

Cedar Rapids, IA – Linn County 6K

"A Blend of the Old and New in Cedar Rapids"

Lat 41.966104, Long -91.661154

©2023 - GDMVA, "Iowa's Walking Club"

Start/Finish: National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library (NCSML)
1400 Inspiration Place SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404.

Cedar Rapids is in east-central Iowa, between Iowa City and Waterloo along Interstate 380, which bisects the city. The starting point is at the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library (NCSML) at 1400 Inspiration Place SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404. GPS location is 41.966104, -91.661154. Directions to the starting point:

Directions: From north: Exit I-380 at Exit #19C ("1st Av W"). Proceed across 1st Av onto L St SW (frontage road on west side of 380). Follow L St to 16th Av (about 5 blocks past grade crossing over railroad tracks) and turn left. As 16th Av swings left toward 12th Av bridge, turn right onto C St SW, and immediately left onto 15th Av SW. NCSML is on left at the end of the block.

From south: In Cedar Rapids, exit I-380 at Exit 18 (Wilson Av SW) and follow the frontage road (3rd St SW) to 16th Av SW. Turn right. As 16th Av swings left toward 12th Av bridge, turn right onto C St SW, and immediately left onto 15th Av SW. NCSML is on left at the end of the block.

PARKING: There is ample parking near the Czech Museum: museum lots A and B just across from the museum entrance, plus other nearby parking for the Czech Village business and historic district.

RESTROOMS: are readily available in downtown Cedar Rapids. Some of the best locations are: National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library, 1400 Inspiration Place SW (starting point); African-American Museum of Iowa, 55 12th Av SE; Ground Transportation Center, 450 1st St SE; NE side of Cedar Lake, Shaver Rd NE 1 block south of H Av NE (on 10K route only); Cedar Rapids Public Library, 450 5th Av SE; NewBo City Market, 1100 3rd St SE.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS: Walking the USA A-Z, Iowa Counties Program, Walking with Veterans, Rock around the Clock, Town Halls/City Halls, Step to the Beat.

Please use either the Online Start Box (OSB) or Physical Start Box (PSB) to register and complete the event. Do NOT mix and match, for example, by registering using the OSB then completing your event using the PSB or signing the PSB log sheet. The sponsoring club only receives credit for an OSB participation when an OSB registration has been completed online by entering your participation date, distances, and any special programs using the OSB.

- 1. From the starting point in the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library, with the reception desk behind you, turn right and exit the front doors. Descend to ground level via stairs or ramps. (Ahead of you is the clock tower – Rock around the Clock special program).**
- 2. Continue forward past the clock tower to 16th Av SW.**
- 3. Turn left and cross the Bridge of the Lions**

As you cross the bridge, notice Mt. Trashmore to your right, previously the Cedar Rapids landfill. It was re-opened to receive all the 2008 flood debris but has again been closed and seeded with wildflowers! An “open spaces park” with walking trails has been established on the site. At the top it offers a striking view of downtown.

On the east bank you will have an excellent view (across the river) of the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library. Notice the tiny gray and red immigrant home. (Museum hours are Monday to Saturday 9:30 am to 4:00 pm.; Sunday noon to 4:00. Tour the museum when you're done if you have time. It's well worth it.

- 5 Just past the end of the bridge you will see 3 flags (Slovak, U.S.,**

and Czech). Turn LEFT there onto the Cedar River Trail and walk with the river to your left under two road bridges and one railroad bridge to 3rd Avenue SE

Just before the first bridge (12th Av SE), on the inland side of the flood wall, is the African-American Museum of Iowa, well worth a visit if you have the time. The ramp to the right just before the bridge takes you there.

Once you've passed under all 3 bridges you will pass a set of three flagpoles on your left. Look across the parking lot on your right for the True North Insurance Company. This is the previous site of the Cedar Rapids Public Library, which was heavily damaged by floodwaters in 2008. Ironically, the new library now is sited where True North once was located.

To your left on the island in the middle of the Cedar River is the Linn County Courthouse and Jail.

A block upriver on the island is the Veterans' Memorial Coliseum (gold flame on top), which was the Cedar Rapids City Hall until 2008. A large stained-glass window created by artist Grant Wood as a tribute to all veterans is located at the front of this building. There also is a veterans' memorial by the entrance (**Walking with Veterans special program**).

On the right bank of the river, across from Veterans Coliseum, is the current Cedar Rapids city hall, formerly the federal court house. (City Halls special program)

Try to visualize the river's water almost covering the bridge railings.

The river crested at 31.2 feet in 2008. Normal flood stage is 12 feet!

6 At Third Avenue SE, turn right and walk beside the former Smulekoff's Department Store to 1st Street SE.

7 Cross 1st Street and continue walking up Third Avenue SE.

You will pass the beautiful Paramount Theatre, CR's primary music venue, built in 1928. (Step to the Beat special program) On the corner is the Simply Divine Candy Shop, which specializes in nostalgic candy, wonderful chocolates and unique gifts. Stop in – you'll love it!

8 Turn left and cross Third Avenue at this corner, then turn right and continue up Third Avenue.

9 Cross 2nd and 3rd Streets SE.

To your left across the street is the former Guaranty Bank Building. It's one of the finest specimens of late 19th century architecture in Cedar Rapids. After crossing the railroad tracks, you will pass the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art on your left. This was built originally to be Cedar Rapids' Carnegie library. Greene Square Park is on your right across the street, with a view of the new Cedar Rapids Public Library across the park. You'll visit the library later.

10 Keep walking up Third Avenue, crossing 5th, 6th, and 7th Streets SE.

Notice First Presbyterian Church on the corner of Third

Avenue and 5th Street SE. This church has stood here since *before* Iowa became a state!

11 After crossing 7th Street, turn left and walk one block to Second Avenue SE.

12 Cross Second Avenue SE and turn right.

You are now passing behind the new Cedar Rapids Central Fire Station. Be sure to stop and read the historical information signs just past the Fire Station drive. They are entitled, "The Lincoln Highway Comes to Cedar Rapids" and "The Lincoln Highway and Automobile Row."

13 Walk to 8th Street SE, cross, and continue to the front gate of 800 Second Avenue SE (This gate was designed by Grant Wood).

This is the new site of The History Center! (Open Tuesday to Saturday, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm) It is the former home of the George B. Douglas family (a National Historic Site). Mr. Douglas traded this home for the Brucemore Mansion (about a mile NE on First Avenue, and well worth a visit) in 1906, which was then two miles out in the country. This gate was designed by regional artist Grant Wood.

14 Continue past the next gate and turn left at the parking lot, trailing the brick wall on your left.

You are approaching Grant Wood's home and art studio, which was located above a "modern, six-stall garage" in 1924. It was here that he crafted the well-known painting entitled "American Gothic" in 1930. Admission is free on

Saturdays and Sundays, open from noon to 4:00 pm.

15 Turn left just before the studio and follow the walkway as it turns right on back side to Turner Alley. Turn left into the alley and return to 8th Street.

16 Turn right on the sidewalk and walk-up 8th Street to First Ave. SE.

On this corner sits the Iowa Masonic Library (no Saturday hours).

17 Turn left at First Avenue SE and cross 8th Street. Walk past the front side of the Cedar Rapids Central Fire Station.

Look under the words "Central Fire Station" for a chance to check your Roman numeral deciphering skills! There's a wonderful 9/11 Memorial just inside.

18 Continue walking down 1st Avenue SE to 6th Street SE.

19 Turn left at 6th Street and walk to 2nd Avenue SE.

Look back to your left up 2nd Avenue and see old Lincoln Hwy. Automobile Row.

20 Cross 2nd Avenue and continue to 4th Avenue SE.

21 Cross 4th Avenue SE, then turn right and cross 6th Street SE.

22 Go forward to the new (2013) Cedar Rapids Public Library on the corner of 4th Avenue and 5th Street SE. Greene Square Park is

directly across the street to your right.

Please go into the library! Once inside, the restrooms are on the right, a fabulous children's library to your left (the whole end of the building), and a small café, and you can take the elevator to the 3rd floor (roof) to enjoy a panoramic view of Cedar Rapids from the rooftop reading area/gardens!

23 Return to the front of the library by the same door you used to enter (4th Avenue SE).

24 Turn left on the sidewalk and walk along 4th Avenue to 3rd Street.

25 Turn left again on 3rd Street and walk to 8th Avenue SE.

26 Cross 8th Avenue *very carefully* with the stoplight. It's busy!

27 Continue on 3rd Street SE to the NewBo Market on the corner of 11th Avenue and 3rd Street SE.

Stop in! You can get many kinds of food, treats, craft items, etc. Nice restrooms also available. Across 3rd Street are the CSPS Hall (built for a Czech fraternal organization, now a prime venue for folk and world music) and Almost Famous Popcorn (great place for ice cream).

28 Return to 3rd Street from the market and turn left and cross 12th Avenue SE, continuing forward two more blocks on 3rd St.

29 Turn right at 16th Av SE and continue back across the Bridge of Lions.

You now have re-entered Czech Village. This once was home to many of the Czech immigrants who came here around the turn of the 20th Century. Most of the humble dwellings that were their homes were ruined in the 2008 flood, but the commercial district remains.

Turn right at Inspiration PI SW and return to your start point.

Be sure to log back into the OSB system to finish/complete your online registration.

These walk directions and maps may only be used in conjunction with a signed American Volkssport Association athletic waiver. All other uses are prohibited.

Emergency: Call 911
POC: Jonathan Ice 319-538-7293
Iowa's Walking Club



Cedar Rapids, IA – Linn County

10k Volkswalk

“A Blend of the Old and New in Cedar Rapids”

Copyright 2023 – GDMVA, “Iowa’s Walking Club”

Cedar Rapids is in east-central Iowa, between Iowa City and Waterloo along Interstate 380, which bisects the city. The starting point is at the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library (NCSML) at 1400 Inspiration Place SW, Cedar Rapids, IA 52404. GPS location is 41.966104, -91.661154. Directions to the starting point:

Directions: From north: Exit I-380 at Exit #19C (“1st Av W”). Proceed across 1st Av onto L St SW (frontage road on west side of 380). Follow L St to 16th Av (about 5 blocks past grade crossing over railroad tracks) and turn left. As 16th Av swings left toward 12th Av bridge, turn right onto C St SW, and immediately left onto 15th Av SW. NCSML is on left at the end of the block.

From south: In Cedar Rapids, exit I-380 at Exit 18 (Wilson Av SW) and follow the frontage road (3rd St SW) to 16th Av SW. Turn right. As 16th Av swings left toward 12th Av bridge, turn right onto C St SW, and immediately left onto 15th Av SW. NCSML is on left at the end of the block.

PARKING: There is ample parking near the Czech Museum: museum lots A and B just across from the museum entrance, plus other nearby parking for the Czech Village business and historic district.

RESTROOMS: are readily available in downtown Cedar Rapids. Some of the best locations are: National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library, 1400 Inspiration Place SW (starting point); African-American Museum of Iowa, 55 12th Av SE; Ground Transportation Center, 450 1st St SE; NE side of Cedar Lake, Shaver Rd NE 1 block south of H Av NE (on 10K route only); Cedar Rapids Public Library, 450 5th Av SE; NewBo City Market, 1100 3rd St SE.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS: Walking the USA A-Z, Iowa Counties Program, Walking with Veterans, Rock around the Clock, Town Halls/City Halls, Step to the Beat.

Please use either the Online Start Box (OSB) or Physical Start Box (PSB) to register and complete the event. Do NOT mix and match, for example, by registering using the OSB then completing your event using the PSB or signing the PSB log sheet. The sponsoring club only receives credit for an OSB participation when an OSB registration has been completed online by entering your participation date, distances, and any special programs using the OSB.

- 1. From the starting point in the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library, with the reception desk behind you, turn right and exit the front doors. Descend to ground level via stairs or ramps. (Ahead of you is the clock tower – Rock around the Clock special program).**
- 2. Continue forward past the clock tower to 16th Av SW.**
- 3. Turn left and cross the Bridge of the Lions**

As you cross the bridge, notice Mt. Trashmore to your right, previously the Cedar Rapids landfill. It was re-opened to receive all the 2008 flood debris but has again been closed and seeded with wildflowers! An “open spaces park” with walking trails has been established on the site. At the top it offers a striking view of downtown.

On the east bank you will have an excellent view (across the river) of the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library. Notice the tiny gray and red immigrant home. (Museum hours are Monday to Saturday 9:30 am to 4:00 pm.; Sunday noon to 4:00. Tour the museum when you're done if you have time. It's well worth it.

- 5 Just past the end of the bridge you will see 3 flags (Slovak, U.S.,**

and Czech). Turn LEFT there onto the Cedar River Trail and walk with the river to your left under two road bridges and one railroad bridge to 3rd Avenue SE

Just before the first bridge (12th Av SE), on the inland side of the flood wall, is the African-American Museum of Iowa, well worth a visit if you have the time. The ramp to the right just before the bridge takes you there.

Once you've passed under all 3 bridges you will pass a set of three flagpoles on your left. Look across the parking lot on your right for the True North Insurance Company. This is the previous site of the Cedar Rapids Public Library, which was heavily damaged by floodwaters in 2008. Ironically, the new library now is sited where True North once was located.

To your left on the island in the middle of the Cedar River is the Linn County Courthouse and Jail.

A block upriver on the island is the Veterans' Memorial Coliseum (gold flame on top), which was the Cedar Rapids City Hall until 2008. A large stained-glass window created by artist Grant Wood as a tribute to all veterans is located at the front of this building. There also is a veterans' memorial by the entrance (**Walking with Veterans special program**).

On the right bank of the river, across from Veterans Coliseum, is the current Cedar Rapids city hall, formerly the federal court house. (City Halls special program)

Try to visualize the river's water almost covering the bridge railings.

The river crested at 31.2 feet in 2008. Normal flood stage is 12 feet!

6 At Third Avenue SE, turn right and walk beside the former Smulekoff's Department Store to 1st Street SE.

7 Cross 1st Street and continue walking up Third Avenue SE.

You will pass the beautiful Paramount Theatre, CR's primary music venue, built in 1928. (Step to the Beat special program) On the corner is the Simply Divine Candy Shop, which specializes in nostalgic candy, wonderful chocolates and unique gifts. Stop in – you'll love it!

8 Turn left and cross Third Avenue at this corner, then turn right and continue up Third Avenue.

9 Cross 2nd and 3rd Streets SE.

To your left across the street is the former Guaranty Bank Building. It's one of the finest specimens of late 19th century architecture in Cedar Rapids. After crossing the railroad tracks, you will pass the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art on your left. This was built originally to be Cedar Rapids' Carnegie library. Greene Square Park is on your right across the street, with a view of the new Cedar Rapids Public Library across the park. You'll visit the library later.

10 Keep walking up Third Avenue, crossing 5th, 6th, and 7th Streets SE.

Notice First Presbyterian Church on the corner of Third Avenue and 5th Street SE. This church has stood here since *before* Iowa became a state!

11 After crossing 7th Street, turn left and walk one block to Second Avenue SE.

12 Cross Second Avenue SE and turn right.

You are now passing behind the new Cedar Rapids Central Fire Station. Be sure to stop and read the historical information signs just past the Fire Station drive. They are entitled, "The Lincoln Highway Comes to Cedar Rapids" and "The Lincoln Highway and Automobile Row."

13 Walk to 8th Street SE, cross, and continue to the front gate of 800 Second Avenue SE (This gate was designed by Grant Wood).

This is the new site of The History Center! (Open Tuesday to Saturday, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm) It is the former home of the George B. Douglas family (a National Historic Site). Mr. Douglas traded this home for the Brucemore Mansion (about a mile NE on First Avenue, and well worth a visit) in 1906, which was then two miles out in the country. This gate was designed by regional artist Grant Wood.

14 Continue past the next gate and turn left at the parking lot, trailing the brick wall on your left.

You are approaching Grant Wood's home and art studio, which was located above a "modern, six-stall garage" in 1924. It was here that he crafted the well-known painting entitled "American Gothic" in 1930. Admission is free on Saturdays and Sundays, open from noon to 4:00 pm.

15 Turn left just before the studio and follow the walkway as it turns right on back side to Turner Alley. Turn left into the alley and return to 8th Street.

16 Turn right on the sidewalk and walk-up 8th Street to First Ave. SE.

On this corner sits the Iowa Masonic Library (no Saturday hours).

17 Turn left at First Avenue SE and cross 8th Street. Walk past the front side of the Cedar Rapids Central Fire Station.

Look under the words "Central Fire Station" for a chance to check your Roman numeral deciphering skills! There's a wonderful 9/11 Memorial just inside.

18 Continue walking down 1st Avenue SE to 4th Street. Just before the railroad tracks turn right to the crosswalk.

IMPORTANT: There is a button to activate flashers that signal traffic to stop.

19 Cross 1st Avenue SE by walking between the white crosswalk markers. Push button and wait for traffic to be stopped so you can cross safely. Proceed forward onto the bike trail.

After passing under the I-380 bridge, to your left will lie Quaker Oats, the largest cereal mill under one roof in the world.

20 At Stickle Drive, follow the green trail sign across three sets of

railroad tracks and bear right on the road.

You will pass the trim little former Rock Island Railroad station on the left. About 60 yards past the station on your right will be sign for the Cedar River Trail.

21 Turn right and stay on the trail, keeping a lagoon to your right. As Cedar Lake begins to open up to your left go straight ahead at the trail junction (left turn should be blocked by a construction barrier) cross to other side of the lake (cross two asphalt bridges).

22 Just before Shaver Rd. (rail junction and I-380 will be on far side) bear left on concrete sidewalk. Continue past The Sag Wagon (aptly named and popular local watering hole) and Cady Auction Gallery, both on left.

23 Bear left on an asphalt trail that goes closer to the lake. There will be public rest rooms to your right.

24 At the parking lot you will see construction on the Cedar Lake renovation project. Turn around and retrace your steps to First Avenue.

25 Walk south on the sidewalk parallel to I-380.

26 Turn right on the bike path when you come to a RR track/yard

sign, keeping the lake on your right.

27 After crossing the second asphalt bridge, you will proceed forward and retrace your route back to 1st Avenue E, turning left when trail meets the road near Quaker, crossing the 3 railroad tracks and rejoining the trail between tracks and 4th St NE.

28 Cross 1st Avenue carefully, using crosswalk button to stop traffic.

29 Continue on the bike trail 3 blocks to 4th Avenue, passing Greene Square Park on your left.

You will see the new (2013) Cedar Rapids Public Library on the corner of 4th Avenue and 5th Street SE.

30 Cross 4th Avenue and turn left, walking to the sidewalk leading to the main doors of the library.

Please go into the library! Once inside, you'll see restrooms on the right, a small café, a fabulous children's library to your left (the whole end of the building), and you can take the elevator to the 3rd floor (roof) to enjoy a panoramic view of Cedar Rapids from the rooftop reading area/gardens!

31 Leave the library by the same door you used to enter (on 4th Avenue SE) and then turn left on the front sidewalk.

32 Walk along 4th Avenue to 3rd Street.

33 Turn left again on 3rd Street and walk to 8th Avenue SE.

34 Cross 8th Avenue *very carefully* with the stoplight. It's busy!

35 Continue on 3rd Street SE to the NewBo Market on the corner of 11th Avenue and 3rd Street SE.

Stop in! You can get many kinds of food, treats, craft items, etc. Nice restrooms also available. Across 3rd Street are the CSPA Hall (built for a Czech fraternal organization, now a prime venue for folk and world music) and Almost Famous Popcorn (great place for ice cream).

36 Return to 3rd Street from the market and turn left and cross 12th Avenue SE, continuing forward two more blocks on 3rd St.

37 Turn right at 16th Av SE and continue back across the Bridge of Lions.

You now have re-entered Czech Village. This once was home to many of the Czech immigrants who came here around the turn of the 20th Century. Most of the humble dwellings that were their homes were ruined in the 2008 flood, but the commercial district remains.

Turn right at Inspiration Pl SW and return to your start point.

Be sure to log back into the OSB system to finish/complete your online registration by entering the participation date, distances, and any special programs.

These walk directions and maps may only be used in conjunction with a signed American Volkssport Association athletic waiver. All other uses are prohibited.



Emergency: Call 911
POC: Jonathan Ice 319-538-7293
Iowa's Walking Club

