



# RAMBLING

Winter 2020 • Issue #65

A Quarterly Trails 'N Travels Update for NSTT Members

## Where did snowshoes come from?

When you are out walking around on your great fitting, comfortable snowshoes, think about what it would be like to walk around with a couple slabs of wood tied to your feet with some straps of leather or twisted bark. That is what the original snowshoe was dating back between 4-6000 years ago in central Asia.

The original snowshoes were used as a basic need to discover new territories for food and shelter during the winter months. The snowshoe helped make travel possible by following the example of the snowshoe hare and the bobcat with their wide feet and paws to carry them on the snow. Native Americans later developed the web style using hardwood such as ash for the frame and lacing them with rawhide from animals such as moose, deer and caribou. Some of these have been found to be up to seven feet long.

A quote passed down through the generations of the First-Nation People: "The white man always tries to avoid the snow and skirt it, whereas the Indian always looked for the best way to walk on it and live in harmony with nature."

So, pack up your fancy snowshoes and get out there and live in harmony with nature and enjoy what winter has to offer.

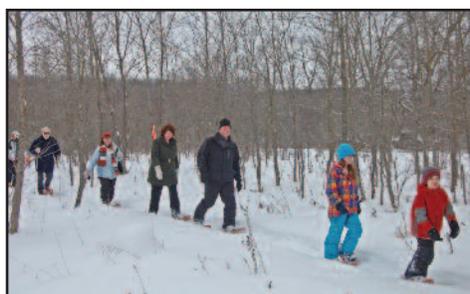
## Wild River Snowshoe Event

Come join us on **Saturday, February 15** for our annual snowshoe event. This year we will be heading north to Wild River State Park on the beautiful and mostly frozen St. Croix River.

If you don't have snowshoes of your own, they are available for rent at the Trail Center. They are \$18 for adults and \$12 for children, per day.

We will be serving a sloppy joe lunch for a suggested donation for participants.

Wild River State Park has three of the main biomes found in Minnesota. We will be walking through Prairie Grassland, Coniferous Forest and Deciduous Forest.



With the three biomes, there is also a wide variety of songbirds such as wrens, robins, starlings, waxwings, finches and cardinals that call this park home for the winter. So bring your bird books and checklists for what you may see.

Snow and weather permitting we will be adding a challenge trail through one of the Tall Grass Prairies where you can be on the lookout for mouse and vole tunnels through the snow. The tunnel will be just under the surface and will look like a rope covered in snow. Following this, look for little port holes up through the snow, which are the breathing holes. Possibly you might even see wing impressions from a raptor landing on the snow to pick up its dinner.

Throughout the walk look for other wildlife tracks, such as deer, turkey, grouse, fox, raccoon and maybe even a beaver.

Head on down to the Nevers Dam area where there is usually open water and you could possibly see great Trumpeter Swans, thanks to its dramatic comeback after many years of hard work by our DNR and the Three Rivers Park System. While down by the river also look for our national bird and symbol, the Bald Eagle.



Checkpoints	
Exercise .....	2
Event Photo Reviews .....	3
Clubhouse News .....	4

# Exercise

By Crystal Meriwether

What eight-letter word containing three letter “e”s is defined by Wikipedia as “a disciplined activity that is meant to improve and maintain fitness, health and wellness?” If you guessed exercise, you guessed correctly.

As NSTT shufflers, scooters and batsouttahell, we have chosen walking as one of our favorite ways to exercise. What you may not be aware of is walking’s relationship to your brain’s gray matter, your genes or your memory.

If you feel smarter and younger after your walking experience with NSTT, you are on to something! The Mayo Clinic just released a study (1/2/20) that provides “new evidence of an association between cardiorespiratory fitness and brain health...particularly in gray matter and total brain volume—the regions of the brain involved with cognitive decline and aging.” What’s exciting about this study is that the research shows that “aerobic exercise can have a positive impact on cognitive function in addition to physical conditioning.” Mayo experts recommend about 150 minutes a week of moderate and regular exercise. (sciencedaily.com/releases/2020/01/200102094314.htm)

Another way to prime your brain for learning is to add some short-term bursts of exercise to your regular routine. All of us know that a regular exercise regimen is good for our wellbeing. However, these short bursts “boost the function of the gene (Mtss1L) that increases connections between neurons in your hippocam-

pus, the brain region associated with learning and memory,” according to researchers at Oregon Health and Science University. Boosting your walking speed from that of a shuffler to a scooter or from a scooter to a batsouttahell (booh) might help



some, but short bursts of hard running on a treadmill might be even better, especially for boohers. Think of rats on a running wheel. (sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/07/190702184555.htm)

As a walker, you may be smarter, but it helps to be able to remember what you have learned too. There is hope as researchers at Boston University Medical Center have shown that physical activity is linked to better memory among older adults (55-82). Those older adults in the study who took more steps either by walking or jogging performed better on memory tasks than those who were more sedentary. One of these tests was that of face-name association. (sciencedaily.com/releases/2015/11/151124155437.htm)

*This issue’s quote: “My grandmother started walking five miles a day when she was 60. She’s 97 now, and we don’t know where the heck she is!”*  
~ Ellen DeGeneres

# Memberships due!

Just a reminder that your NSTT membership is now due! This will be your last newsletter if you don’t renew your membership. A form is attached to this newsletter.

**Remember that NSTT is a working club! So don’t forget to fill out the both sections of the form and tell us what you’re willing to do to help NSTT events!**

# Annual Meeting at Fort Snelling State Park, October 26

Our annual meeting event was held at Ft. Snelling State Park on October 26. The access to Pike Island was flooded so we were unable to walk one of the two planned loops: however, we managed to work around that.

The weather could not have been more cooperative for late October and 54 walkers had a great time, followed by a delicious potluck lunch. The assistant manager, Nick Bartels, provided an excellent illustrated review of the disastrous flooding that plagued the park throughout 2019.

We also had short presentations from the other Minnesota AVA clubs to bring us up to date on their activities.

Lots of door prizes and a good time was had by all.

See photos on next page.

**Ramblings is a newsletter for members of NorthStar Trail Travelers. Coordinator: Peter Cartwright; Layout: Donna Seline.**



# Fort Snelling Annual Meeting Guided Walk 2019

# CLUB HOUSE NEWS

## Fort Snelling volunteers

### Annual meeting walk

Julie Bjorklund, Peter Cartwright, Val Heath, Wayne Heath, Phyllis Hildreth, Bonnie Johnson, Cammy Johnson, Maureen Mahowald, Donna Seline, Wally Swanson, Linda Valen, Diane Valen, David Walz.

### Fort Snelling Candlelight event

Peter Cartwright, Catherine Harrison, Bruce Gravelle, Crystal Meriwether, Dianna Rogers, Tom Rogers, Donna Seline, Bonni Walz and Dave Walz.



## The Appalachian Trail

Some of our members spent 2019 walking across Canada, a virtual on-line program sponsored by AVA going from the Pacific to the Atlantic Ocean with many stops along the way to explore various cities, parks and historical sites.



This year we are going to walk the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine. Originally conceived by forester Benton in 1922, this trail stretches along 2,200 miles of forest and wildlands, which we will accomplish virtually by averaging 5,500 steps per day. Don't worry, we'll pass through a few towns along the way for breaks.

It's not too late to sign up, registration opened December 1, 2019. Go to [http://cb.ava.org/Appalachian\\_Trail.php](http://cb.ava.org/Appalachian_Trail.php) and sign up. The cost is \$35, and the walk goes through December 31, so there is plenty of time to catch up.



Photos by Dianna Rogers.

## 2020 Iowa State Parks Centennial walks

By Wayne Heath

NSTT was founded with the love of state parks and trails. Our friends and neighbors to the south, GDMVA – Iowa's walking club, is celebrating their Iowa State Parks Centennial by doing a 20 in 20.



The club has sanctioned 20 trails in 20 different state parks running from May 1 and ending the weekend of October 2-4 during the Regional Roundup.

Go to [iowaswalkingclub.org](http://iowaswalkingclub.org) for information and to print a guide to the participating parks. Schedule a trip to explore more beautiful parts of our country, head on south and check out some of Iowa's great state parks and support our fellow clubs.

Their event booklet is also available by writing to:

GDMVA, Iowa's walking club  
PO Box 110  
Des Moines, Iowa 50301-0110



# NORTHSTAR TRAIL TRAVELERS

## 2020 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



To get involved as a member of the NorthStar Trail Travelers, please make a commitment to walk with us and assist us when and however you can within your capabilities.

Please print all information.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Include me on upcoming event email alerts!

Type of membership:  individual — \$10

family — \$15

List other family members names on line below:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please fill out reverse side!

Please fill out reverse side!

Make your check payable to: NorthStar Trail Travelers

Mail to: NSTT, c/o Julie Bjorklund

33200 North Lakes Trail, Lindstrom, MN 55045

Note: Membership year runs from January 1 to December 31.

### Remember!

NSTT is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization and any donation you make is tax deductible. Look for donation envelopes at the registration table at our events!

Thanks!

### General help

Some members cannot assist by physically attending events, but to assure the continued existence of NSTT, we also need volunteers in many "behind the scenes" positions.

A good event doesn't just happen ... good volunteers do a lot of work to make our events a memorable experience. Here are some jobs we need volunteers for. Sign up for as many as you can do, but no more than you have time to do well.

Please consider and volunteer!

#### I can help on event weekends with:

##### Event weekends

Walk early to check trail markings

Check if you can:

Help mark trails on event Friday

Help take down trail signs

Help staff registration table

Help staff sales/ food tables

Help staff information table

##### Food

Cook at weekend events

##### Publicity, event weekend

Take photographs at events for articles and club archives.

#### I can help "behind the scenes" with:

##### Trails

Scout new parks for future events. (training provided)

##### Publicity

Write an article for NSTT newsletter, *American Wanderer*, or local publications.

Find new publications that might accept articles about events.

Research local publications in areas we are going for tourist publications.

##### Personal contacts

Call members to volunteer to work events.

Send out email alerts for upcoming events/ deadlines.

##### Other

Help transport event supplies on event weekend.

After-event storage reorganization.

or: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_