

Footsteps

Fun, Fitness, Friendship

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The Prez Sez...

“2020”

That’s a big round number and forecasts a whole lot of fun, fitness and friendship in the upcoming year. If you are old enough to Volkswalk, you just may be old enough to think “wasn’t it just 2000 with its Y2K scare, bunkers to hide in, computers that would fail and maybe the end of the earth”—but let’s not look back—just forward. The year 2020 will have even more possibilities of walking to live and living to walk than many years past; **and** the return of a Lights Walk in Omaha’s downtown area. With the addition this year of the collaborative challenge, with the Greater Des Moines Volkssport Association, of 20 walks in 20 Iowa parks, there are close to 100K for 5K walkers and 200K for 10K walkers sanctioned just by our club for the year.

As always, we will all semi-hibernate after our Annual Dinner on January 18th and then emerge in March for our annual soup walk. Chicken and beef soup to heat and share are welcomed and soups to donate to our favorite charity shelters are requested (Oh, hibernation is only permitted on days not walking at Westroads Year Round, mall walks in the region, and any outdoor walk on warm wintry days). April’s walk will warm everyone’s heart at the Omaha Blackstone District Annual Bockfest. This walk will bring us back to our German roots of all things Volkswalking with craft beer (root beer too), bratwurst and other Deutschland activities to enjoy. In May we walk in the historic Field Club area of Omaha and literally “smell the flowers” on our walk.

Beginning May 1-2, with a Volkswalk kick-off event and big celebration of 100 years

of Iowa having State Parks, there will be many opportunities for summer one-day group walks in the Iowa Parks. All the park walks are Seasonal and available to walk any day between May 1 and October 15th. Also, watch for details on a special bus trip to walk parks on the eastern side of Iowa from September 10-16; and a grand finale of park walks during the AVA North Central Regional Round-Up—*Blazing Trails and Telling Tales*—October 2-4. The round-up will include a welcome mixer, a banquet and a chance to do several trails on the western side of Iowa. Watch for our call for many minds, hands and hearts to help with the round-up.

In September, we will be back with our own traditional one-day walks starting at Standing Bear Lake Park in Omaha and October will bring us to Hitchcock Park in Iowa. The plan at Hitchcock is to not have pouring rain like the last time we sponsored a walk there during an AVA Convention. November will bring us to Ashland this year for our annual pie walk. Pies to eat and pies to share, and hot coffee, tea and cocoa for all.

Now with a drum roll please—a downtown Christmas Lights walk in the Old Market is back the first Saturday in December. The [Urban Abbey Coffee Shop](#), a non-profit coffee house, has offered to be our start-point. This business is charity based and this year we will be asking for diapers that they will donate to Omaha’s [Youth Emergency Services \(YES\)](#).

As you now see, the year 2020 is packed with group and individual walking opportunities; and don’t forget to support our club by walking our own Year Round Events (YREs): Ogallala, North Platte, Ashland, Chalco Recreation, Downtown Historic Omaha, Hanscom Park (Ford Birthplace) and Westroads Mall.

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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 (continued)

OK, one quick look backwards to 2019. I personally want to thank our stellar Coordinating Committee. Without this group planning start-points, walks, beverages, cuisine and festive events we just would not have the fun, fitness, friendship and food we have every year. Also, a personal shout-out to our amazing 2019 Board: Vice President Jeanne Miller, Secretary Tricia Abel, Treasure Jill Champley, Communication Committee Rep. Julie Brown and The Coordinating Committee Rep. Sandy Spaulding. They've done an outstanding job managing a lot of "irons in the fire," so to speak. A special thanks to Tricia for her many years as secretary over the years; she's done an exceptional job with our meeting records and written letters to businesses and members.

When I was in grad school and sent questions, concerns and a gripe or two to my advisor, she was notorious for sending a one-word answer—Forward! It didn't matter if it was a teaching or research problem I thought I had or if I wrote a few sentences or many paragraphs, only one word came back. So, here's me passing that lesson along for Volkswalking 2020. FORWARD!

Walk to Live, Live to Walk,
~Lee



Sandy peaks

It's a new year and we have lots of fun walking opportunities this year! I am so excited by all of the available walks. In addition to the usual fun ones such as Des Moines Sky Walk on February 15, our soup walk starting at a new location at Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church on March 7 and Lincoln's Spring Walk on March 21, we have a host of new Iowa state park walks that can be walked throughout the walking season. Walking through the woods in various parts of the state of Iowa will give us a whole new view of the "flat state with nothing but cornfields". Each of these 20 parks highlighted in the "20 Iowa Parks in 2020" has a unique quality. Some are easy, rated 1 or 2 A. Others are like hiking the AT with walking sticks and sturdy hiking boots highly recommended. Most parks have some amazing history. I was amazed to learn that part of Iowa was owned by Spain and they had a mining operation there. There will be group walks at each of the parks including a special kickoff in May, a bus trip to 7 parks in September and our own Regional Roundup in October. And look for the special program that is coming. This free program requires you to walk 20 of the walks. They can be in any of the parks, so you can cross the river and do Lake Manawa 20 times if you want and still receive a patch. Beware though, Lake Manawa and Waubonsie are the only two parks in the Iowa Park system that charges out of state cars a \$5 day use fee. An exception to that will be the day we walk Lake Manawa during the Blazing Trails, Telling Tales Regional Roundup event on October 3. Lake Manawa will have no charge that day. I digress. Back to the Walk 20 special program. There will be the possibility of a special prize if you complete all 20 different parks over the period of May 1-October 15. We would like all you special program walkers to post selfies on Facebook at each of the 20 parks. More on this later.

Another walk I am really excited about is the Bockfest walk on April 4. This walk will be very reminiscent of walks that Butch and I and many other volkswalkers did in Germany, with a beer tent, Oompa music and multiple checkpoints (on the first 5 K loop) to get refreshed with maybe get a tasty sample of German food before traveling on.

We will also have a return of our breakfast walk at Standing Bear Lake in September. And a December lights walk! So much to look forward to. Watch for the 2020 walk brochure.

I also want to say how in awe I am of our club members. We have the most generous people! After we announced at the last minute that we would be collecting donations for the shelter at our December meeting, we managed to collect 8 pairs of boots, 8 jackets and sweaters, 15 scarves, 26 pairs of socks, 44 pairs of gloves, 39 hats and ear protectors and one adorable baby hat and sweater that some new mother is going to love. In addition to that, I have been able to collect many bags of plastic that some of you have brought in. We are over half way to our 500 pounds of plastic needed to build our bench! So thanks to all for your big-heartedness!

~Sandy

**State Park Spotlight:
Lake of Three Fires State Park**

Lake of Three Fires State Park is part of the 2020 Iowa State Parks walks being hosted by the Nebraska Wander Freunde Trailblazers and the Greater Des Moines Volkssport Association. It is the most southwestern of the 20 walks being offered as part of this program. It is a little more than an hour's drive north of St. Joseph, Missouri.



Its location in the Loess Hills is the setting for the legend which gives this park its name. A band of Potowami Indians decided to join with two other local tribes to form

the "Fire Nation". Three fires burned at all times on the hilltops to signify this coalition. The Lake of Three Fires sits in a valley from where the smoke could have been seen. The park itself was created in 1935 and offers year-round activities to hikers, campers, picnickers, hunters and equestrians.

Lake of Three Fires is a small lake, nearly a mile long and half a mile wide. The 10k trail, rated 2B, takes the hiker around the lake, sometimes sharing the trail with horses. The trail meanders close to the lake and then soars up to the hilltops for sweeping views to the east. Deer and other wildlife browse close to the lake and in the wooded valleys. The 5k trail, rated 1B, follows Main Trail north to the park's boundary and around a small pond before returning to the Start Point along a recreational beach.

Sunscreen and insect repellent are recommended on the natural paths and trails of this state park. Walk hours are dawn to dusk. No entrance fee is required of out-of-state vehicles.

Valentino's is the location of our 2020 annual dinner on Saturday, January 18. Social time begins at 5:30 and dinner is at 6:00 with the business meeting following. The restaurant is located at 5022 S 108th St (108th & Q) in Omaha. Cost is \$15 for members, \$20 for nonmembers and includes drink, tax and tip. Please mail your check by January 10 to NWFT, PO Box 8147, Omaha NE 68108. Hope to see you there!



Check Out AVA's New Logo!



**AMERICA'S
WALKING CLUB**
— ESTABLISHED 1976 —

Avoid Distractions for Safer Walking

Have you heard of distracted walking? It is anything that causes you to focus on something (or multiple things) instead of paying attention to your walk.

Walking is one of the times you are most at-risk for being hurt and we all have to walk from time to time. In 2017, there were an estimated 7,450 pedestrian deaths (including traffic and non-traffic), and nearly 6,000 of those were struck and killed by motor vehicles.

How do we stay safe while walking? Here are some tips you can follow:

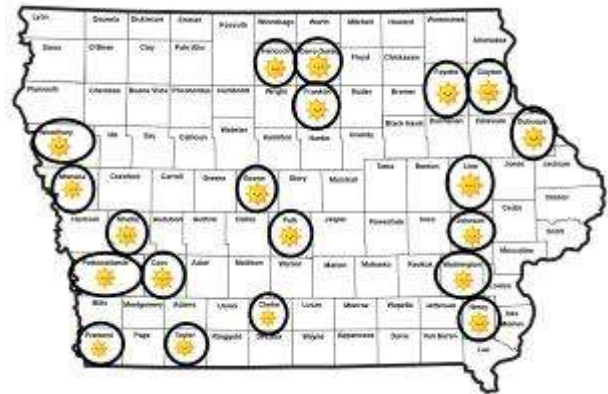
- When possible, walk on the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, walk facing traffic.
- Follow the rules of the road, obeying all traffic signs and signals.
- Cross the streets at crosswalks.
- If there are no crosswalks or you can't see, move to a place where you can safely see oncoming traffic.
- Look left, right and left again before crossing the street. Make eye contact with drivers to make sure they see you.
- Stay alert! Don't use your cell phone or ear buds.
- Don't use alcohol or drugs when walking (or before going for a walk).
- Wear bright and/or reflective clothing.
- Use a flashlight at night.
- Watch for cars going in or out of driveways or parking stalls.
- Children younger than 10 should cross the street with an adult.

Sources:

[Nebraska Safety Council, www.nsc.org/home-safety/safety-topics/distracted-walking](http://www.nsc.org/home-safety/safety-topics/distracted-walking)
[SafeKids Worldwide,](http://SafeKids Worldwide)
www.safekids.org/sites/default/files/alarming_dangers_in_school_zones



In 2020, the Iowa state park system will celebrate its 100th anniversary! Iowa's Walking Club and the Nebraska Trailblazers have set up walks in 20 state parks. You can walk at your own convenience or join other walkers on designated trail walks. More information about each of these routes can be found on the website of Iowa's Walking Club.



A Publication of the Nebraska Trailblazers

Pie Walk

November 9, 2019



Le Mars Holiday Weekend





Mark your calendars: Upcoming Events!!

January

- 1 New Years Day Mall Walk, West Des Moines IAIowa's Walking Club
- 4 Northtown Mall Walk, Blaine MN Lake Country Wanderers

February

- 8 The Walking Company @ Mall of America, Bloomington..... Twin Cities Volkssport
- 8 East Towne Mall Walk, Madison WI Madison Area Volkssport Assn
- 15 Des Moines Skywalk IWC
- 15 Wild River State Park Snowshoe/Walk, Almelund MN..... NorthStar Trail Travelers
- 16 Presidents' Weekend Eagles Walk, Lawrence KS..... Sunflower Sod Stompers

March

- 7 Winter-B-Gone Soup Walk, Omaha..... NWFT
- 14 St. Paul YMCA Skyways Walk.....TCV
- 21 Spring Walk, Lincoln.....Lincoln Volkssport Club



Speaker Schedule

2020 Speakers TBA

Meet & EAT	2020
<h1>Stay tuned for info on 2020 Meet & Eats!!</h1>	

Snow Days

Don't forget—if Omaha/Council Bluffs schools cancel school because of the weather, the Trailblazers won't have a meeting that Monday evening.



Meeting News

The next club meetings will be February 3, March 2 and April 6 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.

Membership Dues

September and 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, please send by February 15:



snail-mail to: NWFT
PO Box 8147
Omaha NE 68108