

WALKING AROUND LAKE SAGAMORE

THE OFFICIAL MISGUIDED GUIDE



NOT BY HARRY AZORIN

I'VE HEARD I NEED A WALKING STICK. DO I?

You heard wrong. You were told you need a walking SHTICK. All seasoned Lake Sagamore residents have one. It's HOW they walk around the lake. You should have one too. Think about Bogart's dangling cigarette. The stooped walk of Groucho Marx. Michael Jackson's moonwalk. Shtick! Shtick! Shtick! But don't use any of *those* shticks. They're already taken. So find your own schtick. And a nice walking stick, too.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO GO AROUND THE LAKE?

A nice, brisk walk - about 1 1/2 hours. Stopping and pointing at the sights - add an hour. Identifying everything by it's Latin name - add another hour. Arguing that you didn't make up all those Latin names - add another hour. Taking the car - the preferred method for long-standing members - nine minutes.

CAN I PICK FLOWERS?

Any disruption to the natural beauty of Lake Sagamore is forbidden. Plucking just one flower would be such a violation. If you do, you're required to leave a note with your name, what's been plucked, how sorry you are, and a commitment to join the board for a year. To date, nothing's been plucked.

CAN WALKING AROUND LAKE SAGAMORE PROVIDE SPIRITUAL BENEFITS?

You're confusing religion with a dirt road. Taking the path around Lake Sagamore will lead to Route 301. That won't provide you with that spiritual lift. But further down 301, there's a Buddhist temple that might. If not, try their lentil and tofu soup. It's not salvation, but for the price, it's not bad.

ARE ANY PREPARATIONS NECESSARY FOR THE WALK?

The 3 mile walk around Lake Sagamore can be taxing, so The Lake Association provides guidelines: IF YOU'RE IN GOOD SHAPE: Vigorous jumping jacks for 10 minutes prior to walk. IF YOU'RE IN LESS GOOD SHAPE: Conserve your energy. Take a nap before you go. IF YOU'RE IN A LOT LESS GOOD SHAPE: Take it *during* your walk.

CAN I GET LOST?

The roads that surround the lake are clearly marked and very wide. So if you find yourself at Boyd's Deli - you've lost your way. How you accomplished this feat is anybody's guess. But if you're hungry - don't order their pastrami sandwich, as it tends to be on the dry side.

HOW OLD IS THE AVERAGE LAKE WALKER?

Old Forge Drive was originally Old Farts Drive. Sagamore Drive was originally Sagging More Drive. We'll leave it there.

WHAT'S THE IDEAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE TO WALK WITH?

People that ask this kind of question are better off walking alone.

IF I'M TIRED, IS TURNING BACK A SIGN OF WEAKNESS?

If you walked more than halfway around the lake, It would be a sign of stupidity.

CAN I DISCUSS MY INFIRMITIES?

Members bring up their infirmities for one reason: so you'll feel sorry for them - and invite them for dinner. If you offer, "My back's killing me!" this ploy will backfire when they out-do you: "Same with my back. *And my knees!*" Then *you're* expected to invite *them* to dinner. So always make sure you have extra beef goulash on hand. It's a Lake favorite.

IS THERE A PROPER WAY TO GREET MEMBERS?

Always greet them by name. "Great to see you, Bob!" gets you a gold star. Unless - God forbid - you direct that greeting to Jack. But there's still hope - if *they've* forgotten *your* name. Otherwise, you're up Shit's Creek. Which might be a better place to walk in the future

HOW CAN I TELL IF SOMEONE APPROACHING IS A COMMUNITY MEMBER?

They walk with a sense of entitlement. But that particular walk - with just a hint of swagger and that certain look in the eye - can be subtle to spot. So ask the individual to lift their shirt. If they don't have an "S" prominently displayed on their front or back, you could be in for trouble.

ARE ANY WORDS VERBOTEN?

Interrupting the melodious sounds of the birds with harsh sounding words like "verboten" are verboten. So if you've got a sandwich containing items with names like *bratwurst*, *kreplach* and *kumquats* - don't tell your fellow hikers what you're eating. Better yet, don't eat it.

IS SEX A PROBLEM ON THE WALK?

The birds and animals do just fine. Occasionally, however, you'll see a couple who seem to be struggling, no doubt because they've forgotten how to do it. Community rules allow you to intercede as long as you approach the couple

sympathetically and offer clear, specific directions. Approaching is forbidden, however, if you yourself have forgotten how to do it.

I'VE FORGOTTEN HOW TO DO IT. DOES THE COMMUNITY PROVIDE AN INSTRUCTION BOOKLET?

No.

WHEN'S THE BEST TIME TO WALK?

It's when you're feeling rip roarin' good, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. This exuberant feeling is best exemplified by the jaunty little fellow at the beginning of this guide, who is so utterly happy he doesn't care that he was born without nostrils or lips.

I NEVER FEEL THAT WAY.

Then forget the walk.

ARE THERE ANY HAZARDS ON THE WALK?

Bumping into trees. This can be the result of walking while being glued to the compelling pages of The Sentinel. For safety sake, The Sentinel is looking for creative ways to make it less interesting. Please submit all ideas a.s.a.p, as the next publication is due out shortly.

ARE BEARS EVER SEEN ON THE WALK?

Yes. If one approaches, follow these guidelines: A. Don't panic. B. Startle it - do the twist. C. Bears love Brahms Lullaby. Whistle it. It'll soothe them to sleep. The tune doesn't go with your dance, but your life's at stake. D. If these suggestions don't work, the bear is probably gaining on you. E. Panic.

IS DRINKING ALLOWED?

It's frowned upon. Not only that - frowning is looked down upon. And looking down is frowned upon. It says you're depressed. This is depressing for others who are walking to get away from depressing things at home. For this reason, as a picker-upper - The Association recommends taking a stiff drink. Even though it's frowned upon.

IS THERE A DRESS CODE?

Unfortunately, no.

CAN I WALK AFTER DARK?

It's an especially good time if you're wearing what a dress code wouldn't allow.

IS BAD-MOUTHING ACCEPTABLE?

At the beginning of every walk, good-mouthing is the rule.

Resident #1: Becky is so nice. Resident #2: Nice? She's super-nice! Resident #1: That was so nice of you to say. This is just one example. It's a nice example, don't you think? After a number of these niceties, an injection of something more titillating is called for. Bad-mouthing is the perfect remedy. If you're looking for some nice examples - on your next walk - just keep your ears wide open.

HOW SHOULD I DECLINE A REQUEST TO WALK WITH SOMEONE?

Provide a good excuse. "Sorry, out of town!" is a favorite. But if you're spotted in your backyard, you're a perfect candidate for bad-mouthing. Then, it's best you *really* leave town.

WILL THIS GUIDE IMPROVE MY WALK?

If it doesn't, go jump in the lake. But be sure to read the community guidelines for contaminant prevention before jumping in.
