



CHECKPOINT

WWW.AVA.ORG

THANK YOU TO ALL THE VOLUNTEERS AND PARTICIPANTS WHO MADE THE USFREEDOMWALK FESTIVAL A GREAT SUCCESS IN ARLINGTON, VA.



AVA CLUB CHARGES SPECIAL COMMITTEE - ROBERT BUZOLICH, CHAIR

IMPORTANT ACTION AT AVA BOARD MEETING, OCTOBER 18, 2023

As some of you may know, or may not have known, I served as the Chairperson of the AVA Club Charges Special Committee. The Committee report was presented in October to the AVA Board of Directors, who did act on the Committee's recommendations. I am providing you with a summary of the Committee report and the Board's action, because it affects your planning for the coming year.

First some background on the charges paid by Clubs to the AVA. The current \$1.25 participation fee and \$3 registration fee was implemented in 2003, which was 20 years ago. Since that time, due to inflation, the value of \$3 has increased to \$4.98, and the value of \$1.25 has increased to \$2.08. Operating expenses have also experienced a similar increase over the same period for the same reason. Yet, we continued to pay the AVA \$1.25. Consequently, since about 2010 the AVA budget has been forecasting an operating loss during non-convention years, which impacts the support provided to the Clubs by the National Office despite The Big Give and budget cuts. This situation is not sustainable for the survival of the AVA. The actions recommended by the Committee should have been taken years ago, and simply could no longer be kicked down the road.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Important Action Pg. 1
- Monthly Webinar Pg. 2
- Member Survey Pg. 2
- King William Parade Pg. 3
- 50th Anniversary Pg. 3
- Eclipse Walk Pg. 3
- US FreedomWalk Festival Pg. 4
- Big Give Pg. 4
- Programs Committee Pg. 5
- Publicity Committee Update Pg. 5
- AVA Recognition Awards Pg. 6
- Starting Point Pg. 6
- Financials Pg. 6
- Centurion Challenge Pg. 6
- Stamp Update Pg. 7

After reviewing the AVA's sources of funding derived by charges to the Clubs, the Committee determined the best course of action was to recommend that the AVA Board increase the participant fee payable to the AVA from \$1.25 to \$2 for all participants at all AVA sanctioned events. This was adopted by the Board. Note that the wording of this recommendation refers to "all" participants, which includes the "Free Walker Category." It will be the Club's decision how best to cover the cost of "Free Walkers," who should now be considered Guests. This action takes effect on January 1, 2024.

The Committee further recommended that the **\$3 registration fee** be increased to a "recommended no more than registration fee of \$4." In addition, a **\$4 registration fee** will be charged to all registrants on the Online Start Box. However, Clubs are free to determine their own registration fee for all events not on the Online Startbox, based upon the actual value of the event added by the Club and other charges such as park fees. This was adopted by the Board and takes effect on January 1, 2024.

The bottom line for your Club's 2024 planning is clubs will be charged \$2 for each participant at your AVA sanctioned events, and the fee for registration through the OSB will be \$4 with 2 dollars going to the AVA and \$2 going to the club. Club's may use their discretion to determine registration fees for their events not hosted on the OSB, and to determine how best to come up with the funds to cover the \$2 participation fee for Guests, formerly referred to as "Free Walkers."

You may expect additional details and guidance in the November and December editions of The Checkpoint, as well as from your Regional Directors.

Am looking forward to seeing you on the trail in the coming year.

PRESIDENT/CEO - HENRY ROSALES

AVA INFORMATIONAL AND TRAINING MONTHLY WEBINARS TO CONTINUE

The AVA will continue with monthly informational and training webinars this November 15, 7:00 pm Central. Training topics will include ESR sanctioning, the Online Startbox, Element3 Health, National, Local and Regional events, Special Programs, Goggle Docs, updates from the National Office and Committee Chairs and special guests. If you have any suggested topics for these webinars, please send them to henry@ava.org

All webinars will be on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 - 8:00 pm Central on the Zoom online platform. The next webinar is on Wednesday, November 15, 7:00 – 8:00 pm. Central. The webinar will be hosted by Mike Green, Information and Technology Chair and a representative from Element3 Health. Please bring your questions, concerns, comments about the Element3 Health program. We are interested in how we can improve this partnership and most important how we can improve these services for club members.



You must pre - register for the webinar. [Click on this link](#) to register. The registration link will also be posted on the AVA website. The passcode is AVA if asked.

AVA MEMBERS SURVEY COMING IN NOVEMBER

The AVA will be emailing all AVA Associate and individual club members and participants a survey in November. The purpose of the survey will be to collect updated demographic data on our members and qualitative and quantitative information on the programs and services the AVA provides. This information will be used to help us with future planning and grant writing efforts. Thank you in advance for your support.



Welcome!
 to our newest AVA members
 Susan and Vince!

"I have been on about 15 solo volksmarches so far and have found them a blast! My husband and I are visiting our daughter in Dallas right now, and we're taking time to do some volksmarches while we're here! This is the San Pedro Trail. This is an internationally famous area for bird watching. The volksmarch is brought to us by the Thunder Mountain Trekkers." -Susan

NEW AVA NATIONAL EVENTS ON THE HORIZON

KING WILLIAM PARADE, APRIL 27, 2024, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Thanks to the support of the King William Association, it is likely the AVA will once again be invited to participate in the annual King William Fiesta Parade. This event draws over 30,000 national and international participants. Please invite club members to participate in the parade and send us their ideas on how we can leverage this event to market the AVA to a broader national audience.

Enter the 2024 Parade Float Contest! – Send the AVA your ideas for a parade float, march, dance, or whatever you think is lively, colorful, and representative of the AVA for the AVA's parade entry. The theme for this year's King William parade is "Love Is In Bloom." The recommendation is to incorporate flowers into our float or whatever we end up doing. **If your idea is selected for the parade, you will not only get to see your idea come to life in front of 30,000 spectators but you will also receive one free roundtrip airfare ticket to San Antonio to participate in the parade!**

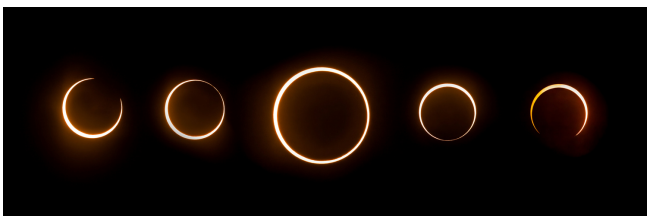
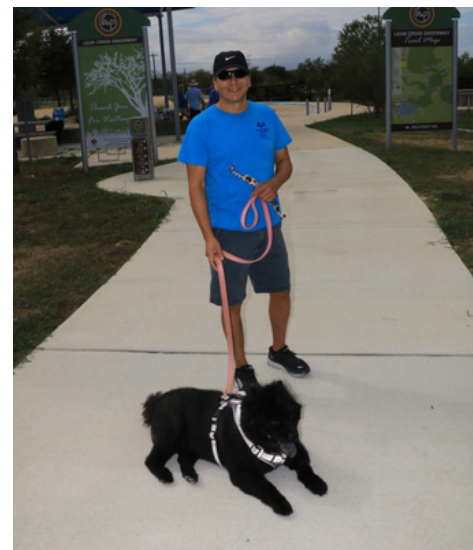
The contest rules are simple. If your idea for the parade is selected, you are the winner! If your idea includes a float, please send a sketch of what you envision the float to look like. Sketches of all other ideas are welcome and can only help your entry but are not required. Entries are due by December 31, 2023. Please mail entries to the National Office, Attn: Henry Rosales. Be sure to put your name, address, phone number, and email on the entries. For questions email henry@ava.org. Please put parade contest on the subject line.

2026 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AVA!

In a little over two years the AVA will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary! It is time to start planning this grandiose event! Please start entertaining discussions with your club members on what you envision for a birthday celebration so we can make it a reality! This celebration does not need to be in San Antonio. Be creative and think Big!

SAN ANTONIO PATHFINDERS TRIBUTE TO FREEDOM ANNULAR ECLIPSE WALK A HUGE SUCCESS!

I attended the Tribute to Freedom Annual Eclipse Walk, hosted by the San Antonio Pathfinders in October 2023. The event was well attended, well organized, and attracted several new walkers! I appreciate how the walk organizers worked with the community to host the event at an establishment instead of a park because by doing so we create new partnerships that bring new walkers! Along the trail I met a professional photographer named Karen Rose who was patiently waiting for that perfect second to capture that perfect photo of the eclipse. She has graciously shared one of her photos with us! Feel free to contact her for additional information and photos! Special thanks the Kathy and Mike Schwencke, the San Antonio Pathfinders, and all volunteers for a job well done!



Karen Rose is a professional photographer living in Brunswick, Georgia who traveled to San Antonio, Texas to photograph the 2023 Annular Eclipse. The photograph is a composite of five photos taken during the eclipse, including the ring of fire seen at Total Annularity (Maximum Eclipse). Karen can be reached at KRosephotos@hotmail.com.

2023 US FREEDOM WALK FESTIVAL

It was great to visit with everyone during the AVA's October board meeting that was held in conjunction with the 2023 US Freedom Walk Festival in Arlington, VA. By combining both events, the AVA leadership had the opportunity to visit with the IML leadership while supporting one of our own events. Working together with the IML and our AVA clubs is a win-win situation because it allows us to maximize our resources while cultivating our international partnerships and supporting our local clubs! This is something the AVA must continue to do to grow.

Special thanks to Dolores Grenier, Tim and Cecilia Miner, Andrea Doll, Hector Hernandez, and all club members and volunteers for your support and yet another very successful US Freedom Walk Festival.



German soldiers and Sarah Garcia in front of Washington monument.

Franklin D. Roosevelt statue

German medics and Volkssporter Sarah Garcia, a former Army medic.

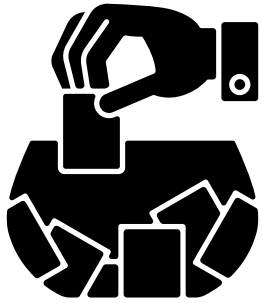
Photos Courtesy of Sarah Garcia

\$84,563 RAISED - THE BIG GIVE INDIVIDUAL DONOR CAMPAIGN WRAPS UP

Many thanks to all who contributed online and sent checks for our annual donor campaign, The Big Give. It was fun to watch the individual fundraising challenge unfold in real time on the AVA's peer to peer giving page. This year we have a new winner in the Peer-to-Peer category, none other than Marian DeVaul! We also had several more individuals open a peer-to-peer account this year while others got very creative on ways to encourage families, friends, and club members to donate.

The AVA finished 21 out of 418 organizations during the online giving segment of the campaign. We had approximately 281 duplicated individuals, 85 clubs, and 9 corporate donors. A final report with more information and winners of the AVA Giving Back prizes will be in the January Checkpoint.

To all donors, I express my sincere gratitude for your continued support of the AVA. You are the cornerstone of this great organization! Muchas Gracias!

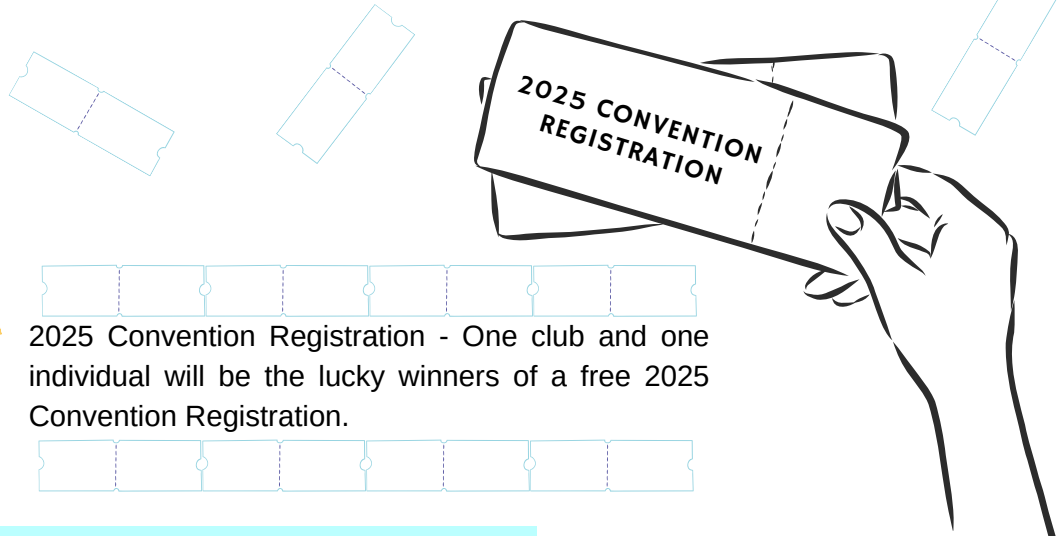


AVA Giving Back – The following 2023 Big Give raffle prizes will be announced in the December Checkpoint. All Big Give individual and club donors have been entered into the drawings.

Free Sanctioned Traditional Events - For every 25 clubs that donate, one free traditional sanctioned event will be raffled.

2024 Starting Point Books - For every 50 unique donors, one 2024 Starting Point Book will be raffled.

The **Big Give**



2025 Convention Registration - One club and one individual will be the lucky winners of a free 2025 Convention Registration.

PROGRAMS COMMITTEE - DIANE HOWELL EVANS, CHAIR



VOLUNTEERS WANTED

As the new Chair of the AVA Programs Committee, I am seeking 1-2 volunteers from each AVA region interested in developing and implementing nationwide interactive programs. These new and existing national programs increase AVA participation and promote our organization to potential new members. Currently there are 2 AVA Special Programs beginning in 2024: a-MAZE-ing Labyrinths and Step to the Beat.

Committee meetings are monthly by conference call and/or video conference. E-mail, texting, and phone calls between meetings may be used to communicate.

I would appreciate it if clubs would share this call for volunteers with their club membership at upcoming club meetings. If a club member is interested in joining the Programs Committee or needs more information, please have them contact me via email at programs@ava.org. Thank you.

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE - SUSAN FINE, CHAIR

PUBLICITY COMMITTEE UPDATE

I can't believe it's the holidays already! For many of us, it means getting outdoors to walk on Black Friday, the day after Thanksgiving. If your club is having an "Opt Out" walk, whether it's a YRE group walk or a traditional event, please let us help you promote it. We'll put it on the website, and promote it through social media. Just fill out the form by [clicking here](#). Please get to Hector by Nov 15.

As we begin the design and production of the new TAW e-newsletter, we have many ideas and stories we will be writing and researching. Some of these will be based on your photos and stories, especially the ones we see on the AVA Facebook page. You are our number one promoter for our sport, so we appreciate you sharing your experiences, and any articles you may find about walking and health. Please send ideas to publicity@ava.org.

Also, if you have writing or publishing skills, or can help research articles about walking and/or health, we would love you to join our committee. With an electronic newsletter, we can link to articles easily to give the proper credit to the publisher and author. Please email me with your interest. - Have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION COMMITTEE - CARL CORDES, CHAIR**AVA RECOGNITION AWARDS UPDATE**

The awards program is designed to recognize and honor those that have made significant contributions to furthering the AVA mission. The Awards and Recognition Committee is responsible for coordinating and completing procedures for the nomination and distribution of awards for clubs, individuals and organizations through the Board and CEO. The criteria for National and Regional awards and nominating procedures are outlined in the AVA Policy Manual.



National Awards are considered every two years and timed to be presented at our Biennial Convention. Nominations are first submitted to your RD no later than November 1 in the year prior to the Convention. Use AVA Form 302 for these nominations.

Nominations for Regional Awards (Meritorious Service, Commendable Service, Certificate of Appreciation) can be submitted at any time on AVA Form 303 to your Regional Director. These awards are reviewed, approved, and prepared by the Regional Director. Presentation method is determined by the RD.

I am pleased to report the committee for this 2-year term has been formed. Committee members are Tom Baltes (NW), Christopher Begnoche (RM), Suzi Glass (PA), Sam Korff (NW), Chris Mellen (NE), and Celia Miner (AT).

ACCOUNTING SPECIALIST - MARIAN DEVAUL**2024 STARTING POINT BOOKS - PREORDER NOW**

We are still taking pre-order's for your 2024 Starting Point Book. You may mail the form to AVA, 1008 S. Alamo St, San Antonio, TX 78210, or fax to 210-659-1212. You may also place your order by emailing the form to marian@ava.org.

This bound 7 ½" x 9" publication is a collection of sanctioned walking, bicycling, swimming, hiking, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing, and boating activities. It is your comprehensive guide to 1,966 self-guided events throughout the United States. The book includes directions to the event, trail ratings, hours of operation and whether an award is offered. [Click here for Order Form.](#)

2023 STARTING POINT BOOKS - CLEARANCE SALE

Our 2023 Starting Point books are on sale for the low cost of \$10.00 plus shipping and handling. For purchase, please e-mail marian@ava.org, or call 210-659-2112.

FINANCIAL

If your club's fiscal year ends on 6-30-23, it is time to file your 990 E-Postcard, Annual Financial Report (AFR), and update your club officers. The financial documents are due by November 15, 2023. An IRS user guide, and the AVA Retention policy for financial and event records have been posted on the AVA website under "Clubs Only". Please submit a copy of your filings to marian@ava.org.

2024 CENTURION ACHIEVEMENT CHALLENGE

The 2024 program begins January 1, 2024. You must be an AVA Associate Member (annual or lifetime) to participate in the Challenge. Eligible participants may register for the 2024 Challenge between October 1, 2023 and September 30, 2024 using the official registration form. Please mail forms to AVA, 1008 S. Alamo St, San Antonio, TX 78210, or e-mail to marian@ava.org.

American Volkssport Association



CENTURION



100 EVENTS EACH YEAR

[Click on image for order form.](#)

IT SPECIALIST - HECTOR HERNANDEZ

2024 STAMP MAILOUT

The production of the 2024 event stamps has begun. Please make sure you have all your events in for the new year. If you did not get your event in on time you will not receive your stamp with this run. If there is a missing stamp for whatever reason please send an email to hector@ava.org. I will also not be sending stamp handles for events this year. If you are in need of a handle for new or old events please email hector@ava.org.



SUPPORT OUR NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FRIENDS

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS



Join us May 24-26, 2024 for a walk through history in Canada's First Capital and surrounding areas. Registration includes 5 Event Walks, a Meet & Greet, and a Dinner.

The King's Town Trekkers Volkssport Club
CVF Festival
Come join us May 24-26, 2024
Kingston Ontario Canada welcomes you for a great weekend of fun, friendship and food, oops I mean fitness.
Registration, hotel info and the schedule will be on the website: www.walks.ca

NATIONAL EVENTS



ALABAMA AMBLERS
IVV Credit Only
www.alabamaamblers.net
COME JOIN US FOR A WEEKEND OF FUN!!!

The Alabama Amblers are sponsoring walking events on Veterans Day Weekend 2023!

Click images to go to official website.



TEXAS TRAIL ROUNDUP
3-DAY International WALKFEST
San Antonio, Texas, USA
23-25 February, 2024



SOLAR ECLIPSE
APRIL 8, 2024
SAVE THE DATE
World Walking Week is 1-7 April, 2024

The Texas Hill Country will be one of the few places in North America in complete totality of the solar eclipse. Observers will see about 4 minutes and 29 seconds of totality starting at 13:32.

The Texas Volkssport Association is planning **5 & 10 km walks** in the Texas Hill Country

COME WALK WITH US
www.walktexas.org

CALLING ALL WALKERS!!
Join us in Arlington, VA USA for the 22 Annual US FreedomWalk Festival
October 20-22, 2023
www.USFreedomWalk.org

AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB
Volksmarching at its Best

Walk Arlington

An International Walking Experience

Checkpoint Available Via Email to All Club Members Who Request It
To receive an electronic copy of the Checkpoint send your request to Hector at hector@ava.org. Please note on the subject line: Request for Checkpoint.



The American Volkssport Association
The Mission of AVA is to promote and organize noncompetitive physical fitness activities that encourage lifelong fun, fitness, and friendship for all ages and abilities.



1008 S Alamo St · San Antonio, TX 78210, Phone 210.659.2112 · Fax 210.659.1212 Message US.