WALK'N MASS VOLKSSPORT CLUB

Footnotes

www.walknmass.org

November 2026

President's Corner

by Mary Frink

I know I am late with this (stupid flu), but I want to give a HUGE thank you to everyone who helped with the Boston Signature Event at the end of August. Whether you volunteered for 5 minutes or 5 hours or 5 months, every single minute was needed. It was a fabulous success! I have heard nothing but praise for what we accomplished. A special shout out to my fellow committee members: Carol Giesecke, Beate Hait, and Karen Plichta. There was a lot to organize and we managed to pull it all off.

Have you ever done an AVA special program? If you don't know what that is, AVA special programs are challenges where you do a set number of walks that meet certain criteria and when you are done, you get an award, usually a patch. A few years ago, we sponsored an AVA special program where the walk had to go past an ice cream parlor. That was a yummy one! For 2026, I signed up for a program called Anniversaries Hurrah. It celebrates the 50th anniversary of AVA. You have to do 25 walks, all in 2026. When I signed up, I figured it would be no problem. That's just over 2 walks a month. Surely I can do that! Well, when we got to the Boston Signature Event in August, I realized I had only done 5. Uh oh! Since then, I have been trying to complete 2 walks a week. I can still only do 5K at a time, so it hasn't been too bad. As of writing this, I am at 16 walks out of 25! I will let you know if/when I finish! Many thanks to Miriam Boucher and Marianne Marshall who have been willing to walk with me on Tuesdays when I get out of work. I hope you will sign up for a special program if you find the subject interesting or (like me) you just like the patch. Hopefully you will do better than me with your scheduling!

I haven't minded doing all the walks now to finish the special program. As most of you know, Fall is my absolute favorite time of year. The trees are so beautiful and it's fun to see all the Halloween decorations. I hope you can get out and enjoy it yourself!

After Thanksgiving, **#OptOutside** and join our group walks in Fall River and Concord.

- *Friday, Nov. 27*
  Group Walk:
  Fall River, MA 10:00am
- *Saturday, Nov. 28*
  Group Walk:
  Concord, MA 10:00am



Come Friends, Let's Walk

- *Saturday, Oct. 31*
  Group Walk:
  Newton, MA
  10:00am
- *Sunday, Nov. 8*
  Day Event:
  Cambridge, MA
- *Saturday, Nov. 14*
  Group Walk:
  Provincetown, MA
  10:00am
- *Saturday, Nov. 14*
  Group Walk:
  Hartford, CT
  10:00am (CVVC)
- *Sunday, Nov. 15*
  Group Walk:
  Boston Special Places 9:00am
- *Tuesday, Nov. 17*
  Group Walk:
  Danvers, MA
  10:00am (TTWC)
- *Saturday, Nov. 21*
  Group Walk:
  Plymouth, MA
  9:00am

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.

Issue Highlights:

Lowell YRE Update – 2
Cambridge Preview – 3
Walking Waves: Panama Canal – 3
Bulletin Board – 4
Gloucester YRE – 5
Walk Coordinator Speaks – 6
October Meeting Highlights – 6

Lowell Year-Round Event Update

by Marianne Marshall

Please note: the Lowell event will be **online registration only from November 1st to the end of year**. If you plan to walk this event, please check the Lowell National Historical Park Visitor Center's website for hours of operation (https://www.nps.gov/lowe/index.htm). Their schedule has already changed to being open only 9am – 4pm on Saturdays and Sundays through November 28. It is currently unknown what the schedule will be after November 28.

As a reminder, we decided to not renew the Lowell event for 2027, so please take the opportunity to visit again using Online Start Box (OSB) to register before this year ends.



Left to Right: Pam, Bev, Flavio, Mary, and Diane on Oct. 17 at the Lowell group walk

Photo by Marianne Marshall

President
Mary Frink, Everett
617-387-1577
mfwalks2010@verizon.net

Vice President
Keith Harlow, Blackstone
508-353-3336
krhguy13@yahoo.com

Secretary
Marianne Marshall, Waltham
781-899-5975
mrbwalker@verizon.net

Treasurer
Karen Plichta, Fall River
508-673-2374
karenp53@verizon.net

Activities Chairperson
open, volunteer needed!

Email Contact
Brian Timmons, Milford
508-782-0608
brianptimmons2017@gmail.com

Membership Chairperson
Diane Peterson, Lowell
978-987-3064
di1258@gmail.com

Walk Coordinator
Beate Hait, Holliston
508-429-3564
beateh1@aol.com

Group Walk Coordinator
Marianne Marshall, Waltham
781-899-5975
mrbwalker@verizon.net

Equipment Managers
Keith & Dawn Harlow, Blackstone
krhguy13@yahoo.com

Trail Master
Ann Plichta, Fall River
508-673-6553
amplic@comcast.net

Assistant Trail Master
Karen Kolaczyk, Marlborough
508-481-7389
kimba1959.kk@gmail.com

Print Newsletter Circulation
Joel & Susan Weddig, Waltham
339-215-9559
jands1971@gmail.com

E-Newsletter Distribution
Margo Craven, Attleboro
magoo249@comcast.net

Newsletter Editor
Monica Hait, Holliston
footnotes.editor@gmail.com

Publicity Chairperson
Karen Kolaczyk, Marlborough
508-481-7389
kimba1959.kk@gmail.com

Specialties Chairperson
Beate Hait, Holliston
508-429-3564
beateh1@aol.com

Sunshine Coordinator
Chris Lipson, Bedford
781-275-0464
c2lipson@msn.com

Historian
Dawn Harlow, Blackstone
dawnvt@yahoo.com

TAW Coordinator
Joe LaPointe, Holliston
landogriffin78@yahoo.com

Volunteer Awards
Marianne Marshall, Waltham
781-899-5975
mrbwalker@verizon.net

Facebook/Meetup POC
Blake Mitchell, Holliston
kblakemitchell@gmail.com

Webmaster
Bill Howe, Chelmsford
978-256-7370
bill.howe@bvhowe.com

Cambridge Preview

by Carol Giesecke

The snail at top right appears several places as part of a park in Cambridge. Let's see if you can find it on November 8th during the Cambridge traditional walk's 6km or 10km routes.

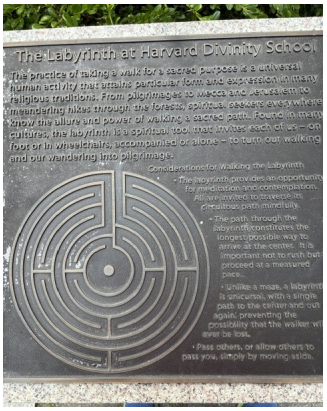
Prize(s) for first one(s) to indicate where they saw it may be awarded by Carol Giesecke at our After-Holidays party.



Top: Find that Snail

Bottom (L-R): Turkeys on Harvard campus; Labyrinth sign at Harvard Divinity School; the Harvard Lampoon Castle







Walking Waves: Panama Canal 2028

by Rob McDaniel



After a wonderful time celebrating America's Walking Club's 50th Anniversary in Boston, we're excited to invite our Walk 'n Mass friends to join us for another adventure!

Our 4th Annual Walking Waves Fundraising Cruise – Panama Canal & Beyond is officially open for reservations!

Join fellow walkers and friends January 2–12, 2028, aboard the Norwegian Gem for a 10-night cruise roundtrip from Miami, Florida.

Once again, we'll combine travel, friendship, and opportunities to explore new destinations while raising funds to support America's Walking Club (AVA). Cruise fares start at $1,413.65 per person, based on double occupancy. Group rates are locked in through December 1, 2026.

Reservations: www.nwztravel.com
Under Groups & Extras → America's Walking Club – Panama
Group Password: AVAPAN

Questions? Contact Rob McDaniel at rob@nwztravel.com

Bulletin Board



Beat the Bay State starts Nov 1! https://runsignup.com/Race/MA/Boston/baystate

Lace up, Bay State! The 7th Annual Beat the Bay State Challenge is officially back this November, and we need your steps to make Massachusetts streets safer and more accessible for everyone.

The Quick Details:

Dates: November 1–30 (Virtual) Entry: $20 per person

The Goal: Walk or run anywhere, log your miles, and virtually cover the 900-mile perimeter of MA—solo or with a team!

Unlock fun badges, win prizes for top mileage and fundraising- all while supporting WalkMassachusetts.



Save the Date: our **After-Holidays party** is being planned for **Sunday, January 24th** at the Willow Brook restaurant in Mendon. More details next month.

Next Club Meeting
Monday, Nov. 2

6:30 pm

Stop & Shop
40 Franklin Village Drive
Franklin, MA 02038

Up the stairs past
Customer Service Desk

Newsletter Submissions to:
footnotes.editor@gmail.com
Deadline for next issue: Nov. 21st

DANVERS, MA
Group Walk & Lunch
10am on Tuesday, November 17

Join the Two Town Walking Club (TTWC) at the Danvers Library (Peabody Institute Library of Danvers), 15 Sylvan Street, Danvers, MA 01923, for a Group Walk.

We plan to proceed to a restaurant, either on the walk or afterwards, where participants can purchase lunch. For information, please contact the POCs Joseph Piffat (jpiffat@aol.com) or Kathryn Piffat (kapiffat@aol.com). Sign in by 9:45-10am for a 10:15am walk step off!

The Northeast Region nominating committee is seeking candidates for election as NERD or Assistant NERD for 2-year term starting at AVA Convention 2027. If you are interested in being nominated, just learning more about these roles, or have ideas on individuals to consider, please contact Bea Hait (beateh1@aol.com).



New Trail for Two Town's Gloucester YRE

by Kathryn Piffat

Rejoice! The infamous hill on TTWC's Gloucester YRE is no more! The physical start box at the Market Basket on the infamous hill has been removed, and the trails are shorter and less strenuous.

The NEW Gloucester YRE is an Online Start Box (OSB) walk, and the trail now starts and finishes at historic Stage Fort Park (24 Hough St., Gloucester, MA 01930) on the Gloucester Harbor waterfront. As a result, the new trails are 5km and 10km and are rated only 1B. Stage Fort Park is an excellent location for picnicking. Restrooms are open in the summer.

America's oldest seaport, Gloucester, MA, is still an authentic working waterfront community and home to Gorton's, Inc. (frozen seafood). Three lighthouses, many museums (including the Cape Ann Museum), scenic vistas, shops & restaurants are along both routes, along with the Fishermen's Memorial, the Fishermen's Wives' Memorial, numerous Armed Forces memorials, and a view of Hammond Castle, built by eccentric inventor John Hays Hammond (Father of Radio Control). A fascinating place, tours of Hammond Castle, a short drive away, are highly recommended. The 10km route also includes Our Lady of Good Voyage Church (if open, check out the votive ships made and donated by the sailors); the home and memorial to artist Fitz Hugh Lane; the site of the First US Coast Guard Air Station; the Spanish American War Memorial; and Gorton's headquarters. Stage Fort Park itself includes a memorial to the Revolutionary War veterans.

Special Programs for the new Gloucester YRE include Anniversaries Hurrah, Lighthouses II, Par-for-the-Course, and Step to the Beat and will include Historic Places of Worship in 2027.

Parking at Stage Fort Park is FREE now after Labor Day weekend until Memorial Day weekend. (Last summer, it was very expensive, e.g., $30-$35/car, reservations required.) Additionally, metered parking is available on nearby streets. Another option on Sundays is to start the walk from the Cape Ann Museum and City Hall, where Sunday parking in the lot is usually free and where the two 5km loops that make up the 10km meet ([#12], [#37]). The 10km trail can also be accessed by walking a few blocks from the Gloucester Train Station (take the Rockport Line commuter rail from NORTH Station in Boston, confirming with the conductor before boarding that the train is traveling to Gloucester, as the line splits after Beverly; after exiting the train, turn left on Railroad Ave. to pass the supermarket, and proceed as described in the train directions, turning RIGHT at Pleasant Street [#35]).



Fishermen's Memorial
Photo by Barbara Piffat

Restrooms are available in City Hall (when open during the week, 5km/10km), at the Sawyer Free Public Library (when open, 5km/10km), at the Chamber of Commerce (10km), or at Stage Fort Park (summer only). Please note that most/all restaurants without seating (including Dunkin') do NOT have customer restrooms.



Ten Pound Island Lighthouse
Photo by Kathryn Piffat

The beautiful Rockport SE (also an OSB) is right next door to Gloucester, which makes it convenient for a second scenic oceanside walk nearby. The 10km Rockport trail passes the Rockport Train Station at the end of the line, one stop beyond Gloucester. Special Programs include Anniversaries Hurrah, Lighthouses II, Par-for-the-Course, and Step to the Beat and will include Historic Places of Worship in 2027.



Fishermen's Wives' Memorial
Photo by Barbara Piffat

For additional information, please contact Joseph Piffat (jpiffat@aol.com) or Kathryn Piffat (kapiffat@aol.com).

2026 YRE: https://my.ava.org/event-view.php?sn=131492
2027 YRE: https://my.ava.org/event-view.php?sn=133551

Walk Coordinator Speaks

by Beate Hait

November 8 – Cambridge, MA – Staffing is underway for this day event, and POC Carol Giesecke is excited about having participants get to experience this area of Cambridge that features a walking path along the Charles River and sights to see on the Harvard University campus. Did you know there is a labyrinth on the campus? I'm looking forward to seeing that – and completing my AVA Special Program Labyrinth Book.

Friday and Saturday after Thanksgiving – Have you already put place holders on these dates to participate in a volkswalk? Since 2017, Ann Plichta (Fall River on Friday) and Miriam Boucher (Concord on Saturday) have graciously offered to meet volkswalkers and join them on a walk. If you need incentive to get outside after nibbling on Thanksgiving treats, consider this your gentle nudge. You may either walk with others or head out on your own. The main goal is to get outside and walk!

Friday, Nov. 27, Fall River, MA – Work Out World (WOW), 18 Pocasset Street. Sign in at 9:45 to walk at 10:00.

Saturday, Nov. 28, Concord, MA -- Walgreens, 71 Lowell Road. Sign in at 9:45 to walk at 10:00.

Planning walks for 2027 – Thanks to those who have offered to plan walks in 2027, you can look forward to events next year in Milford, Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard, Lexington, western Mass (e.g., Shelburne Falls, Deerfield, Northampton, etc.), and Block Island, RI. Stay tuned for what develops.

The date of our 2027 Walk and Soup Social is confirmed to get our "walking season" going in the spring: **Saturday, April 10, 2027**, and we'll be starting in the center of Hopkinton near the start line for the Boston Marathon.



October Meeting Highlights

by Marianne Marshall

Meeting held Oct. 5, 2026 in Franklin, MA.

Walk Coordinator:

- It was decided to have a WnM Walk Challenge 2027 like the 2026 program.
- Bea arranging with St. John the Evangelist Parish in Hopkinton as Start/Finish for our Soup Walk on Sat., April 10, 2027
- Potential 2027 walks: Milford in October, an island hopping weekend to include Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket as well as other WnM YRE/SE walks in the area, and perhaps Block Island on Lighthouse Day, Sat., Aug. 7.
- Renewed 9 YRE and 11 SE (8 of which are Pay-Per-Participant) for 2027.

New Business:

- Keith to check with Willow Brook Restaurant in Mendon for WnM's After-Holiday Party.
- As no one came forward or proposed any-one else for WnM elected positions and the current officers were willing to remain in their positions, the members present unanimously re-elected the slate: Mary Frink, President; Keith Harlow, Vice-President; Marianne Mar-shall, Secretary; and Karen Plichta, Treasurer.
- Carol to find volunteers for the NERD Nominating Committee.

Upcoming Club Meeting:

Next meeting Monday, Nov. 2 at 6:30 pm at the Stop & Shop in Franklin.