



Fun, Fitness, Friendship

February 2019

www.ava.org



CHECKPOINT ✓

David Bonewitz, PhD—AVA National President

In the last issue of TAW, I wrote about the "free walker" issue and asked if anyone could share with me the history of how we arrived where we are today with regard to "free walkers."

The following is from an e-mail sent from former AVA President, Heinz Johnson.

"The volkssport program here in the United States was based on the policies and procedures of the German Federation (Deutscher Volkssportverband e.V.), the largest country organization in the IVV (International Federation of Popular Sports). In essence, it was the IVV!

Using the template of the DVV, a FREE walker category was established here. Its purpose: to entice new walkers to take part in the IVV Achievement Awards Program and purchase IVV Record Books after taking part in a few events. Most people who "try" volkssporting do so at the invitation of a friend. In the "early days" there was limited information about IVV Record Books and as a result many people walked several times before purchasing "books" and getting involved in the awards program. As a personal reference, I was one of those people. The FREE walker category was never intended to be open ended for anyone although there was never any written policy to substantiate it. However, it became a staple for some people and they never bought record books.

The introduction of volksmarches in the 1980s drew many, many participants and the numbers easily reached 1,000 participants or more at volksmarches. Thus, many dollars flowed into a club's treasury and

the national headquarters. The FREE walker category had a minor impact on event revenue. However, event participation throughout the country has been dropping significantly during the past decade or so and this is having a major impact on club solvency as well as the national headquarters. . . .

During my stint as Director, Southwest Region (2007-2011), we began to eliminate the FREE walker category in Texas because it was impacting club solvency, particularly for the smaller clubs. It was believed that the \$3 participation fee was something affordable for anyone wanting to take part in a Volkssport event especially when this is compared to the fee for road races which was many times that amount. Also, the volkssporters who continuously claimed the FREE category were not contributing to the cost of operating an event. Most participants understood the need to levy a fee on all walkers and they have paid a fee without a squabble. . . . The bottom line: There are expenses required to conduct an event and event fees are the only source to pay for them. They require support from ALL walkers not just one or two categories of walkers.

Again, the FREE walker category was intended to entice walkers to buy record books after taking part in a few events. It was never intended to be open ended for anyone."

Thanks to Heinz for sharing this. So, there it is---the historic intent of the "free walker" option. As Heinz says, during the boom days it didn't make much of a difference, but today that loss of income is significant. It is clear that something needs to change.

Important Deadlines for the June 2019 General Membership Meeting

Call to Clubs for Agenda Items for the General Membership and NEC Meeting

March 1, 2019 All submissions for the Awards Book should be submitted.

April 13, 2019 (60 days before meeting):

Clubs email Agenda Items to Regional Directors and AVA National Office.

Agenda items from Regional Directors for the General Membership and NEC meeting due to AVA National Office.

Final list of agenda items for the General Membership and NEC meeting sent to AVA Clubs and Regional Directors.

April 28, 2019 – Deadline date for clubs to be in “good standing” in order to be eligible to vote during the General Membership meeting this June.

May 13, 2019 (30 days before meeting): Officer’s, Regional Director’s and Committee written reports are due at AVA National Office. Reports will be published in the Biennial Report (300 word limit please).

May 14, 2019 – Credentialing forms must be postmarked by this date if you are mailing them to the AVA National Office.

May 22, 2019 (21 days before meeting): Meeting information package for General Membership and NEC meeting emailed to NEC members.

AVA NEC Officer’s Reports and Committee Reports:

[Click here for Agenda items Form](#)

[Click here for Officer Report Form](#)

[Click here for Committee Report Form](#)

NEC and Committee Updates

2019 Convention News - 5 Months to Opening!

Yes we are open for preregistration.

This is AVA’s first time conducting the registration site and it will be using this one as their prototype.

As you read through the registration site, please encourage all your club members to have even more fun by **volunteering** just 1,2, etc. hours of their time at convention. It is a great way to meet others and giving back to the sport we love.

Silent Auction is eagerly waiting for your donations and raffle items to arrive. Fill out the Silent Auction form found on walkescv.org and include it with your item. It is exciting to watch your item’s bidding climb throughout the convention days.

Be sure to read the **Frequently Asked Questions** before going to registration. There is a lot of useful information here. But, if your question isn’t there, send it to convention@ava.org

One big favor...we are looking for ideas for our table decorations at the Friday dinner. We’d like to have an awards theme since this is the 1st AVA Walk of Fame Awards Evening. Please send all ideas to convention@ava.org

Your Convention Committee Chairs are busy now procuring required permits for the walk sites, devising signage, and finalizing AV needs at the hotel.

...• Teresa Kennedy and Lea Darling, Convention Co-Chairs



Come One,
Come All!



My AVA Fun, Fitness, and Fun!

Up Welcome Schedule

2019 Convention - Registration

▼ Participant Information

First Name _____
Last Name _____ (and suffix if applicable)
City _____
State/Province _____ State or Province or area
Country _____
E-mail Address _____
AVA Associate or Lifetime Number (Optional) Enter your AVA member number

☐ This participant is a minor
☐ This participant is a member of a bus tour
This participant usually walks **5K**

▼ Event Packages - a description of available

- ☒ Full Convention Package
- ☐ 1-Day Convention Package
- ☐ 3-Day Walk & Transportation Pass
- ☐ 1-Day Walk & Transportation Pass
- ☐ Individual Walk

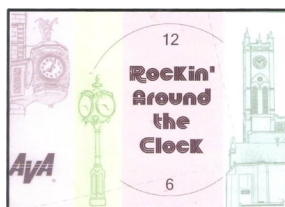
2020 Special Programs

An AVA National Executive Council meeting was held in Tucson, Arizona January 11 – 13 at which time three new Special Programs were presented and proposed for approval. These programs would start on January 1, 2020 with book sales through December 31, 2022 and redemption of completed books through December 31, 2023. The three proposed Special Programs were approved and books will be available from the club POC by approximately May 1. A taste of what is to come includes:



“Airports” - submitted by the Seneca Valley Sugarloafers. Reminisce as you walk by an Airport. Qualifications for this program are to participate in 12 different AVA sanctioned walks (different year = different walk) that go by Airports. The walk must be near enough to see airport operations by using a perimeter pathway of an airport, go to a designated viewing area of the airport, or walk on a trail in close viewing proximity to the airfield and runways. Community Airports, National and International Airports, and Military Airfields do count but not Helipads or Heliports.

“Mayflower 400th Anniversary Walks” - submitted by Twin State Volkssport Association. Qualify by walking 12 different AVA sanctioned walks in Plymouth, MA along Cape Cod and in towns where the Pilgrims walked. Qualifiers also include dozens of surnames of Mayflower passengers and those important in the pilgrim story including Native Americans. Examples include any Bradford Street or White Street on an AVA walk will qualify. Mayflower moving vans and Plymouth cars do not qualify unless they are on permanent exhibit or the word is on a sign or building.



“Rockin’ Around the Clock” - submitted by Maumee Valley Volkssporters. Qualify by walking 24 different AVA sanctioned events that include a public clock, clock & repair shop or clock museum. Only one use of the IVV Stamp is allowed for each qualifier per year.. Public clocks are usually large outdoor clocks in public places, i.e. town squares or on buildings. They appear in a variety of styles, such as: stand-alone or pole-mounted, wall mounted on a building facade, and/or clock tower.

More information on the Special Programs will be provided in the next TAW issue with a submission by each POC. I would personally like to thank each of the clubs and POC’s for their Special Program proposals. It takes a lot of hard work and time to set up these programs. Please help make them successful by including any or all of them which pertain to your walks. They do indeed bring more walkers to your area. Thank you in advance for participating in the Special Programs by either sponsoring, applying them to your walk or by buying the books and walking.

AVA Awards Program—Suzi Glass, Chair

Honor Your Volunteers by March 1

There are 3 ways to recognize those who support your club:

Certificate of Appreciation for “individuals, organizations or businesses for service to AVA on a regional, state or club level” – perfect for those places that house walk start points and/or POC’s for events.

Commendable Service Awards for “individuals who have given a significant amount of service regardless of the amount of time they have been a member” can recognize club officers, organizers and specialists (newsletter editors, etc.).

Meritorious Service Awards are for those who have received the Commendable Service Award and “given at last five years of outstanding service to the AVA”.

Anyone can nominate candidates by filling in AVA Form 303 (AVA website, “Clubs Only” tab, AVA Club Forms) and sending it to your RD.

Nominations must be completed by March 1 to be included in the 2019 Biennial Convention Recognition Award Booklet.

CONVENTION TIME APPROACHING

We are a short four months away from convention in June. As your club meets before June think about how your club and State Association can assist with the volunteers who have been meeting each month in New York and those clubs preparing pre and post convention walks. Registration is open on the AVA Website. There is a call for the Silent Auction, Volunteer for an hour or two, and many other tasks are needed to enjoy a fun filled convention. Let's not forget to stock the walk boxes for those travelling to and from convention. All conventions are accomplished by the many hands of AVA Nation, us. The ultimate success belongs with each of us as a volunteer organization.

Convention Silent Auction Committee—Sue Grey, Co-Chair

We are enjoying preparing for our silent auction. We have received some wonderful donations-waiting to hear from you. Our Albany/AVA Convention website is easy to use to make your S.A. donation. Go to <http://www.walkescv.org/ava2019convention/welcome.html> click on the blue Silent Auction button. A clear explanation on how to donate is at this site.

Sam Korff, AVA Secretary

VOTING AT 2019 CONVENTION

When voting on issues or candidates at past conventions, there has always been an awkward delay as voting cards were counted. The awkwardness came as multiple voting cards had to be counted. It is expected that this awkwardness will be a thing of the past at the upcoming convention in New York. Electronic voting devices will be provided for each vote carried. For those carrying more than two proxies/delegate votes, space will be provided to manage multiple voting devices.

The devices were tried and tested at the January 2019 NEC Meeting in Tucson. It looks like electronic voting will work for us. At the beginning of the business session, the President will conduct a trial run so that delegates/proxies will be familiar with the devices. Instant results are expected. In the picture, the issue is for demonstration only. The issue shown is not a real issue.

The American Volkssport Association has had electronic registration for the past two conventions. Now we will have electronic voting. We are moving into the 21st Century!

AVA Programs—Debra Kruep, Chair

AVA, America's Walking Club Virtual Online Challenges for 2019



Walkin' Canada

Walkin' Canada is a virtual walk across Canada "visiting" 50 cities. As you pass these milestone cities you will receive information about the local IVV walk, interesting fun facts and history. To receive your Walkin' Canada T-Shirt, complete 5,500 steps per day or a total of 2,007,500 by December 31, 2019. You can post your steps manually, sync with a fitbit or other walking device, most devices work with the program. There are still a few out there that may not. Don't have a walking pedometer or device, you may also use a smartphone.

★ Convention Request ★

By Karen Watson – ESCV member

Just five months until the 21st AVA CONVENTION
Let us bring something to your ATTENTION

Your ESCV HOST CLUB would like to ask
clubs or individuals to PLEASE TAKE ON A TASK

Start thinking right now and CONTEMPLATE
what items you or your club could DONATE

SILENT AUCTION... baskets and raffles will be great
but ...WE NEED HELP from you,
from each club, from EVERY STATE

What can you donate? START THINKING NOW...
I'll give you some ideas (but please NOT a cow!)

CRAFTS, FOODS or WINE from near where you live;
Gift certificates or cards WOULD BE GOOD TO GIVE

A weekend/week at your VACATION PLACE
ANYTHING TO PUT A SMILE ON ONE'S FACE!

Please come up with ideas before it's too late!

We want the 2019 AVA Convention

★ ★ to be truly first rate. ★ ★

When you register for Walkin' Canada you may also join ranks with walkers in your region. Each of the ten AVA regions will have a team. It doesn't matter how many walkers you have, large or small, all teams have an equal chance to win bragging rights by walking towards the elusive Traveling Trophy. This trophy will be awarded to the region that averages the most steps by the AVA Albany convention conclusion and award dinner. Could this be your region? Once enrolled in Walkin' Canada, simply click on the team tab in your walking account. This must be done on a computer, not on the app. You receive both challenges and any additional challenges during 2019 for the \$22 fee.



Fun, Fitness, Friendship

Regional Team Challenge

Register at www.ava.org and click on the Walkin' Canada logo.

Training Development Committee—Ton Baltes, Chair

Strolling Afloat!

In June 2018 the AVA Board approved a change in policy to allow events on cruise ships that originate in US waters (Policy Manual, Para 4.06.II.D). Following our basic rules, cruise events of up to seven consecutive days can be sanctioned as Traditional Events and longer cruises would be sanctioned as Seasonal Events. If you are considering a cruise in the near future you might want to check on the availability of a suitable onboard walking track to help stay active while enjoying the luxury of your cruise experience. Events can be sanctioned through your local club or work with your Regional Director to find a way to make it happen. Having walked with over 100 participants on a cruise to Alaska last summer we found a walking incentive really helped and gave us a chance to engage other passengers in conversation about America's Walking Club. To manage costs for small groups you can always request Per Participant Sanction Fee. Have fun walking on water!

Walkbox Followup

Last month we published some tips on things to look at as you reset your walkboxes for 2019 and in doing so we have received some good feedback. First, we've reviewed our annual topic schedule and will be sure to have information a month earlier on time sensitive topics to allow more time for implementation. Second, we listed Incident Report Forms and Liability Insurance Certificates as items to have in the walkbox. To be clear, these are not required by policy to be in your walkboxes and the liability certificate should not be included. Both forms are readily available on the AVA website under Club Forms and can be easily accessed by smart phones, computers, etc. What is important to have in your walkbox and walk directions is contact information for emergency services and the club point of contact for the walkbox. Finally, as we work on updating the Trailmaster's Guide we'll spend some time and energy developing an outline of an ideal walkbox that will list the essential items and those practices we learn from all clubs that can make walkboxes exceptional. Thanks to all who took time to read our article and provide feedback to improve our message.

AVA National Office Team

Awards & Membership—Karen Winkle

Please be sure to mail in your completed 2018 Centurion books by February 28, 2019. These names will go in the 2nd quarter TAW (April—June) issue.

Information and Technology Specialist—Hector Hernandez

AVA Biennial Publicity Contest – 2019

As the excitement builds for the 2019 Convention in Albany, New York so grows the anticipation for all the interesting and unique entries in our Biennial Publicity Contest! Winners of our 2019 national competition will be recognized at the 22nd AVA Biennial Convention, June 9-16, in Albany, New York. All entries must have been created or occurred during the time-period from January 1, 2017 to April 1, 2019. Specific rules and submission category guidelines are attached. A separate Official Entry Form must be submitted with each entry and this form may be reproduced as needed. Submit your form in an envelope and attach it to the items submitted for judging. All photography category entries must include the Photo Release Form.

Competition in the AVA contest is open to AVA members, clubs and state organizations. Names of the winners will be published in the American Wanderer newspaper, the AVA website, and other promotional outlets. Winning photographs or other images may be used on our website or for other purposes such as the cover photo on the "Starting Point" book.

AVA cannot be responsible for any late, damaged or incomplete entries. All entries submitted to the contest will become the property of AVA and may not be returned.

All submitted entries must arrive at AVA National Office no later than April 15, 2019. Mail them to the American Volkssport Association, 1001 Pat Booker Road, Ste. 101, Universal City, Texas 78148, Attention: Publicity Contest or email with the subject line "Publicity Contest Entry" to hector@ava.org.

Entry submission deadline is April 15, 2019 Midnight/Central Time

[Photo Release Form](#)

[Categories/Guidelines](#)

[Official Entry Form](#)

Walks to Remember

Texas Trail Roundup, now that's a walk I remember! Cloudy skies, wind lightly blowing and checkpoint after checkpoint we go. Whether you do the 5k, 10k or 40k it's a memorable site to see. What's a memorable walk in your area? Share it with your friends and share it with AVA. If you are in need of assistance marketing February/March walks and events please email your walk or event information to hector@ava.org.



Flag stands being made by Hector with the laser engraver for the Texas Trail Roundup.

Starting Point Changes

Starting Point changes on the AVA website are only for events published in the Starting Point Book. Please remember to make all changes within your ESR and then send to Hector. The website will be updated weekly. Email changes to hector@ava.org.

Click here for this months [Starting Point Changes](#)

Communications— Samanta Sanchez

Champions for our Cause

Our goal for the 2019 Big Give is to raise \$78,000! In efforts to reach our goal, the AVA National team has signed up to fundraise on behalf of the organization through the Big Give's *Peer to Peer Program?*

Join us and become a fundraiser champion for our cause during our annual Big Give campaign. Just visit our AVA profile on [the Big Give website](#), click on the Fundraise button, create an account, log in, and personalize your profile. On your profile, you will be able to share a story on why you're fundraising on behalf of AVA, set a fundraising goal, and invite your family and friends to donate to your campaign. Donors will be able to make contributions starting the 21st of March. Remember the donations you receive through your personal campaign will count towards AVA's overall amount raised, so spread the word!

If you need assistance creating or personalizing your page, please refer to this step by step handout by [clicking here](#) or send an email to samanta@ava.org. Note on subject line *Peer to Peer Help*.

We are the champions for our cause. Keep America Walking!



Give Big, Win Big!

For the past two years, our Big Give donors have been eligible to win AVA prizes. This year is no exception and donors have a higher chance to win! AVA members who donate during the Big Give are eligible for the following prizes!

- For every 25 clubs that donate, one free traditional sanctioned event will be raffled.
- For every 50 unique donors, one 2019 or 2020 Starting Point Book will be raffled.
- One club and one individual will be the lucky winners of an all paid 2021 Convention Registration!



Save the date! Visit the [Big Give website](#) on **Thursday, March 28th** to make your contribution. Early giving will start March 21st and run through March 27th. You may also mail in your donations anytime through April 30th to the American Volkssport Association: 1001 Pat Booker Road, Suite 101, Universal City, TX 78148. Thank you for your support!

For more Big Give details, stay tuned for our special edition of the March Checkpoint.

Convention Hotel Updates

The Red Lion Hotel in Albany has officially sold out! This is exciting news! We are happy to learn that we will see a lot of you at the convention. If you did not have the chance to book your reservation at the Red Lion Hotel, no need to worry. The AVA now has a block of rooms reserved with Red Roof Inn at a discounted group rate of \$77.99. Please note, Red Roof Inn is not a full-service hotel and continental breakfast will not be included. To make your reservations please call the number below and ask for the American Volkssport Association group rate. To receive our discounted group rate, make sure to **book your reservations before May 21, 2019**. After this date, our group rate will close. Cancellation 3 days prior to the day of arrival will result in a penalty of 1 night's room rate plus tax.

Red Roof Inn Albany Airport
188 Wolf Rd
Albany, NY 12205
For reservations dial: (518) 459-1971
Group Name: American Volkssport Association
Block code: B112AVA611



Thank you for your years of service to the AVA.
You will be missed. (Rick White 1942-2019)

Finance Director– Erin Grosso

Good Standing Policy and Deadlines - Convention 2019 – Albany, NY

The AVA Call to Convention and AVA Form 500 will be mailed to the clubs by the end of February. Please follow the directions on the form and return to AVA for Credentialing at Convention. **All forms must be postmarked no later than May 14th, 2019.** If the deadline for mailing this form to the National Office is missed, **all copies of the form** must accompany the Delegate, Alternate, or Proxy to the Credentials booth at the Convention. The form should be mailed to:

American Volkssport Association, Inc.
Attn: Erin Grosso
1001 Pat Booker Rd. Ste 101
Universal City, TX 78148

Please do not forget that clubs must be in "good standing" forty-five days before the opening of the membership meeting in order to be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members. **The final date for clubs to meet the criteria of being in "good standing" to vote is midnight of April 28th, 2019.** Detailed information and some things to keep in mind regarding the AVA's Good Standing Policy and Membership Voting Policy is provided below.

[Click here](#) to see full article with AVA Bylaws

Exciting News! New AVA Membership Benefits for Lifetime and Associate Members

GroupWorks

In an effort to grow AVA and streamline communication for all AVA Lifetime and Associate members we have decided to explore GroupWorks Membership management online platform. GroupWorks provides online tools in a simple to use format to enhance the following:

- Manage chapters and members via email group messaging and emails
- Event management
- Online Membership Payment and Renewal System
- Share photos, videos, ideas and updates
- Communicate with members, officers and board representatives across AVA
- Secure sign in with user friendly experience on desktop and mobile
- Engage with AVA Members on trips and events

Complimentary for ALL AVA Lifetime and Associate Members!

During the month of March you will be receiving an email from me with a link to SIGN IN and a unique temporary password. PLEASE CLICK ON THE LINK AND USE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS AND TEMPORARY PASSWORD TO SIGN IN. Once you log-in, you will find the shortcut to "AVA National Members" group in the upper left of the screen.

The AVA intends to use this group as place to communicate with all Lifetime and Associate Members about relevant news and upcoming events, as well as highlight accomplishments from within the AVA community. We also hope the AVA National Members group will serve as a forum our members to share their experiences and suggestions.

In the coming weeks GroupWorks will host online demonstration webinars to help you get comfortable using the platform, should you like further assistance. Email notifications will be sent with dates, times, and login information for the webinars. The information will also be posted on the AVA website.

FlipRocks

The World's First Extreme Flip Flop with Interchangeable, Replaceable Gripping Soles are now available at a discounted price for all AVA Lifetime and Associate members!

FlipRocks are a complete redesign of the flip flop, with a strong focus on outdoorsmen and women who require a lot from their footwear. FlipRocks are super light and the only flip flop with integrated arch support, removable comfort strap and a raised toe guard. These extreme flip flops are actually seven shoes in one! Thanks to a patented, rugged design with interchangeable, replaceable soles that are constructed with GripToeNite gripping technology. They're tough enough to withstand any adventure while keeping your feet firmly planted on any surface in or out of water. FlipRocks creates extreme footwear with adaptability for a large range of activities such as: fishing, hiking, surfcasting, kayaking, boating, golfing and walking. To learn more visit: www.fliprocks.com



AVA Lifetime and Associate members can receive a 10% discount on FlipRocks Extreme footwear. In return, FlipRocks Extreme footwear will donate 10% of all purchases to support the AVA's commitment to health and wellness! The receive your 10% discount go to www.fliprocks.com and enter the code: **walking**. It's a win, win, order today!

Talking About the V Word - AVA's National Publicity and Marketing Campaign Update

We've all had conversations about the V word—volksporting. We're either trying to explain the V in AVA or the sport we're so passionate about.

As America's Walking Club, we have a great product. You don't have to convince people that fun, fitness and friendship are worthwhile, yet most of us are struggling to maintain membership, much less grow it. In many ways, we're still the best kept secret of American fitness, and it's time to increase our visibility.

In 2018, AVA took some significant steps toward that goal. A six-person publicity committee was established, and they worked diligently to define our organization's needs and goals. The result of that effort was a request for proposals to find a publicity firm that can help us address those needs and achieve those goals. The RFP was issued in August. The committee received seven proposals and unanimously decided on MassMedia, LLC from Henderson, Nevada.



Publicity Committee member, Kathryn King and Mass Media consultants, Casey Floyd, Ashleigh Fehmie, and Chelsea Chavez, brief the AVA Board of Directors.



Several factors distinguished MassMedia from the competition. From the creativity of a pair of signed hiking shoes included with their proposal to visiting the AVA's Las Vegas High Rollers and Strollers club in Las Vegas and creating a video with man-on-the-street interviews about AVA, it was clear that they understood our organization and what we offer the fitness community and aligned with our mission.

We do have a lot to offer the fitness community—safe and well-planned walks, friendly people with whom to walk and a low-cost incentive program. For the price of a typical 5K race, walkers could complete 10 of our walks and likely learn something in the process. It's time to take that value to a larger audience, and we're looking forward to working with MassMedia to develop the communications and marketing tools that clubs can build on to take AVA into the future.

The committee is currently working to refine the contract and deliverables, and an update will be available at the national convention in June. In the interim, if you have any questions or suggestions, please email publicity@ava.org.

AVA Publicity Committee

Patricia Jewett, Northeast Region

Kathryn King, Southeast Region

Susan Ives, Southwest Region

Barbara Nuss, Pacific Region

Henry Rosales, National Office, Chair

Samanta Sanchez, National Office

Support Our National and International Friends

National



AVA 2019 Calendars are now on sale! Get them while you can at the low price of \$5 + shipping.



Click on image for more information



Click image for more information.

Checkpoint Available Via Email to All Club Members Who Request It

To receive an electronic copy of the Checkpoint send us an email to the attention of Samanta requesting that you be put on our distribution list for the Checkpoint. Please note on the subject line: Request for Checkpoint. Send your request to Samanta at samanta@ava.org.



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.



1001 Pat Booker Road, Suite 101 · Universal City, TX 78148, Phone 210.659.2112 · Fax 210.659.1212 avahq@ava.org / ava.org