

President's Corner

Editor: Mary is taking a hiatus to recuperate and revel in the memories of the AVA Signature Event we held in Boston. See photos throughout this issue. Next month she should be back to her perky self with more to say.

by Mary Frink

Reminder: **club elections** for President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer will be voted on at the **Oct. 5 meeting** in Franklin. Meeting details: Monday, Oct. 5 at 6:30 pm, Stop & Shop, 40 Franklin Village Drive, Franklin, MA 02038. Up the stairs past Customer Service Desk and go about half-way down the hall to the meeting room.

Pictures: Boston

by Bev Lange



Come Friends, Let's Walk

- ❖ Sat., Oct. 3
Group Walk:
Sandwich, MA
10:00 am
- ❖ Tues., Oct 6
Group Walk:
Roslindale, MA
10:15 am
- ❖ Sat., Oct. 10
Group Walk:
Branford, CT
10:00 am (CVVC)
- ❖ Sat., Oct. 17
Group Walk:
Lowell, MA 10:00 am
- ❖ Tues., Oct. 20
Group Walk: Boston
Freedom Trail
10:15 am
- ❖ Sat., Oct. 24
Group Walk:
Providence, RI
3:00 pm (Water/Fire)
- ❖ Sat., Oct. 31
Group Walk:
Newton, MA
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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AVA Achievement Awards (compiled from TAW)

Based on the IVV Event and Distance Award information provided in the September 2026 issue of *The American Wanderer*, **congratulations** are due to the following people.

Name	Events	Distance
Carol Giesecke	500, 525	3,500 KM
Sheila McClellan	1,450	
John McClellan	1,900	19,000 KM

Did I overlook either your event or distance award? Please let me know so I can submit it for the next issue of *Footnotes*.

-Marianne Marshall,
mrbwalker@verizon.net

Congrats

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Fort Independence & USS Constitution Photos



Photos courtesy of Mike Green

On Friday, Aug. 28, the USS Constitution fired a 21-gun salute at the cannons near Fort Independence to celebrate Chief Petty Officer Heritage Week. The Fort's cannons honored the occasion as well which quite impressed some walkers on our Castle Island route. Learn more: <https://www.war.gov/News/Feature-Stories/Story/Article/4159377/aboard-the-uss-constitution-chief-petty-officer-heritage-weeks/>

September Meeting Highlights

by Marianne Marshall

Meeting held Sept. 14, 2026 in Franklin, MA.

Boston Castle Island Signature Event:

- Successful two-day event with a total of 194 participants for WnM's Castle Island Signature event plus 79 participants on Back Bay, 78 on Freedom Trail, and 66 for Special Places/Hidden Gems. HUGE thanks to Bea Hait, Mary Frink, Carol Giesecke, and Karen Plichta as well as other WnM club members, other clubs, and AVA for their work to ensure a smoothly run event.

Walk Coordinator:

- Renewed 9 year-round and 11 seasonal (8 of which are Pay Per Participant) events for 2027.
- Bea to check costs for a start point for a Soup Walk in Hopkinton either April 3 or 10, 2027
- Mary and Miriam interested in having Lexington as a day event in 2027.
- Keith investigating possibility of Block Island as a guided group walk on August 7, 2027 which is National Lighthouse Day.

AVA Checkpoints for August & September:

- Next AVA Biennial Convention is June 28 to July 1, 2027 in Springfield, MO. Registration now available at the University Plaza Hotel.

- AVA members can purchase heating and cooling walking gear through Venustas and get \$30 off first purchase plus a \$10 gift card.
- New 2027 Special Programs: Craft Beer and Historic Places of Worship.
- Lighthouse Special Program extended to Dec. 31, 2027.
- AVA seeking volunteers to serve on Nominating Committee to find candidates for AVA officer positions.
- Big Give: due to benefitting financially from the Signature Event, WnM decided to send AVA \$250.

New Business:

- Keith to check with Willow Brook Restaurant in Mendon for WnM's After-Holiday Party.
- Bea to serve on Northeast Regional Director Nominating Committee. Contact Bea if you would like to nominate yourself or another person for either Regional or Deputy Director of the Northeast Region.

Upcoming Club Meeting:

Next meeting Monday, Oct. 5 at 6:30 pm at the Stop & Shop in Franklin.

Bulletin Board



We are delighted to welcome **new club members**:
Vivian Glassman, David Grosser, and Anna Grosser
of Auburndale, MA

-Diane Peterson, Membership Chairperson

Weihnachten 5K

Saturday, December 5, 2026

Holiday evening walk through
beautiful **Helen, GA**

alpinehelenvolksmarch.org



**Next Club Meeting
Monday, Oct. 5**

6:30 pm

Stop & Shop
40 Franklin Village Drive
Franklin, MA 02038

*Up the stairs past
Customer Service Desk*

Walk Around Florida: WAF35

November 6-8 in Bradenton, FL

Pre-registration deadline is Oct. 26,
learn more and find form through
<https://my.ava.org/find-a-fest.php?id=106>

**4 Walks & a Swim in Manatee
and Sarasota Counties**

Host Club
Suncoast Sandpipers
Alice Lawrence
(727) 542-9742
pipers@tampabay.rr.com
Tampa Bay Region

Newsletter Submissions to:

footnotes.editor@gmail.com

Deadline for next issue: Oct. 21st

Change in previously announced autumn
group walk dates:

Lowell now **Oct. 17** at 10am

Providence now **Oct. 24** at 3pm

Provincetown now **Nov. 14** at 10am

Lowell Group Walk Swan Song

by Marianne Marshall

The Lowell yearly event has NOT been renewed for 2027. If you haven't been able to get to this walk recently, the route includes many historic landmarks, museums, canals, and gate locks. If you wish to join a final group walk of Lowell, please plan to join me on **Saturday, October 17**, at 9:45 am to register and 10:00 am to walk. Park at the garage at 350 Dutton Street, walk out the garage entrance, turn RIGHT, go down the stairs and across to the start on the left at the Lowell National Historical Park Visitor Center. Present your parking ticket to one of the rangers at the desk to get your parking ticket validated. I hope to see you there.



Halloween Group Walk in Newton

by Marianne Marshall

Although there are four 5km loops from which to select, I'm planning to lead walkers on the Newton Cemetery loop on Halloween morning, **Saturday, October 31**. There are no streets to cross and no known ghosts, but I have heard some people might acknowledge the holiday with an appropriate headpiece or pin.

For those who wish a longer distance, I will be walking one of the other 5km loops as well so if you have a favorite loop (Crystal Lake, Boston Marathon's Heartbreak Hill, or Bulloughs Park & Newtonville) let me know that day and the majority will determine which loop to walk second.



Do you have a volksmarching travel story to share?

Send it to footnotes.editor@gmail.com for publication in a future edition of **Footnotes**.

Castle Island Recap

by Carol Giesecke

As many *Footnotes* readers know, Walk 'n Mass has a long history. Some current members have been organizing and leading walks for over 40 years! Once, over 15 years ago, Walk 'n Mass offered a walk route that started at the Kennedy Museum and Library and went to Castle Island and back (15 km), ending with a picnic on the lawn of the Library. Luckily, our amazingly organized Walk Coordinator, Bea Hait, keeps all the records of past walks and happily shares them when we ask for a copy.

In 2025, the Board and Publicity Committee of the American Volkssport Association, AVA: America's Walking Club (of which Walk 'n Mass is a member club), suggested that each of the 8 regions across the country develop one or more walk events to help celebrate 50 years of AVA which started in Fredericksburg, TX with walk #1 in 1976. Some regions planned more than one celebration, like the Northeast with ESCV hosting the Lake George, NY events in May plus our Castle Island in August. All in all, 17 celebrations were planned and are still taking place. There are two in October – one in Arlington VA- the 25th Anniversary Freedom/Walk Festival October 14-16 and Hallowe'en Kicks on Route 66 in Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma Oct. 31-Nov. 1. There are also two in November – the 35th Annual Walk Around Florida November 6-8 in Tampa



Bay and OWF Honors Veterans held in Dayton, OH on November 14. The final observance will be held as a walk and Christmas market in Helen, Georgia on December 5 – the Weihnachten Lights Spectacular.

All this is a prelude to explain that Walk 'n Mass members were asked by AVA to hold a celebratory event in August 2026.

Pictures by Beate Hait



Concurrently, Rob McDaniel, who is a veteran-owned travel advisor with Cruise Planners/ NWZ Travel and who creates fundraising cruises to benefit AVA through Walking Waves, had decided to hold a cruise from Boston to Portland, Bar Harbor, Halifax, and Saint John, New Brunswick from August 30-September 7. He chose three host hotels in Dorchester (South Boston) for his cruisers to stay. Our task at Walk 'n Mass was to come up with pleasing 5km and 10km walk routes that would start and end at one of the hotels. We decided to include the three existing Boston YREs as part of a weekend of events for those people still needing a stamp for the capitals Special Program or having an interest in seeing other areas of the city. We were also asked to host an evening event with cake to celebrate the AVA 50th anniversary.

My job was the easy and very fun one – to come up with two good walk routes that would be scenic with lots of opportunities to eat and rest along the way. Many thanks go to the event planning staff – Bea Hait, Mary Frink, Karen Plichta, and Marianne Marshall for all the hours of Zoom calls, working with Courtyard Marriott staff (Bea), planning, coming up with registration materials, the magnet award, and finding the best little stamps to use for the activity cards (Mary), walking the walk and improving on the first, second, and third drafts of the directions and also modifying the Back Bay walk to help walkers return to the hotel from a tour of Fenway Park that Rob added for cruise participants (Karen and Marianne). All that planning and publicity culminated in

Continued on page 7

Castle Island Recap (cont.)

by Carol Giesecke

194 participants from 24 states coming to enjoy the volkswalk routes in Boston on August 28 and 29.



A big thank you, first of all to our volunteers from other clubs that staffed tables, checkpoints and led walks – Joe, Barbara, and Kathryn Piffat from

Two Town Walking Club; Terri Tyler, AVA South Central Regional Director; Kathy Kresko from First State Webfooters; and Denise Macaronas from Southern Maine Volkssport Association. In addition, we wish to thank the cruisers and other volunteers from other clubs around the country: Shirley Hightower, Marilyn Nasi, Diane Evans, Kelly Rosche, Gail Leichty, Rob McDaniel, and Pat Skaggs. Your help in making our event a big success was invaluable! Finally a hearty Walk 'n Mass thank you to all our club volunteers for making this a memorable event: Mary Frink, Marianne Marshall, Keith Harlow, Dawn Harlow, Ann Plichta, Karen Plichta, Miriam Boucher, Karen Kolaczyk, Brian Timmons, Patty Timmons, Sara Derstine, Suzanne Laundry, Beverly Lange, Diane Bucher, Beate Hait, Janet Razulis, Cary Greenburg, Joan Hartnett-Barry, Mary Suchodolski, and Jack Suchodolski. This 2-day



event would not have been possible without all these caring and helpful volunteers, and we are all very grateful!

We were very lucky with the weather. Although it was sometimes hot, walking along the water was often very refreshing. We were also lucky that the historic and very popular Sullivan's Restaurant on Castle Island, which opened in 1951, was right on the walk route, so those who wished could take advantage of their savory offerings. One amazing event that we could not possibly have planned, but provided an amazing treat for a lucky group of walkers at just the right place and time, was the sight of the USS Constitution firing a 21-gun salute at the cannons near Fort Independence and those cannons answering back with firing of their own. This Friday happening was in honor of Chief Petty Officer Heritage Week. Many amazing photos and videos emerged from that event!! For those who missed this thrilling spectacle, there will be a similar event on October 21 commemorating the USS Constitution and the United States Navy's Birthday. Perhaps you will journey to Castle Island that day!



Pictures by Beate Hait

Walk Coordinator Speaks

by Beate Hait

Castle Island and AVA's 50th Anniversary in review – Thank you to POC Carol Giesecke who planned the walk route to Castle Island that was enjoyed by 194 walkers from 24 states over the 2-day event on August 28-29. There were also about 75 participants at each of the three Boston YREs: Freedom Trail, Back Bay, and Special Places. I also spoke with several people who were planning to participate in a variety of our other SEs and YREs, such as Providence and Quincy. Those choosing to walk the Back Bay route were treated to *The Great Elephant Migration*, an art installation along Commonwealth Mall, that ended on Sept. 13.

At the evening socials, Meet & Greet on Friday and the Anniversary Cake Fest on Saturday, the games most enjoyed by participants included Uno, Name 5, and Kollide. See Carol's recap on pages 6-7.

Cambridge, MA on Sunday, November 8 – Carol Giesecke is the POC for this walk that winds through Cambridge, Harvard University campus, and along the Charles River. If you are available to staff a 2-hour shift at the Start, Finish, or Checkpoint tables, please contact Bea at beateh1@aol.com or 774-292-9098.



2027 Walk Calendar – Our traditional event walk calendar will begin in April. Stay tuned for the location & date for our Soup Walk. Also looking to add walks to the schedule for the rest of the year. Please share your suggestions!

2027 AVA Biennial Walking Festival and Convention – Plan to join walkers from around the country in Springfield, Missouri for the AVA convention June 29–July 1 (with pre-walks June 26–28 in Bentonville, Arkansas, and Branson, Missouri. Info on post-walks July 2–4 to be forthcoming). University Plaza Hotel in Springfield is the host hotel. Swimming & biking event plans are underway. See ava.org/2027-convention to stay up-to-date as details are posted.

Pictures: Portland, ME

After the Walking Waves II participants finished in Boston, they set sail on a Norwegian Cruise ship and headed to Portland, ME. It was a beautiful day for a group walk with SMVA on Monday, Aug. 31.



Beate Hait

Beate Hait