



# ST STEPHEN NORDIC WALKING CLUB 2024

## Introduction

The St. Stephen Nordic Walking Club is for all ages, all speeds and fitness levels, members and friends alike. We get together on Tuesday evenings from 7 to 8 in the summer to walk 2 ½ to 3 miles, varying our walking location from week to week. We call it “Nordic” walking only because we advocate walking with the use of some kind of poles like those used in Nordic skiing, particularly when going up or down hills. They are an option, not a requirement.

*What equipment is needed?*

**Low-cut walking shoes** are fine, so are hiking shoes. **Sunscreen and bug repellent** from time to time. **A water bottle**, especially on a warm day, one that doesn't need to be carried in your hands. Dress for the temperature, but don't overdo it unless you plan on sweating.

*What about weather?*

We cancel if it's raining, or if there's lightning, or if heat/humidity is excessive. But cool, cloudy days are good for walking.

*What about poles?*

Poles should have comfortable grips. Most poles are height-adjustable, so that the best length can be found, which is about 6 inches shorter than armpit height. Occasionally, we walk on hard surfaces, but most of our walks are on turf or dirt where poles with hard metal tips are best.

*Bathrooms?*

All locations have potable facilities at the starting points. A few have facilities along the way.

*Does the group walk together, or will it spread apart?*

We accommodate all walking speeds, using an approach called *group compaction* to keep the group together. If group members get spread out, when an intersection is reached we circle back to pick up members. Some of our walking routes are “out-and-back”, which allows walkers to choose a shorter walking distance for themselves.

*When will the Nordic walking season begin?*

Tuesday, April 30<sup>th</sup>. Our last walk of the summer will be Tuesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>.

## Walking Locations

We will walk this year at seven (7) different locations close to the church. They are listed below with directions based on driving from the church.

**No. 1: Lake Avenue, from Kowalski's to West Park.** This is a turn-around walk, with options for distance. The turn-around point is 1.5 miles from the start, creating a 3-mile out-and-back walk. The walk is entirely on a paved path adjacent to White Bear Lake.

**Directions:** Drive to Kowalski's and park near Admiral D's. We'll meet on the bike path next to Admiral D's.

**No. 2: Katherine Abbot Park** Katherine Abbot Park is in Mahtomedi and hosts a wide variety of trails on dirt, some with hills of varying steepness, and mostly all in the forest. Poles are valuable here. Some short segments of our walk will be on pavement. We will walk approximately 2.8 miles using various trails. Multiple, interconnected trails give us options for varying our walk length after it has begun.

**Directions:** The entrance to the park is at 1000 Lincolntown Ave. Take County Rd E to Old Wildwood Road in Mahtomedi; take Old Wildwood to Lincolntown Ave.; drive south 1/3 mile to the park entrance. We'll meet in the parking lot in front of the cabin.

**No. 3: Vadnais/Snail Lakes Regional Park: Vadnais Lake Trail** The Vadnais Lake Trail is a picturesque out-and-back trail between East and West Vadnais Lakes that extends from County Rd F on the north to Vadnais Boulevard East on the south. Our walk will begin at the north end. The trail is pavement all the way. Total distance from the north end to our turn-around point at the south end is 1.4 miles.

**Directions:** Take County Rd E to Centreville Road; go north to County Rd F and turn west; drive two miles until you cross a creek; just past the creek, turn left at the regional park sign. The parking lot is at the end of the entrance road and that's where we will meet.

**No. 4: Century College** Our walking route at Century College is on both the east and west sides of Century Avenue, and we'll use the College's skyway bridge to get from one side to the other. Part of the hike is on the College's Wood Duck Trail, which is paved, and part is on the City's Echo Lake Trail, which is not.

**Directions:** Drive east on County Rd E to Century Avenue; turn right (south) on Century and drive ¼ mile to the first traffic light; turn right (west) and drive to the far western edge of the parking lot, which is where we'll meet.

**No. 5: Tamarack Nature Center (Bald Eagle-Otter Lake Regional Park).** Trails at the Tamarack Nature Center are all turf or dirt. There are hills where poles are useful. Multiple, interconnected trails give us options for varying our walk length after it has begun. We meet at the parking lot in front of the Nature Center Building on Otter Lake Road between Hammond Road and County Rd H2.

**Directions:** Take Spruce Place, Midland Avenue, and Cedar Avenue to Highway 61; cross Hwy 61 to Hoffman Rd and turn right (north); in a half-mile turn left (west) onto Scheuneman Road; in another 500 feet take a slight right turn onto Otter Lake Road; drive 2.5 miles north to the entrance to the park, which will be your left.

**No. 6: Vadnais/Snail Lakes Regional Park: Sucker Lake.** This trail is a circular loop trail 2.5 miles in length, with half of it on hard pavement that is flat and the other half on dirt with some hills. The trail

circumnavigates Sucker Lake, which abuts the south side of Highway 96. However, the trail around the lake's north end is safely off the road and separated from traffic by a fence.

**Directions:** Take County Rd E to Centreville Road; go north to County Rd F and west on County Rd F; drive two miles until you go past the entrance to the parking lot entrance for Vадnais Lake Trail (Location No. 3 above) and cross the railroad tracks. The entrance road to the Sucker Lake Trail parking lot is on your right. We'll meet there.

**No. 7: Oakdale Nature Center On Hadley Ave** This city park contains a maze of short-distance, interconnected trails, allowing us great flexibility with regards to distance. We'll walk 2.5 to 2.8 miles. The terrain is mostly wooded with gently rolling hills. One trail crosses a boardwalk spanning a channel that connects the two halves of a lake.

**Directions:** Go to 694 and head east; exit at Highway 36 and go west to the first exit at Hadley Ave; drive south on Hadley for about a mile to reach Oakdale Nature Center; the entrance to the Center is on the right, where we'll meet. Be aware that Hadley makes a sharp right turn just after the first curve.

### Schedule

April 30: Lake Ave

May 7: Katherine Abbott Park

May 14: Vадnais/Snail Lakes Regional Park: Vадnais Lake Trail

May 21: Tamarack Nature Center (Bald Eagle-Otter Lake Park)

May 28: Century College

June 4: Vадnais/Snail Lakes Regional Park: Sucker Lake

June 11: Oakdale Nature Center. Hadley Ave

June 18: Tamarack Nature Center

June 25: Lake Ave

July 2: Century College

July 9: Katherine Abbott Park

July 16: Vадnais/Snail Lakes Regional Park: Vадnais Lake Trail

July 23: Vадnais/Snail Lakes Regional Park: Sucker Lake

July 30: Lake Ave

Aug 6: *No Hike. Night to Unite*

Aug 13: Katherine Abbott Park

Aug 20: Tamarack Nature Center

August 27: Lake Ave. And a post-hike Admiral D social gathering