




VOLUME 29, NUMBER 8



**AMERICA'S
WALKING CLUB**
— ESTABLISHED 1976 —

August 2020

www.ava.org

CHECKPOINT ✓

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Fun, Fitness, and Friendship!

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Executive Director's Update—Henry Rosales

Adjusting to Changes Shaped by COVID-19 Virus

Thank you to all our Volkssporters who continue to walk in support of your health and AVA clubs. Please continue to follow the guidelines of local health and government officials and the AVA's Safe Practice Recommendations.

[Click here for Safe Practice Recommendations.](#)

AVA Office Closed on Fridays

The National office is open to visitors and club members Monday – Thursday, 9:00 am to 5:00 p.m. Due to COVID-19 virus, we ask that all visitors wear a facemask. All employees work on a rotating office schedule during the week, 50% of their time at the office and 50% from home. This is to protect our employees and visitors from the spread of the virus. If you need to meet with someone at the National Office, please set up an appointment in advance. The office will be **closed on Fridays** and the museum remains closed until further notice.

2021 AVA Convention

The AVA initially blocked 500 room nights at the Madison Concourse hotel for the convention and thus far we have a total of 661 room nights booked! Once this hotel is full, we will announce a second hotel where we have also blocked rooms at a discounted rate.

Convention registration should be up and running by October 1, 2020 on the AVA website. New in 2021 will be a community walk event on Saturday, July 3rd. We hope you will join us! Also, the Awards and Recognition Dinner will be on Thursday instead of the traditional Friday and the President's Reception will be hosted on Friday evening. The President's Reception is a special event for all AVA Lifetime and Associate members. If you are not an AVA member you might want to sign up so you do not miss this exciting event!

[Click Here to Become an AVA Lifetime or Associate Member](#)



22ND AVA BIENNIAL CONVENTION
MADISON, WI | JUNE 26 - JULY 3, 2021

Special thanks to Doug Wiest, Terry Wendt, Jeff Giddings, Sammy Hunnicutt, Tom Baltes, Pam and Jerry Wilson and the Convention Committee for their terrific pre-planning efforts.

Tom Jackson, Sarah and Eleanor Garcia
Bicycling Event.— Photo submitted by
Sarah Garcia.



Publicity Committee

Due to revenue loss of the COVID-19 virus, the Publicity Committee suspended the marketing contract with Mass Media. In response to the suspension, Mass Media proposed we terminate the agreement with a 60-day notice. The Publicity Committee has agreed to accept their proposal with retention of services for 60 days to complete projects already started and not completed. The work will resume August-September 2020.

The Publicity Committee is working on new design specifications for our national publication (TAW). Once specifications have been completed, the AVA will ask for vendor quotes and the top 2 quotes will be presented to the board for a final selection in December. The committee is also exploring the idea of a monthly news brief that will keep clubs informed and market upcoming AVA events.

Do not forget the Publicity Committee has completed design work on new event flyer templates clubs can customize and use to market events in public areas like grocery stores, coffee shops, parks, and hotels. To access these templates, [click here](#).



Financial Update

2020 Budget Modification

The 2020 modified budget reflects a projected revenue loss of **\$68,182** as a direct result of the COVID-19 virus impact on our club events. Approximately 89 events have been cancelled and 93 have been rescheduled. The revenue loss will increase should the COVID-19 virus linger through the fall and/or resurrect in the winter (projected \$75,000+).

To offset revenue loss, expenses were cut by **\$28,513**. Reductions are in payroll and board travel.

The budget modification also reflects an \$8,000 increase in National and International programs. These funds were spent on the very successful IML/Texas Trail Roundup. Some of these funds will also be used for the Olympiad Presentation. Special thanks to Susan Medlin, Sammy Hunnicutt, the Texas Trail Roundup Club and all local clubs and volunteers for a very successful event!

The AVA National Office continues to closely monitor the impact of the COVID-19 virus on our organization. Consequently, we have initiated the following measures to stay within our modified budget for 2020.

Revenues

- *We have secured Paycheck Protection Program Funds (\$50,700). This loan can be used for payroll, utilities and rent and should be fully forgiven if the funds are spent according to the regulations.
- *Virtual Online Program revenues have increased by \$2,000.
- *The AVA is on target to surpass our Big Give goal of \$80,000.

Expenses

- *The July in-person board meeting was canceled by AVA President, David Bonewitz.
- *The Mass Media contract was suspended.
- *Personnel hours have been reduced.

To review the 2020 Modified [Budget Click Here](#).

FUND DEVELOPMENT

Individual Donor Campaign, The Big Give – Total Raised as of June 2020 = **\$61,962!**

Our annual fundraising campaign has been extended through September 10, 2020. We already have **21 New Individual Donors** and **Two New Club Donors!** Help us reach our goal of \$80,000!

Please encourage your family and friends to support the AVA on September 10, 2020!
To donate to the Big Give, [Click Here](#)

AVA's Sustained Giving Program

The AVA's Sustained Giving Program was launched a year ago and thus far we have 5 individual donors enrolled. This may not sound like many however, their monthly contributions have now raised \$3,067 for the AVA! Sustained giving works well for individuals who want to support the AVA with smaller monthly amounts instead of one large donation. Please help us promote this new fund development program. To become a sustained donor, [click here](#).

AVA Angels Legacy Giving Program



This planned giving program also launched a year ago.

Congratulations to our first AVA Angel, Susan Medlin!

For more information [click here](#).

Special thanks to all our guests who joined us live through the internet during the July Board meeting! We had an average of 20 participants each day! I hope you will continue to join us.

Nominating Committee—Tom Jackson, Chair

Members for the AVA Nominating Committee

We are looking for at least five people who are willing to become members of the AVA Nominating Committee. The duty of the Nominating Committee is to nominate candidates for the AVA National Offices (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer) at the Membership Meeting at the AVA Convention in Madison, Wisconsin.

Members of the Committee are not allowed to be a candidate for one of the National Offices.

If interested or for more information, please contact Tom Jackson at nominations@ava.org.

Natasha Wampach, Vice President of Network, Element3 Health, Inc.

Free Fun Virtual Classes and Events for AVA Leaders and Members

Element3 Health (an AVA partner) launched a virtual community of clubs that is engaging and FREE to all AVA members. The community offers a mix of live and pre-recorded classes, inspirational content and fun social events. All are welcome and we are excited to share this resource with the AVA community to help us all to stay engaged and connected! The website for this virtual community of clubs: <https://www.element3healthclubs.com/>

Here are a few examples of clubs and classes Element3 Health offers:

Creative Crafting Club - Live crafting classes and events on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays

Dance Club - Live line dancing classes and events almost daily!

Painting & Drawing Club - Live art classes and events throughout the week

Sewing Club - Weekly projects, socials, guest speakers, skill set building content, live sewing classes!

Weekly Featured Events

Qigong: Thursdays at 10 a.m. MT

Healing Yoga: Wednesdays at 10 a.m. MT

Technology Help Get Together: Mondays and Fridays 10 a.m. MT

Meditation Series: Fridays at 10 a.m. MT

About Element3 Health

Element3 Health is a network of clubs that provides a unique matching service focused on engaging older adults in their passions (including walking!) to increase social, mental, and physical activity for healthy aging. AVA joined Element3 Health as a partner in early 2020. All AVA clubs are encouraged to sign up for the Element3 Health network membership to benefit from: access to new members through their matching service (Element3 Health connects their members directly to your clubs), FREE access to GroupWorks, FREE access to the Virtual Club Community filled with classes, events, educational content, and more.

Helpful links with additional information about Element3 Health

Benefits of joining the Element3 Health network: <https://element3health.com/for-clubs/>

Sign-up form to join the Element3 Health network: <https://element3health.com/join-our-network/>

Element3 Health virtual community: <https://www.element3healthclubs.com/>

Dedicated Virtual Groups Support Line: 844-932-0226 or email: help@element3health.com

Information and Technology Specialist—Hector Hernandez

Event Renewal

If you have not renewed your events please do so soon. Events need to be entered into the ESR so that stamps can be made and mailed out in late November.

The 2021 YRE and Seasonal Renewal process opened up June 1, 2020, the deadline is midnight, September 15, 2020. RDs have until September 30 to review their region's events. If you would like your walks to be listed in the Starting Point book, please renew your walks at your earliest convenience. Click the link for [Renewal Instructions](#).

Here are some tips to renew your YREs and Seasonals.

- Please do not mark your events "No Renewal" if undecided. There is no "undo" button, you will have to re-enter a new ESR.
- For a faster and error free renewal, do a fast and quick renewal without changes. Simply click renew and submit. You may enter your changes or updates by going to the ESR Listing page to edit your event information.
- Your event will disappear from your renewal list if you enter incorrect information. Contact Hector to have your event reactivated if your event disappears during renewal.
- Most of the errors occur when entering information in the POC section. Please follow the instructions carefully.

Contact Hector at hector@ava.org for any ESR renewal problems and concerns.

Accounting Specialist—Marian DeVaul

STARTING POINT BOOK

Do not forget to pre-order your 2021 Starting Point Book. The deadline is no later than midnight, September 30, 2020. Please e-mail the form to marian@ava.org. As of this publication, I have had zero clubs request copies of the book. Please send your pre-orders in this month so we can determine if there is any interest in the publication this year.

FINANCIAL

If you did not change your fiscal year end to December 31, 2019, it is time to start preparing your required financial documents. You will need to file your 990 E-Postcard, submit the Annual Financial Report (AFR), and review/update your club officers in the ESR. 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. Thank You.

Starting Point Pre-Order Form

The deadline to pre-order Starting Point Books is September 30, 2020. No book orders will be accepted after deadline.

[Click here for form.](#)



Colorado River Walkers on Brushy Creek Trail YRE #1547 in Cedar Park, Tx. On July 4, 2020.— Photo submitted by Carol Obianwu.

Starting Point Photo Contest

Thank you for all your submissions. Photos are ready to be judged. Good luck to all the contestants.

big give
09.10.2020
GIVE \$10 ON SEPTEMBER 10
\$61,962
Raised
Thank You

big give
09.10.2020
GIVE \$10 ON SEPTEMBER 10
No gift is too small.
GIVE \$10 OR MORE ON SEPTEMBER 10 BY DONATING ONLINE THROUGH THEBIGGIVEA.ORG OR DONATE ONLINE NOW BY VISITING AVA.ORG. YOU MAY ALSO MAIL YOUR CHECK TO THE AVA NATIONAL OFFICE, NOW THROUGH SEPTEMBER 10, 2020.

AMERICA'S WALKING CLUB
ESTABLISHED 1976

Tim Miner
Programs Committee Chair

Be sure to click on image to view our latest 2020 Big Give video by Tim Miner our Programs Committee Chair. Make sure you like and subscribe to our channel. More to come.

Event Stamps: Effective October 1, 2021

Our IT Committee is working on a new billing system for event stamps. Instead of receiving an invoice from the National Office, the charge for stamps will appear on your Quarterly Participation Report. The following is the new fee schedule that will be effective October 1, 2021:

- The 1st stamp is included with your sanction fee.
- Replacement and additional stamp handles are available to purchase for \$9 each.
- Additional stamps are \$5.00.
 - Note: It may take up to 6 weeks to receive stamp(s).
 - Additional stamps requested well in advance of the event start date (more than 6 weeks) will be scheduled for production at the same time as the 1st free stamp.
 - A new online my.ava.org club interface will be deployed to allow clubs to request additional stamps
- Additional stamps that are needed sooner (Emergency Stamps) are \$12.00 (includes regular USPS shipping & handling). Priority or overnight shipping is not included in the \$12.00 fee. Once the new stamp request interface is deployed, the steps for requesting an Emergency Stamp are as follows:
 - Use the new online interface to request an additional stamp
 - Then, contact the AVA National Office (Hector) and request that the additional stamp should be upgraded to an Emergency Stamp and agree to the total charge of \$12 for this service. A projected shipping date for the Emergency Stamp will be provided.
- Custom stamps are \$15.00 (plus S/H). Contact the AVA National Office (Hector) concerning custom stamp requests.

Communications— Samanta Sanchez

Give \$10 on September 10!

Our mission, as America's Walking Club, is to continue to keep you physically active and healthy despite the current challenges. More and more people are taking up walking during this current pandemic. Why? Because walking is a safe and fun activity to engage in! Walking can be done around your neighborhood or on one of our sanctioned trails. Walking gives you the opportunity to explore and be one with nature. It helps relieve stress and can help reduce anxiety and depression. There are many health benefits to walking! Now more than ever, it is important to exercise regularly to maintain a healthy body and mind. That is why we are dedicated to bringing you the best walking experience. You can count on us to provide beautiful, historic trails that are safe to walk and safe to socially engage with others, while adhering to social distancing recommendations. Your health and wellness drive our mission. Can we count on you to continue it?

This September 10, we ask you to please spare a minute of your time and consider donating \$10 or more to our Big Give campaign. Your generosity is needed to continue our mission. We feel humbled and grateful that many of our supporters have already given to our Big Give campaign to help relief some of the financial burdens that COVID-19 has brought us. But our fundraiser is not over yet! That is why we come to you, to help us spread the word of our work and invite your family and friends to give \$10 on September 10. Ten dollars is the minimum amount to donate online, but a small gift of \$10 can make a BIG impact! In fact, if you donate on this day, the Big Give will match any donation dollar for dollar up to \$100 during five Match Minutes taking place at 9:15am, 12:15pm, 3:15pm, 6:15pm & 11:15pm Central Time (transactions must be completed within the 1-minute to be matched). Double your impact and give \$10 or more on September 10 (through the thebiggivesa.org) to help us reach our \$80,000 goal or donate online now through the end of the campaign by visiting ava.org. You may also mail your donations to the American Volkssport Association, 1001 Pat Booker Rd, Ste. 101, Universal City, TX 78148, now through September 10, 2020. No gift is too small. Every gift helps continue our mission.

Calling All Fundraiser Champions!

Join us and become a fundraiser champion for our cause during the Big Give 2020. Last year, majority of our new donors were gained from participating Peer-to-Peer campaigns. These small fundraising campaigns are a great way to introduce our organization and mission to new individuals. One Peer to Peer campaign can bring up to four new donors! Donations received through your personal campaign during the five Match Minutes will be matched dollar for dollar!

**GIVE \$10 ON
SEPTEMBER 10**

No gift is too small

On September 10, 2020, visit thebiggivesa.org and donate during the minutes below to have your donation matched dollar for dollar (up to \$100):

Match Minutes

Pacific Time: 7:15am, 10:15am, 1:15pm, 4:15pm & 9:15pm
Mountain Time: 8:15am, 11:15am, 2:15pm, 5:15pm & 10:15pm
Central Time: 9:15am, 12:15pm, 3:15pm, 6:15pm & 11:15pm
Eastern Time: 10:15am, 1:15pm, 4:15pm, 7:15pm & 12:15pm (Sept. 11)



If you need assistance creating or personalizing your page, please refer to the [Crash Course on Peer-to-Peer handout](#). If you need further assistance, please send an email to emily@ava.org (note on subject line: Peer-to-Peer Help) or call the Peer-to-Peer Hotline at (210) 659-2112.

Atlantic Region is in the Lead

The Big Give has surpassed \$60,000! Our generous donors have raised a total of \$61,962. Your support is getting us closer to reaching our \$80,000 goal. To date, the Atlantic Region is leading the Regional Challenge with the most amount raised thus far. The campaign is not over yet, there is still time to donate! Any region can still be crowned the 2020 Regional Challenge winner.



Big Give Committee Member—Bob Hall

Walk-the-Talk with a Walk-A-Thon!



We love walking! Am I right? We want more people to join us for the fantastic benefits we enjoy: Fun, Friendship and Fitness!

However, just how do we promote our beloved sport safely in the current COVID pandemic world we live in? After all, some areas of the country are locked down tighter than others and the rules about walking in small groups vary from locality to locality.

You may recall that Bob Hall and his giant schnauzer Panda put on a successful Big Give walk-a-thon in the spring that raised \$1,500 for AVA. They called it the “Give-a-Woof” walk-a-thon! Bob is from the Pacific Northwest which is blessed with beautiful trails through forests, along streams, up hillsides, and through

majestic parks and neighborhoods. Your neighborhood probably can boast similar advantages. Bob and Panda, and several friends walked over a hundred miles in one week and solicited pledges from friends, family and fellow walkers and exceeded their goal.

Bob and Panda are prepared to put on a webinar for anyone who is interested in using this method to raise money for our favorite charity. AVA will be continuing the Big Give fundraiser through September with the goal of reaching the organization’s goal for the year. A walk-a-thon is a fun way to advertise walking, “walking the talk,” in a manner of speaking.

Please contact Bob directly at bobhallfamily@aol.com for details on how you too can raise money, and at the same time take those you care about on a walk that could change their lives! Bob will put together a webinar for anyone interested and share his experience and tips for a successful campaign. See you on the trail!

Training, Standards and Evaluation—Sammy Hunnicutt, Chair

Attention All Trailmasters and Anyone Who Would Like to Become a Trailmaster

The AVA is looking to enhance the current Trailmaster program. The current program is as great as it is now, but the desire is to make it even better, and, to acknowledge our Trailmasters and the critical jobs they do for each of the individual clubs.

The 2021 Convention Committee is seriously considering a workshop for existing Trailmasters but will include anyone interested in becoming a Trailmaster. This is slotted now in the tentative workshop schedule.

At this point we are brainstorming on what the program will entail. Some of the ideas so far are:

- Create a stand alone Trailmaster Committee within the overall Training Committee. The Committee would identify new training opportunities for Trailmasters. Anyone interested is strongly encouraged to let their intention to participate be known
- Come up with a process or mechanism for conducting periodic training specific to Trailmasters. The timeline for this is an unknown, and one of the key discussion points in the Trailmaster workshop at Convention. Maybe a “continuing education” type program: but we don’t know exactly, that is why we are soliciting assistance and input from Trailmasters.

We are seeking input from any and all Trailmasters on how best to do this, and more. If you have an idea that could enhance the existing program, please contact me at sw_rd@ava.org.

Two New AVA Special Programs Announced for 2021

On the evening of July 22, 2020, members of the AVA: America's Walking Club Programs Committee hosted the first online, monthly national Zoom meeting to introduce the membership to two new Special Programs that will start on January 1, 2021. These programs are the "Great Lakes, Great Fun, Great Fitness, Great Friendships," and "Walking with America's Veterans." Both programs will have co-hosting organizations that allow the activities of America's Walking Club to be shared with populations that do not know about popular sports or volksmarching.

Great Lakes, Great Fun, Great Fitness, Great Friendships

To successfully complete this program, participants must accomplish 12 AVA-sanctioned popular sport events in the USA of any type -- which includes YRE, seasonal, traditional, guided walk, or any other AVA program using the IVV/AVA stamp -- which travels along a Great Lake; or on, beside or inside a street, building, city, school, or any other "physical thing" with a Great Lake name associated with it. Great Lakes are Huron, Erie, Superior, Ontario, and Michigan. Just being in the state of Michigan does not qualify. Examples of qualifiers would be Huron Street, Ontario City, Erie Canal, or anything else that uses one of the five names.

The logbook will require three separate Great Lake names to be included in the twelve events.

The logbook must be completed between January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2023. There will be a one-year grace period to send in the book.

The special program collects the "qualifiers" so each qualifier (specific street, building, or other thing, or any sanctioned trail along a great lake) can only be used once in an event logbook or once in a year, whichever comes first. An event with multiple qualifiers can be done again for the additional "finds." This means that once a walker fills up a logbook with 12 different qualifiers, they can use the same ones over in another purchased logbook. If a logbook is used over multiple years, the new IVV/AVA stamp with a different year allows the use of the same qualifier in the same book.

Upon completion of a logbook, participants are eligible to receive a string backpack with the program's logo. There will also be an option to purchase an event patch.

This "Great Lakes" program is hosted by the Washtenaw Wanderers Volksporing Club, in partnership with the Council of the Great Lakes Region. The club will also host a Facebook discussion group to promote the program and facilitate contact between participants.

The club contact is Roxie Weaver who can be reached at (616) 745-9624 - geiserweaver@gmail.com.

Walking with America's Veterans

This special program puts America's Walking Club back in contact with its roots, American veterans who returned from Europe, and to reacquaint them with popular sports and modern volksmarching in the United States.

The program collects 15 local veteran's monuments and memorials for "campaigns" from the Spanish-American War to the present in local communities. These memorials would begin about 1890 to go to today. Also "targeted" are the locations of veteran organizations like the VFW, American Legion, or any of the other members of the [National Military & Veterans Associations](http://nmva.us/?page_id=7) (http://nmva.us/?page_id=7). Almost every community has found a way to thank those who have gone overseas, especially those who did not return. Purple Heart Memorials count. Trails and roads named for veterans and veteran groups from 1890 to present also count. "Blue Star" and "Gold Star" roads qualify. A monument with multiple parts representing different wars will be considered a single qualifier if local authorities give the whole display a single name on maps and directories, and it is obvious that it is a connected whole.

The logbook must be completed between January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2023. There will be a one-year grace period to send in the book.

The special program also collects the "qualifiers" so each qualifier can only be used once in an event logbook or once in a year, whichever comes first. Again, if a sanctioned event has multiple qualifiers, it can be used again for the additional find. Once a walker fills up a logbook with 15 different qualifiers, they can use the same ones over in another purchased logbook.

If a logbook is used over multiple years, the new IVV/AVA stamp with a different year allows the use of the same qualifier in the same book.

Upon completion of a logbook, participants are eligible to receive the first AVA: America's Walking Club military challenge coin. There will also be an option to purchase an event patch at the end of the three-year program. A special grand prize will be given to the participant that collects the most different memorials and qualifiers over the three years, which will require multiple books to be filled and redeemed.

This "Veterans" program is hosted by the U.S. FreedomWalk Festival Club in Arlington, Virginia, which has had a consistent relationship with the Reserve Organization of Association (ROA) since 2001. The ROA is a member organization of the NMVA. The club will also host a Facebook discussion group to promote the program and facilitate contact between participants and to share pictures of the memorials across the country. Members of the club are not eligible for the "grand prize" event.

The club can be reached at (703) 583-2916 or at veterans@walkvirginia.org.

Support Our National and International Friends

International

October 29—November 2, 2021 17th IVV Olympiad
Seoul, Korea 2021

Click on images to enlarge.

[Click here for more information.](#)



National



BHVA will decide during the August 17, board meeting if the Autumn Crazy Horse Volkssmarch will be cancelled. For the latest update visit their website at bhva.org.

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.



1001 Pat Booker Road, Suite 101 · Universal City, TX 78148, Phone 210.659.2112 · Fax 210.659.1212 [Message US](#)