

the great connector

WALKWAY OVER THE HUDSON • SPRING NEWSLETTER 2023



Walk The Walk

April launched Walkway Over the Hudson's Membership Month, highlighting the diverse voices of our most ardent supporters and unveiling an updated membership program. With the recent revamp, we are now pleased to offer new and expanded benefits to members at all levels.

No matter why they join, the support of our members makes a real, tangible impact on the Walkway every day. Members directly support our corps of 150+ volunteer Ambassadors that bring the Walkway to life for more than 600,000 guests each year, access to our electric tram for seniors and visitors with mobility challenges, a robust and diverse annual calendar of family-friendly community events, summer employment opportunities for local high school students, our Walkway Explorers program connecting children ages 5-9 to Walkway's mission, and much more.

As the season launches, we invite visitors from both near and far to join our community of tight knit supporters that believe in our mission to

contribute to the vitality of the Hudson Valley by becoming a member. To our current members, thank you! You are truly the driving force behind everything we do.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Free admission to Mayfest, Walktoberfest, Walkway Talks Lecture Series, and our entire calendar of Walkway at Night events
- Advance purchase opportunities and discounted admission for special events including the sell-out July 4th Fireworks Spectacular
- Invitation to attend special VIP events like our Annual Meeting and Dinner
- 10% discount on Walkway merchandise purchased at our pavilions or online at shop.walkway.org
- Subscription to the bi-annual Great Connector print newsletter and Walkway e-news
- Official Walkway membership card and sticker



Connector member Dr. Kimberly Clare Ticknor utilizes her enhanced membership to do her part in creating a wonderful Walkway experience for everyone.

"On the Walkway, I can shake off my cloak of stress and anxiety. Here, there is only water and sky and the enduring steel and concrete beneath my feet. I feel responsible for the piece of the Walkway that I 'own', knowing that it will always give back far more to me than I can give in return."

TO FIND THE MEMBERSHIP LEVEL THAT'S RIGHT FOR YOU, VISIT JOIN.WALKWAY.ORG

The Season Ahead

As spring blooms across the Hudson Valley, I couldn't be more excited for my first season "on the bridge". I was honored to join Walkway Over the Hudson as Executive Director in January, stepping into an organization with a tremendous and inspirational legacy. As a lifelong park advocate, the chance to make an impact within my own community by supporting a renowned and cherished park space is a true privilege.



Parks play a vital role improving the physical, social, and mental health of communities, and are critical infrastructure that bring together people from all walks of life, strengthen local economies, and promote safety. But the Walkway isn't just any park. The story of how this beloved community asset came to be, conceived of and propelled forward by a group of local visionaries, is one that continues to inspire. We are an attraction for over 600,000 visitors each year – more people than live in the state of Wyoming – over half of whom are from within a 25-mile radius of the bridge. There is no doubt Walkway Over the Hudson is improving the quality of life in the Hudson Valley and will continue to do so in the years ahead.

Since January I've received a warm welcome from many of our stakeholders, members, and volunteers all of whom share a deep love for the Walkway. As we head into spring, I look forward to getting to know even more of you and together shaping our park for generations to come.

Thank you for your continued support. I look forward to great season ahead.

See you on the Walkway,

Lori Robertson
Executive Director

CURRENT PARTNERS

Our partners have a transformative impact on the Walkway on the Hudson Valley. To learn more visit walkway.org.



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Preserve A Memory, Create A Legacy

Walkway's bronze medallions are custom designed and engraved trail markers permanently mounted on the bridge's north railing that honor and celebrate the people and organizations that have made a tremendous impact on our park.

For more information about dedicating a medallion for yourself, your company, or a loved one, visit walkway.org/stewards or call 845-454-9649.



Save The Date - 2023 Events

Saturday, May 20 & Sunday, May 21 – 12- 5 p.m.

Mayfest Farmers and Makers Market

Hudson Valley Rail Trail (Walkway's West Approach)
walkway.org/mayfest

Tuesday, July 4th - tentative

4th Of July Fireworks Spectacular

Walkway Over the Hudson
walkway.org/fireworks

Friday, October 6 – 6-10 p.m.

Starry Starry Night

walkway.org/starrystarrynight

Saturday, October 21 & Sunday, October 22 – 12-5 p.m.

Walktoberfest Farmers and Makers Market

Hudson Valley Rail Trail (Walkway's West Approach)
walkway.org/walktoberfest

Walkway At Night

Friday, June 2 - 8:30-10 p.m.

Friday July 21 - 8:30-10 p.m.

Friday, August 4 - 8-9:30 p.m.

Friday, August 18 - 8-9:30 p.m.

Friday, September 29 - 6:30-8 p.m.

Friday, October 27 - 6-7:30 p.m.

walkway.org/walkwayatnight

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Ambassador Spotlight

Marie Letterii

What inspired you to become a Walkway Ambassador?

The Walkway opened when I was in college, and I loved riding my bike on the Rail Trail and across the Walkway when I came home for break. After college, I moved out of the area for a few years but always loved coming home and going for a bike ride. When I finally moved back to the area in 2019, I couldn't wait to sign up as an Ambassador. Volunteering has always been important to me, and I love giving back to a place that means so much to me.

What's your favorite part of being a Walkway ambassador?

I love being outside and getting to interact with all the people that visit the Walkway. Everyone is always so friendly and so happy to be on the bridge, and it's great to share in that enjoyment. Plus, I have developed so many friendships as a Walkway Ambassador, and I love being able to connect with my fellow Ambassadors.

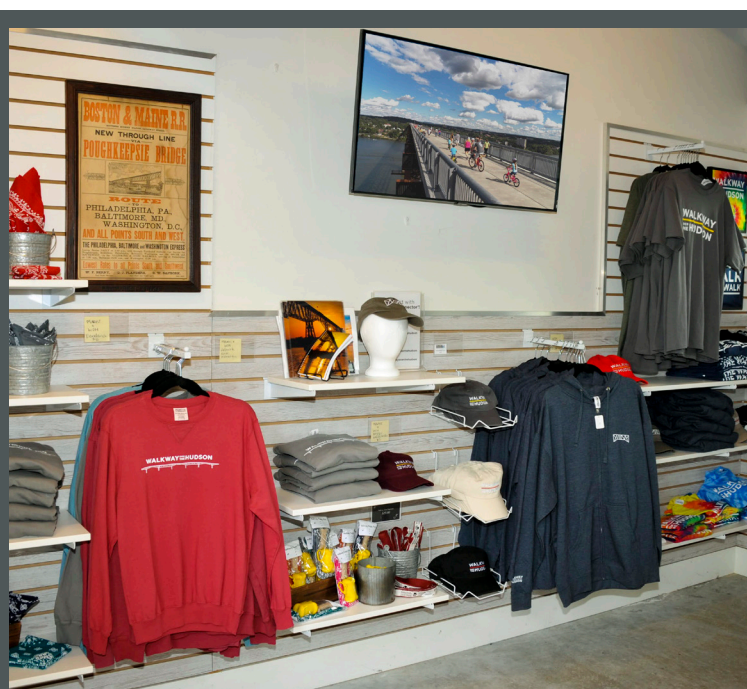
What's your favorite event to be a part of on the Walkway every year and why?

There are so many! Walkway at Night is always so beautiful, especially being out there right around sunset. Mayfest and Walktoberfest are great opportunities to check out local vendors. I love seeing all the people that travel to the Walkway to see what those events have to offer.

What would you say to someone considering becoming an Ambassador?

Do it! I volunteer not only because I love the Walkway, but because of how easy everyone makes it to want to be there. The staff, guests, and my fellow Ambassadors are so nice, welcoming, and flexible. I work full-time and have some periods where it's more difficult for me to get out to the Walkway, but everyone is so encouraging, and we get so excited to see each other. Even in the most stressful times in my life, I can always count on the few hours at the Walkway being a calming, positive experience that leaves me happy that I volunteered that day.

To explore becoming a Walkway Ambassador, visit walkway.org/volunteer.



Pavilions Open For Season

Walkway's merchandise and information pavilions – the East Gate Plaza in Poughkeepsie and West Pavilion in Highland – are open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. (weather permitting).

Staffed by volunteer Ambassadors, the pavilions offer visitors the opportunity to purchase merchandise, learn about Walkway membership, receive assistance, or ask questions about the bridge and surrounding area. Ambassadors can provide information about local restaurants, hotels, other attractions of note, and more.



Electric Tram Available To Assist Guests

The Friends of the Walkway's 11-passenger wheelchair-accessible electric tram operates on Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 10 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. and runs on a continuous loop across the bridge. A complete one-way trip takes approximately 30 minutes, and passengers can hop on or off at multiple locations including the East Gate Plaza, Elevator Overlook, Center Overlook (by the flagpole), and Ulster Welcome Center. Reservations are not required, and rides are free. Donations accepted on board to help further defray operating expenses.

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Lighting Project Nears Completion

Later this spring, the installation of color-changing LED lights at Walkway's three overlooks (the wide areas of the bridge near the elevator, flagpole, and western shoreline) will be complete. These fully programmable, energy efficient lights will support nighttime events, provide safety signaling when required, and allow Walkway Over the Hudson to shine bright in support of charitable causes and other community celebrations.

Domingo Gonzalez Associates, a nationally renowned outdoor lighting firm, spearheaded the project with support from New York State Parks and the Friends of the Walkway Amenities Committee. It is a natural extension of the 450 solar lights added to the bridge's north railing in 2021.



**Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation**