“THE SHIP IS PASSING”

Walking a traditional walk in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan is an exciting experience especially when we encounter, can you believe it, a vessel passing through the Soo Locks. It sparks in me another comparison - between volkssporting and ships. What could I possibly mean? Allow me to share with you what I am thinking.

First, a ship has a captain responsible for all the activities. Each of our clubs has such a person, our President. He or she leads the club and ensures all the actions necessary for a year-round or traditional event are accomplished. Thank you all for all your hard work.

Second, each ship has “hands” that do various functions on the ship. Some cook, some in the engine room, some deck hands and some managers. It takes a team to keep the ship going just as a team keeps the club vibrant and moving in the right direction. Thinkers and doers are evident everywhere in our clubs, each with important tasks to accomplish. Thank you for all your work.

Third, ordinarily a ship is part of a floating fleet. It forms part of a grand plan to provide transportation; in this case, on the Great Lakes. The fleet serves industry and ports along its route. Clubs are part of a greater group and, in our case, the Mid-America Region of AVA. Our “fleet of ships” gathers once a year at our annual conference. This year we join in walks near Dundee, Michigan. Together we keep the ships moving and functioning.

Fourth, a big feature of shipping is the weather. We all know about that – cold and hot, wet and dry, cloudy and sunny.
Each day we walk offers new opportunities and sometimes overwhelming challenges to our events. Ever walk in the snow? How about 100+ heat? A “monsoon” downpour? Many of us experience the fickle weather on our walks, as do ships. But we prepare for all kinds of weather.

Fifth, each ship has a planned route. Each ship must factor in many things – the depth, the height, the rocks, the speed of the ship. All are important in knowing ahead of time where, when, and how they will travel to their destination. Clubs are similar; they must anticipate and sanction events ahead of time. In short, they have forward-looking plans. Thank you for your advance planning.

Going through the Soo Locks looks so easy. The ship slides in, the water goes down (or up depending on the ship’s direction) and the boat passes through. Events, clubs, Mid-America all look easy from the outside. Because of our officers, our participation and our support, our events look easy. We thank all those who sacrifice so much of their time, talent and energy to make our events GREAT and look so EASY!

**DISCUSSION ITEM FOR CLUBS**

Issue: Proposal for raising the event fee from $3 to $4 per walk.

Your input on this discussion is helpful. I have heard from many. How does your club view an increase in event fees? Let me know your viewpoint by emailing me at bacon.arthur@gmail.com. I will need your input before August 10, 2018.

There is however a significant issue which the NEC/Board continues to address. After years of deficit budgets, how are we to continue as a fiscally viable group? The key question is marketing and increasing our event participation. More walkers equal more revenue. While that is not the entire solution, it is a beginning for us.

**HUMOR OF THE MONTH**

"Remember, the second most important thing to choosing the right shoe is choosing the left one."

**TAW ARTICLES FROM MID-AMERICA**

Share with others what your club is doing by submitting an article to The American Wanderer. Share the WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY AND HOW nationally with fellow walkers. The deadlines are:

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<td>February</td>
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POEM OF THE MONTH

As a ship goes forward into the lake
So the walker treks along the trail
As the waves bounce along the boat around
Our walking feet remain on solid ground
The ship is steered by a steady hand
As the walker navigates a beautiful land
The boat afloat is ever grand
Even as our walking band

WALKING SAFETY
To decrease the likelihood of a pedestrian accident at one of your events:

- Mark the trail that crosses or shares roads with pedestrian signs.
- When participating in an event, be cautious around moving vehicles and bikes.
- Be patient when crossing streets and use only cross walks.
- Be vigilant when walking along streets and roads – and always walk facing traffic.
- If an incident occurs, call 911 immediately.

(modified from AAA Midwest Traveler, July/August 2018, p. 12.)

TRIVIA

The trivia question this month is connected to the Mid-America Conference. What city in Michigan was its first capital, when did it move, what was the reason, and in what year did it re-locate?

Please send your answer to bacon.arthur@gmail.com along with your mailing address and I will send you one event fee. I’ve enjoyed hearing from participants in prior months’ trivia quizzes.

EVENT OPPORTUNITIES

2018 IML Freedom Walk, Arlington VA 19-21 October
2018 Crazy Horse Walk 29 & 30 September
2018 Mid-America Conference in Dundee, Michigan – 26-28 October
2019 NEC/Board meeting Phoenix AZ 11-13 January
2019 Crazy Horse Walk 1 & 2 June
2019 AVA Convention in Albany NY
9-16 June
2019 IVV Olympiad in Aix-en-Provence, France – 15-19 October

WALK OF THE MONTH

OTTAWA, ILLINOIS: August 25

Trails start on natural surfaces along the I&M Canal and continue on sidewalks and streets in Ottawa, taking you into neighborhoods, downtown and Washington Square Park. The trails conclude on the river walk path from Ottawa to Fox River Park. Washington Square Park has true-to-life statues commemorating the first Lincoln-Douglas debate in 1858. There are beautiful murals in downtown Ottawa and a unique statue of "Radium Dial Girl." Ottawa has the Historical and Scouting Heritage Museum, two rivers (Illinois and Fox), a restored I&M Canal Toll House and a replica canal boat.

For details please go to http://clubs.ava.org/gen3/data/event_details.asp?eventid=110814

MID-AMERICA REGIONAL CONFERENCE

"ON THE TRAIL TO HENRY FORD"

"Pure Michigan" is the Michigan state slogan and "On the Trail to Henry Ford" is the conference slogan. We have the opportunity to walk three conference walks and to enjoy a number of area year-rounds. If you have not registered for this fun event, please consider it now.

The AVA President and Vice President have indicated their intent to join us. What an opportunity to hear and see our national leadership during the conference.

REGIONAL CONFERENCE

PRELIMINARY AGENDA

1. Mid-America Nomination Committee
2. Treasurer Report
3. Excess Fund Proposal
4. Appointment/Election of Deputy Regional Director
5. Next Conference site
6. Future Conference Dates
7. AVA
8. Mid America Regional Director
If you have other items for presentation or discussion, I would appreciate you would submitting them ahead of time.

**HAVE A CLUB ANNIVERSARY OR AWARD TO GIVE?**

If you desire to award a worthy volunteer in your club, recognize a business, or celebrate a club anniversary, let me know. A certificate or letter of commendation is appropriate to recognize those who support our AVA mission of “Fun, Fitness and Friendship.”

Please complete the awards form located at http://www.ava.org/Clubs_Only/AVA_Form_303CS_MS_CA_revision_5_2016.pdf.

Send the form by email to me for processing. Email address: bacon.arthur@gmail.com.

**RENEWAL SEASON**

It’s time to renew your events! Events need to be entered into the ESR so that stamps can be made and mailed out in November/December.

The 2019 YRE and Seasonal Renewal process is open. The deadline is midnight September 15, 2018. If you would like your walks to be listed in the *Starting Point* book, please renew your walks at your earliest convenience. Click the link for...
Renewal Instruction. Here are some tips to renew your YREs and Seasonals.

- Please do not mark your events “No Renewal” if undecided. There is no “undo” button; you will have to re-enter a new ESR.

- For an error-free renewal, do a fast and quick renewal without changes. Simply click renew and submit. You may enter your changes or updates by going to ESR Listing page to edit your event information.

- Your event will disappear from your renewal list if you enter incorrect information. Contact Hector to have your event reactivated if your event disappears during renewal.

- Most of the errors occur when entering information in the POC section. Please follow the instructions carefully.

Contact Hector at hector@ava.org for any ESR renewal problems and concerns.

As we progress with planning the CORRIDORS TO THE 2019 CONVENTION, I will be using information from the sanctioned year-round events. Please consider renewing or creating new YREs before the deadline.

ELECTRONIC MEETING NOTES – JULY

The NEC/Board discussed the progress on the Convention with the Albany Committee and heard comments on the proposed fee increase.

A decision on fees will be made at the August NEC electronic meeting.

IT’S OFFICIAL, the 2019 Convention website now is OPEN. Please go to AVA.org, scroll down to the Convention Logo and click on it. It is a beginning and as things get firmed up we will add to the site.

We are very excited to be at the less than a year mark till you arrive in the Northeast to experience all the wonderful sights and history of our region. Our regional history begins in the 1600’s with the Dutch landing in New Amsterdam and takes us through many centuries of population explosion, industrial superiority, independence from foreign rule to the national pastime of baseball and SO MUCH MORE!

Walk through the convention site to get a feel for some of the history of the areas you will be walking. Plan some side walks and visit other sites of personal interest while in our neck of the country.

Make sure to check when our Convention hotel, Red Lion Hotel, opens up for reservations. It will be here on July 20. Put the date on your calendars so you can get yourself registered.

See ya soon to WALK THRU HISTORY in the Northeast! The Convention Committee
Update on the Release of Liability Form for Minors

The National Executive Council (NEC) passed a motion to create a policy for youth under the age of 18 who participate in AVA events. The drafting of this policy was referred to the Standards and Evaluation committee, after which it must be approved by the NEC. If you have comments or recommendations regarding the creation of this policy, please send your comments to Jerry at nc_rd@ava.org. Please put “Youth Participant Policy” in the subject line.

In the meantime, although it is recommended, clubs are not required to use the Release of Liability Assumption of Risk and Photo Liability Release for Minor Participants.

BRIGHT IDEA

Recently I went into the AAA office in my area. During my visit I began discussing AVA with the assistant. This visit left my mind racing with the “bright idea.” Could it be possible to place club brochures or schedules in an AAA office? Would they be willing to put a walk article in their newsletter? What club opportunities are possible with AAA? Would AAA host a walk?

Many of my questions remain unanswered! Nevertheless, it is one more idea for a local club with a AAA office to consider.

END NOTES

- Don’t forget to renew your year round and/or seasonal events by September 15.
- Plan ahead for your traditional events in 2019.
- A thank you to all the clubs who have submitted their renewals or new seasonal events.
NEWS ON AVA CALENDAR – an email from AVA Headquarters

We are working on the Calendar that I told you about in June. The plan is as follows:

1. Each RD should send us the details for 2 or 3 events that you would like to highlight for each month of the calendar. So, 24-36 events placed throughout the year. These can be YRE’s, Seasonal, Traditional, State Convention….you get the picture.

2. For the month that you drew (or traded with another RD), you are welcome to use additional space on the calendar any way you like. You may want to list your clubs in the Region, support a struggling club’s walk, highlight more events or programs….again, you get the picture.

   The list of the month that currently belongs to you is listed below. You’ll notice that there are two months without an RD; these months are for AVA to use, in similar fashion, as the RD’s. If someone wants a month that we are assigned, we will be happy to trade.

3. If you would like to submit a picture for your month to show off a walk, add a quote, highlight a special/national program, be super creative with a collage, etc….you can buy that page for TBD. We will be happy to help you with the design of your month!

In order to get this together, get proofs in and corrections back out….we need to move quickly. I hope you will see this as a fun way to work together, create a really special calendar with some great walks and get more participation at these events. The goal is to sell a calendar (or more) to every associate member.

Attached is a mockup of the calendar, the list of RD’s and the month they drew. The mockup shows how the calendar would look with events listed. I have used the month of June as it is the convention month and I already have the events for that week.

We would need date of event, name of event, city, and state.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Region</th>
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<tr>
<td>January</td>
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<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Tom Bates</td>
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<td>March</td>
<td>NW</td>
<td>Andy Bacon</td>
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<td>April</td>
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<td>Chris Mellen</td>
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<td>SC</td>
<td>Lucy Yother</td>
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<td>SE</td>
<td>John McClellan</td>
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<td>November</td>
<td>SW</td>
<td>Susan Medlin</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>RM</td>
<td>Sherry Sayers</td>
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Thank you in advance for your cooperation. Please feel free to contact either Hector or me for more information. We are working on this together…..let’s hope we are both still alive when the calendar goes out!!!

Have a terrific evening,
Erin

Mid-America Region: I will be sending out a request for our proposed walks during the year as well as information about our page. Leaders, please look for it.