

TRAIL DESCRIPTION: The walk route makes use of the existing surface of Interstate I-75 as it crosses the Straits of Mackinac, which includes cement or asphalt paving and grating. The 5-K distance is rated 1-A. Any distance greater than 5-K is rated 2-A. The trail ratings are based upon the current AVA rating scheme. The trails may not be suitable for wheelchairs or strollers. In the event of relatively extreme weather conditions, there may be some additional restrictions or prohibitions in effect.

SPECIAL NEEDS: A special needs trail will not be available. Do recommend that people with special needs start at the Southern end of The Bridge, where the ingress and egress is more ADA compliant. The Northern end of The Bridge requires crossing natural terrain to access the ingress and egress point.

REFRESHMENT: It is highly recommended that participants carry water with them along the route. Restrooms (Porta Potties) will only be available at the ingress/egress points on both ends of the Mackinac Bridge. There are no public restrooms on The Mackinac Bridge.

PRE-REGISTRATION: Pre-registration for the walking events through the AVA Online Start Box (OSB) is required. Please print off the Maps & Directions at the time that you register on the OSB, Pre-registration for the AVA 50th Anniversary Celebratory activities and A-Award is required and must be mailed to the POC to be received No Later Than August 7. All pre-registrations are final. No monetary transactions will be made on site.

BUS GROUPS: Bus Groups need to contact the Host/POC via email No Later Than Friday, July 24, to coordinate the handling of the Bus Group for this activity.

Group Walks: Information for Group Walks is provided with the Map & Directions for The Bridge Walk. Need to emphasize that the Group Walks are intended as a photo opportunity to attract the attention the media at the North and South ingress points for The Bridge Walk. Please wear AVA 50th Anniversary apparel or other Volkssporting apparel, if participating in the Group Walk.

REFUND POLICY: NO refunds given.

WEATHER: These events will be held rain, shine, or snow except in the case of extreme weather conditions posing a threat to life, limb and property.

DISCLAIMER: The AVA (American Volkssport Association), the State of Michigan, The Mackinac Bridge Authority, Emmet County and the Village of Mackinaw City are not liable for accidents, theft, or material damage. Every reasonable effort will be made to make the events safe and enjoyable. Children under the age of twelve must be accompanied by an adult. NO PETS are allowed on The Bridge during the walk, except legally allowed service animals. Please consult the Map & Directions for restrictions and prohibitions in force when crossing The Bridge.

HOST & POINT OF CONTACT: Bob Buzolich at (574) 339-9140, or via email to Sonofbuzz@prodigy.net.

THE CLUBS OF THE MID-AMERICA REGION AND THE MID-AMERICA REGIONAL DIRECTOR

INVITE YOU TO

THE 2026 MACKINAC BRIDGE WALK



A SEASONAL VOLKSSPORTING EVENT
TO CELEBRATE THE AVA 50TH ANNIVERSARY
FROM 7 AM TO 10 AM ON SEPTEMBER 7, 2026

VOLKSMARCH (WALK) WITH MULTIPLE DISTANCES

MACKINAW CITY, MICHIGAN



MA2026/131664 (WALK)

ALL TIMES CITED IN THIS BROCHURE ARE EASTERN DAYLIGHT TIME

WELCOME: To celebrate the 50th anniversary of AVA, the Mackinac Bridge walk in Northern Michigan on Monday, September 7, 2026, will be one of the featured celebration walks. The Bridge Walk is an annual event on Labor Day, the only time that the bridge is closed to traffic from 6:30 am to 12 noon, allowing thousands of people to walk across the Straits of Mackinac on the bridge, the longest suspension bridge in the Western Hemisphere. The total distance across the entire bridge and back is 18-K, but people can choose to walk as far as they want, then turn around and return to where they started. Because thousands of people from Michigan and across the U.S. come to the area for this historic walk, we wanted to give you a heads up to start planning now.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS: Items to consider include:

- 1) There are two Start Points (one at the North end of The Bridge - St Ignace, and one at the South end of The Bridge - Mackinaw City).
- 2) You may start any time after 7 am, when the Governor's delegation opens the walk at the North end of The Bridge and MUST be off The Bridge by 12 Noon. The very last time that anyone will be allowed to begin walking The Bridge is 11 am by which time the only distance available is 5-Km.
- 3) The Michigan State Police and the Mackinac Bridge Authority regulate the Bridge Walk. (This event is not under the control of the MARD or the AVA.)
- 4) The distances offered for The Bridge Walk are 5-km, 10-Km, 15-Km and 16-Km, to which you may add your distance to reach the ingress point for the walk and the direct return to your lodging or auto. The four distances identified are based upon a round trip from the ingress point to a specific turnaround point on the Bridge and return to the ingress/egress point. To plan your trip, you will need to make some decisions beforehand on where to start and how far to walk. Detailed information on the walk itself will be available in the Map & Directions for the event, which is OSB only, except for bus groups.) Once you have decided on your Start Point and Distance, you will want to give some consideration to lodging, transportation and parking.

LODGING: Because of the variables of The Bridge Walk, I do not anticipate there being a "Host Hotel." If cost is not a factor, staying in Mackinaw City is possible. Bear in mind that lodging in Mackinaw City during the Labor Day Weekend is not cheap. Even the two Super 8's in Mackinaw City charge over \$300 per night with at least a two-night minimum stay. Recommended lodging locations with reasonable rates, availability and a reasonable distance to the South end of The Bridge may be found in Gaylord (1 hour drive on I-75 to Mackinaw City), Grayling (1-1/2 hour drive on I-75 to Mackinaw City), Cheboygan (MI) and Petoskey (MI). Recommended lodging locations with reasonable rates, availability and a reasonable distance to the North end of The Bridge may be found in Sault Ste Marie (1 hour drive on I-75 to St Ignace), and St Ignace itself.

TRANSPORTATION: For transportation, a vehicle is useful for mobility. From Michigan's Southern State Line to Mackinaw City, it is about a 6-hour drive one way, and a 3-1/2 to 4-hour drive from Michigan's Upper Peninsula Western and Southwestern State Line to St Ignace. The nearest airport to Mackinaw City that provides regular commercial flights is the Pellston Regional Airport (PLN), which also has available rental vehicles and a shuttle. Rentals and the shuttle require reservations that may be done through the PLN website. PLN is serviced by Delta and United

through SkyWest. Another option for commercial flights near Saint Ignace is the Chippewa County International Airport (CIU), which is the former Kincheloe Air Force Base. It is at the midway point between Saint Ignace and Sault Sainte Marie. So, it is only about a thirty minute drive on I-75 to Saint Ignace. CIU is serviced by Delta through SkyWest. The nearest Amtrak Station is in Traverse City, which is currently not a good option, because of distance and lack of options for travel between Traverse City and Mackinaw City.

PARKING: For parking on the day of the event, you will find plenty of free parking at Bridge View Park, which is also the Start/Finish Point at the North end of The Bridge. If you wish to walk to the North end of the Bridge from your lodging in St Ignace the distance may be up to 3.7 miles one way, which you may add to the distance you actually walk on The Bridge. Also, some of the lodging locations may offer a shuttle to or from a point near the North end of The Bridge. To access the South end of The Bridge there is plenty of parking for a price in the range of \$10 to \$30 in Mackinaw City. Some of the parking may be provided by local charitable organizations seeking a donation. Last year, Shepler's Ferry started offering parking for \$15 at its Day Lot on Nicolet Street, even if you are not taking the Ferry on the same date. If you arrive exceedingly early on September 7, you may even find free parking at the Michigan Welcome Center on Nicolet Street after exiting from I-75 at Exit 337 (Nicolet Street). (The Welcome Center is exactly one kilometer South of the ingress point at South end of The Bridge.)

SPONSOR: The Mid-America Regional Director, Robert (Bob) Buzolich (AVA Club #REG-MA) of South Bend, Indiana.

PROCEDURE: The primary means of registration for this event is through the AVA Online Start Box (OSB) at <https://my.ava.org>. When you register through the OSB, you may download the Map and Directions for this event and complete the event at your own pace on the designated date and times. Upon completion, please return to the OSB to record your completion and receive credit. On-site registration and physical stamping will only be available for Bus Groups, who need to coordinate with the host/POC No Later Than August 7 via email or phone.

START/FINISH: The location of the Start/Finish Point will be provided with the Map & Directions when you register using the OSB. When you register through the OSB, you may do the event anytime during The average walker can complete a ten kilometer trail, rated 2-A, in about 2-1/4 to 2-1/2 hours.

FEES: Everyone is welcome. However, event registration for the walk associated with this event, which includes a fee, is required of all participants. The basic registration fee for ALL participants is \$4.00, which will be collected through the OSB or the Tour Guide if you are a member of a bus group.

IVV CREDIT: Participants completing this event are eligible for IVV event and distance credits.

SPECIAL EVENT STAMPS: Walking the USA A-Z
Anniversaries Hurrah
Lighthouses 2
Walking with America's Veterans

A-AWARD: The A-Award for this event is 2 inches by 2-2/3 inch printed patch depicting the logo for the AVA 2026 Mackinac Bridge Walk, as shown on the brochure cover. The cost of the A-Award is \$5, which does not include IVV credit and is only available by pre-registration.

EVENT & ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7 (LABOR DAY)

- 7 AM TO 10 AM EDT** FEATURED WALK EVENT – MACKINAC BRIDGE WALK PER INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED ON THE AVA OSB.
- 7 AM** GROUP GUIDED WALK OF FEATURED EVENT ON THE MACKINAC BRIDGE LED BY BOB, THE MARD, AT THE SOUTHERN INGRESS POINT & ROXIE. THE MADRD, AT THE NORTHERN INGRESS POINT PER INSTURCTIONS THROUGH THE AVA OSB.
- 1:45 PM** AVA 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELABRATORY ACTIVITY AT THE PAVILLION IN THE MACKINAW HERITAGE VILLAGE PRE-REGISTRATION PER BROCHURE REQUIRED.
- 3:45 PM** GROUP GUIDED WALK OF A SPECIAL SHORT TERM SEASONAL EVENT INTO MACKINAC HEADLANDS (MICHIGAN) LEAD BY BOB BUZOLICH, THE MID-AMERICA REGIONAL DIRECTOR – PLEASE REGISTER THROUGH THE AVA OSB.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

- 10 AM** GROUP GUIDED WALK OF THE SEASONAL EVENT IN SAULT STE MARIE MICHIGAN LED BY ROB & ROXIE WEAVER OF WASHTENAW WANDERERS – PLEASE REGISTER THROUGH THE AVA OSB.

EVENT & ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, AUGUST 7

LAST DATE FOR RECEIPT OF PRE-REGISTRATIONS FOR ALL ACTIVITIES OTHER THAN THE WALKS

MONDAY, AUGUST 24

AVA OSB REGISTRATION OPENS FOR WALKS THAT START ON SEPTEMBER 7

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

- 10 AM** GROUP GUIDED WALK OF THE YEAR-ROUND EVENT IN LANSING (STATE CAPIAL) MICHIGAN LED BY ROB & ROXIE WEAVER OF WASHTENAW WANDERERS – PLEASE REGISTER THROUGH THE AVA OSB.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5

- 7 AM TO 10 AM** TRADITIONAL EVENT STARTING AT RIEKE PARK IN AUBURN INDIANA HOSTED BY THREE RIVERS STROLLERS – ON SITE REGISTRATION ONLY.
- 2 PM** GROUP GUIDED WALK OF THE SEASONAL EVENT IN FRANKENMUTH MICHIGAN LED BY ROB & ROXIE WEAVER OF WASHTENAW WANDERERS – PLEASE REGISTER THROUGH THE AVA OSB.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

- 8:30 AM** GROUP GUIDED WALK OF THE SEASONAL EVENT IN GAYLORD MICHIGAN LEAD BY BOB BUZOLICH, THE MID-AMERICA REGIONAL DIRECTOR – PLEASE REGISTER THROUGH THE AVA OSB.
- 2 PM** GROUP GUIDED WALK OF THE SEASONAL EVENT IN MACKINAW CITY MICHIGAN LED BY ROB & ROXIE WEAVER OF WASHTENAW WANDERERS – PLEASE REGISTER THROUGH THE AVA OSB.

**PRE-REGISTRATION
FOR AVA 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATORY ACTIVITY**

NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____
ZIP+4: _____ PHONE: _____
EMAIL: _____

MEMBERS OF PARTY:

- 1) NAME: _____
BOXED LUNCH - COST: \$20.00
CHOICE (CIRCLE ONE): HAM – TURKEY – VEGAN
ANNIVERSARY EVENT - PATCH COST: \$5.00
CHOICE (CIRCLE ONE): YES – NO
- 2) NAME: _____
BOXED LUNCH - COST: \$20.00
CHOICE (CIRCLE ONE): HAM – TURKEY – VEGAN
ANNIVERSARY EVENT - PATCH COST: \$5.00
CHOICE (CIRCLE ONE): YES – NO
- 3) NAME: _____
BOXED LUNCH - COST: \$20.00
CHOICE (CIRCLE ONE): HAM – TURKEY – VEGAN
ANNIVERSARY EVENT - PATCH COST: \$5.00
CHOICE (CIRCLE ONE): YES – NO
- 4) NAME: _____
BOXED LUNCH - COST: \$20.00
CHOICE (CIRCLE ONE): HAM – TURKEY – VEGAN
ANNIVERSARY EVENT - PATCH COST: \$5.00
CHOICE (CIRCLE ONE): YES – NO

TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

**Please pay by check or money order payable to INDIANA VOLKSSPORT
ASSOCIATION -- NO CASH AND NO ONSITE TRANSACTIONS**

**Mail to Indiana Volkssport Association, c/o Robert Buzolich, Treasurer, 1703 E
Howard St, South Bend, IN 46617-1826 to be received No Later Than August 7,
2026.**

**AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB
50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

IN MACKINAW CITY

Following the completion of the Mackinac Bridge Walk, the Mid-America Regional Director will host a celebration of the 50th Anniversary of America's Walking Club at the Pavillion in the Mackinaw Heritage Village, 1425 W Central Avenue, Mackinaw City, MI 49701. All AVA participants of the Mackinac Bridge Walk are invited to join with the Regional Director and distinguished guests as they celebrate the occasion. Participation in this activity requires pre-registration by No Later Than August 7, 2026.

The activity at the Pavillion starts at 1:45 pm EDT and should conclude by 3:30 pm. This activity consists of a cold box lunch with your choice of turkey, ham or vegan with a bag of chips, chocolate chip cookie and a water. Also included is a slice of the Anniversary cake following the presentation and slicing of the celebratory cake. A proportional share of the venue cost is included in the meal cost. Any net receipts from pre-registration and the patch will be donated to the American Volkssport Association.

At the Celebration AVA Passport Stamps and A-Awards will be distributed to anyone, who had not received their's earlier in the day.

Following the Celebratory activities at approximately 3:30 pm, the Mid-America Regional Director will lead a Group Guided Walk into the Mackinac Headlands, which is a short-term Seasonal Event.

**NEED SOME INTERESTING EVENTS
FOR THIS YEAR'S CENTENNIAL PROGRAM?**

**WHY NOT DO MULTIPLE EVENTS
WHILE YOU ARE IN THE AREA FOR A LONG WEEKEND?**

**INFORMATION FOR OTHER LOCAL YEAR-ROUND AND
SEASONAL EVENTS IS AVAILABLE AT**

<https://my.ava.org/find-an-event.php>

USE THE SEARCH FUNCTION FOR INDIANA, MICHIGAN OR OHIO

**SEE EVENT & ACTIVITY SCHEDULE FOR GROUP GUIDED WALKS AT
SOME EVENTS BEFORE AND AFTER THE MACKINAC BRIDGE WALK**