

President's Corner

by Mary Frink

Hello everyone! I hope you are getting excited for the Boston Signature Event! Everyone is busy getting everything together. My part right now it to get the activity cards stamped and put together the packets for those who pre-registered. We have 154 people pre-registered from 23 states! I hope you will be able to come. You can register for any of the 4 Boston walk routes (Castle Island, Back Bay, Freedom Trail, or Hidden Gems/Special Places) on Friday or Saturday just like a regular day event. If you are able to volunteer, we still have space left. It will be a great time!



Stamped activity cards
drying station

I hope to see you Friday and/or Saturday!

Starting Point 2027

by Beate Hait

The 2027 edition of AVA's *Starting Point* provides an overview of 1,000+ Year Round & Seasonal volkswalk routes and is a convenient resource to have at your fingertips when planning a US vacation or weekend away. Invite relatives/friends along for a walk—and enjoy the time to converse while seeing the sights. Contact Bea to reserve your copy by Sept. 30, 2026. Cost of the book is \$35 plus \$6.50 postage, and delivery is expected in early December. Beateh1@aol.com or 774-292-9098.

Picture Time!



Beate Hait

It was a lovely day for the Newton group walk on August 15.

L-R: Carol Giesecke, Monica Hait, Bev Lange, Mark Laviolette, Diane Bucher, Marianne Marshall, Denise Dracup, Miriam Sadofsky, Miriam Boucher, Mary Frink

Come Friends, Let's Walk

- ❖ Fri. & Sat., Aug. 28-29
Special Events:
Boston Castle Island & more
- ❖ Sunday, Aug. 30
Group Walk:
Boston Back Bay 9:00 am
- ❖ Sat., Sept. 12
Group Walk:
Fall River 10:00 am
- ❖ Sat., Sept. 12
Group Walk:
Mystic, CT 10:00 am (CVVC)
- ❖ Sat., Sept. 19
Group Walk:
Wellesley 10:00 am
- ❖ Sat., Sept. 26
Group Walk:
Concord 8:30 am
- ❖ Sat., Sept. 26
Group Walk:
Providence (Water/Fire) 3:00 pm
- ❖ Sat., Oct. 3
Group Walk:
Sandwich 10:00 am

See club or AVA website for starting location details on these events. For group walks, please aim to arrive 15 minutes earlier to sign-in.

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Volunteer of Honor: Bill Howe

by Marianne Marshall

In addition to continuing his duties as WnM's webmaster, in 2020 Bill volunteered to take on the responsibilities of the Lowell year-round walk. While not an onerous job, being a YRE/SE POC does require checking the route to be sure no changes have to be made to the directions due to construction or street signs being removed, keeping up with the Special Programs applicable to the route, checking the walk box to be sure all information is in place and current, and completing the quarterly report with the number of participants and dollars due. As the Lowell National Park Service experienced closures, part-time schedules, and even a move to another facility while renovations took place, Bill stayed on top of the changes so walkers knew the start

location and the available hours. WnM appreciates the extra effort required by Bill and thanks him for managing the Lowell walk so well for six years.



*Photo of Bill courtesy
of Beate Hait*



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Elephant Migration

photos by Carol Giesecke

Some of our club members have already visited the elephant herd art installation along Boston's Commonwealth Avenue Mall, which is part of the Back Bay year-round route. Enjoy the exhibit through Sept. 13, 2026.

There is another Back Bay group walk opportunity on Sunday, August 30. Meet under the dome at center of Quincy Market to register starting at 8:30. Group walk begins at 9:00.



Far left: impressive view of one sculpted trunk

Immediate left: Anna & Rachel Walther, Mackenzie Sweet, Carol Giesecke, and Paul Allen among the life-size elephant sculptures on August 19

August Meeting Highlights

by Marianne Marshall

Meeting held August 3, 2026 in Franklin, MA.

Boston Castle Island — Aug 28 & 29:

- 148 pre-registrations.
- Volunteers needed for Friday, Aug. 28 and Sat., Aug. 29. Contact Bea.
- If you have games to lend, alert Bea.
- Anticipated expenses not expected to exceed anticipated income.

Specialties:

- If you wish to receive Starting Point 2027, contact Bea. Order must be in by end of September.

Sunshine:

- Sympathy card to Carol Giesecke on the death of her brother; get-well cards to Joanne Izbicki, Joe Piffat, Helen Tolbert, and Sue Weddig; a congratulations card to Phil & Alida Lupsiewicz on the birth of their new grandchild.

Walk Coordinator:

- 217 participants in our 20 YR/S events through the end of 2nd quarter.
- Lowell YRE to be dropped in 2027; Keith Harlow to be POC of Plymouth effective 1/1/2027.
- Agreed to extend Nantucket and Oak Bluffs walks to 10/31 next year (Oak Bluffs had been 9/30).
- Day event in Cambridge on Sunday, Nov. 8. Registration 8:30-11:30.

AVA Checkpoint:

- Next AVA Biennial Convention is June 28 to July 1, 2027 in Springfield, MO.
- Nomination deadline for national awards is Dec. 1, 2026.

Upcoming Club Meeting:

Next meeting Monday, Sept. 14 at 6:30 pm at the Stop & Shop in Franklin.

Bulletin Board

SMVA SEPTEMBER GROUP WALK
(6K*) - AUGUSTA, ME - State Capital

Date: Saturday, September 26

Time: Meet at 10:45am at Park and
Ride on Piggery Road, at the inter-
section with Hospital Street/Rt
9. Walk starts at 11:00am

*Distance: 6K; 10K route available
upon request. Rated 2A

Fee: \$4 with physical stamp on site

RSVP (in case of any changes and so
we know who to expect; also details
re: parking directions)

walkinginmaine@yahoo.com or
text/voice to 207-245-8233

**Come and join us for the 25th
US FreedomWalk**
16-18 October 2026



An International Walking Experience

**Do you have a
volksmarching travel story
or favorite walk memory to
share?** Send it to

footnotes.editor@gmail.com
for possible publication in a
future edition of **Footnotes**.

**Next Club Meeting
Monday, Sept. 14**

6:30 pm

Stop & Shop
40 Franklin Village Drive
Franklin, MA 02038

Up the stairs past
Customer Service Desk

The **25th US FreedomWalk Festival**
will be held **Oct. 16-18, 2026**. Yes,
that's right, USFWF is celebrating 25
years, the AVA is celebrating 50 years,
and America celebrates 250 years!

Participants can pre-register through:
www.usfreedomwalk.org

Same day registration at start/finish:
American Legion Post 139
3445 Washington Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22201

The US FreedomWalk Festival is a
3-day, non-competitive, social walking
challenge that attracts participants of
all ages and abilities together for fun,
fitness, and international friendship.

The festival includes walks and
activities programmed each day.
The walk, bike & swim events cater
to a range of interests and abilities
from beginners to experts.

This event is co-hosted by the
American Volkssport
Association, IML Walking
Association, Arlington
County, Virginia,
BikeArlington
& WalkArlington.

Newsletter Submissions to:

footnotes.editor@gmail.com

Deadline for next issue: Sept. 21st



Visit www.ava.org on
September 23 & 24
to donate to AVA
during the annual
Big Give

Autumn Group Walk Schedule

by Marianne Marshall

Sun., August 30	Back Bay	9:00	Sat., Nov. 14	Wellesley	10:00
Sat., Sept 12	Fall River	10:00	Sun., Nov. 15	Boston Special Places	9:00
Sat., Sept. 19	Wellesley	10:00	Sat., Nov. 21	Plymouth	TBD parade
Sat., Sept. 26	Concord	8:30	Fri., Nov. 27	Fall River	10:00
Sat., Sept. 26	Providence	3:00	Sat., Nov. 28	Concord	10:00
	water/fire		Sat., Dec. 12	Wickford	10:00
Sat., Oct. 3	Sandwich	10:00	Tue., Dec. 15	Roslindale	10:30
Sat., Oct. 17	Provincetown	10:00	Tue., Dec. 29	Sandwich	10:30
Sat., Oct. 24	Lowell	10:00			
(last group walk before event ends)					
Sat., Oct. 31	Newton	10:00			
funny hats/costumes optional					



Please remember to arrive 30-15 minutes earlier than the group walk time to allow for parking & registration. Thanks!

IML Global Walker: Mary Suchodolski

At the IML event in Vaasa, Finland during August 2026, Mary Suchodolski received the Global Walking Award. This distinction is earned by completing 75% or maximum 10 IML walks in each IML region (currently 10 European events and 8 Pan Pacific events).

There are ~190 countries in the world. Mary has been to 34 countries; 24 for IML walks (denoted by * in list).

- | | |
|-----------|------------------|
| USA * | Austria * |
| Canada * | Luxembourg * |
| Mexico | Vatican |
| Bermuda | Czech Republic * |
| Bahama | Slovenia |
| Ireland * | Poland |
| England * | Israel * |
| Norway * | South Korea * |
| Sweden * | Japan * |
| Denmark * | Taiwan * |
| Portugal | Netherlands * |
| Spain * | Belgium * |
| Greece | Turkey |
| France | New Zealand * |
| Germany * | Australia * |

 **Mary Suchodolski**
1h · 🧑

During the closing ceremony today in Vaasa , I received my Global Walking award , certificates and a delicious box of chocolates !!!



- Switzerland *
Italy *
Croatia *
Finland *

Congrats!

Walk Coordinator Speaks

by Beate Hait

The Great Elephant Migration on Commonwealth Avenue Mall – This huge art installation is available through Sept. 13 and is on our Back Bay Boston volkswalk route. Note that the 5K route turns at Clarendon Street, so we encourage 5K walkers to continue on the Mall for another block where the installation starts at Dartmouth Street. (The cross streets are alphabetical in this area; you won't get lost.)

There is a Back Bay Group Walk at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, August 30, following the AVA 50th Anniversary Castle Island event on August 28 and 29. No problem if you didn't pre-register. You may register for any of the four Boston walks on Friday or Saturday at the Courtyard by Marriott at 63R Boston Street in Boston.

SAVE the DATE – November 8 – Walk in Cambridge, MA – Our last traditional, staffed volkswalk this year starts in the parking lot of Trader Joe's and the Micro Center on Memorial Drive in Cambridge on Sunday, November 8. Please contact me if you can put up streamers and arrows to mark the route at 8, take down our markings when heading out to walk the route at noon, or staff a 2-hour shift at the Start/Finish or at a checkpoint between 8 and 2:30.

2027 Year-round and Seasonal Events – The Lowell volkswalk will not be renewed for 2027, so plan to walk it before the end of December. To register, ask for the Walk Box at the desk of the Lowell National Historical Park Visitor Center or use Online Start Box through the my.ava.org website. Enjoy the fall colors while walking along the rivers and canals and see the exhibits at both the Visitor Center and the Boott Cotton Mill.

Joining the list of YREs and SEs is a seasonal walk on the island of Nantucket. We are also exploring the potential of an Island Hopping Volkswalk Day in 2027 which would encompass a full day of Hy-Line ferry trips to Nantucket and then to Martha's Vineyard to walk the volkswalk routes on those islands before returning to Hyannis. Stay tuned for details.

Wednesday Walks and Group Walks – Carol Giesecke often hosts group walks on Wednesdays. You may walk with others or walk on your own following the written directions. For questions or to let Carol know to expect you at the start point, call 302-399-6334.

Fall dates for group walks have been selected for Fall River, Wellesley, Providence, Sandwich, Provincetown, Lowell, Newton, Boston Special Places, Plymouth, Concord, Wickford, and Roslindale. See the schedule in this newsletter [page 5], and stay up to date on all walk plans using our website.

Where and when will we schedule day walks in 2027? First up will be the Soup Walk in March or April where the start location needs to be an indoor venue, ideally with access to a kitchen, and a room that can accommodate seating for 40 to 60 people. Since AVA requires notification of an event a minimum of 90 days prior to the event, the clock is ticking. We hope to have a Soup Walk location determined by the end of this year.

The club, needs someone to introduce a walk location by saying, "Hey, how about doing a walk in __," or "I know there are sidewalks along most streets where we can walk safely," or "there are lots of trails through a park," or "there's a good place to start with bathrooms and lots of parking," or "there's a really fascinating part of town that I'm sure others will find interesting."

As Walk Coordinator, I assist in tasks related to planning and implementing a walk, and there are others in the club who perform a myriad of tasks from producing the brochure to documenting data for the after-action report.

I am anxiously waiting to hear walk location suggestions from our membership. Contact me! Beateh1@aol.com or 774-292-9098

