



# Washington DC Area Volksmarching Club

# WANDERFREUNDE

July 2009

## A Note from the President

Washington DC area weather during June and the first half of July has been wonderful, with very few of the Triple-H (hazy, hot, and humid) days we normally associated with Mid-Atlantic summers. Conditions may change, and the oven may be turned up a little as we move toward the traditional dog-day month of August, but all in all, we're enjoying some fine days for some great walking.

The WDCAVC has had some very extended periods without scheduled walks over recent years, but our club has four walks scheduled over the next four months. In fact, we are the only club offering scheduled walks in July and August, and you should take advantage of some brand new trails in Old Town Alexandria to see the sites and have fun clicking your Ks.

The July 21 walk has been titled "Lattice Weave You a Walk," and the use of the term lattice weave is an accurate description of the complex trail we've laid out to move you back and forth on Old Town streets so that you can walk either 6 KM or 10 KM on different streets while never being more than 8 blocks from our Start/Finish Point at the Barrett Branch Library at 717 Queen St. (just two blocks north of King St. and a half-block west of Washington St.).

The following month, on August 18, you can enjoy a "Riverfront Ramble," as a new trail will take you to the river and then weave you back and forth on streets beside or within a few blocks of the tidal Potomac. Both 5 KM and 10 KM walks are available for this walk, too.

The official start window for the event is 4:30 to 5:30 PM, but experienced WDCAVC evening walkers know "we aim to please," so we try to be ready to send walkers off as early as 4:00 PM, and if you arrive a little after 5:30, we'll still try to work out an arrangement to let you enjoy that evening's walk.

The WDCAVC monthly meeting officially is scheduled for 7:00 PM on the evenings of both walks, but the four or five hardcore members who normally are the folks in attendance periodically have held meetings "on the fly" at the S/F Point while others are walking, so if you'd like to participate in the meeting, be sure to tell us before you start walking so we don't jump the gun and meet without you.

We will hold the last evening walk on September 15, with walkers having the chance to select the trail they want from the four preceding evening walks of the season.

And in what is probably our most exciting news for our club in a while, we will offer the first scheduled walk across the new Wilson Bridge walking path on Saturday, October 10. Our trail will allow walkers to enjoy walks of 5, 10, or 16 KM, with the longer walk including passage across the bridge and back with explorations of the new National Harbor area between crossings. We will be looking for workers to help on this day, so be sure to place it on your calendar and let us know if you're willing to help out.

Before I close, I'd like to note two meetings held in June. At a meeting on Sunday, June 14, in Bethesda MD, representatives of 24 Atlantic

Region clubs met to elect a regional director for the next two years. Incumbent Skip Coburn had been the only candidate the Nominating Committee had identified, but Sam Tollett of the Tidewater region in Virginia was nominated from the floor, and in a secret ballot, Sam was elected our new regional director.

And in the heat of North Texas not quite two weeks later, the AVA held its biennial convention. Sandi Cahill represented our club at the meeting, and she will report more extensively about her impressions in the next issue of the newsletter. For now, I encourage you to read an interesting article that appeared in the *Dallas Morning News* during the middle of the convention. It follows in the next column.

So read up now, but use the long days and warm weather to allow yourself to get some extra walks in while the walking is good. Just remember to hydrate properly. Just adapt the advice of Woody Woodruff, the former Nature Center Director at the Rodney Scout Reservation in northeastern Maryland, who at every meal had all Scouts in the mess hall yell out together:

*A hydrated Scout is a happy Scout.  
A dehydrated Scout is a dead Scout....  
And dead Scouts have no fun!*

Enjoy your walks and all else you do!

Thomas Baerwald, WDCAVC President

## **Minutes of the WDCAVC Meeting**

May 19, 2009

The minutes of the last WDCAVC meeting normally would be placed here, but the always-behind-schedule newsletter editor failed to get word to Secretary Sandi Cahill regarding when he wanted to get the minutes in time for publication, so those minutes will appear with the July minutes in the next issue of the newsletter. And the editor promises that he will get the next issue out earlier in the month. (We know.... You'll believe it when you see it!)

## ***Local Newspaper Coverage of the 2009 AVA Convention in the Dallas Texas Area:***

### **North Texas' 100-Degree Days Don't Soothe Walking Conventioneers' Soles, But They Fancy the Footwork Anyway**

By Jeffrey Weiss / *Dallas Morning News*  
(Thursday, June 25, 2009)

Deborah Carter laughed when she heard the question: Who thought it was a good idea to host a national convention of older outdoor walkers the week that North Texas hits its first 100-degree days of the year?

"Some of our own members are asking that same thing," said Carter, operations director for the American Volkssport Association convention in Richardson this week.

And yet, more than 300 conventioneers happily padded around White Rock Lake on Wednesday. Just as they'd walked through the streets of Fort Worth on Tuesday. And through and under the streets of downtown Dallas on Monday.

The first three days of walking were a success. Only one man was taken to the hospital for overnight observation for heat-related problems.

These are serious walkers, willing to withstand whatever the weather throws at them.

"I love the warm weather," said Christopher Mello, 70, of Boston, where the temperature was in the 60s when he left. "It doesn't stop me."



*Karen Reger and Russ Crane of Madison, Wis., take a break on a 5K walk at White Rock Lake. Over 300 members of the American Volkssport Association are attending a convention in Richardson.*



*Members of the American Volkssport Association participated Wednesday in 5K, 10K and 17K walks at White Rock Lake during their biennial convention. The word volkssport is German and literally means 'people's sports.'* (Photos by Sonya N. Hebert/DMN)

Mello was one of about 400 people who came to Richardson for the biennial convention. The organization is part of an international network of clubs dedicated to encouraging "non-competitive physical fitness, friendship and fun."

While the clubs host bicycling, snow-sport and boating events, the vast majority of the programs are walks. And though the events are not competitive – there are no winners – some of the participants are quite attentive to their accomplishments.

For instance, national association president Carl Myron can tell you that he's gone on 1,178 official walks that covered about 13,400 kilometers through 48 states and 26 countries.

And Carter, the North Texas native who is operations director for this convention, has logbooks with passport-style stamps from dozens of walks she's participated in. One book has room for exactly 26 stamps, one for every letter in the alphabet. In her book, A is for Anchorage, Ala., and Z is for Zamora, a town near Sacramento, Calif.

The word volkssport is German and literally means "people's sports." In the 1950s, a group of Germans created the idea of a healthy and low-pressure alternative to competitive sports. The concept has spread to 51 countries. Local clubs host regular events and hold the official stamps for the logbooks of visiting volkssporters who come to town and take their own walks.

The American association claims about 25,000 members, most of whom are in their 50s and older. North Texas was a logical place for a national convention because the state has 34 local clubs.

Carter has been part of the planning for this week's convention for more than four years. The national association's bylaws require a convention every two years, in June. So she knew the date would offer some climate challenges.

"I wanted to be sure that the convention had the best we had to offer," she said.

For instance, the convention headquarters, the Renaissance Hotel in Richardson, is next to a DART train station. Everyone who registered for the convention got a five-day transit pass, and each day's official walks started at a transit station.

Over the years, local clubs scouted out walks that could offer some relief from the heat. The downtown Dallas walk used the network of air conditioned, underground tunnels for part of the route. The White Rock Lake walk route takes advantage of available cover.

"We counted every shade tree," Carter said.

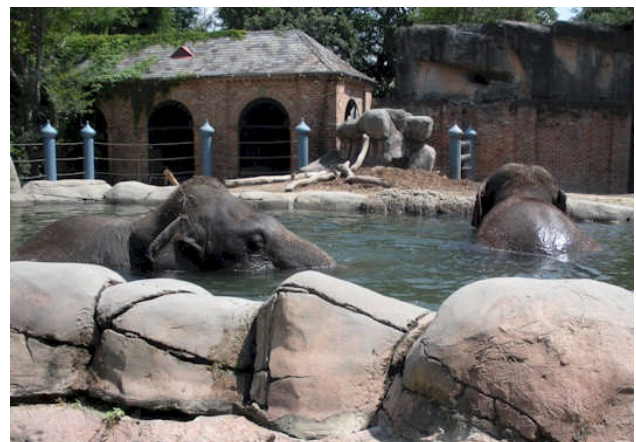
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**Remember that after a long summer walk....**



**...nothing is nicer than a dip in the pool!**



## Atlantic Region Schedule

<b>July 2009</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Sponsoring Club</b>	<b>Event Location</b>	<b>Contact Phone</b>
18	W	Susquehanna Rovers Volksmarch Club	Harrisburg PA (Wildwood Nature Sanctuary)	717-599-5033
18	W	Columbia Volksmarch Club	Columbia MD (Harpers Choice Village)	410-290-6510
<b>21</b>	<b>NW</b>	<b>Washington DC Area VM Club</b>	<b>Alexandria VA (Barrett Branch Library)</b>	<b>703-765-3128</b>
25-26	2W	York White Rose Wanderers	York PA (York Expo Center)	717-624-4808
<b>Aug 2009</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Sponsoring Club</b>	<b>Event Location</b>	<b>Contact Phone</b>
1	W	Seneca Valley Sugarloafers	Rockville MD (Caribou Coffee, Rock Creek Village Shopping Center)	301-294-1191
8	W	Finger Lakes Volkssports Club	Montrose PA (Montrose Village Green)	607-754-1979
15	W	Columbia Volksmarch Club	Columbia MD (Lakeside Coffee & Cafe)	410-290-6510
<b>18</b>	<b>NW</b>	<b>Washington DC Area VM Club</b>	<b>Alexandria VA (Barrett Branch Library)</b>	<b>703-765-3128</b>
22	W	Piedmont Pacers	Hagerstown MD (Augustoberfest Fest Tent)	410-795-7855
29	W	Annapolis Amblers	Annapolis MD (Annapolis Maritime Mus)	410-960-6226
<b>Sept 2009</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Sponsoring Club</b>	<b>Event Location</b>	<b>Contact Phone</b>
11	W	Freestate Happy Wanderers	Laurel MD (Montpelier Art Center)	301-717-3604
12	W	Piedmont Pacers	Brookeville MD (Rachel Carson Cons Park)	301-829-3685
12	W	Peninsula Pathfinders	Newport News VA (Riverview Farm Park)	757-890-9220
12	W	Northern Virginia Volksmarchers	Meadowlark Botanical Gardens Reg Pk	703-591-6579
12	W	Susquehanna Rovers VM Club	Fort Loudon PA (Cowans Gap State Park)	717-599-5033
14	NW	Northern Virginia Volksmarchers	Fairfax Station VA (Fairview Elem Sch)	703-455-1878
<b>15</b>	<b>NW</b>	<b>Washington DC Area VM Club</b>	<b>Alexandria VA (Barrett Branch Library)</b>	<b>703-765-3128</b>
19	W	Gator Volksmarsch Club	Norfolk VA (Van Wyck Branch Library)	757-490-9324
19	W	Great Greenbelt Volksmarchers	College Park MD (College Park Airport)	301-937-3549
19	W	Penn-Dutch Pacers Volksmarch Club	Elizabethtown PA (Masonic Village)	717-625-3533
20	W	Liberty Bell Wanderers	New Britain PA (Peace Valley Park)	215-317-3326
26	W	Virginia Vagabonds	Norfolk VA (San Antonio Sam's)	757-490-9324
26	W	Loudoun Walking & Volkssport Club	Lovettsville VA (Game Preservation Assn)	703-737-2175
26	W	Freestate Happy Wanderers	New Market MD (Grange on South Alley)	410-531-3873
26	W	Liberty Bell Wanderers	Philadelphia PA (Pennypack Park)	215-322-5759
27	2W	Columbia Volksmarch Club	Ellicott City MD (Centennial Park)	410-290-6510

Legend: W=Walk, GW=Guided Walk, GNW=Guided Night Walk, NW=Night Walk, B=Bike, S=Swim, Sk=Ski, IS=Ice Skate, RS=Roller Skate, SS=Snowshoe