that the British were coming to subdue the port. Portsmouth shipbuilding history has had a long symbiotic relationship with Kittery, Maine, across the Piscataqua River. In 1781–1782, the naval hero John Paul Jones lived in Portsmouth. The Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, established in 1800 as the first federal navy yard, is on Seavey’s Island in Kittery, Maine. Historical sites all visible in the harbor we walked along.

Next up was the preconvention walk in Danvers, Massachusetts. Why you asked, so did we? It turns out, Danvers (formally the *Village of Salem*), is where the rumors of witches, historical trials and burnings at the stake occurred. There are still over a dozen houses in Danvers standing that date back to that era, many associated with the witchcraft tragedy of 1692. We walked by several of these homes and a large memorial to the victims.

(Continued on Page 2)

The Prez Sez... (Cont.)

The last preconvention walk was in Springfield, MA. This walk essentially stayed in **Forest Park** one of the largest urban municipal parks in the United States. Designed by the renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, Forest Park features a zoo, aquatic gardens, and outdoor amphitheater—with our walk on winding wooded trails with expansive views. This park was bequeathed and permanently endowed through the estate of Everett Hosmer Barney (1835–1916), an American businessman and philanthropist, who developed clamp-on ice skates and roller-skates. This walk also took us past the enormous [Barney Family Mausoleum](#) built for the family, It overlooks I-91 and the Connecticut River; and you could almost reach through the fence and shake hands with Mr. Barney.

Each convention day had walks in the morning before workshop sessions began after lunch. You could use prearranged convention buses or drive to the start-points. The Cohoes/Waterford, NY walk took us along a portion of the Mohawk River at its confluence to the Hudson River. This was a historic mill and textile city with a 90' high, 1,000' across waterfalls. Part of the original Erie Canal had a lock here that was used to circumvent the falls and move industry and commerce to the west. This walk passed Harmony Mill No. 3, also known as the "Mastodon Mill," built in 1866–1868 and expanded 1871–1872. It is a four-story red brick structure on a stone foundation, with an additional story under the distinctive French mansard (curved) roof. It features twin six story towers topped by mansard roofs and cast iron grillwork. It was known as the "Mastodon Mill" for the skeleton of a mastodon found while excavating the north section—but also maybe because it was big. It was the largest cotton mill complex in the world when it opened in 1872. Since being placed on the National Historical Register in 1999, it has been turned into high-end residential lofts with a pool, spa and other luxury amenities.

Our next walk took us through Schuylerville, NY, home to one of the houses of the Schuyler family that Alexander Hamilton married into. It is still open as a museum and the docent and Federal Park officials, who someone forget to tell about big crowds of Volkswalkers coming, were very pleasant in giving us tours. Some 15 miles away, another portion of this walk took us to the Saratoga Battlefield Park. British General John Burgoyne thought he could snuff out the rebellion here, but in a major turn of events, American Forces led by Horatio Gates and Benedict Arnold are said to have turned the war with the

surrender of the British forces. Arnold was a fanatical leader in a significant charge against British (and German mercenaries) and hero of the battle. He is memorialized with a statue in the park, but it is one of his boots upside down reflecting his later treason.

The last convention walk was in Albany, NY, along a Hudson River Park, past the state capital, war memorials, open air and fine art concert venues and in a unique underground area of shops and restaurants. We also walked past the World's Largest [Nipper Statue](#) sitting atop a storage building. It is a four-ton, 28-foot tall steel and fiberglass statue of the canine mascot of the Radio Corporation of America (RCA), the now-defunct consumer electronics behemoth.

We did one official postconvention walk (we skipped the walk in Buffalo, NY) before staying in the Adirondack Mountains—where Lee's cousins 'scheduled' the "Strawberry Moon" to rise over and reflect on the lake outside their cabin and through pines and spruces. Very thoughtful cousins. The last scheduled walk we did was the Cooperstown, NY walk. I am going to let everyone guess as to the museum that most represents Cooperstown, Mom and Apple Pie. Hint, there was a large display about Babe Ruth and my favorite, a wall covered in cards titled, *These Are All the Cards Your Mother Sold*. Lastly, using some extra time we found we had on the drive back to Omaha, we did a quick turn off I-90 and did the Niagara Falls walk. OK, guess what we saw there?



Just a note to finish up. We have many digital pictures to edit, including those from each of the historical walks discussed, but the one I want to share here is the best picture we got on the trip. Donna and I stopped at a Portsmouth, NH restaurant called, [The Beach Plum](#) and Donna ordered the "small" ice cream cone picture.

So, to sum up the AVA National Convention in 2019, it was fun, provided fitness and certainly we made friends while walking through early US history. On that note, let me encourage every one of you to start planning for the 2021 conference in Madison, WI. Compared to Albany, New York, Madison is just a hop, skip and a jump from our club headquarters in Omaha.

Walk to live, Live to Walk,

~Lee

PS: Thanks and credit to Google and Wikipedia for filling in some of history I used in this article.



Sandy peaks

Well, walking season came and went. It is hot, hot, hot. We are looking forward to fall already. But we do have a couple of summer events to enjoy before then. Hope you all are looking forward to seeing the Storm Chasers play against San Antonio on July 28. And sitting in a nice cool theater to watch that dastardly Uriah Flackhacker get his due on August 10th. Last I heard, there were still seats left for this showing.

Our lives have been so chaotic that I have almost forgotten how the May walks went. Bellevue was a lovely walk and the museum was wonderful. They were so willing to give over their space for us and the museum itself was filled with wonderful things. We did a group walk in Council Bluffs and the weather cooperated. We had a wonderful lunch after at Lansky's. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend the gifting walk in June, but heard that it was a success with people delighted to receive our gifts. Look for the pictures later in the newsletter.

Our trip to convention was filled with wonderful weather and lots of great walks. We finished our Appalachian Trail program with walks rated from 1B to 4E. One trail even went through a zoo. So, anyone that walks the complete AT should be able to say they saw a bear. He just might be in a cage, though. Convention was well organized and had some marvelous trails. We enjoyed all of the 70 degree temps with sunshine. Three extra weeks of real springtime. That ended in Niagara Falls where it poured rain. It rained so hard the smoke from the fireworks could not escape so it covered the fireworks completely. You could hear them and maybe see the trail going up to the smoke, but no burst of light. Another new adventure. Have you ever stood in the pouring rain to watch a puff of smoke. We can say we have and laughed all the way back to the hotel!

Check out our temporary new section - State Park Spotlight. It will be in the next few newsletters. We will give you some great information about the state parks we will be hosting next year!

~Sandy

Just in - the Shelby YRE will be closing as of August 31. The Corn Crib brothers are retiring. Check the Meet and Eat section. We will have one last group walk.

October 2019 National Volkssport Month Patch



October is National Volkssport Month. Please let Jill Champley know by emailing her care of netrailblazers@gmail.com by **July 26th**, if you want one. The patches are \$3.50 each.

Looking for Volunteers!!

As always, volunteers are the backbone of any organization like our Volkssporting Club. Just like each officer that is elected in our club, region and national organization, and our trained Trailmasters, a significant raise in pay comes with each new year and each new activity volunteered for.

You too can reap these almost priceless compensations each time you volunteer to help at a walk. Volunteers worldwide are often jealous of all the zeros you can add each time you volunteer for a Volkssport event or activity.

Here are places we need volunteers for each walk: *Trail Marking Greeters, Group Walk Leaders, Registration Table, Finish Table, and Checkpoint Table; and here are places often needed at special walks (pie, soup, lights): Raffle Table, Donation Area, Door Prizes, Kitchen/Food and Beverage Tables, and Delivery Drivers.*

So, if you have always wanted to earn the high rewards of volunteering, contact any officer and watch for the sign-up sheets when they come out by email or at meetings. (*Please Note: Volkssport volunteering is a deferred compensation program, your rewards come at a much later date, but are really, really worth it.*) - Lee



View from a ridge in Stone State Park

One of the Iowa 20 State Parks in 20 Counties in 2020 walks, Stone Park will be one of the parks celebrated in Iowa's State Park Sesquicentennial. Make plans now to spend some time in Iowa to explore these diverse parks.

Located at the northern end of the Loess Hills, Stone State Park is an "Urban Wildlife Sanctuary". Sitting on the northern edge of Sioux City, the woodlands provide a home to white-tailed deer, coyotes and foxes. It is a birdwatcher's paradise. In early May the woodland flowers bloom and in June, the little Hackberry Emperor Butterflies come out by the thousands. Over 1500 acres of back country and 15 miles of trails gives the outdoor enthusiast plenty to enjoy.

The history of the park goes back to when Native Americans were the first humans to inhabit this area with the Dakota Sioux occupying this area when the Lewis and Clark expedition passed by in 1804. Daniel Hector Talbot, known in Sioux City as the most eligible bachelor and a man who moved in such circles as Thomas Alva Edison when he traveled with him to watch the 1878 Solar Eclipse started buying the land now known as Stone Park. He

raised unusual such animals as elk, bear, bison and wolves. The land was purchased by T. J. Stone, a prominent banker and influential business man in Sioux City. His son developed it into a park which was later acquired by the city and subsequently sold to the state of Iowa.

While visiting the park, take advantage of the nearby Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center, managed by the Woodbury County Conservation Board with its "walk-under" prairie, aquarium of native fish, hiking trails and interpretive displays. There are lots of other places to visit in the area. The Sergeant Floyd Monument stands tall on a hillside in memory of the only person who died on the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The Sioux City Public Museum located downtown and the Sergeant Floyd River Museum are both free museums for the history buff.





My husband Rex and I started Volksmarching while we were stationed in Germany, a total of 6 years. We went every Saturday and completed a 10K as they did not offer 5Ks then. I did not stamp books but Rex did. Every one of my seven brother-in-laws got a 6 piece set of beer mugs as that was a lot of the items you received after a walk. I also have plates and patches. When we returned to the States; we knew there were clubs there but really did not ever try to find one. Then one day as I was looking at my newspaper, I came across an article in the Living Section of the *Omaha World Herald*. It was dated March 16, 2009 and it read "Walk the Walk". It featured what the club was all about and highlighted all of the patches that Butch Spaulding had accumulated on his travels. We decided to walk the walk that was featured in the article. It was at Bellevue University and it said nonmembers welcome. We still have that paper. We walked and it brought back many memories of us enjoying getting out and learning about the history of the area. About 4 years ago, we found the club meeting information and have been members. We have met lots of people and been to many interesting places.

We completed the book on the Louisiana Purchase. I did not know that there were 15 states in that purchase. When we went to weddings, etc., we planned walks nearby to be able to work on that goal too. We have been to two of the AVA Conventions. The first in Montana and the second one we just got back from Albany, New York. We took a bus tour with other walkers and after we got off of the bus, we walked the 3 or 6 miles. Not only did we walk every day, but we got to see history in Ohio, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and New York. All of the places were beautiful. On the way back, we did the post walks which were in Cooperstown and we visited Niagara Falls. We met great walkers along the way.

One of our favorite walks was a 4 day trip to Grand Island, Nebraska for a viewing of the Total Eclipse. It was truly an awe inspiring experience. We are going to try to walk the 20 featured Iowa State Parks in 2020 to celebrate Iowa's Centennial. We also will plan to volunteer to be a worker for the 3 walks that our Trailblazers club will be sponsoring.



May and June Meeting



Cinco de Mayo
Photo by J. Webb



Habitat for Humanity
Photo by J. Webb



Convention Basket
Photo by J. Webb



Yum!!!
Photo by D. Webb



All about bees
Photo by D. Webb



Learning all about AVA
Photo by D. Webb



Joan and Jerry, new friends of NWFT
Photo by D. Webb

Sarpy County Museum

May 11



Our Des Moines Travelers
Photo by D. Webb



Sarpy County
Museum



Fun on
the Trail



It's a Family Affair

Photo by D. Webb



Friends Forever

Photo by D. Webb



UP Exhibit

Photo by D. Webb

Council Bluffs Group Walk May 25



10 K Walkers

Photo by Sandy



All together ready for lunch!

Photo by Sandy

Gifting Walk June 22



It's a birthday celebration!

Photos by D. Webb



Mark your calendars: Upcoming Events!!

August

- 3 Crosby Farm Regional Park Walk, St. Paul, MN Twin Cities Volkssport
- 10 Ramsey County, New Brighton, MN Lake Country Wanderers
- 17 National Balloon Races, Mitchell, NE Black Hills Volkssport Assn.
- 17 Frank Lloyd Wright walk, Racine, WI Madison Area Volkssport Assn.
- 24 Barnesville, MN Red River Volkssport

September

- 7 Downtown Breweries, Des Moines, IA Greater Des Moines Volkssport Assn.
- 13-15 Multicounty event, Parker, SD Prairie Wanderers
- 15 Lake Farm County Park, Madison, WI Madison Area Volkssport Club
- 21 Walnut Creek Walk, Papillion, NE Nebraska Trailblazers
- 29 Autumn Crazy Horse walk, Custer, SD Black Hills Volkssport Assn.

This is a limited number of the many walking opportunities available. Look for the details at AVA.org
 Become an AVA associate member to receive "The Wanderer" filled with nationwide walk information.

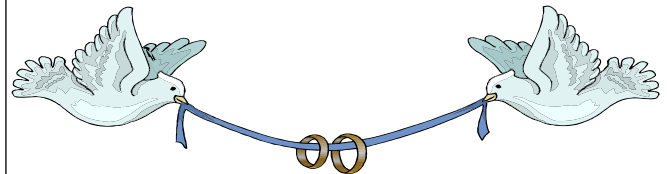


Belated Anniversary wishes to

Jim & Diane Fenlon June 25

Due to inexperience, I cut off their anniversary in the last newsletter. My apologies and I hope you had wonderful anniversary! Sandy

You're Still the One



- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Mel & Vicki Bohn | July 3 |
| Sharon Sullivan | July 4 |
| James & Linda Cashin | July 6 |
| Dave & Judy Zikmund | July 7 |
| Mark & Mary Anne Conway | August 5 |
| Daniel & Shu Garber | August 6 |
| Stan & Carol Fraas | August 9 |
| Larry & Judy Seger | August 15 |
| Deb Gaskins | August 16 |
| Tim & Julie Brown | August 31 |

July/August

Happy Birthday to You!!!!

August

- | | |
|----------------------|----------|
| Gabriella Castro | July 2 |
| Noel Petersen | July 3 |
| Ellen Peters | July 14 |
| Ardith Ortgies | July 16 |
| Jerry Golmanavich | July 17 |
| Dudley Allen | July 27 |
| Jeanne Van Houweling | July 29 |
| Robert Glenn II | August 4 |
| Shu Garber | August 5 |
| Karen Dix-Johnson | August 9 |



- | | |
|------------------|-----------|
| Mark Conway | August 14 |
| Sharon Sullivan | August 17 |
| Rex Holford | August 22 |
| Tim Brown | August 23 |
| Mary Brown | August 24 |
| Richard Sobetski | August 28 |
| Georgia Abboud | August 28 |
| Jason Petersen | August 28 |
| Dee Willemsen | August 28 |
| Jeanne Miller | August 29 |
| Linda Robb | August 29 |

NWFT Officers

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Speaker Schedule

September 9 Strength Building, Flexibility
And Balance
Ross Holsing, DPT, OCS

October 7 TBA



2019

August 3 - Shelby YRE. Meet at the Corn Crib at 8 a.m. We will walk early to beat the heat and those who would like can stay after for Brunch at the Corn Crib. August will be the last month the Shelby YRE will be open. Contact Sandy at sandypauld@yahoo.com if you are interested in carpooling.

September 7 - Des Moines Brewery Walk
Peace Tree Brewing, 317 E Court Ave.
Des Moines, IA
Start at 11 a.m.
Contact Sandy at sandypauld@yahoo.com if you are interested in carpooling.
Please do not park in the brewery parking lot. There is street parking and a lot across the street.

Meeting News

The next club meetings will be September 9 and October 7 at Morning Star Lutheran Church, located at 331 S 85th Street in Omaha. The meetings start at 7:00 p.m. We try to have a short program before the business meeting. Just a reminder that the club meetings are the 1st Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m. with some exceptions: no meetings in January, July or August, and it is the 2nd Monday in September. Don't forget that at each meeting, we have a drawing for a \$10 door prize. Contrary to popular belief, you don't have to be a club member to win this.

The board meets, same dates, 5:15 p.m., at Jason's Deli, 7010 Dodge St. Meeting is open to all members.

Membership Dues

May and June dues are now past due (check your mailing label—email message will be sent out as a reminder). Renewal is \$10 for a single membership and \$15 for a family membership. Please send renewals to:

NWFT
PO Box 8147
Omaha NE 68108

Newsletter Info

To place info/articles/photos in the next newsletter, please send by August 15:



email: sienna518@gmail.com



snail-mail to: NWFT
PO Box 8147
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