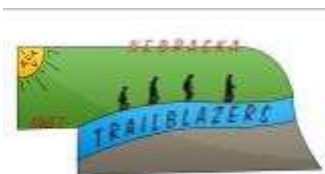


Footsteps

Fun, Fitness, Friendship



The Prez Sez...

Ending 2020, Whimper or Bang?

I am starting this Prez Sez, my last as your President, the morning after our *Hitchcock Nature Center* walk. If you were unable to join us, hopefully you have seen the wonderful pictures on our Facebook page. Thanks to all the great volunteers who pulled off mapping, trail-marking, distancing, covering up, wearing gloves, smiling through those masks, and helping our walkers process through the unique September and October walks.

Both walks had beautiful days and were a great way to get out of 2020 with a bang. By ending 2020 with two well-planned, virus-mitigated walks, it feels like we reversed the last stanza of T.S. Eliot's poem *The Hollow Men*, "*This is the way the world ends. Not with a bang but a whimper.*" Volkswalking will survive with a bang, not a whimper. Be sure to see the article on one more opportunity to walk—past holiday lights in Seward, Nebraska—in 2020; and for now, see our plan for 2021.

As announced, with gathering in groups still not the best of ideas, we are not having a Face-to-Face (F2F) annual dinner. However, please plan (if you are technologically capable) to gather in a ZOOM™ meeting on Monday, January 11, 2021 from 7:00 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. We will have 45-minutes to: transfer the gavel to the new president, meet the new board, give out awards and announce the Walker-of-the-Year (WOTY). Thanks to Jeanne Miller for already having a club ZOOM™ account set up.

Pressing on with a bang of a year for 2021, we now have eight one-day Traditional Events (TEs) planned. Keep an eye out for these walks starting in March; and watch for COVID mitigation strategies for each walk able to be held. Eating soups and pies will be health department dependent. If we are not able to eat together when the time arrives, we should still be able to donate purchased

items to charities. Also, our 2021 Year Round and Seasonal Events will be open for your walking pleasure. Been on the *Wabash Trace Nature Trail* lately? Watch for the new club walk in 2021.

This year we say goodbye to the phenomenal Lincoln Volkssport Club (LVC) and its many members, leaders, and volunteers. This longtime neighboring club, to the southeast, has made fun, fitness and friendship (and food) a way of life for Volkswalkers from around the world. Happily, NWFT is going to keep three of the LVC walks going. NWFT is welcoming all Lincoln members interested, free of dues in 2021, into our club; and has awarded longtime LVC President, Rose Quackenbush, an NWFT Lifetime Membership. The Seward Year Round Event (YRE) will be hosted by Lori Anderson and the Lincoln Capital YRE POCs will be Carol and Stan Fraas. Watch for the exciting new Capital walk start-point near the Lincoln/Lancaster City/County Building. Donna and I will be POCs for the Nebraska City walk. It will be a Seasonal Event (April-October). Check out the new routes past this historic downtown's murals, Arbor Lodge, and apple farms.

Before closing, I would be very remiss if I did not send mountains of thanks to the club 2020 Board of Directors and other significant support I have had. COVID has been an obstacle none of us could have imagined or expected, but without trepidation the board took on electronic management and decision making with the hope of keeping all members safe, in good spirits and providing a few walks once mitigation practices were established. Thanks to Jill who has kept our treasury, financials, and AVA reports under control. Thanks to Sandy (and her whole Coordinating Committee) for the event planning, safety processes, and cancelations, reschedules, relocations and walk adjustments made as needed.

Inside this issue:

<i>The Prez Sez</i>	1
<i>Sandy Speaks</i>	2
<i>Walker of the Year Nominations</i>	3
<i>Changes in Dues</i>	4
<i>Photos</i>	5
<i>Event Calendar</i>	10
<i>Birthdays & Anniversaries</i>	10
<i>Officer Roster</i>	11
<i>Meetings & Dues</i>	11

For the latest on events and news visit our website:

<http://www.netrailblazers.club/>



The Prez Sez (continued)

Thanks to Dave Brown who as secretary has had to keep track of all our emails and board business as this year progressed. Thanks to Julie Brown who has done a great job with the newsletter we gave back to her after her health improved. Thanks to Jeanne Miller who has guided our electronic/social media communication through this tumultuous pandemic year. I was grateful for the half-year she could give us a Vice President and her continuing help with everything electronic. May the force stay strong with all these outstanding leaders.

Almost in closing, please note that Dave Brown, Jim Fenlon and Joyce Sobczyk are working diligently as our Nominating Committee on next year's slate of officers. If possible, please respond with a big cheerful "Yes I Can" if you are called to serve the club in an elected capacity. It has been my pleasure to be your President for three of the last four years, and Immediate Past President the year I took-off from the presidency, but it is now time for some new direction coming from the driver's seat of this 'bus.'

Now in closing, please study the adjacent Hitchcock Park picture taken from the lodge. It shows the park and Missouri river valley covered in a tranquil mist. In the peace of that mist, fog, and serenity, please join me in remembering the many in the world who have lost their lives in the time of COVID-19. Let us Volkswalk in their memory for many days to come.

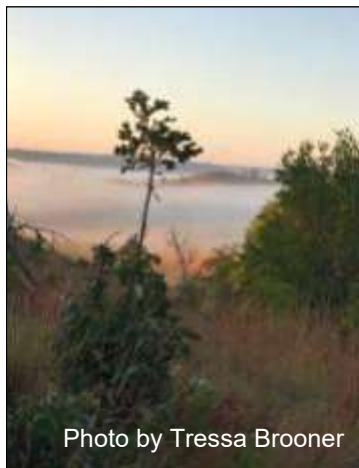


Photo by Tressa Brooner

Walk to Live, Live to Walk, Be Safe, Stay Healthy,
~Lee



Sandy Speaks

When AVA requested its board members to help run the

Crazy Horse walk, we felt compelled to volunteer. We traveled up a couple of days early to get in some nice walks. Spending time in the open air is still the safest way to enjoy time during the pandemic. We ate takeout, either going to a park to eat or returning to our hotel room. The hotel was following precautions. Masks and social distancing were in place. There was no room cleaning. Just put your trash outside the door and it would disappear. We wiped down the touch surfaces such as TV control, door handles and light switches with sanitizing wipes. Breakfast consisted of a takeout bag with a bottle of water, energy bar, apple and muffin. I took my own bowl of oatmeal to heat up in the microwave.

We helped mark the trail on Thursday. This was our chance to see the changes to Crazy Horse since our last visit. I learned something new. Hidden in the woods, the family that owns the monument has their own little cemetery with

mausoleums all built of local stone. The changes to the monument are all in the arm. The area you walk on is all polished stone. You can see the knuckles of the hand and can tell where the pointing finger will be.

We have walked Crazy Horse a few times and have always been in awe during this great event. This year we experienced it from an entirely different perspective. South Dakota is very much a "Free Will" state. They are the only state in the union that refused any of the CARES Act money. There are no mask mandates. The Black Hills Volkssport Assn., AVA and the Crazy Horse Memorial owners debated if this event could be held safely during a pandemic. They did not want to get the reputation of being a superspreading event as was done with the Sturgis Rally. Walkers were handed flyers at the entrance to Crazy Horse telling them to have exact change. Eight foot tables were set up eight feet apart. The ground was marked with 6 foot distancing. A huge sign was set up at the entrance telling the walkers to mask during registration. A large bottle of hand sanitizer was set up at the entrance. Sanitizer was at every table. A system of clean pens and used pens was set up. Different areas were set up for filling out registration cards and paying. Walkers were to immediately walk onto the trail after paying.

The first day of the event dawned cool and clear. Butch and I handed out start cards with gloved hands and masked faces. The walkers lined up and looked at the mask sign and actually put on their masks. Many used the hand sanitizer (brrr!). We did have to remind many to have only one family group head to a table. But some of those family groups were really large!

Sunday brought a different group of people. Less likely to mask and more likely to "flock" to the tables. Volunteers worked hard to keep them distanced and most followed guidelines once they were reminded. I worked one of the registration tables. The walkers were directed to these tables to fill out their start card then directed to move on to the other tables where they would drop off their \$3 and head for the trail. It was an efficient system. It was a REALLY chilly morning. We had to use ice scrapers on the tables to scrape away the frost which continued to reaccumulate for the first hour. My most memorable registrants had a home town feel. As one wrote their town of College Springs, Iowa, I couldn't help but comment. This is a town of 400 where my Great, Great Grandfather lived. Shortly after that, there was a family from Modale, Iowa, where I grew up. This is a town of less than 300. It is a small world! One couple was thrilled when it started snowing. She was from the rain ravaged state of Florida and he was from burning California.

Overall, this was a well-run event and as safe as it could be made. Lots of planning and lots of volunteers made it happen. No known cases of Covid-19 have been attributed to the event. And walkers were delighted.

~Sandy

Walker of the Year Nominations



Jill Champley

I nominate Jill Champley as 2020's Walker of the Year. Jill serves as Treasurer for the club, is the Point of Contact for the Lake Anita State Park seasonal event and actively promotes club walks and events. As a member of the Coordinating Committee, she has created numerous photo frames for walks and meetings matching the theme of each. For these reasons and much more, I feel she should be 2020's "Walker of the Year".



Diana & Jim Webb

Since coming to Nebraska Trailblazers only a few years ago, Diana and Jim Webb have jumped right in with both feet. They have adopted two of our YREs. They have been out exploring the area looking for new walking opportunities. Diana has taken over the meeting programming, finding great speakers. And Diana, with Jim at her side, is responsible for most of those great pictures in our newsletter, on Facebook and on Meetup. She has even put our club on the map with her winning photo in the AVA photo national photo contest.

20 Parks in 2020-A Big Thanks!



The 20 Iowa Parks in 2020 program ended with some pretty strong numbers for a very unusual year. How did we do that? Well, we had great partners in Iowa's Walking Club. Special thanks to Peggy Watts for organizing this program and to her friend Suzy Belle, for being utterly devoted to promoting this program as well as thanks to all of the

other Iowa's Walking Club Volunteers who helped put this together.

Of course, the variety of the walks kept it exciting for walkers and sometimes challenging for our POCs. But they rose to the challenge! A big thank you to Sandy & Butch Spaulding, who took on THREE of our seven walks in this program, as well as to Jill Champley, Karen Dix-Johnson, Lee Frantz & Donna Campbell, Jeanne & Steve Miller and Joyce Sobczyk.

20 Parks in 2020 by the Numbers

Our park walks were open from May 1 to October 15, and despite Covid, we had great numbers:

Manawa	97
Lake Anita	84
Prairie Rose	79
Waubonsie	68
Lewis&Clark	68
Lake of 3 Fires	61
Stone	60



Changes to Club Dues

As noted earlier, we will not be having a F2F Annual dinner. See more in this newsletter about our ZOOM™ meeting in January. However, as a way of saying thanks to hanging in with us during the uniqueness of 2020, the club will have free membership renewals in 2021. This article clarifies on how the free 2021 dues will work:

- Anyone joining now through 12/31/**20** still must pay for a full year.
- Any club member whose membership expires before 12/31/**20** still must pay for a full year.
- Anyone who joins in **2021** will join for free and their membership expires 12/31/**21** (a benefit that Lincoln members who join us will like).
- All club members current as of 1/1/**21** have their memberships expire 12/31/**21**.
- All club members in 2021 who wish to be club members in **2022** will pay \$10 individual or \$15 family due by the annual banquet in January **2022**.
- Anyone who joins later in **2022** will have their membership pro-rated [quarterly] so that it expires 12/31/**22**.
- (7) Since club members who adopt a YRE/SE/Traditional Event have no annual dues, per our by-laws, they will receive 5-coupons valued at \$3 apiece for use only at our club events.

Also and just FYI, to greatly reduce the workload of the treasurer, the board is working on language to amend the by-laws so dues renewal will change to our fiscal year (January to December), and depending when someone new joins there will be a pro-rate each year (with pennies rounded off). This language will aim to have dues due by each January annual dinner (normally 3rd Saturday in January) and a method to send overdue notices at 30-days (after annual dinner) and membership dropped at 60-days (after annual dinner). If this change is made, we will still make sure you get your whole free 12-months coming to you in 2021—even if it goes into 2022.

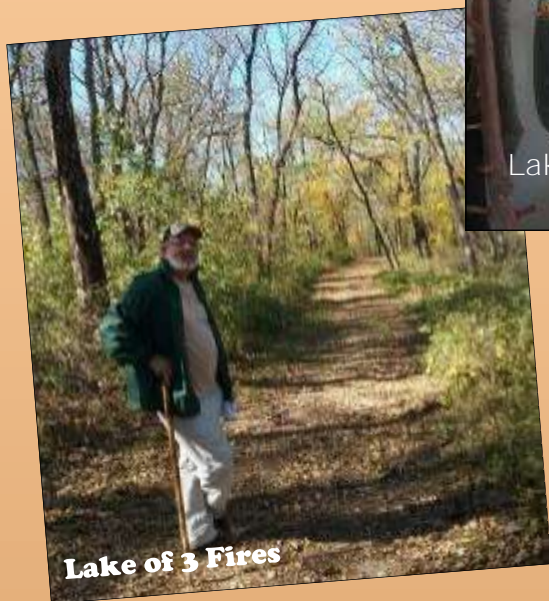


2020 Iowa State Parks Centennial Walks

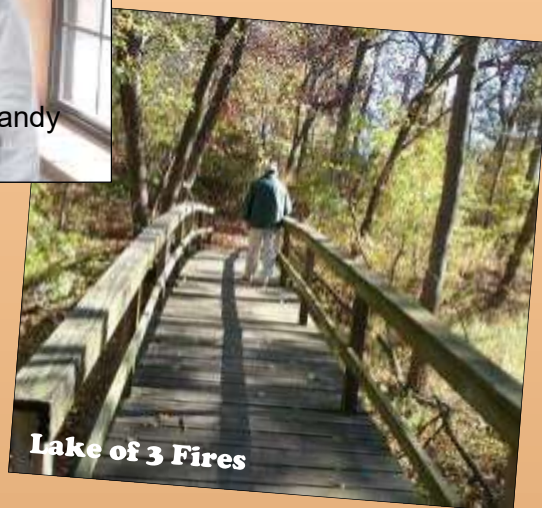


Lake of 3 Fires

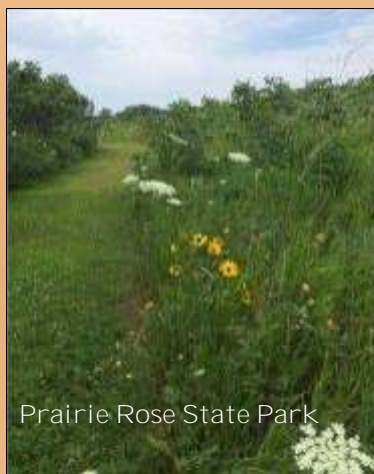
Logan & Sandy



Lake of 3 Fires



Lake of 3 Fires



Prairie Rose State Park



Lake Manawa State Park



2020 Iowa State Parks Centennial Walks



Stone Park

Jake & Sandy



Pikes Peak State Park



Lewis & Clark State Park



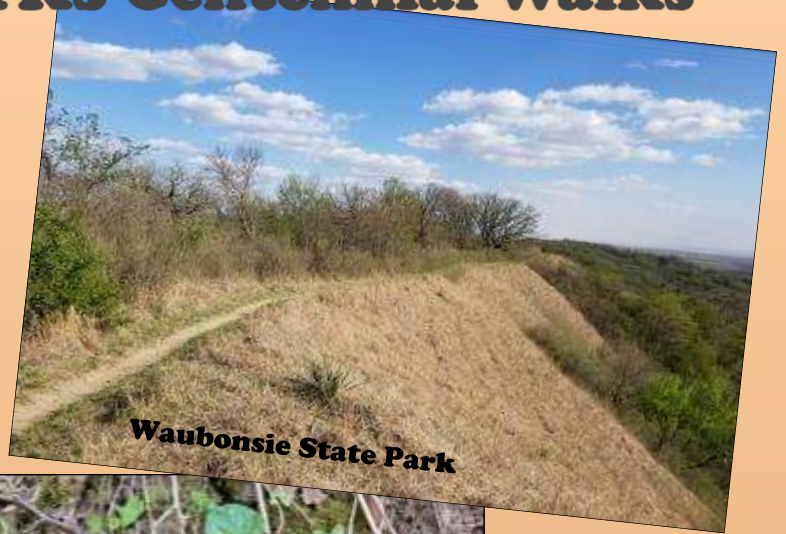
Pikes Peak State Park



2020 Iowa State Parks Centennial Walks



Waubonsie State Park



Waubonsie State Park



Waubonsie State Park

Crazy Horse



Butch hands out start cards



Social Distanced Registration



September 19 walk at Field Club, Subby Anzaldo Columbus Park and Gerald Ford Birthplace



Halloween Walk at Wyuka Cemetery



Where's Stan? Due to Covid and the cold temps, he got



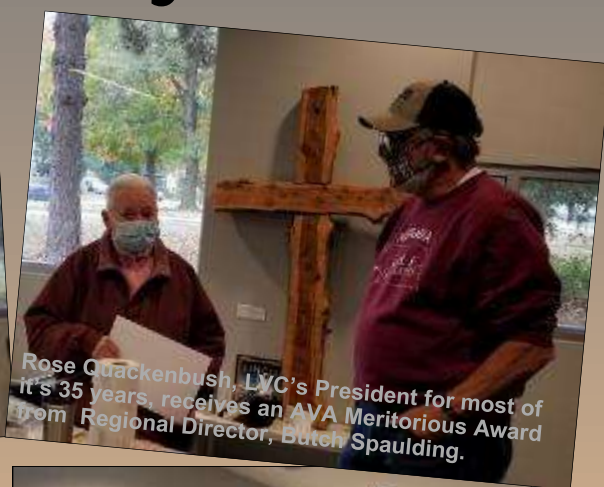
AVA walks are designed for folks of all walking abilities!



Halloween Walk at Wyuka Cemetery



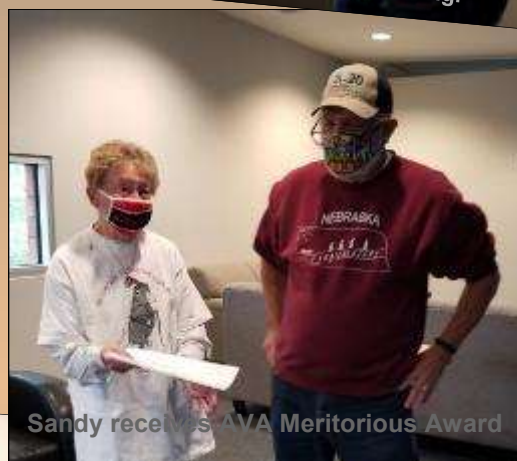
Prez Lee Frantz presents Rose with a lifetime Membership in the Nebraska Wander Freunde



Rose Quackenbush, LYC's President for most of it's 35 years, receives an AVA Meritorious Award from Regional Director, Butch Spaulding.



Carol, the club's longtime treasurer, receives AVA Meritorious Award



Sandy receives AVA Meritorious Award



Stan receives AVA Commendable Award



Bill receives AVA Meritorious Award from Butch.



Ready & waiting for walkers





Mark your calendars: Upcoming Events!!

Many events have been canceled or postponed. Check the calendar below to make sure your event is still scheduled

November

No nearby traditional walks planned

December

5 Christmas City of Nebraska Walk, Seward..... NWFT

January

1 New Years Day Mall Walk, Des Moines IA..... America's Walking Club

1 Northtown Mall Walk, Blaine MN Lake Country Wanderers

Don't forget to Vote (for Walker of the Year!)

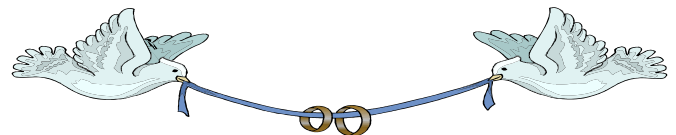
I know that we're all tired of hearing about the November 3rd election, but I'm going to talk about our November/December election for our club officers and Walker of the Year (WoTY). Don't worry – no campaign ads, though!

We moved to a hybrid online/in-person voting system a few years ago, with ballots mailed to our members without an email address. Since we won't have a December meeting, we're asking our club members to vote online when prompted to do so. Online voting begins November 7th and closes November 21st. I'll be using SurveyMonkey again and will use one color for Adult #1 in the household and another color for Adult #2 in the household (if both adults share the same email address).

Those who have not voted online will be mailed a paper ballot on November 23rd to be returned to me no later than December 7th. I will be including a postage paid envelope to be returned to me. That's a cost of \$1.10 per ballot, so voting online will be much cheaper for the club!

Results for the club officer election will be announced immediately to the Board on the evening of December 7th. Results for the 2020 WoTY will be announced at the January Zoom meeting, currently in the planning stages.

~Jeanne



NWFT Officers

President
Lee Frantz

Vice President
Open

Secretary
Dave Brown

Treasurer
Jill Champley

Speaker Schedule

Stay tuned for 2021 speakers!



Meeting News

Our next club meeting will be a Zoom meeting at 7:00 on January 11, 2021. We will not be having an annual meeting/dinner. Just a reminder that the club meetings (after Covid) will resume on 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.



Membership Dues

September & October 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,

Mail info to:

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