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Nebraska Trailblazers club enters 36th year

By Jim Goeltz

Where is your walk box located for your year-round event(s)? Other AVA clubs have located their walk boxes in motels, hotels, taverns, restaurants, museums, gas stations and hospitals, to name a few. Whatever seems like a good and trustworthy location is fine. The Trailblazers have one located on the front porch of a private home. Yes, our Bennington, Nebraska year-round event is located on Steve and Jeanne Miller's front porch. The walk goes around two small lakes. Note the photo below, which describes what the box is made of and what the box contains.



This walk box for the Bennington, Nebraska YRE is on the front porch at the home of the Millers, two very active members of the Nebraska Trailblazers. The box is homemade of cedar siding and pine strips for trim, with metal letters. The hinge door falls forward revealing the instruction book and two bottles of water, though the water may be frozen in the winter. Photo by Sheila.

Our club has reached its 36th year and has passed the 14,000 total for walkers. For sure, other clubs have been in existence a bit longer and have proba-

bly exceeded our total of walkers but we are proud of our accomplishments. Over the years we have maintained our popular Soup Walk, the annual Christmas Lights event and our ever-enjoyable Pie Volksmarch. The extra soup we have generated, the paper goods and winter clothing we have collected and the left-over pies all went to Mission of Hope Ministry Place (MOHM) in Council Bluffs, Iowa. At our 14th annual Christmas Lights event recently we collected and delivered 192 rolls of toilet paper, 26 pair of gloves, 24 winter caps, eight headbands, nine scarves and two boxes of assorted cookies, all to MOHMs.

Our traveling trophy for the Walker of the Year has been passed around for 35 years and is holding up well. The names of all 35 winners are all engraved on the trophy. In the past year we have taken over the management of Year Round events from clubs that have disbanded in Nebraska. Our club remains an active force in eastern Nebraska and western Iowa.

Each February our club members attend the Shelby (Iowa) Cook-off. This is an event held on the first Saturday of February in little Shelby's old high school. About a dozen various groups bring their specialty soups for attendees to sample. They dress in costume according to the name of their soup — Road Kill, Packer bean, Mexican Hot, etc. You can sample all the soups in small bowls and come back for more. Last year our group devoured more than 100 bowls of soup. An entry fee is charged and there are plenty of raffle items. Homemade pies go for around \$100. Our Stone Arch Trail Year Round in Shelby starts at the Red Barn Inn. Proceeds from the cook-off go towards maintenance of the trail.