



Vancouver 'Venturers Volkssport Club

Email: vancouverventurers@gmail.com

Website: <https://vancouverventurers.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/vancouverventurers/>

Meetup: <https://www.meetup.com/Vancouver-Venturers-Meetup/>

Newsletter #95 July – Dec 2021

Nothing 'Ventured – Nothing Gained

	President	Doug J.
	Vice President	Jerry v. Z.
2021/2022	Secretary	Susan M.
VVVC	Treasurer	Denise M.
EXECUTIVE	Membership Director	Patricia L.
	Trail Master	Markku V.

WELCOME ALL NEW CLUB MEMBERS !!!

Our club continues to grow. Our membership director Patricia reports that as of June 30 the VVVC has 196 fully paid-up members.

VOLKSSPORT AWARDS

From
Jan/Feb/Mar 2021
and
Apr/May/Jun 2021 issues of
Volkssport Canada

Congratulations to the Walk 100 (2020) award winners:
Dennis H.
Rita H.

Congratulations also to Dennis H. for earning his
10,000 km Distance Achievement Award

Mail your completed IVV record books to:
Marion Boom, CVF Awards Coordinator,
42 Billingham Crescent
Ottawa, ON K2K 2T7

Mail Special Program books (e.g., Walk 100, Winter Walking
Program) to:
Canadian Volkssport Federation
Suite 604 - 251 Bank Street
Ottawa, ON K2P 1X2

President's Letter



On behalf of the Vancouver 'Venturers executive volunteers I want to say "THANKS".

Thanks for joining us on our walks and contributing to making our walking club an inclusive, friendly, social, fun, and healthy place to spend a few hours. With four walks a week now, you can choose which walks appeal to you the most or check them all out.

The NEW members who are finding us through Meetup or word of mouth have been nice people, they fit in with our group perfectly and are making our club even better.

We are very happy that we are reaching and appealing to people who like and appreciate what our club offers. Please tell your friends.



Very soon, August 8, our scheduled walk will start at Locarno Beach and unless it is raining that day, this will be our club picnic. Bring your lawn chair and picnic lunch or buy from the concession stand and stay for a visit.

**Please remember also - "We need you on our team". We always need help with a few small jobs and if you can help, let us know.

I hope to see you at a walk soon.

Doug

Have something you would like to share in our next semi-annual newsletter?
Please email your submissions directly to the editor at jerry@vancouverventurers.com.

Please be advised that:

- * Submissions may be edited for brevity and clarity.
- * We will publish your first name and last initial, unless you ask us not to.
- * Our newsletters may be cross-posted to Facebook and elsewhere on the Internet.
- * Not all submitted material will be published.

VABC President's Report

by Beverley Cattrall

Greetings to members and friends of Vancouver 'Venturers.

It's good to hear news of your club - that you have been working on ways to have group walks in a safe, fun way, and, all the while, have been continuing to attract new members. Congratulations!

As I write this, a number of Volkssporters have been trying out the new Vancouver Island walks that were recently "adopted" by VABC as CVF Director's walks. This happened as a result of the cancellation of the Island Walks event. These walks include Elk Falls, Englishman River Falls/Qualicum Falls, Mount Tzouhalem, Port Alberni and Shawnigan Lake. While the event itself did not take place, it's gratifying that so many people are doing these exciting new walks anyway. Many thanks go to the committee, Joan Sanderson, Gord Keeble, Christine and Rick Desjardins, and others, who spent months creating them.

Since BC has opened up, some of you may be considering doing some of the 36 CVF Director's walks that VABC administers. All of them are available on the VABC website, www.volkssportingbc.ca, as online registration walks. If you do walk them, and if you notice anything in the directions or maps that needs improving, please advise me, Christine Desjardins, or David Cattrall who administers VABC's CVF Director's walks.

Christine, as many of you know, is our CVF BC Director. Her role is to represent BC volkssporting nationally. Christine in turn lets me know of any decisions made by the CVF Board and I in turn advise the clubs by email, and also by placing news item on the front page of the VABC website.

The CVF Board has been working on a number of initiatives that are designed to increase flexibility for clubs. One recent CVF Board decision was to allow Multi Day Walks to take place over seven days rather than five. At least several BC clubs are now sanctioning their Map Walks as Multi Day Walks. Another forthcoming decision: a CVF committee is currently working on a new sanction request form that will make the sanctioning process easier for clubs. And, as you know, a committee has been formed to determine the feasibility of holding a CVF convention in Yellowknife next year. Thanks, Doug, for chairing the committee.

While all this is going on behind the scenes, it's inspiring to know that people are out walking every day. I certainly hope over the coming months that I'll have the opportunity to meet with you in person. See you on the trails!

Beverley Cattrall

[\(beverley.cattrall@telus.net\)](mailto:beverley.cattrall@telus.net)

Contest Results

by Jerry v. Z., Editor

As you will probably recall if you received my email dated June 14, I offered prizes for the best personal story and the best photograph submitted to me by June 29. The results are in. Lily F is the winner of the story contest and Satomi M is the winner of the photo contest. Congratulations, ladies! Each winner has received a \$50 gift card. Satomi's beautiful photograph is shown below and Lily's Indonesian travel story is also included in this issue of the newsletter.



Louise was the runner-up in the story contest. I hope that you will all enjoy her well-written and touching story as much as I did.

Walking through Cancer

by Louise K.

My journey through the Covid 19 pandemic with cancer began in late November 2020. I was scheduled for a regular mammogram. Usually I have them in September, near my birthday. Like many women I find that makes it easy to remember. There was a pandemic on! Why should I go look after this “little thing” I’d been going for years.....surely it would be okay to miss this one!

Something in me told me to go, and after the mammogram session I was waiting for the word that it was okay to go.....when one of the nurses came to me and told me that they thought they had found something and I needed to wait to talk with the oncologist.

What does this have to do with walking? I’m sure some of you are asking just that question. Walking has always been my joy, what I do for exercise and what I do to still my mind when dealing with worries. Usually about my children or more recently my grandchildren. Now I would use it to help me cope with the rising tide of cancer and its treatments that I faced from then until the end of May 2021.

In December, 2020, I had a biopsy and the results of cancer were confirmed. I had joined a virtual walking group doing the Camino in Spain and I used this as a guide. I couldn’t walk with my local walking group as pandemic restrictions kept us apart. Instead, I walked on the seawall, through Stanley Park, around Lost Lagoon, over to Cambie Street Bridge, past the Science World, over the Viaduct and back on the seawall. I often stopped and sat on a bench and contemplated life and all its many ups and downs. It was a time to realize how good I had it. I live in a city that has some of the best cancer treatment for breast cancer, in North America. I had family and friends that were there to support me and I had a lifetime passion for walking which helped my whole body during this journey.

I had surgery January 15th and rested for a few days and then started doing short walks. My left shoulder (the operated side) was sore and didn’t want to swing as I tried to stride out on these walks. So the walks became shorter and I stopped more to admire the scenery, and, as time went by, the flowers that began to peek through the soil and smile at me.

Following the surgery, I was scheduled for radiation treatment as part of the follow up treatment. This involved having a CT scan so they could map out how to do the radiation. They use small tattoos to mark the spots that the radiation will focus on. As I had never had a tattoo before I asked them to give me roses instead of dots. They laughed and said NO! and as I waited to be called for the treatment I walked. Again, the seawall called me and it is close to my Yaletown apartment. Every day on it is different. Sometimes I took the False Creek ferry over to Granville Island and then walked back, across the Granville Street Bridge or east towards the Cambie Street Bridge. At Stamps Landing they were selling gelato and it was a great treat to help me finish the walk.

The radiation knocked it out of me and I was having a couple of naps a day. Good friends and family were great at calling and checking up on me and my son Frank would meet me for coffee and a short walk on the seawall.

Friends and family calling me to chat and see how I was doing. Walking.....everywhere, anywhere, anytime. This kept my spirits up and helped my body and mind stay strong. I am now cancer free and await a follow up annual mammogram in the fall. And I'm back walking!



Contest Photo by Linda M.



Contest Photo by Feri A. Glycine in Feri's back yard.



My Sulawesi Adventure

by Lily F.

In 1972 I had travelled, overland, on my own, fighting my way onto trains and buses, from Jakarta to Bali. In 2013 I covered the same route in a more refined manner with a travel group. After the trip I headed off on my own and flew to Sulawesi, an island that is culturally unique but still part of Indonesia. I had researched and made as much arrangements as possible. My aim was to experience the Toraja culture.

After landing in Makassar I flagged a taxi to take me to the bus stop cause there was a night bus I was going to have to take to the town of Senkang, my first stop. The thought of having to travel on a night bus was a bit of a nightmare so I asked the taxi driver if there was another way. He suggested the informal method of hitching a ride on the roadside on the route to the town. I thought I could give that a try so we drove to the side of the road. There didn't seem to be a lot of travellers so he got out and found someone going there. The person was still eating at a stall. I begged the taxi driver to sit with me and make sure I could get on my way before he left me. I simply refused to leave the taxi! There were already a group of people doing the "let's stare at the strange tourist through the window of the taxi by pressing right up to the glass". Finally the driver was ready and 5 enthusiastic observers ran over, yanked the boot door up, hauled my suitcase from the taxi and threw it into the van. They were in serious need of amusement on this island.

I looked over at the van and was thrilled to see...White People!! They were German NGOs working in the country and could speak the language. Then the driver started packing the car: travellers started appearing. Finally, 10 people packed into a car for 8 but luckily 2 got off down the road. Hot as hell and with no AC, that was a good thing. Driver drove like a mad man, negotiating the road down the middle and then wheeling over last minute when a car approached. The German guy did tap him on the shoulder once when he was trying to pick something up off the floor and the car looked about to crash. He stopped the search for whatever and then to make up for having lost a nanosecond he sped up like crazy. I couldn't doze off like the others because I wanted to see where I was going if we crashed. Funny thing about Muslim women on the island -- they wear the headscarf but they are relaxed about it. Women drive cars and motorbikes, work, run businesses, and when sharing a mini bus packed next to men, they will nod off and slump on top of each other.

Amazingly, we got to Sengkang all intact and we were even delivered to the hotel -- the only one. By the time we arrived in the evening there was a classic tropical downpour and I was lucky to get the last room. My room had three beds and I tried every one of them...the roof leaked and I wanted to make sure I got one that wasn't under any drips. I watched TV on one and then switched to sleep on another. Didn't feel guilty since they probably never changed the linen anyway.

The next morning the sun shone, I went off to find someone who was willing to take me out on Lake Tempo for two hours. This was the whole reason for coming here. There is a community of houses on stilts on the lake. I was the only one there. It was a magic moment. The lake had water lilies, people were doing their daily business outside their homes and I got the best views.

Lake Tempo



Getting out of Senkang was a problem as most people take the once-a-day morning bus out. I went for lunch at a little kiosk and tried to find some other transport. The man operating the "restaurant" offered to take me on his *tuktuk*. Off we went onto the main road with cars. Took about 2 hours instead of a half hour car ride. When we got to the "bus station" ...ha!...there was no visible sign that it was such a thing. People were sleeping by the side of the road and it was basically just a part of the main high road. Again I asked the man to wait with me until the bus arrived, which it finally did. For \$5 I got a seat in a bus with air con, comfortable seats, and no kamikaze driver.

I must mention that people along the way were super kind and helpful. At no time was I afraid or felt threatened; I just felt vulnerable because of the language barrier so when I meet someone who can speak English I latched onto him. Otherwise, there was a lot of sign language.

Finally, the bus took me to my final destination, Rantapao on Tana Toraja, which is a Christian area...Christian in a loose sense.

I arrived at my booked hotel, fully expecting to meet the guide I had communicated with via email on the net. Nope. Was told he was going to be a no-show. I felt a little played at that moment. Whatever, I thought to myself. I was there and I could find another. And what do you know, a cool dude kind of guy sidled up and we skirted around the issue of price and days. Finally came to an agreement.

Had my first day with the private guide. Amazing.

Here's a bit of info on Toraja people, an ethnic group on the island, and their culture. Apparently they were Indo-Chinese people who sailed to this island of Sulawesi. Don't know when. The people in this region were those who resisted Islam and held fortification in the mountains. The Dutch made them move into the valley and turned them into Christians. They were animist to begin with and changing them into Christians apparently just added a new dimension to their spiritual belief system. You can introduce Christ to an animist but you can't kill the animist belief; it just makes for a more complex religious belief system.

They don't bury their dead. They don't even acknowledge someone is dead until they have a funeral which may take ages. The family must save enough money for a splashy party. They embalm their dead and place them in their family *tongkonan*, a boat shaped house. The body is placed in a

north/south direction. They say the person is "sick" or "resting" and this can go on for years, until the family can afford a funeral. They bring food to the "person" three times a day and they make sure they have family activities in the next room to include that person. The funeral involves putting the body into the family tomb, which is in a hole carved into the side of the rocky mountainside.

Animals are slaughtered: pigs and buffalo. Cock fighting is allowed, and only sanctioned during funerals and not for sport (I doubt this is strictly observed) and all family members attend the funeral.

My guide decided I was OK and not too annoying (remember, he is a cool dude) and he decided I was worthy of the effort to take me into a burial cave deep into the jungle. We had to bush whack our way. He told me he rarely takes anyone, as generally people can't handle the terrain. And people are annoying. It was slippery and dense and required about an hour of hiking with a silent guide who didn't share much except to turn around once in a while to make sure I was still behind him.

I gasped when I got there. There were coffins in the shape of boats or buffalos, skulls lined up everywhere. Every sight and image I viewed with awe. I spent a couple of hours there

photographing and poking my way around. I do believe him when he said few people knew this one and it was rarely visited. There was no identifiable path.

This cave held many fascinating burial treasures probably hundreds of years old. In the beginning they would bury the bones in a carved boat which was placed in the cave. Impressive that all was intact and no theft and vandalism, no graffiti. I felt privileged to have had the experience and honour to be shown this.



Each square cut into the rock face belongs to a family to bury their dead. The bones are put into bags and every few years they take them out and re-bag them and have a little ceremonial party. The carved figures represent the family members within.

One very poetic gesture was that when babies die before the first tooth they are buried into the trunk of a living tree so the tree's spirit will nurture the baby and they grow together. The hole is secured and the tree heals. I was so in awe of the whole culture of respect for family members.

My guide also swung an invitation to a funeral which was a big plus. I wasn't sure I could get to witness one as I was there just for a week and had no way of knowing if the timing could work out. All I had to do was buy a gift of cigarettes. It was fascinating to see the days long affair. There was the obligatory crying and wailing at the appropriate moments and I saw the ceremonial slaughtering of pigs and buffaloes which was all done so swiftly, professionally and finished within seconds. Outside invited guests such as myself can wander about, which I did. It was really a community gathering to band together to cook and perform ceremonies and eat. Food is shared and the slaughtered animals are parcelled out to families.



I also toured the island to see the beautiful rice fields, the incredible markets with all sorts of animals being sold and cocks strutted out to show off their deadliness as fighters.



Going back to the capital city was easier, as I had the bus booked and was assured it would drop me off at the airport. Not quite. It dropped me off by the side of the road and was pointed in the general direction I had to make my way to and then the bus took off. I was by the side of the road with this man and his motorbike. The man had long hair, wore a baggy shirt, and looked and smelled as if he had never been near water. I approached him as he was about to leave and pantomimed my destination...he seemed to understand. We negotiated a price...and off I went on the rickety thing piled high with me and my suitcase. It was NOT a walkable distance! But he was good and carried my bag to the side of the airport. I made it.

I booked myself into a temporary hotel in the terminal for 4 hours at a time for 2 days and basically lived there until my flight was to fly out to Jakarta. The hotel staff was totally bewildered by my behaviour of booking in, have them look after my case when I booked out, then coming back to book in. I figured it was safer than trying to go into town to find a place.

The whole experience was exhilarating. I had to be mentally alert at all times to problem solve. This was a perfect example of what I consider a successful adventure.

~~~~~



## THE UMBRELLA STORY

by Verni B

(originally published in Volkssport Canada in Oct/Nov/Dec 1997)

A few years ago, I mail ordered an official IVV umbrella from Germany. In April of this year, I planned to use it as identification at the start points for the special pre- and post-convention volkswalks in Toronto and Montreal. [The 1997 Canadian Volkssport Federation AGM/Convention had been held in Kingston, ON, halfway between those two large cities.]

Fourteen people located me (and the umbrella) outside Union Station in downtown Toronto on April 25th, and despite the blue sky, I carried my special identification during the 10km walk.

The following Monday, I needed the parapluie for the rather wet weather and so that ten people could find me at City Hall in Old Montréal. It was fun leading the group while searching for landmarks and street names from under the umbrella. By the end of the walk, the shaft had a definite bend in it which my brother-in-law was able to straighten. However, a few days later during a thunderstorm in Montréal, my special umbrella met its end! Half a block from my sister's place, a sudden gust of wind twisted it in half.

Over the next two days, my 11-year-old nephew discovered many creative and imaginative uses for a demolished umbrella – the nylon covering became a cape and a parachute, the handle became a cane and a fishing rod, and the spokes decorated a Martian helmet!



Verni and her "official umbrella"

~~~~~